

Effective Leadership: Coalition Building

As I further my Rotary journey, I will continue to examine my own leadership style, engage in more complex and skillful use of my leadership skills, and seize opportunities to lead.



Session Goals

- Build insights into leadership, team building & club communication
- Improve our ability to lead & communicate in group settings
- Identify ways we can win support for our goals and purposes

Resources

- Building a coalition Excerpted from Leadership Development: Your guide to starting a program 250EN Rotary.org
- Leadership Strategies for Rotarians. Kathleen O'Connor. *7 Leadership Strategies to Help You Handle Change* * (Originally published at the Super Performance website, now offline) PDF

All PDF materials are available at www.rlifiles.com

Session Topics

- 1) What is coalition?

- 2) If you wanted to build a coalition for your plan, what sort of things might you do?

- 3) Which of these approaches would be best? Why?.

- 4) What sorts of things would you want to avoid?

- 5) What are some examples you have seen of good coalition building in your club or at your job?

- 6) Why do some people seem to have influence and others do not?

Summary:

- We are more successful when we work together
- Building a coalition is critical for success

Effective Leadership Strategies Scenarios

Scenario 1:

Rotary Club Vice-President Marvin Montrose is proposing holding an arts and crafts show for his club of 25 members. There has not been such a show in that town in recent memory. He wants to invite crafts persons from the region to come to exhibit and sell their wares. He also wants to invite painters to do the same. He would charge the exhibitors for display tables. Maybe the club members could sell food and drinks to make more money. The site of the show would be the local park in the center of town. It is basically an empty lot with grass. ALL the members would be necessary to help out at the event. The club has never held such a large event in the town of 1500 people. Marvin says that a club committee could work out "details".

What are the issues? Develop a plan and discuss how the group came to its conclusions. Discuss how they can gain acceptance for their plan and have it implemented by the club.

Scenario 2:

The Rotary Club of Milton Crossing has a few active, involved members, but most of the members are apathetic. They come to lunch, often they leave before the program starts, and do nothing else. The membership is 33, down from 62 three years ago. The few active, involved members keep the club going, but they are getting tired of doing all the work. President Maria met with her board and the board listed several problems:

- (1) There are cliques who always sit together at meetings and ignore everybody else. People who wish to sit with them are discouraged.
- (2) Some of the inactive members are big talkers, but when asked to do something, they fade away.
- (3) Some members have not been at a meeting for many months, but the club is afraid of losing them if they push attendance.
- (4) Some members announce loudly that "We don't need more members. We have a happy, friendly group now and more people will disturb that".
- (5) When two members were asked to sponsor new members, they fired back that "we only want quality members, and we have to be very careful..."
- (6) The President announced that she is having trouble filling the committees, because most people said they were too busy to participate.

Can this club be saved? Develop a plan and discuss how the group came to its conclusions. Discuss how they can gain acceptance for their plan and have it implemented by the club.

Insert ELS-2: Building A Coalition

BUILDING A COALITION



Building a coalition is the act of finding a solution that satisfies everyone's needs, especially among those who have different viewpoints; it doesn't mean compromise or surrender. Leading others to a coalition results in a decision that is viable and sustainable.

Speaking points

- Define coalition, or share a story of a time you had to bring others together.
- Explain the benefits of open disagreement, which can lead to a better analysis of an issue and allow all parties to express their opinions.
- Discuss the benefits of coalition building, such as helping everyone feel a sense of ownership in the project and discovering new solutions.
- Outline the coalition-building process:
 1. List what each party wants out of the situation.
 2. Review what is critical for each person and what isn't as critical.
 3. Brainstorm new solutions.
 4. Discuss the outcomes of those solutions.
 5. Rework the solutions and other decisions to meet the critical needs.

Discussion questions

Why is coalition building important in your profession? Your Rotary club?

How do you ensure that a coalition doesn't result in compromise? How do you satisfy everyone involved?

Suggested activities

Group work: Have participants work in small groups on a case study. Assign group members different viewpoints, with one participant acting as a moderator who must build a coalition.

Individual work: Ask participants to reflect on a time when they had to participate in building a coalition. How do they think the process worked and were they satisfied with the result.

Leadership Strategies for Rotarians:1*

- A team is more than the sum of the parts. Picking the right mix of people is key (experienced vs. newbies; identifying professional related to the project moves things along, etc.)
- Be effective with your own time and take matters to closure. Clarity and delegation are important. Time is valuable. Keep the process moving.
- Know the problem and empower others to break through barriers with their own solutions. Preparation is obvious but empower committee to find solutions.
- We are Rotarians. Recognize the work/life balance. Each goal must be made worth the effort by stressing the meaningfulness of the goal, recognition, and the expectations of the leader.
- Solve problems with the right questions. Start with consensus building. Follow-up with questions to get to the real issues involved with the project as preparation so everyone is aware of the challenges and can contribute to the solutions.
- Listen! Leaders are tempted to add input into new ideas from the team, which is often counterproductive. Be enthusiastic and supportive. The team needs to feel ownership in the endeavor. Part of the Rotary leader's job is to make winners of the volunteers.
- Build your Rotarian leadership pool. The more experienced, knowledgeable and motivated Rotarians you have in your pool, the more you will be able to accomplish. Partnering, mentoring, and succession planning, are effective techniques to make this happen. Every key person in your organization should have a replacement trained and ready to do the job if called upon. Recognizing your mentors but placing the responsibility on them to have a replacement, is key.

Kathleen O'Connor. *7 Leadership Strategies to Help You Handle Change* *"volunteer" changed to "Rotarian" for emphasis.
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