

18 HOT TIPS FOR ASSOCIATION LEADERS

Emerging Leaders Conference

- 1) **Ask for help** from your members and co-workers. Ask what you need and what you want. Leaders are often left out on their own, which encourages the mentality that “it is just easier if I do it all.”
- 2) **Delegation is key for survival.** Find ways to break down tasks and jobs and involve more people. It may take more energy to break up tasks, but it is key for engaging your members and cultivating new leaders.
- 3) **Why have a meeting when you can have a party?** Think of how you can make your meetings effective, useful, attractive and fun. Also, think about the title of your events and/or meetings. How does this title attract or repel members?
- 4) **Stay energized.** What energizes you? How can you make this an element of your life and your leadership? How can you build upon this? You need to feel energized about what you do to bring your best “self” to the table. Moreover, what energizes you about union work? Re-write your Association job descriptions and goals to match this.
- 5) **Expand your islands of success rather than try to shrink your oceans of failure.** Build on what you do well, rather than tackling your large problems first. It is always easier to build upon what you have accomplished, rather than tackle large problems at once. Ex: Start a membership campaign in a building with 60% membership, rather than a building with 20% membership. You will have more immediate success and as a result, keep more members motivated and engaged.
- 6) **Dysfunction stops with me as a leader.** Don’t pass on dysfunction in your Local Association. As a leader you should take responsibility for strengthening your Association and dealing with aspects of the Association that just don’t work well.
- 7) **Attitude is everything!** Focus your members’ energy on your collective ability to change things. If you feel defeated about a project before you begin, you will not succeed.

- 8) **C.A.V.E. - "citizens" (or members) against virtually everything.** There will always be people who are against virtually everything. Your job as a leader is to figure out ways to include these people in your Association and engage them in some way. Keeping these members close helps them to not become nay sayers who suddenly start to have a following among other members.
- 9) **Lead from your strength.** We use more energy leading from our limitations than from our strengths.
- 10) **It is important to make new mistakes, but don't repeat old mistakes.**
- 11) **Don't confuse means with ends.**
- 12) **Look for opportunity to build relationships vs. solving problems all the time.**
- 13) **Look for ways to appreciate people. We don't thank enough.**
- 14) **Find ways to bring an element of play into your Association work.**
- 15) **People (members) are assets.** We need to understand what skills and strengths exist in our membership and use them to help the Association. Everyone has some sort of asset to offer.
- 16) **We are not resourceful enough.** We don't see the abundant resources all around us. Instead we often see challenges, barriers, or reasons why things can't be done. Be creative and look around for your resources.
- 17) **Think big, start small.** Some projects take lots of planning, while others are more short-term. It is important to have a vision and set high goals, but make sure you start with small steps.
- 18) **Avoid burn-out by reminding yourself why you do what you do and what is truly important.**