THE ART OF ˝LEADERSHIP˝ AND HOW TO ATTRACT YOUTH TO JOIN YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

INTRO:

Becoming a leader is the desire and ambition of many, but it does not only bring honor and glory, but also a great deal of responsibility. What distinguishes a good leader, what is the right way of leadership, the characteristics of which a good leader must have, is the ability to lead inborn or acquired? These are questions that are repeatedly raised, but there is no single answer, since the methods of leadership are practically the same as the leaders.

No one is born a leader. Leadership, like other professions, needs to be learned. Requires specific personality traits and skills that need to be developed. A good leader is a person with a strong character who gives rise to trust in people and extracts the best qualities from them. So, how to develop into a good leader?

Leadership skills are one of the key elements of job satisfaction, as a successful leader makes an important contribution to the well-being of employees, to working performance and a healthy working environment. And what are the skills that a successful leader must have?

So, what does it take to be a good leader then?

1. **The leader must be an example to the employees or other people or members of organisation**

The task of the leader is to convincingly express the vision of what the organization must achieve and to involve all employees in its fulfillment. By doing so, they allow them to contribute as much as they can in their power. He must be a good thinker, a facilitator and a persuader. The greater the leader's sense of self-worth, the more likely he will be able to perform this function successfully. A person who doubts himself can not stimulate thinking about quality in others. It is unlikely that a person who feels that he does not deserve achievement and success has stimulated the pursuit of high achievements in others.

Leading by example, is the most often mentioned skill of a good leader, which has a significant influence on the sense of belonging to the working organization. It means that the leader works and behaves just as he expects from the employees. This skill interweaves the coherence between verbal and non-verbal communication; which communicates the manager with words in words, he also supports the actions. Actions are more often more convincing and affect employees more than words.

1. **Keep a friendly relationship**

In practice, there is an increasing number of socializing outside the company. Businesses and organizations organize picnics, sports gatherings and other connecting activities. Their purpose is to connect people, open communication and improve relationships, which then have a positive impact on the work process.

1. **Do not underestimate team work**

Make sure that you are not the one that prevents the successful work of the team. Some leaders allow the project to almost collapse and only then they can jump in and help. Tip: If you do this again and again, find out why. Do people need education to be more effective? Could not you share all the information that might be helpful to them? Leaders are too often wasting their time in tasks that belong to them, but their time could be much more better used. Tip: Review your duties. Would you be more effective if you delegated others for some tasks? Team members will be satisfieda snd grateful, and the leader will be able to focus on important tasks.

Among the skills of a successful leader, the proper formation and management of work teams is also included, as well as work within the working environment. Even before the team is formed, the leader must answer some fundamental questions: do team members understand goals and agree on the way they work, or know what standards are expected, the rules and instructions are clear enough and how is it possible for consultation and reporting?

1. **Be grateful, clearly give thanks**

If you do not express your gratitude and respect to people, they will never know that you really feel this. Give thanks honestly and clearly. People will feel that you are genuine. Look people in the eyes. Adress them by their name. Between: "Thank you" and "Thank you, Jason" is a big difference.

1. **Authorize employees**

A company or organization can not be effective enough if people constantly turn to the leader and are not independent in their work. An employee who is at the center of the campaign and who knows the work well needs to feel free to decide for himself. He will probably also make mistakes, but this is the only way to improve and decide next time better. The most common reason for the leaders not to empower their colleagues is the lack of time to teach others, and at the same time it is unauthorizing others the reason for the lack of time. So, whoever does not authorize due to lack of time, is thinking in the short term. Please note that the time invested in that is quickly reimbursed. If people are constantly turning to the leader with questions, the organization can not be successful. Employees should be allowed to freedom in their work. They probably make some mistake, but only in this way they can improve themselves in their work.

1. **Promotion**

Usually, a well-proven employee is rewarded with a promotion to a managerial position. But this is not always the best. Leadership requires different abilities from technical ones, so even the best "technicians" can be very bad leaders. In addition to technical skills, management also requires other skills. Make sure that you are really achieving your goal with such promotions.

Sometimes it was considered that leader should set norms to others and monitor them. Nowadays, the leader is considered to have the power that is given to him by employees. This power should involve the collaborators in deciding and defining goals. It must be able to understand and coordinate the values ​​and principles of organization and employees.

1. **Communication skills**

Communication is part of all aspects of leadership. How else could the manager successfully transfer his ideas and thoughts to the employees, effectively give instructions, successfully negotiate with business partners, present ideas to the general public, etc. Communication skills can be learned and improved. This also applies to assertive communication, which in a respectful and clear way helps to realize wishes, instructions and ideas. The guidelines and ideas presented directly, clearly and simply and understandable are close to employees and therefore well accepted. Good leaders also have the ability to listen and provide feedback.

1. **Planning and organizing**

Planning is a bridge that connects the current state to the desired situation in the future. A good plan answers the question: "How to achieve the goal?" Cooperation with employees is also involved in the design of working methods. The organization, however, relies on managing time, priorities and deliberate job setup. The organization can also include the systematization of the working environment (sales, purchasing, financial system, etc.).

1. **Clear goals and tasks**

Clear goals and tasks are key to success. The clear task is concrete, time-bound, realistic, and pledged in a way that enables later evaluation. Through clearly defined goals and tasks, colleagues know exactly what is expected of them, how the work will be done and what the goals are for the work organization.

1. **Care for colleagues**

Good leaders know their colleagues and they also ensure that colleagues get to know them at the appropriate level. They are aware that employees know what is expected of them or what their contribution is in the work process. They also provide for an appropriate system in the field of staff training and education and recognition of performance and remuneration; the latter employees represent motivation and strengthen the sense of belonging to the working organization. An important part of caring for employees also covers social care and informal spending of time trough tem building activities.

1. **Self-confidence and control**

Self-esteem is closely linked to self-assessment and knowledge of individual's strong and weaker characteristics. Better self-esteem contribute clearly defined goals and standards that are close to the individual. It is characteristic of a good leader that in addition to good self-control, he has good control over the work process. It is characterized by a good knowledge of the structure of employees and their work tasks, and an appropriate assessment of how much control is needed to carry out a particular task and how this control should be carried out. For example, a creative working environment requires more working freedom than tasks that are more clearly defined and more structured.

1. **Motivation**

A good leader understands the importance of appropriate employee motivation for successful work and factors that can influence individual motivation. To a large extent, the motivation of employees is influenced by real tasks and work challenges and the evaluation of the work process, which contributes to focusing on progress. An important part of creating an incentive working atmosphere is reward and recognition for work.

*Leadership is nothing more than motivating people. The concept of leadership is actually the ability to influence, encourage and direct colleagues towards the goals. It is an art, because we are always guided by people defined by their personality. From leading, in fact, everything depends, success, as well as failure, if leading was not successful. If you can become a leader of yourself.*

***If an individual can become a leader of himself, as he should be, he will become the leader that people will want to follow.***

Today, the leaders of organizations are always asking how to increase the number of members in their organization. To be a good leader is also one of the most important characteristics which can help attract youth to join youth organizations. A good leader is also the one whom people follow and the more people follow you, the better leader in the quantitative sense you are. The number of members of the organization is the most important quantitative indicator of a good and successful organization, for which good and successful leaders stand.

In the previous chapter, we have identified what qualities must have a successful leader, we will now define ourselves on certain tools that managers of organizations must use to increase membership in their types.

Increasing the number of members in the organization is one of the most important aspects of management in the organization. Management with its characteristics affects all aspects of the organization, especially the membership. Management defines the planning, organization, management and control of work in the organization and the related tasks and activities. The main task of managing the organization is to achieve the set of goals, which means fulfilment of the mission of the organization and its further growth and development. We will be able to achieve this through successful planning, organization, management and control.

How to attract more young people to the youth organizations? Here’s the answer.

1. **Incentives and rewards**

Leaders of organizations, with their influence, direct and motivate their employees and other members to perform their tasks as successful as possible. For successful leadership involvement rewards is required. These can be:

- **Material**, such as payment, reward, official equipment, etc.

- **Indirect ones** oriented towards the benefit of the organization (recognition, certification, travel, etc.)

- **Intangible**, related to the status and position of the organization, personal satisfaction and action for values ​​and ideals.

Management should reward their members with different ways of rewarding, as mentioned above.

1. **Follow your members**

Social media is the most important communications channel with members and future members. Participate in LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter discussions focused on topics related to your association and use social media to tweet about your activities using #hashtags that will generate followers or endorsers. **Go where your members are** and you will be able to find new members. Create member-only groups on platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn for members to interact with you and each other. The most valuable engagement however is when you marry these virtual interactions with physical ones too – opportunities to meet each other in person.

Get feedback from current members. Ask your current member base for their opinions. Involve them in making the policy of the organisation. Create an annual member survey to collect feedback. They will not only be impressed that you’ve addressed their concerns, but they will likely spread the word to non-members.

Increasing your membership count also means retaining current members. The fewer you lose, the easier it will be to reach your annual growth goal. New members, those within their first year of membership, are at the greatest risk for drop-off. You need to keep existing members happy, maybe trough annual events, picnics, meetings, etc.

1. **Be Visible**

Engage members through your website. There are several things that are important when building your web page, since this is usually first contact that new members have with your organisation. Most important things you really need to consider are:

* Professional design
* Intuitive navigation
* Answers to common questions
* Strong SEO
* Sharable content

Ensure content is targeted to your audience. It is important that you understand your audience and you are offering the content they need and want. Also ensure that you update your content often and easily. Many small organizations rely on volunteers or staff with limited digital skills to update content on their website. You need to have user-friendly platform or content management tool to make their job easier. For example, you could have one volunteer responsible for managing the member’s forum, and another could be your blog writer, posting frequently on your blog. Make sure that members can easily find what they want. Be sure your navigation menu is simple and easy to use so visitors can easily search for topics.

Alert them to fresh or new content. You can keep your members informed of fresh content by including information in other channels, such as:

* regular updates in your newsletter: be sure to include a regular section and/or news article with updates on new content with live links to the new web material
* any publications you create and/or send to members: for example, you can include an update to the bottom of any “member updates” or any regular email to members or include the link to your blog, member’s forum or other news page at the bottom of all outgoing emails.
* in face-to-face meetings: e.g., have the Chair of the Board and any meeting Chairs alert assembled members of new blog posts, articles, etc. that might be pertinent to the meeting.
* via social media: Social networks, such as Twitter and Facebook are also great ways to keep members informed of new content. Find ways to leverage and promote new online content to get and keep members actively involved.

Enable two-way communication. Information shouldn't just flow out to members; you need to promote two-way communication opportunities as well. This means opening channels so members can also communicate with your administration and leadership too. This can be done through:

* online forums: here's a resource that outlines How to Start an Online Forum
* a blog: create a blog if you don’t have one and if you do, be sure you enable members to comment on your blog posts;
* online surveys: you can conduct regular surveys to elicit member input or you can simply pose mini surveys or questions on your website or Facebook page to get conversations started. And once you get some two-way conversations going, be sure to respond to and promote (and amortize) feedback and comments by noting these in blog posts, twitter and in your newsletter as well.
* via social media: e.g., encouraging communication via Twitter or Facebook - e.g., ask questions and listen to member's comments; post mini surveys on Facebook.
1. **Make attractive activities**

Organizations are known for their events. Make your events “Must attend”, by offering high quality and interesting events that will attract as much of people possible. If your events require fee make a bonus action: recruit new members by allowing attendees to bring one guest for free, gratis (an idea). Also you can reward those who generate the highest number of new members. Use your event registration forms as a way to capture lead information. Use this contact information to inform them about your activities.

1. **Build a Brand**

Provide new members with personalized membership card and reward them with free and attractive T-Shirts. Make the membership of your organisation as a “Status Symbol”. A membership card can provide access to events, information and other benefits (i.e. discounts) and keep your organization top of mind all year long.

*It takes hard work to achieve member growth for your association, but as long as you consistently remember the needs of members – through the collection of feedback, personalization, events, and more – you’ll be sure to keep current members happy, and create interest among potential new members.*

For the creation of this strategy we were consulting plenty of resources that helped put what we had in our mind into words and all of the sources used are written below.

Sources used and further reading:

1. Adair, J. (2010), **Develop your leadership skills,** Kogan Page, London.
2. Johansen, B. (2009), **Leaders make the future,** Berrett-Koehler Publishing, San Francisco, CA.
3. **Leadership Skills** (2009), Infobase Publishing, New York.
4. Stark, P. in Flaherty, J. (n.d.), **The manager's pocket guide to leaderskip skills,** HRD Press, Massachusetts
5. **5 ways to increase assoctiation membership recruitment and retention** (2017), Modern Marketing partners, <https://www.modernmarketingpartners.com/5-ways-increase-association-membership-recruitment-retention/?fbclid=IwAR0pcUapPJCYixo8MUqVpt_WkLtFA12aKNJ2aYCgBr7iAUjOxi_NNfg75Qs>
6. **6 tools, ideas & tactics to increase membership numbers** (2016), Eventbrite blog, <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/blog/increase-membership-numbers-ds00/?fbclid=IwAR3AI-Ty1EitFqU0p5E70UYEeNx_oj2PTI4fjvLafDdg6a5ACV3taQEb8mg>
7. **How Associations Can Achieve Membership Growth and Improve Member Engagement via Events** (2016), Eventbrite, MemberWise, <https://memberwise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/DS01-Strategies-for-Associations-to-Grow-Membership.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2oYpgUqTeFVKI0t_AkqAm5ygS5Nl7fmQqllua7UfSc3SmMsk0F34ndxr0>
8. **Strategies to Increase Membership in Your Club,** JotForm, <https://www.jotform.com/blog/increasing-club-membership/?fbclid=IwAR0zcCkCfUWB8CliRthogv_6K3p9RNbo3wop1TfvyrKoL_EOL_gfeYAIFsQ>