



An Apple from a Teacher



ELECTIONS: BECOMING A LEADER

One of the frustrations of elections is the apparent lack of connection between students wanting to be school leaders and those same students acting like school leaders. It is not enough to have the intention of being a leader: if one acts like a leader, one will become a leader. If a student goes through the prescribed actions of being a leader, they will, sooner or later, become a leader. This means that having a very simple framework of things that the new leader must do initially is much more effective than waiting for this same leader to do something.

There is no way of knowing how far intention and action will take your rookie leaders, but they will make progress by acting as leaders and therefore become adequate leaders. The real job of the advisor is to coach, prod and push the student leaders into leader-like actions. We all know that having the intention to lose weight is good, but putting that intention into action will produce the negative numbers desired.

Once your leaders are going through the motions, the advisor can move them from a level of adequacy to a level of competency. Remember: winning an election is only a confirmation of intent. Action is the statement of reality.

Close your eyes and imagine a world without volunteers! I am not sure what you see, but what I see scares the bejeebers out of me!! If you are like me, you are probably turning on your television set and wondering, “Where are the Olympics?” Can you imagine this event without the thousands of volunteers who put it on? The Olympics, summer and winter, are signature events that we get to see every four years. And every four years we are inspired, at a global level, to get involved and make a difference.

If you can’t make it to your nearest Olympics, I have great news for you; you can still get involved and make a difference. Start at home – your family, your school, your community. There are local events and community service clubs who are in need of your support and involvement in order to stay afloat. Simply put, without the involvement and participation of our younger community members (students and teachers), some of these organizations/clubs are running out of breath and will not be able to function much longer. For example in my community, one of the local service clubs, whose mandate is to assist youth and elderly alike, literally had to take out an advertisement in the local paper stating that “unless we are able to increase our membership, we are going to have to close this chapter of our international association.” The good news is that our community responded and they will be able to serve our community for one more day!

Sometimes we make the assumption that all successful organizations are run by people who are on the payroll. This is not necessarily true. Look at the Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors (C.A.S.A.A.). This organization, your organization, thrives upon volunteer participation to keep doing what we do. Each year, thousands of hours are ‘invested’ in Canadian youth leadership. Between the Canadian Student Leadership Conference (C.S.L.C. 2010 – Pierrefonds, QC) and the day-to-day operations of our association, it is evident that teacher volunteerism is the backbone of who we are and what we do.

Making it Great

“In one and the same fire, clay grows hard and wax melts.”

Francis Bacon

WIN-WIN DANCES

A group of student leaders wanted to raise money for Brain Tumor research by running a dance. They contacted a professional DJ assuming that they could simply ask him to reduce his fee because they were running a dance for a charity. The students became frustrated when they realized that the fee was not going to be reduced significantly through discussion even though they had a great cause in mind: they forgot that a DJ is running a business and not the charity. This is a mistake that many groups make. Any business will reduce their cost to you, only if you can give them something valuable in return. This is a win-win negotiation.

When asked what the DJ needed, the students understood that he needed more dances for his business. The students then hit upon the idea of running a grade 7-8 dance earlier at the school the same day of our scheduled dance. This meant that the DJ's equipment would already be set up, and they could charge a fee to the visiting students from the local junior schools. The charity would receive the benefit. The students would run a transition activity for the incoming grade 8's and the DJ ran the dance.

This was truly a win-win situation. The students were able to raise funds for their intended charity, and the DJ got exposure to another set of clients. When negotiating with any business, you must understand their needs and interests and cater to them to be successful. This will make your business contacts truly win-win.

How do you get a school group to motivate itself to do great things? Can you make teenagers understand their true powers as a group? Finally, how do you keep a great program going with students graduating and new students entering each year? Great programs have a reputation and an image that doesn't just happen overnight. This image and reputation must be intentionally built and carefully maintained. Consider the following:

Warren Buffet is one of the most successful businessmen in the world. He has made his large fortune through hard work and a thorough knowledge of people and management. Bono, lead singer for U2, approached Buffet for advice on how to inspire Americans to help him in his battle against poverty in Africa. Warren Buffet told him: “Don't appeal to the conscience of America. Appeal to the greatness of America and you'll get the job done.”

When you appeal to an individual or group's conscience, you are appealing to a sense of right or wrong. This plays on an innate sense of guilt. However, we tend not to like people who make us feel guilty; in fact we spend most of our time trying to avoid them. Bono would have gotten results by telling Americans that they are the richest nation on earth and asking them if they were going to let Africans starve while the world watched. However, these results would have been tempered by guilt and this appeal would be only good for a campaign that decreased in results each year.

You will be much more successful if you appeal to your students' sense of pride rather than guilt. Using guilt works once and it works very poorly in comparison. Give students a great reputation to live up to, and they will live up to it. The students of Elmira District Secondary School have run three extremely successful Relay for Life campaigns raising over \$240,000 in total. These events are completely student-run and student-attended. Each fundraising campaign has been kicked off by a full-school assembly that trumpets how incredible a giving community EDSS is. Students who are new to the school hear about the great reputation of previous campaigns and feel immediate strength and kinship in living up to that reputation. This reputation for giving is reinforced through the many small seasonal campaigns. Students and staff are extremely proud of what they give to charity at EDSS.

This is how some schools have built enduring reputations as “basketball powers” or “the football school.” This is also how some school develop a “bad” reputation. If there is no great thing that the school can be known for, students will live down to that “bad” reputation. When students are told about the great reputation of the school, they will live up to it in a positive way. ■

Dave Conlon



“It is good to rub and polish your mind against that of others.”

Michel de Montaigne

Choosing Magnets

Magnets are a powerful and mystic force. Their power is both undeniable and invisible. Individuals who have the ability to make wise choices, even in the face of erroneous, too much or too little information, have a force similar to magnets guiding their decisions. This force pulls them in a direction they might not want or realize they need to go, but their “choosing magnet” forces them to go.



To leverage the power of your choosing magnet on a consistent basis, use this checklist:

- Correctly align your choosing magnet’s power source with your core beliefs. i.e. If you believe in the value of hard work, make decisions to reflect that. If family is at the heart of your core value system, use that belief to drive your decisions. Stay centered.
- Get good at being aware of your choosing magnet’s pull — that little right/wrong voice that is constantly chatting. You need to be receptive to it in order to benefit from it. This is a major reason why many success experts tout the benefits of having 30 minutes of quiet time during your day (preferably first thing in the morning.) This is your time to stop doing and to start listening, thinking, reflecting and making yourself quiet enough to be aware of your magnet’s pull.
- Be disciplined in your daily path to listen to and follow your choosing magnet’s pull. The discipline can start today and should start with the smallest decisions. Once you get great at following the pull in the thousands of small choices you face daily, you will be better equipped to follow the pull in big decisions. The more you follow the pull, the clearer it will be, the stronger it will be and the more trustworthy you will be.

What is pulling you? ■

This article is from the book, “the leadership locator”, by Rhett Laubach. Check out his website at www.PersonalLeadershipInsight.org

LEADERSHIP IS INFLUENCE

Margaret Thatcher, a former British prime minister, was a world leader in every sense. She commanded the world stage during a difficult time in Britain’s history, and there was never any doubt about who was in charge. She stated, “Being in power is like being a lady. If you have to tell people that you are, you aren’t.” Leadership is not a title because true leadership cannot be awarded, appointed or assigned. It comes only from influence, and that cannot be mandated. It must be earned.

Leaders do not have to look powerful, impressive or charismatic. One of the most effective leaders of the twentieth century was anything but impressive upon first appearance. When most people envision Mother Teresa, they think of a frail little woman dedicated to serving the poorest of the poor. But she was also a tremendous leader because she had a tremendous amount of influence with others. If you don’t have influence, you will never be able to lead others.

Leadership by influence is leadership without leverage. The boss can make you do things because of his position and power, not because of his influence. Student leaders with influence can get their peers to volunteer and participate without leverage. This is the mark of true leadership ability.

John Maxwell

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Like all forwarding thinking organizations, CASAA is constantly looking for ways in which to better serve our members. We have a couple of exciting projects that are due to be brought on-line during this calendar year – the CASAA Scholarship Program and our CASAA Advisor Certification Program. Each of these initiatives will allow us to better serve our membership and to leave our footprint firmly on Canadian Student Leadership now and into the future.

THE VOLUNTEER DIFFERENCE

Peter Drucker states, “The purpose of the work on making the future is not to decide what should be done tomorrow, but what should be done today to have a tomorrow.” One unique idea he advocated was creating a “parallel career” in areas such as teaching, writing, or working in nonprofit organizations. Consider how to match your values, experience, and education, and what shifts you might need to make in your life to support such changes.

An essential part of living in more than one world, Drucker believed, is displaying a sense of generosity. Here, he said, “... everybody is a leader, everybody is responsible, everybody acts.” Sharing your time and talents by getting involved in volunteerism, social entrepreneurship, and mentoring not only provide opportunities to contribute, but also offer personal benefits, from broadening and deepening your life experience to expanding your circle of friends and colleagues. Think about what happens outside your workplace—in other industries, professions, and walks of life—and consider ways you can exercise your own generosity.

Drucker saw volunteerism as essential to the smooth functioning of society, as well as a satisfying way of ensuring that work doesn’t consume your life. Today, there are hundreds of volunteering opportunities to choose from. Drucker’s recommendation was simple: Find an organization and cause you believe in—and get to work!

Bruce Rosenstein

Having said this, no association/organization/club is immune to the aging and complacency! The health of each of our associations relies completely on the willingness of its members to get and to stay involved. It doesn’t matter where in Canada (or the world) you are; the future of anything we do depends upon its members. If you are not willing to get involved and keep your association moving forward, I simply have to ask you, “Who are you expecting to take this on?”

Before you answer, I would encourage you to take a long look in the mirror – when you do, the answer will be obvious! More often than not, we have to live by the old adage – “If it is to be, it is up to me!” Be a difference maker and invest in your future and the future of those around you - share your most valuable resource – your time! Remember, ‘You never know how many apples are in a seed!’ My challenge to you — get out and plant something!

Cheers,
Brent Allen
Vice Principal, Wainwright High School
CASAA President



CASAA Leadership Scholarships

CASAA has now reached a new stage in its development as a national not-for-profit educational association. Our mission is to promote and develop student leadership and activities within Canadian high schools. We have done this through conferences, the website, resources and this newsletter. Now the association is financially able to sponsor five student leadership scholarships each year. Students have been the reason for CASAA's existence in the first place, as this association is dedicated to promote and develop student leadership and student activities within Canadian schools.

Description:

1. There will be five \$1000 scholarships given out each year. They will be awarded to students who have met the scholarship policy criteria.
2. Scholarships will not be given out by geographical boundaries but rather on the merit of the applicant's contributions to student leadership in Canada.

Criteria:

Applicants must:

1. Be enrolled in their senior year in a Canadian school.
2. Plan to attend an accredited Canadian post secondary institution.
3. Have made a superior contribution to Canadian students through membership in planning committees of major regional, provincial and or national student leadership initiatives recognized by CASAA.
4. Have made a significant contribution to student leadership initiatives in their home community.

Documentation:

Applicants must submit:

1. A completed application form to the Executive Director of CASAA by April 15, 2010.
2. A resumé.
3. List of leadership activities completed in their high school years. Applicant must indicate level of participation for each activity.
4. Transcript of marks for their senior grades.
5. Essay on the relevance of student leadership to their present and future activities (500 words minimum).
6. Letter of reference from conference chairperson or leadership advisor.
7. Proof of application to post secondary institution.

Scholarships will be awarded in June of each school year. Check the CASAA website for more information and application forms.

SCHOLARSHIP BASICS

Student leaders are the prime candidates for academic and community scholarships. However, very few of them are aware of how to enhance their chances of receiving a scholarship. Student leaders are not used to bragging about their accomplishments and think that they aren't as good as people from another town or city.

If you consider a \$1000 scholarship as worth 20 hours of solid work, you can work on preparing for this scholarship and make \$50 an hour if you receive it. This prep work is not wasted as the material can then be adapted and rescripted for another similar scholarship.

It is worth your time to prepare your material for a major scholarship first. Polish your answers and be very specific about what you have initiated and accomplished.

Make sure that your references specifically mention what you have accomplished. It is not cheating to give them a list of the things that they should know about you. Many reference letter writers need to be reminded of what you have done and will appreciate a timeline.

You must understand what specific qualifications the scholarship is looking for and address your answers to their outline. You cannot receive an environmental scholarship for your work with senior citizens.



“A man should live with his superiors as he does with his fire: not too near, lest he burn; nor too far off, lest he freeze.”

Diogenes 323 BCE

THE NUDGE DIFFERENCE

Social behaviours are often reinforced by the belief that the behaviour is more pervasive than it actually is. Smokers and binge drinkers persist because they believe that they are part of a majority. Addressing this type of behaviour is more effective through a “nudge” rather than a scare.

Consider an anti-smoking campaign aimed at adolescents that states, “Smoking is harmful to your health: Smoking causes lung cancer.” This is a fact, but it has been shown to have very little effect upon teens. Compare it to, “Most of this school’s students (80 percent) do not smoke.” Social perception is better with the second statement and it is a nudge towards a healthier social norm. The second statement is more effective than the scare tactics of the first.

Most schools try to get students involved by stating that school will be more “enjoyable” when students join one of the existing activities. Try marketing your activities with a nudge campaign that states, “Over 1/3 of our students belong to a school team or club. How about you?” This appeals to the human and especially teenage desire to be a part of something.

The Nudge

A secondary school was having persistent trouble with seniors initiating grade 9’s in the first week of school. Most of this initiation was happening at lunch off school grounds, and the nines were co-operating by leaving school grounds to “see what was going on.” This fall, the school decided to run a full week of lunch-time activities specifically designed for the nines. The nines were told that they should choose to show up for these activities so that they would feel more welcome in their new school. About 90 percent of the grade nines showed up and therefore had no time to leave the school grounds. Initiation was stopped because there were no willing victims — the victims had been nudged into making another healthier choice.

Nudge is a book by Richard Thaler that describes how our daily choices can be arranged or “nudged” so that healthy choices can be made freely and more often, rather than by random selection. For example, grocery stores know that items at eye-level sell more than items that are above or below this level. That’s why you will find the most profit generating items for the store placed at eye-level. However, a healthy “nudge” would be to put the healthier choice items (less fat or salt) at eye-level. Consumers would still be free to choose the unhealthy product, but they would be nudged into picking the healthier choice more often.

The state of Texas employed a “nudge” when they created their anti-littering slogan, “Don’t mess with Texas.” Previously, the state had spent a lot of time, money and effort attempting to convince people that it was their civic duty to stop littering. This was a failure until they adopted a “tough-talking slogan that would also address the unique spirit of Texas pride.” The campaign was targeted at men between the ages of 18 and 24 who were a large proportion of the litterers, and during TV ads Dallas Cowboy football players were engaged to smash beer cans in their bare hands and growl, “Don’t mess with Texas!” About 95 percent of Texans now know this slogan, and in its first six years, visible roadside litter was down 72 percent. All of this happened not through mandates, threats or coercion, but through a creative nudge.

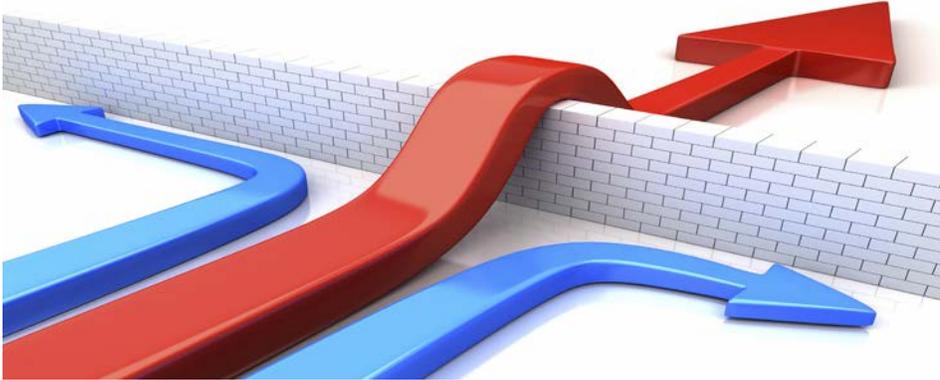
Adolescents will often rebel against mandated options, but they can be nudged into making choices that are better for the school community and the individual. Creating a nudge involves thinking about how to arrange the available choices into a structure that makes the healthiest choice the one that is made the most often. A nudge is not a new rule or mandate, but rather a choice that is mindfully structured in a user-friendly environment. ■



This article is from “Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness” by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein

Overcoming Communication Roadblocks

Effective communication happens when students understand that there are times when good communication doesn't happen. It is how you get the communication cycle started again that's important.



The following 12 ways help to unblock the channels.

- Express anger, disappointment, or frustration in “I-messages” (“I don’t like it when someone lies about me.”), not “you-messages” (“You’ve been lying about me”).
- Focus on the problem (“I don’t like it when my locker is messed up”) not the person (“I knew that it wouldn’t work to share a locker with you”).
- Remember that a cornered animal will bite and scratch. Always give the other person a way out. (“I know you did that on purpose”).
- Listen without being defensive. Everyone makes mistakes—even you.
- Don’t allow yourself to be a victim. Don’t take the blame for something you didn’t do. Stick up for yourself without attacking the other person.
- Say you’re sorry if you need to.
- Look for the good in the other person, even when this is hard to do. Make it clear that you care about him or her.
- Look for common ground—something you can agree on.
- Try to stay calm no matter what.
- Brainstorm solutions together. Try to reach an agreement on what’s best to do. Carry out your agreement.
- If your best efforts don’t succeed, get a third party involved. Find a peer mediator or an adult to help you talk through your problem.
- If spoken communication isn’t going anywhere, try writing a letter. But wait at least a day before mailing it. You might change your mind about what you want to say.

This article is taken from the book, “What Do you Stand For? For Teens: A Guide to Building Character” by Barbara A. Lewis

“I’ve learned that you shouldn’t go through life with a catcher’s mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back.”

Maya Angelou

LIVE HERE: GIVE HERE

There is an old saying, “Love is like shallots the more you divide it, the more it grows.”

- Say hello to students who you don’t teach in the hallways. It may be the only positive greeting that they get in the day.
- Have birthday greetings on your announcements. Some families don’t recognize this important day.
- Encourage your students to become givers. Run “loose change” charity drives monthly for a specific charity.
- On a central bulletin board, post pictures and articles of students and graduates who appear in the local newspaper. Highlight their positive accomplishments outside of school.

“The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.”

William Shakespeare

Above and Beyond

is the official newsletter of the Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors. The newsletter is published 3 times a year for schools all across Canada.

To learn more about membership, go to www.casaaleadership.ca/join.html

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Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors

Resources

Be sure to visit the CASAA website for more lesson plans, activity ideas and a complete list of resources.
casaaleadership.ca



This newsletter has been printed with the generous support of Friesen Yearbooks.
www.friesens.com/yearbook

Effective Praise and Criticism

The announcements are read daily in almost every high school in Canada, yet very few people really pay attention to them. In spite of that, the person who will hear at least one announcement that day is the person whose name is read because they scored a goal, came first or won an award. People love to hear their names in a positive vein and will ignore all of the other announcements being made but then tune in just to hear their own name. However, if their name is pronounced incorrectly on the announcements most of the positive praise for their accomplishment is lost. It's almost as if they are being criticized for simply having a name that is difficult to communicate. For praise and criticism to be effective they must be done properly and with an understanding of how we receive each.

We all crave praise because it makes us feel better about ourselves, and it inspires us to do more and to do it better. We need praise because it identifies us as doing things that are approved of by other people such as our peers or teachers. Our name is who we are, so praise in any form should be with our name and with our accomplishments publicly announced.

Nothing can make us feel more terrible than being criticized for something we did or didn't do. When the person reading the announcements gets our name wrong, we are being criticized in public and it hurts. This is why students will avoid award ceremonies where they know that they will be mocked by their peers. It hurts to have public disapproval however subtle, even though the whole ceremony may be intended as a public approval.

As an advisor, there are times when you need to criticize and this must be done in private. Effective praise is public by name and criticism is private by individual. There are many times that the leader of an activity can be publicly praised by name and then spoken to privately about some of the problems. To be truly effective as an advisor and teacher, these shortcomings or problems are then listed as learning opportunities for next time. People will respond with improvement if they are complimented with all of the things that they did right, and then a few "growing points" are outlined. Praise will always motivate us to do better and effectively administered criticism will smooth out the bumps on the way to success. ■

Dave Conlon

