

Developing Leadership

IN YOUR GROUP

2 QUITE COMPELLING REASONS TO PRIORITIZE DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN YOUR GROUP

ONE

Although it may be impossible to imagine now, eventually *you will graduate from Whitman*. And when you do, you don't want your club legacy to be the leadership vacuum that you left behind. This sad state can be prevented by proactively growing the next generation of leaders in your group. The key word is *proactively*. Some of your members may have natural tendencies towards leadership or experience leading other groups. Assuming that members will naturally rise into the leadership roles and have all the skills to carry them out effectively isn't a viable succession plan. In order to carry on the unique legacy of your group, future leaders need to be identified early on in their involvement and set up to succeed.

TWO

Growing leaders through your membership base means *less work* for the elected leaders in the long run.

When members are empowered with leadership tools and the expectation that they will use them, they will take initiative for reaching group goals, instead of waiting for marching orders. Empowered members know their actions have an impact and their participation is valued. Use this enthusiasm. By investing in your members, you'll show that you expect that they engage fully and make significant contributions to the group through their active participation.

The single biggest way to impact an organization is to focus on leadership development. There is almost no limit to the potential of an organization that recruits good people, raises them up as leaders and continually develops them.

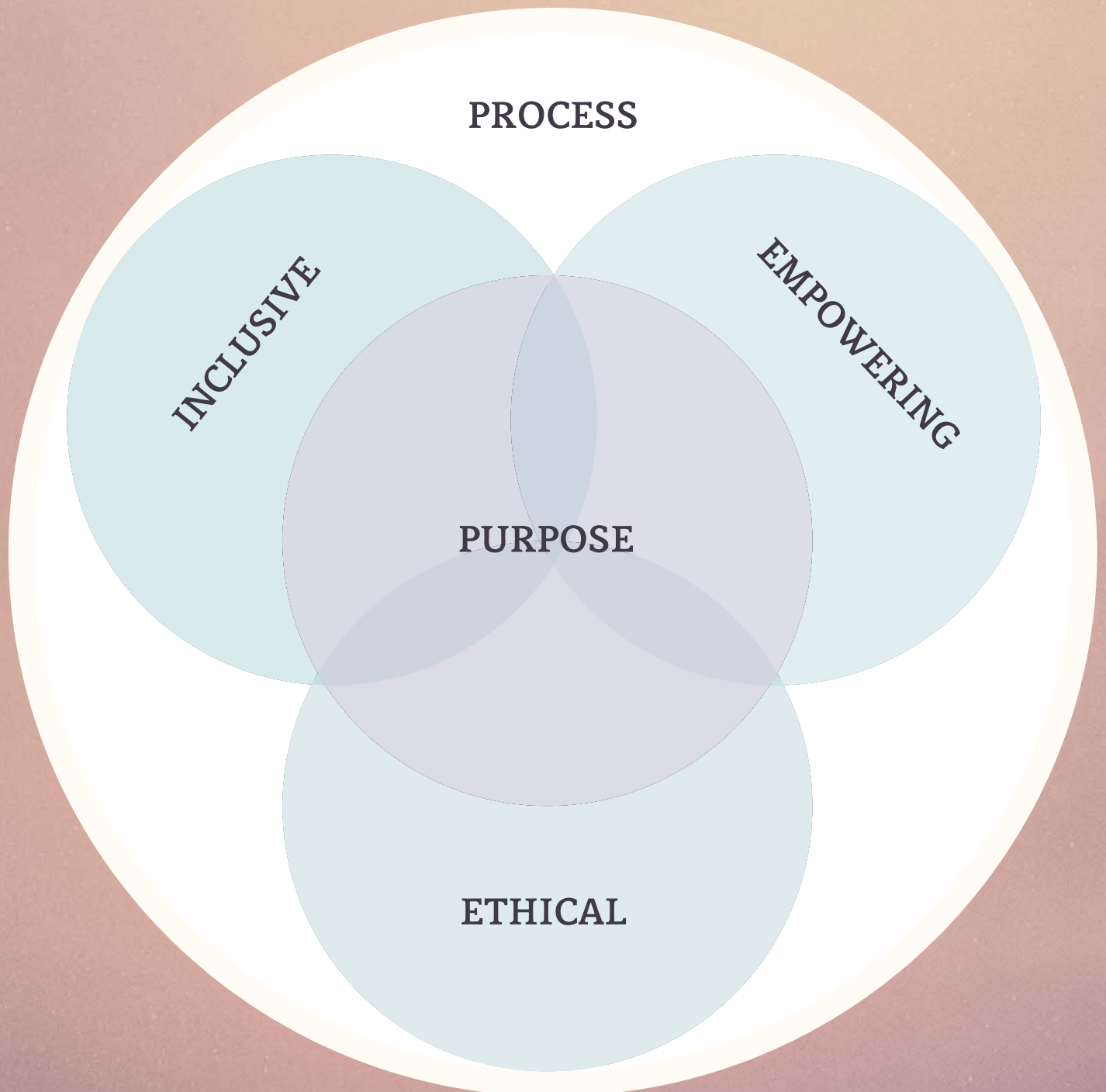
John C Maxwell

The Relational Leadership Model

ONE USEFUL TOOL FOR DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN GROUPS IS THE RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP MODEL (KOMIVES, LUCAS, & MCMAHON, 2007).

THIS MODEL ASSUMES THAT ALL MEMBERS OF AN ORGANIZATION CAN (AND SHOULD!) MAKE MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TO IT. IF YOU APPLY THIS MODEL TO DIRECT YOUR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, YOU'LL BE DISTRIBUTING POWER AND INFLUENCE THROUGHOUT YOUR MEMBERSHIP, HELPING EVERYONE IN THE GROUP TO DEVELOP THEIR LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL.

THIS MODEL FOCUSES ON FIVE QUALITIES OF SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP



Components of the **Relational Leadership Model**

PURPOSE

Purpose is the common ground, goal, or activity shared by group members. It's the driving force of a group and motivates individual members to do their part to achieve it. Each member should be able to articulate what this purpose is. The purpose of a group is the central element connecting the other four dimensions of the model.

PROCESS

Process describes the ways in which a group conducts its activities and achieves its purpose. Process is the container in which the shared experience of the group takes place. Group members should be able to describe this process so it isn't something that happens without intention or by default. The processes of most successful groups are built around collaboration, cooperation, and reflection.

EMPOWERING

Empowerment involves both creating the conditions that lead to and welcome individual involvement and supporting individuals' personal expectations to be involved and heard. Empowering members can include providing mentoring, offering them a leadership role, sharing information and knowledge, and ensuring they are set up for success.

INCLUSIVITY

Inclusivity describes valuing individuals and the unique points-of-view and talents they bring. On the ground, this looks like developing the unique strengths of group members and creating opportunities for members to participate in problem-solving and decision-making.

ETHICAL

Ethics are modeled by example, as leaders and members demonstrate their commitment to shared values and good conduct through words, deeds, and open conversation.

5 Practical *and* Impactful *ways to* Develop Leadership *in your group*

one BE PURPOSEFUL TRAIN MEMBERS IN THE MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES OF YOUR GROUP



SOME SIMPLE WAYS TO TRAIN YOUR MEMBERS ON THE GROUP FOUNDATION INCLUDE:

If you've ever visited Pike Place Fish Market in Seattle, then you've seen the power of a well-understood mission, vision, and values in action.

The fishmongers sell fish (that's their mission) while having ridiculous amount of fun (one of their values), by throwing fish across the shop, and encouraging tourists to participate in the action. This coordinated experience is made possible by their common understanding of what they're doing, and the spirit in which they're doing it.

Likewise, when all the members of your group are onboard with your mission, vision, and values, they can work creatively and independently within this structure. Instead of looking to the established "leaders" for each new direction, they'll look to the mission, vision, and values for guidance. When members know what to do and the spirit in which to do it, they're much more likely to step it up and take initiative on their own.

Don't assume your members already know the mission, vision, and values of your group just because they've attended a meeting, or that they'll absorb them as they go along. Making sure the members know this foundation, understand how it infuses the group's programming and process, and see themselves as integral contributors to achieving it, will result in increased commitment and purposeful participation.



Prioritize discussing the mission, vision, and values in meetings. When events are being considered, ask how they relate to and fulfill the foundations of the group.



Ask for input. The mission, vision, and values direct a group, not "dictate" to it. The more your members can contribute to the discussion of what activities, processes, and priorities best serve that foundation, the more committed they'll become.



Include the mission, vision, or values on your printed materials, such as event posters and meeting agendas.



Display a poster of the mission, vision, and values at each meeting. They don't necessarily need to be talked about; if members are already familiar with them, the visual reminder will have an impact.



Send new members an email about the mission, vision, and values, and then follow up. Show how seriously your group takes its foundation by asking new members to discuss this email with a leader or in an orientation meeting for new members.



As a group, periodically reflect on how well you're achieving the mission, vision, and values. If you're not doing so well, make a specific plan to get back on course. In this way, your members are thoughtfully considering the foundations of the group and how they are or are not being prioritized.



At the conclusion of your group meetings, facilitate a round-robin (see Reflection Notebook) to discuss how members are applying the mission, vision, or values to their work for the group. Any related question about these foundations will help to keep the group focused on them.

two

BE INCLUSIVE
CONNECT MEMBERS WITH
OPPORTUNITIES TO LEAD IN
THEIR AREAS OF STRENGTH
OR INTEREST



Here's a fast, convenient way to gather this information



Ask each member to fill out a note card at the beginning of the year. Design a card with check-boxes that are specific to the needs of your group to make categorizing the information convenient.

Asking each member to do this individually saves the time of a large brainstorming session. Collecting the cards from each member individually at a group meeting will ensure that every member is participating.

Once the cards have been collected, organize the information and channel it to the members who will benefit from having it. You may want to create a "members guide," listing the skills and talents that members are willing to be tapped for in various projects, alongside their email addresses.

Group leaders may want to comb through the list and match volunteers to upcoming projects so members can plan to participate ahead of time. Leaders can also use this information to assess which members are particularly eager to get involved and begin training them in specific club functions.

People are typically happiest when they're using their own strengths and interests. Assess the unique strengths of group members and connect them with opportunities to lead in these areas. The members will be excited to share their talents with the group, and the group will benefit from having each member contributing in their area of expertise.

At the start of the semester, assess what gifts, talents, and interests the members are bringing to the table.



Success is achieved by developing our strengths, not by eliminating our weaknesses.

**Marilyn
Vos
Savant**

Example

MEMBERSHIP INTEREST NOTECARDS

Pull out your baking spoons and get ready for another year of the baking club!

PLEASE CIRCLE THE JOBS YOU'RE INTERESTED IN HELPING OUT WITH THIS YEAR:

Fundraising

New Member Recruitment

Event Planning for the Bake-Off

Poster Design

Updating Our Recipe Database

Writing Job Descriptions for Head Baker & Sous Chef

Inventory Management

BASED ON YOUR SCHEDULE AND OTHER COMMITMENTS, IN WHAT CAPACITY WOULD YOU LIKE TO ASSIST THE CLUB IN THIS YEAR?

Leadership Team

Leading a Committee

Being on a Committee

Can't commit to anything right now... insane semester.

WHAT ARE YOUR UNIQUE SKILLS OR INTERESTS THAT YOU'D LIKE TO USE IN SERVICE TO THE BAKING CLUB THIS YEAR?

I make a killer piecrust! I love working with people, especially around teaching and building relationships. I'm up for anything to do with new members: recruiting, training, teaching the basics of baking class, etc.

WHEN WILL YOU BE ON CAMPUS?

Fall Semester

Spring Semester

Both

WHAT IS YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

hobsonc@whitman.edu

EMPOWER
CREATE A STRUCTURE FOR COLLECTING
AND PASSING ON GROUP KNOWLEDGE
AND TRAIN YOUR MEMBERS TO USE IT

three

New leaders and members shouldn't have to start from scratch. Help them build on the foundation that was left behind by making sure that group knowledge, such as a great list of community contacts or particularly effective promotion strategies, is organized and easy to retrieve.

Create a structure for organizing group knowledge that's simple to use. This could include:

- ❁ A database of organized folders for the main functions, routines, and positions within your group. This could include a collection of event posters for inspiration, detailed checklists for events that are hosted every year, recruitment ideas, job descriptions for key positions, things to delegate over the summer so the group begins the academic year on the right foot, etc. Regularly schedule maintenance of these folders to weed out content that's outdated.
- ❁ Training manuals for key positions within the club, including members. What are the responsibilities and expectations of the individuals in these roles? What resources will help them be successful? What common mistakes can be avoided by anticipating the learning curve and educating about these areas preventatively? Update these manuals annually to reflect on how the positions have developed over the year and the new tools that leaders are using to successfully complete their work.
- ❁ Organize a short-term mentoring program within your group. One way to pass on the knowledge of your group is to have up-and-coming leaders train with the people who are currently in those positions. Request that the mentees observe a leadership meeting and assist with the main functions of a leadership position, so the training will occur through real-life experience. If the job descriptions are kept in a manual, make sure the mentee has received training in all the key functions before the leaders steps down.
- ❁ Maintain a "backburner" list to capture great ideas and opportunities that can't be taken advantage of in the moment. Include things to follow up on and ideas to explore, and review this list at regular intervals.

four

EMPOWER

DELEGATE WITH A PURPOSE

Sometimes it can be frustrating to train new members in the tasks that experienced members can do in half the time. Passing on this knowledge though, will help to sustain your group over time.

Encouraging members to take on increasingly difficult tasks will help them develop their skills, build their commitment to the group, and most importantly, learn the insider knowledge unique to your group.

Be proactive in using delegated tasks as a leadership development tool; instead of asking for willing members to volunteer, consider matching them with the tasks that will challenge them to grow. This shows that you're serious in developing them as leaders and that you prioritize using their strengths to benefit the group. You may also consider developing structured leadership roles within the group, each with their own responsibilities and written job description, to encourage members to participate in leadership.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL DELEGATION:

✿ Delegate the objective, not the procedure for achieving it. Be very specific about the end product you expect, what small details need to be considered in order to be successful, and when the project should be completed.

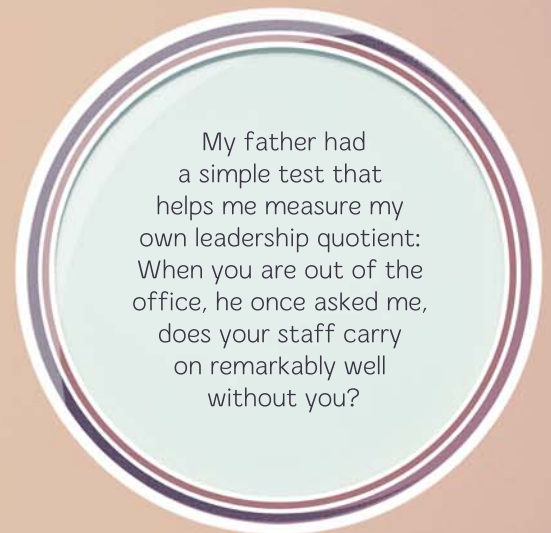
✿ Ideally, delegate tasks which are slightly above the current skill level of the volunteer, to keep your members challenged and growing. Connect the volunteer with the collected group knowledge (remember idea #3?). If you've gathered information on your member's skills and interests, this would be a great time to use it.



Paint the big picture. Not all tasks are glamorous, so help the member to see the larger purpose of the delegated work by carefully explaining how it fits within the larger goals of the specific event or group mission.



Offer generous support. When members are taking on a new task for the first time, be sure they're connected with someone to contact with questions. Taking the time to check in on a new member who has taken on a task shows that you value both the task and the person completing it. Ideally, the person who delegated the task should be the person to support its completion. If this isn't possible, ensure that someone else is filling this role.



My father had a simple test that helps me measure my own leadership quotient: When you are out of the office, he once asked me, does your staff carry on remarkably well without you?

Martha Peak



Follow up on the results. When a delegated task is complete, take time to reflect on how the process went and offer feedback. Was the task completed on time? What did the volunteer learn about working in that capacity for the group? What could have been done differently, and how will they apply that learning in the next task?



Show appreciation. Everyone likes to know that their work is valued, especially when it seems insignificant. Kind notes or a shout-out at a meeting go a loooooong way towards making people excited about continuing their work with the group.

five

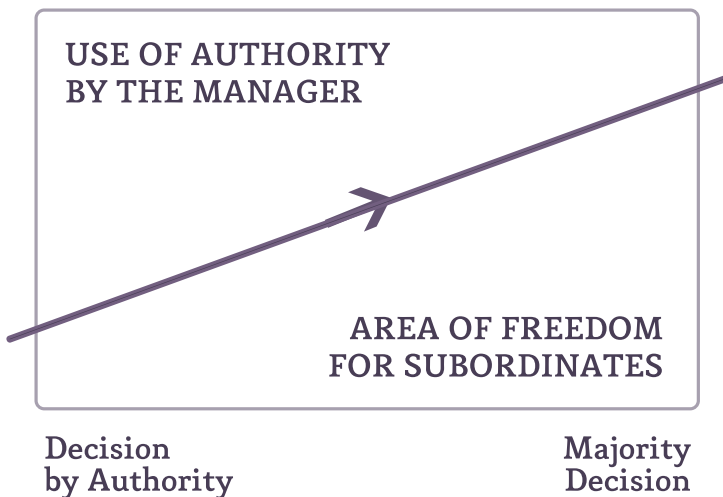
BE INCLUSIVE
INVITE MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
DECISION-MAKING
PROCESS

Decisions come up all the time in groups. Everything impacts how the energy of the group will be spent, from choosing which events to host, to which items get air time on a tight agenda.

When set-up with intention, making these decisions is a low-risk opportunity for members to practice leading the group. Through decision-making, members learn to think critically about the future of the group, align the possible choices with the mission, vision, and core values of the group, and advocate for a selected path.

A quick intro to a decision-making model:

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) proposed a simple model of decision making, where decision-making power is plotted along an axis of more to less input by the authority” figure. It looks like this:



On the left, the “Authority Figure” fully utilizes that authority, making decisions independently and conveying them to the group members. As the line moves up towards the right side of the chart, this individual authority decreases, as group input about the decision increases.

Decision-making methods follow along this axis. Sometimes, decision by authority is the most effective one to choose. Frequently, it’s not. When a decision needs to be made, you can decide if it lends itself to group involvement, and if so, at what level.

How to use this model with your group:

To create an opportunity for member leadership, select or recruit participants for the decision-making process. Be sure to set the group and participating members up for success by clarifying two key points:



How the decision is being made? (i.e. Which model of decision-making group will be using?)



Who has decision making power? (i.e. Which people will be making the decision and how/can others add input?)

When you’re clear about these factors up front, then the members know how they are expected to contribute, and what the impact of their decision will be.

In this model, the decision-making methods include:

- ❁ Decision by Authority: One person makes the decision. There is no room for negotiation; what this person decides is the final call.
- ❁ Decision by Expert: The individual with the most relevant knowledge makes the decision. Again, their decision is final.
- ❁ Minority Decision: A small group of leaders make a final decision for the group.
- ❁ Consultative Decision: A leader makes a preliminary decision, then requests feedback before finalizing plans.
- ❁ Consensus Decision: No final decision is made until every single person in a group agrees on it.
- ❁ Delegative Decision: Individuals representing different interests of a group form a team and make a decision together.
- ❁ Majority Decision: Each person has one vote. The decision is made by selecting whichever option receives the most votes.

There are a few things to keep in mind when involving group members in decision-making. Make sure that the decision-making team has the relevant experience in the group to make a smart decision and that they understand the mission, vision, and values of the group as a whole. You may want to include both new and experienced members, so the decision reflects the history of the group, as well as its future.

Give the decision-makers an appropriate amount of time to complete their work, but be sure there's an agreed-upon deadline.

A Concise List of Resources

TO HELP YOU IN YOUR

Passionate Pursuit of High Quality

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

for your group

RESIDENT EXPERTS

Barbara Maxwell, Associate Dean of Students
maxwelba@whitman.edu

Barbara would be happy to consult with student leaders who are interested in designing a leadership development workshop for their groups. She has an extensive library of workshop ideas, and can advise on design and implementation.

Nancy Tavelli, Associate Dean of Students
tavelln@whitman.edu

Nancy offers several trainings for developing leadership in groups. These include the Myers Briggs assessment, which can assist group members in identifying the unique strengths they can contribute to the group, and a Situational Leadership workshop, which will prepare members to match their leadership style to the skill of the group and demands of the situation.

Leann Adams & Katharine Curles, Student Activities Office
adamsle@whitman.edu, curleske@whitman.edu

The Student Activities Office offers the StrengthsQuest leadership assessment to help give you insight into personal talents and skills that can be leveraged in all areas of life. StrengthQuest can also help teams examine their breadth of strengths, as well as areas of potential, in order to optimize performance. Contact Leann and Katharine to arrange to take the StrengthsQuest assessment and to set up a workshop for your club or club leadership team.

Suggested Extra Reading

Zappos Blog Post

This post describes the training process that teaches Zappos employees about the vision and values of the company.
<http://blogs.zappos.com/blogs/ceo-and-coo-blog/2009/01/03/your-culture-is-your-brand>

Exploring Leadership (2nd ed.)
Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007

How to Choose a Leadership Pattern
Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1958