
LESSON C

SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP THROUGH POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

FOCUS: Working together as a group effectively is a critical part of any organization. Communicating, giving negative feedback, and working with the public as well as significant others outside of the group are critical in achieving success and developing positive relationships in and outside of the organization.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Working together as a group is perhaps the most important component of success for an organization. Listed in the teachers information "Working Together" are some activities that may be helpful in bonding as officers and members.
2. To help students develop communication skills review several techniques with them, read them the communication story and have them participate in one or more of the following activities:

Seat students back to back. Give one student a dot to dot and the other student a blank piece of paper. Have the student with the dot to dot give the other student instructions to draw the same picture on the blank sheet. No eye to eye contact or hand gestures are allowed. Look at the end results. Discuss what happened and how it applies to leadership.

Seat students in a circle. Give the first one a short message and have each one repeat the message to the one next to them in the circle. Have the last person in the circle repeat the message out loud. Is it the same message you gave the first person? Discuss and apply to leadership.
3. Develop a calling tree to inform members of up coming events and information.
4. One of the most difficult parts of leadership is giving negative feedback. A few simple guidelines can help when it is necessary to tell someone there's something wrong. Equally as difficult and perhaps more frequent is getting complaints when you are the leader. Discuss the material in teacher information "Solving Conflict," then practice the techniques.
5. Review the information in teacher information "Publicity." Have students practice writing news releases.
6. Using the "Leadership Project Thank You Letter," write to someone who has helped in some way with the chapter. (From the files of Jan Bowers, Idaho State Specialist, FHA-HERO Advisor.

Working Together

Leadership Volleyball

Divide the class into two teams. Provide one volleyball (a net is not necessary).

Rules:

1. Each member of a group must hit the ball the same number of times to the other side. For example, if one person on the team hits the ball twice everyone in the group must have the opportunity to hit the ball two times before they can be declared the winners.
2. Members of the team may talk.
3. If the ball is dropped it must be thrown back into the air by the leader (not a member of either team.)
4. When everyone has had the opportunity to hit the ball to the other team that team wins.

After completing the activity discuss what took place— keeping track of who had hit the ball, how many times, and how the group organized to allow everyone their turn.

Blind Maze

Create a maze of using ropes, tables, chairs, etc (trees if outside). Blindfold all members of the group except the appointed leader. (This will generally be the teacher initially and then an assigned member of the group.)

Members hold hands. The leader begins through the maze. Each blindfolded member follows, helping in turn the one behind them. A person may take the blindfold off to lead. This may be alternated among members by blindfolding them again and placing them back in the members. There should not be any talking.

After everyone has completed the maze. Remove the blindfolds and discuss.

The Line-Up

Blindfold all students. Instruct them to line-up from shortest to tallest without talking. After completing the activity discuss how the task was accomplished. What do they know now about one another they didn't know before?

Communication

DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION STYLES:

NEGATIVE: Talking for someone, disqualifying, distracting, blaming, interrupting pacifying.

POSITIVE: Avoid intense anger, reframing, ask questions, clarify, reflective listening.

ONE ON ONE COMMUNICATION: Sharing, keeping a proper perspective, touching, eye to eye contact, "I statements" spending time together.

Communication

A blacksmith was helping to teach the trade to a young apprentice, and he was working with him on the various niceties of being a blacksmith. They finally came to the day when they were going to shoe a horse. He says, "today we are going to shoe a horse, young fellow", he says "good." So, they get the horse shoe out, get the tongs, they put it in the fire, got it white hot, got it white hot, and while he was holding it there, he handed the kid the sledge hammer...and then he put the white hot horse shoe on the anvil and says, "now look young fellow, when I nod my head twice, hit it as hard as you can with the hammer."

So, maybe we better think a little bit about our communications with people.

Solving Conflict

Some conflict can be prevented before it occurs if you remember to:

- Stay within the limits
- Check city laws
- Obey school policy
- Research the facts, know the consequences of your actions.
- Cope with disappointments

If conflict does occur, below are some helpful guidelines to follow:

1. TALK. Don't simply suppress your feelings.
2. Avoid sending incongruent messages.
Be aware of what kind of nonverbal messages you send.
3. Use "I" messages to say what YOU feel. Avoid placing blame, causing guilt or speaking for other individuals.
4. Level
Know how you feel inside
Decide why you feel that way
Talk about it with those whom it concerns

If you must give negative feedback

- Get their attention - call them by name
- Say something positive
- Give negative feedback
- Be sure they understood
- Ask how they feel
- Offer suggestions
- Thank them for listening

If you are receiving negative feedback

- Stay in control.
- Don't move away.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Don't interrupt.
- Apologize or explain if you were wrong.
- Ask to discuss it another time if you are not able to control your emotions.

Public Relations

Future Homemakers of America needs to project a contemporary—even futuristic—image as an organization of substance

STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD Involvement in chapter activities is preparing members to take their places in the community as wage earners, civic leaders and family members.

- Chapter members need to agree on what their image will be.
- Consciously uphold this image when choosing chapter projects.
- Develop a public relations plan

BE AWARE OF YOUR IMAGE Images don't just happen. They are earned by what we do—by what people see, hear and read. A negative or mediocre image is very hard to change. It cuts away at a chapter's ability to attract new members and win public support. It can even contribute to cutbacks in a school's vocational home economics program. And yet, a conscious effort, over time, to build and project a strong chapter image can yield numerous positive results.

The Whats and Whys of Chapter PUBLIC RELATIONS The aim of chapter public relations is to gain the respect and support of the public. The public relations committee, usually chaired by the chapter reporter, is made up of several members who share an interest in promoting the image of the chapter and are enthusiastic about FHA. Committee members should be: *knowledgeable, *good communicators, *interested in people, *committed to the process, *promote the true image of the chapter, *establish the chapter as a valuable part of the school and community, *serve as a news source for local media.

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN Timing is very important. Last-minute efforts to pull something together rarely pays off. Start early in the year by listing the activities planned for each month.

Elements of the PUBLIC RELATIONS MINI-PLAN

1. **The Message** - Every activity or project planned and carried out by chapter members, every display, every photograph transmits a message.

What to say...

- Helps members develop leadership "skills for life."
- Members are using positive peer pressure to tackle teen concerns.
- A goal of FHA is to increase family communication and cooperation.
- Activities demonstrate commitment to community service.

The Facts...

- Know the basic information about the organization. See FACT SHEET
- Look through the chapter scrapbook and see what's been happening since its founding.

Send the Right Message... Let the public know "everyone's a homemaker." Show how members are developing now the skills they will need in the future to be successful adults. Remember to stress that FHA is an extension of the vocational home economics curriculum. Show how FHA and HERO chapters interface.

Be able to explain where the chapter's programs come from: Financial Fitness, Japanese Exchange, Leaders at Work in Food Service, Nutra-Sweet Giving It 100% Award for Community Service, Power of One, STAR events, Student Body.

Benefits of Belonging Members develop leadership skills and skills for life which ultimately benefit the community.

2. **The Audience** Start with family, neighbors, employer, friends. Widen the circle to include teachers, principal, superintendent, school board, advisor committee, all other school personnel, students. Third circle encompasses your community, the mayor, local civic, church, youth and professional groups; business and industry. The last circle includes the public at large. Target your message to the group.
3. **The Purpose** Show the impact chapter projects have on members, their families, schools and communities. A positive profile reaps benefits for members and the chapter. *Recognition of good deeds, *Good feelings about self, *Increased participation, *Helps get outside support, *Strengthens home economics programs.
4. **News Outlets** Daily/weekly newspapers, radio/television stations (don't forget cable), school, employee and neighborhood newsletters, weekly shoppers, free publications.
5. **The Method** Keep in mind you are competing for print space or air time. It's news if it includes one or more of the following "news elements": Information, Timelines, Significance, Scope, Interest, Uniqueness, Human interest, and Relevance.

OTHER WAYS TO STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD

- Make a Video
- Present a Slide Show
- Set up a speakers Bureau
- Displays
- Chapter Brochure
- Stage a Proclamation signing ceremony
- Use the telephone to inform, thank, order, clarify, ask, learn etc.
- Write letters
- Have a chapter newsletter - tape to members lockers once a month

6. **The Timing** Public relations is a process that goes on constantly. Every time chapter members go before the public, they are judged as representatives of FHA. Every phone call, letter, project, photograph and news story promotes your chapter and leaves an impression in the minds of the public. The goal of a chapter public relations campaign is to establish your chapter as a valuable part of the school and community. Good rapport is necessary. Treat everyone with courtesy and honesty. Send thank-you notes for good coverage. Invite them to special events. Send certificates of appreciation or recognition. Ask them to speak to your chapter or class. Always be up-front, never fudge facts, never waste time.

7. Follow Up/Evaluation Remember to send thank you notes. Keep a scrapbook. Leave an information notebook for the next reporter.

Let the national organization know what gets into print! Claim your chapter's page in the National Publicity Book by sending in your published newspaper articles (actually, just sent in the whole page). Be part of the Future Homemakers of America archives while putting your chapter in the community spot light.

Send to—
Public Relations Director
Future Homemakers of America, Inc
1910 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

***The above information was taken from The Public Relations Manual for Future Homemakers of America, INC. FHA/HERO Chapters. It can be purchased from National FHA/HERO for \$6.95.

**LEADERSHIP PROJECT
THANK YOU LETTER**

Date _____

Their Address: _____

Dear _____,

Thank you for helping my Vocational Home Economics _____
(name of class)

We appreciated having you _____
(summary of what they did for you)

Your support of an participation in our class helped us work towards our goal to

_____ (identify one of eight vocational purposes)

Sincerely,

(your signature)

Thank you for supporting our Vocational Home Economics Program and for working with my student.

Sincerely,

(Teacher's Signature)