



Leadership Development

Developing a leadership rich organization not only requires learning to delegate. It requires a conscious strategy for identifying leaders (opportunities for leaders to emerge), recruiting leaders (opportunities for leadership to be earned), and developing leaders (opportunities for leaders to grow).

Identifying leaders requires looking for them. Who are people with followers? Who brings others to the meetings? Who encourages others to participate? Who attracts others to working with them? Who do other people tell you to "look for?"

Although leading is a matter of "doing" and not "being," there are some ways of being that can help you lead:

- It is hard for a person who has not learned to be a **good listener** to become an effective leader - you have to understand the interests of your constituency if you are to help them act on those interests.
- Listening means learning to attend to feelings - **empathy** - as well as to ideas because the way we feel about things affects our actions more than what we think about them.
- **Curiosity** helps us see the novel as interesting rather than threatening, enabling us to learn how to face new challenges that are always a part of organizational life.
- A good **imagination** helps because strategizing is a matter of imagining different futures and possible ways to get to them.
- A sense of **humor** helps you from taking yourself and your troubles too seriously and helps keep things in perspective.
- A **healthy ego** is very important - arrogance and a wish to dominate others are usually the sign of a weak ego constantly in need of reassurance.
- Leadership also requires **courage** - the willingness to take risks, make choices, and accept the consequences.

Recruiting leaders requires giving people an opportunity to earn leadership. Since followers create leaders, they can't appoint themselves and you can't appoint them. What can you do to create opportunities for people to accept the responsibilities of leadership? How can you support them in learning how to fulfill these responsibilities?

If you have to get the word out for a meeting, you can get three of your friends to help you pass

out leaflets or you can find one or two people who will take responsibility for recruiting five people to attend. They earn their leadership by bringing the people to the meeting. What other ways can you think of that you can give people the opportunity to earn leadership?

Developing leaders requires structuring the work of the organization so it affords as many people as possible the opportunity to learn to lead - delegation. It is true organizing the work in this way can be risky. You may delegate to the wrong people; they may let you down, etc. But if you fear delegating, the strength of the community is stifled and can never grow.

There are things you can do to increase the chances of success. Leadership training sessions help clarify what is expected of leaders in your organization, give people the confidence to accept leadership responsibilities, and express the value your organization places on leadership development.

Leadership Team or "Lone Ranger"

The most successful organizers are those who form a leadership team with whom to work early on in their campaign. Although it can be a mistake to recruit people to act as an "organizing committee" too early - especially if you are not careful to recruit people drawn from the constituency whom that community views as leaders or, at least, potential leaders - organizers more often err in delaying too long.

The sooner you have a team of people with whom to work, the sooner the "I" of the organizer becomes the "we" of the new organization. Once you have formed a leadership team you can more easily establish a rhythm of regular meetings, clear decisions, and visible accountability that will help make things actually happen.

You don't build an organization of 500 people by recruiting them all yourself. You build it by finding people willing and able to commit to help building it with you. If you don't have a leadership team working with you by midterm, it's time to look very closely at why.

Qualities of Empowering Leaders

Values:

- Respect for others
- Integrity and authenticity
- Honesty
- Compassion

Behaviors:

- Shared leadership
- Mentoring
- Collaboration
- Open communication
- Accessible

All of us have skills to contribute to collective efforts of our given cause. Few of us have *all* the skills necessary to build strong organizations. Effective leaders are aware of the skills they possess, recognize those they need to develop, and build strong teams of people with diverse skills working towards shared goals.

The following chart illustrates four different types of leaders - all necessary to build strong organizations:

<p style="text-align: center;">Process Leader: Leader as Community Builder</p> <p>Mission: Create strong democratic organizations in which members develop their ability to participate in decision-making, resolve conflict when it occurs, and feel a strong sense of belonging.</p> <p>Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication ▪ Community-building ▪ Conflict resolution ▪ Group facilitation and decision making <p><i>Understand how individuals and groups develop. Begin where members "are at" and work to effectively increase participation and involvement.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Task Leader: Leader as Manager</p> <p>Mission: Create effective organizations that act to meet members' shared goals. Focused on goals, objectives and outcomes.</p> <p>Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efficiency ▪ Accountability ▪ Organization ▪ Task Orientation ▪ Follow-through/persistence <p><i>Results-oriented. Know how to create structures and motivate people to accomplish the work of the organization.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Strategic Leader: Leader as Change Agent</p> <p>Mission: Develop effective strategies for both short-term and long-term change and work with others to put those strategies into action.</p> <p>Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vision ▪ Analytic Skills ▪ Ability to plan ▪ Future-directed ▪ Sense of history <p><i>Believe in the possibility of change. Analyze forces for and against change. Develop effective approaches to change.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ethical Leader: Leader as Moral Compass</p> <p>Mission: Challenge groups to pursue goals that are just. Insist that the group acts with honesty and integrity.</p> <p>Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Long term vision ▪ Ethical sensibility ▪ Moral courage <p><i>Believe that ethical values are important and that social justice should be a measure of success. Able to raise ethical issues in a group.</i></p>

Sources: WellstoneAction.org; Marshall Ganz