

WHAT MAKES A LEADER?

“Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them.”

All of us can become good leaders by working on those qualities that comprise strong leadership. Knowing what makes a good leader is half the battle.

THE PURPOSE OF LEADERSHIP

- ✓ Groups without leaders either fall apart or go nowhere. Leaders bring groups together to work towards a common purpose, keeping the group on track and fostering participation by all its members.
- ✓ Leaders help group members get to know one another, communicate openly and effectively, and expand their skills.
- ✓ Leaders help members understand the phases of group development (see attached) and assist in working through the phases successfully. Leaders help the group evaluate itself, its members and its program.
- ✓ The group benefits when its leaders grow as individuals, too. Group leaders need continually to learn, take risks, share their skills, and evaluate themselves.

KEY LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

- ✓ **Character:** Trustworthy, reliable, honest
- ✓ **Conceptual skills:** A clear vision of the big picture, the goal everyone is working towards
- ✓ **Good judgement**—a willingness to make hard decisions after listening to everyone’s input
- ✓ **Track record:** a history of achieving results
- ✓ **Maturity:** Level-headed, not emotional, works well with all individuals
- ✓ **People Skills:** an ability to communicate, motivate, and delegate

LEADERSHIP ROLES

The most important role played by the leader of a community group is that of **convener**. While leaders of companies, or organizations with paid staff, are often charged with taking their group in new directions, or achieving certain results, the leader of a community group is often most valuable for her ability to bring different partners together while keeping an eye on the big picture.

In addition to this position, leaders may play a variety of other roles within a group, depending on their personality and the group’s needs. Generally leadership roles fall into two categories: **Task Roles** and **Maintenance Roles**.

Task Roles: Interested in Achievement

- **Facilitator:** helps the group make decisions and take action.
- **Entrepreneur:** enthusiastic, creative and engaging. All things are possible to this member.
- **Quality Control:** questions, inspects and challenges ideas and decisions to keep the group focused.
- **Doer:** task oriented and gets things done. This person may be impatient with slow progress.

Maintenance Roles: Interested In Relationships

- **Team Builder:** brings the group together and focuses on consensus.
- **Synthesizer:** blends the individual ideas to provide an overall group plan.