

WLCJ Distance Workshop: Team Work Makes the Dream Work

October 28, 2018

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I'm On A Committee

*Oh, give me your pity; I'm on a committee
Which means that from morning to night,
We attend and amend and contend and defend
Without a conclusion in sight.*

*We confer and concur we defer and demur
And reiterate all of our thoughts.
We revise the agenda with frequent addenda
And consider a load of reports.*

*We compose and propose, we suppose and oppose
And the points of procedure are fun!
But though various notions are brought up
As motions there's terribly little gets done.*

*We resolve and absolve, but never dissolve
Since it's out of the question for us.
What a shattering pity to end our committee.
Where else could we make such a fuss?*

The Value of Teams

Human beings have always formed groups to accomplish goals that could not be achieved by any one person. Being a part of a team is highly valued in many societies, from the simple to the most sophisticated. Even in a culture like ours, which values individuality, the individual's need to be a part of something human, supportive, and reinforcing is strong. We know we can make a bigger difference when we do it together.

Do you know what T.-E.-A.-M. stands for?

Together Everyone Achieves More!

In one of Webster's earlier dictionaries, a *team* was defined as, "Two or more horses harnessed to the same plow." For us, our "plows" are our Women's League Sisterhoods.

Is your Sisterhood made up of committees or teams? And, what exactly is a team?

Let's Review a Team's Characteristics

It's Organic – made up of several parts, which come together, to form a cohesive whole greater than the sum of its parts.

It's Interdependent – each member supports one another.

It's Stimulating – the actions and attitudes of the members spur each other on to greater efforts and achievements. Achievements which each may have thought beyond her own personal abilities.

It's Enjoyable – Women like the camaraderie, the sense of belonging, the fun of being with a group.

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Co-ordination without co-operation can take any team only so far.

When people are ordered about by a leader, without consultation, they are:
not likely to take on any more responsibility than the minimum expected;
unlikely to volunteer their efforts or ideas; and,
unlikely to volunteer again.
The result is that the contributions of individual members go to waste.

Co-ordination with co-operation can take any team to greater heights.

When members are consulted they:
will take on greater responsibility and feel pride of ownership in the project;
brainstorm with each other to meet new and sometimes unexpected challenges;
unite around a clear and challenging common goal;
depend upon each other;
contribute their unique talents to the team effort;
build relationships with each other;
empower each other to carry out consensus decisions;
develop leadership skills;
volunteer more time, effort and energy to the project; and
volunteer to work on other projects the Sisterhood plans for the future.

What's the difference between a committee and a team?

Committee members represent people, groups, and interests. They are committed to participating vs. promising a result.

Team members, on the other hand, are committed to the shared goal of the team, and promise to be accountable for the end result being delivered and often implemented.

A team is a group of women working cooperatively to accomplish a common mission or goal through the exercise of their gifts.

The team matters more than the leader

The future of your Sisterhood should not depend on you, even if you're a unanimous superstar! It depends on a well-rounded, unwavering team. However, working for your team, rather than having your team work for you, isn't always so easy. Kick your bad habits and put your team first.

Here are seven ways to ensure that every team member is able to step up to the plate without a second thought.

- 1. Build a strong foundation.** Set the teamwork bar high from the beginning. If your Sisterhood culture and mission do not encompass the power of team-focused efforts, there is no way to ensure your Sisterhood's strength will lie in the team. Your members need to know that you are there for them and not the other way around.
- 2. Empower your members.** Every one of your members has something she can bring to the table. Since you are there for your team, it's your responsibility to find out where each member excels. This will motivate team members to live up to their reputations and keep them interested enough to stay on top of their game.

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- 3. Establish goals.** You must have a vision to have a team. Forget about using your team members as task-doers and let them collectively achieve goals within teams. Give each team a goal to accomplish within a short timeframe. This will allow them to focus on the big picture rather than just accomplishing minor tasks. Working toward team goals will benefit the women on your team and give them a sense of ownership and responsibility, positively impacting your Sisterhood from the inside out.
- 4. Learn to delegate.** Trust your Sisterhood members. If you are a micromanaging perfectionist, you can kiss the idea of a team-focused culture good-bye. To set your teams on the right path share with them the big picture and measurable outcomes. The rest is up to them. Your efforts at delegating will allow them to work creatively to get things accomplished. They may surprise you in the process!
- 5. Let them figure it out.** Your team members will not learn to handle challenges on their own if you swoop in every time a challenge arises. It may seem easy to tell your teams what to do and how to do it but that leaves them out of the decision-making process. Stop telling your teams what to do and instead ask them how they plan to do it themselves! That will result in an increase in team autonomy, responsibility, motivation, and create a positive change in the way your teams make decisions.
- 6. Recognize their efforts.** Praise is the best way to boost motivation and engagement. Want more inspired Sisterhood board members? Tell them what they're doing right and continue to encourage them. Remember that they are all volunteers, just like you!
- 7. Remove hierarchy.** Your teams do not necessarily need a manager. Your Sisterhood's new motto could be "all for one and one for all." Without an official team captain the women may feel more empowered to work as a team and the structure will form naturally. Nobody will want to let the entire team down. Being a team-focused organization, rather than leaving all responsibility in the hands of one or two women, will help keep your Sisterhood afloat no matter what. With one or two people doing everything you will have serious problems in their absence.

What makes a successful team?

There are five crucial elements to every successful team, all equally important.

- 1. Find common ground:** This is the No. 1 most important aspect of any successful team. From top to bottom, no matter a Sisterhood's size, the team must share a passion for what the Sisterhood is doing. If not, your Sisterhood will become a perfect candidate for WLCJ Consulting Services emergency assistance.
- 2. Reinforce values:** Much like a marketing plan, values are difficult to define and understand at the beginning. They'll evolve over time, as your Sisterhood grows and as long as everyone believes in your Sisterhood and what it's doing. Another way of saying this, is to practice WLCJ's policy that there be 100% buy-in of all team members as group decisions are reached. If there is a shared purpose, then the values will emerge organically. Work to maintain those values.
- 3. Know your team:** Understand your team and accept each member for who she is. Understand yourself, too. Only then can you build a team that draws out each member's strengths and offsets her weaknesses. If you can't speak honestly, you don't have a team.
- 4. Be transparent:** Call a spade a spade. Even when things aren't going perfectly, hash out what needs to be done constructively. There must be underlying trust and respect in order to be transparent.
- 5. Be willing to compromise:** Starting a Sisterhood project is akin to diving into a relationship. It can be tricky and frustrating. It's a joint effort that takes work and requires compromise. Ultimately, great teams are collections of people with shared goals and the passion to make them a reality.

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How do you build a great team?

A great team is not just a group of great women. Studies have shown the elements that go into making a productive team aren't always obvious and often defy conventional wisdom.

Here are seven points to consider when building a team.

1. Women with strong social skills make the best teammates.
2. The best predictor of team success is if the women like one another.
3. The most creative teams are a mix of old friends and strangers.
4. Team morale is about good storytelling.
5. Effective team performance requires clear goals.
6. Effective team performance requires defined roles.
7. Research shows a team *really is* only as strong as its weakest link.

Now, let's talk about team identity.

Each team has an identity of its own. Its identity stems from its interrelationship with the larger Organization. In this workshop, this means an individual Sisterhood and its relationship with Women's League for Conservative Judaism. Its identity is **not** the sum of the types, or preferences, or temperaments of the team members. There are many kinds of teams including ad hoc, project, executive, and so on. Each team has a charter to fulfill a certain role within the organization. Team dynamics are heavily influenced by the nature and purpose of the team.

Here are five essential identity questions every team should consider.

1. Who Am I and Who Are You?
2. Who Are We Together?
3. What Are We Here to Do?
4. How Are We Going to Do It?
5. How Are We Doing or How Did We Do?

Let's examine each one of these identity questions.

Who Am I? Who are You?

Team members are individuals first. Each brings different talents, perspectives, values, and experiences to the mission of the team. The more self-awareness each team member has, the more actively she can contribute. The more each team member knows about the other team members, the better each can tap into the talents and experiences of others for better overall team performance.

Who Are We Together?

Individuals with different personalities are unique in the ways they build relationships and deal with conflict. When we try to forge better relationships, we can easily do something that undermines the relationship instead of improving it if we don't take these differences into account. Personality differences show up in how we tend to communicate, as well as how we like to be communicated with.

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What Are We Here to Do?

Amazingly, teams often start doing the work rather than clarifying what the work is. They assume others see the assignments in the same ways they do. Conflict and wasted time could be avoided if teams spent time to be sure they all share the same view of what they are to be doing and what the outcomes will look like.

Remember to take the time at the outset to discuss what the goals, mission, or tasks of the team are so you're all on the same page. Don't be blindsided by your own personal agenda. The success of the team depends on getting personal agendas out of the way.

How Are We Going to Do It?

Often people treat how we're going to do it as the most important issue on a team. It takes the form of who's going to do what by when. However, teamwork involves more than that. It involves both the processes and the production aspects of getting the work of the team completed. People of different personality types will have different preferred approaches to doing the work. We tend to expect others to do the work the same way we do. Production is often where our individual talents come to bear the most and where knowing yourself and others can really optimize the performance of the team.

And of course there are pitfalls of each woman's approach to both process and production. An example of this is two team members who react to deadlines differently. One completes her task as soon as she assumes responsibility for it. The other waits until just before the due date for her task to be completed. This illustrates a pitfall that may be encountered in both the process and production of a Sisterhood's work.

How Are We Doing or How Did We Do?

Finally, each team must have some measure of how it is doing. Women with different personality types will have different perspectives on what constitutes good and adequate measurement. Don't get stuck in your own preferences. Effective teamwork starts with understanding ourselves and ways we are different from others. When we know our own value to the team, we are in a better position to appreciate and capitalize on the contributions of those who are different from us. We should move our thinking from "I" to "We." Then, we are also better able to think in terms of the team as a unit.

Task-Minded Functions that help a team be productive

Recognizing these functions will help participants become aware of the role they play within the team.

Initiator - proposes tasks or goals, defines a group problem, and suggests a procedure or ideas for solving a problem.

Information-Seeker - requests facts, and seeks relevant information about a team concern.

Information-Giver - offers facts, and provides relevant information about a team's concern.

Opinion-Seeker - asks for expressions of feelings, solicits expressions of value, and seeks suggestions and ideas.

Opinion-Giver - states a belief about a matter before the team, and gives suggestions and ideas.

Clarifier - interprets ideas or suggestions, clears up confusions, defines terms, and indicates alternatives and issues before the team.

Elaborator - gives examples, develops meanings; makes generalizations, and indicates how a proposal might work out if adopted.

Summarizer - pulls together related ideas, restates suggestions after the team has discussed them, and offers a decision or conclusion for the team to accept or reject.

Supporter - accepts ideas of others, she expresses agreement and support.

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Process-Minded Functions.

A team needs order to work harmoniously, which is achieved through process-minded functions. Here's a list of team roles to facilitate effective team work.

Encourager - is friendly, warm, and responsive to others; accepts others and their contributions, and gives team members opportunities and/or recognition.

Feeling-Expresser - sends and expresses the feeling of the team, calls attention to reactions of team members' ideas and suggestions, and shares her own feelings with the team.

Harmonizer - attempts to reconcile disagreements, reduces tension, and gets team members to explore their differences.

Compromiser - offers solutions in a conflict situation, admits error; and disciplines herself to maintain team cohesion.

Standard-Setter - expresses standards for the team to achieve and applies these standards in evaluating team function and production.

Consensus-Tester - asks for opinions to find out if the team is near a decision, and sends up a trial balloon to test a possible team conclusion.

Disruptive or Self-Centered Behavior and Roles in Teams

These may sound familiar to you.

The Blocker, The Fighter, The Pleader, The Dominator, The Withdrawer, The Talker, The Nitpicker, and The Dependent One.

Let's take a closer look at each of these disruptive behaviors along with suggestions for redirecting them.

The Blocker goes off on tangents, consistently argues on points the team has resolved, and rejects ideas without consideration. A couple of ways to minimize this behavior include diverting attention from the team member exhibiting blocking behavior, and/or politely pointing out that she has strayed from the topic. Refocus her attention on the team's task.

The Fighter attacks the motives of others, shows hostility toward the team or some individual without relation to the team's task; criticizes and blames others. Gently put a stop to it by getting her to redirect her anger toward a topic rather than a team member; point out why her criticism may be unwarranted; and/or emphasize that all team members share ideas and should be recognized for what they contribute.

The Pleader proposes her own concerns beyond reason and attempts to speak for others. Give her some attention and then focus on the priorities of the team, reminding her to speak only for herself.

The Dominator interrupts the contributions of others, and uses authority in manipulating the team, or certain members, by pulling rank. For example she uses, "I've been around much longer than you," as a preface to her point. Ask this team member to manage a special independent project. Or, you could always send her on an errand! We will examine the dominator more closely in a few minutes.

The Withdrawer acts passive or indifferent. She doodles, whispers to others, and passes notes, or checks email and text messages on her smartphone. Ask her a direct question, or to lead the team's discussion. The goal is to get her actively involved with the team.

The Talker seeks recognition with extreme ideas and boisterous boasts. Tactfully interrupt her and ask other team members to comment. Indicate that you are pleased she has so much to share but that other team members also want to contribute. You may also want to have a private conversation with her before your next team meeting.

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The Nitpicker criticizes. She finds fault with everything - the room set-up, the room temperature, the menu, and other similar trivial details under the guise of helping. Assure this team member that her concerns will be discussed later, and redirect her attention to the team's key tasks or goals.

The Dependent One is overeager to please the leader by doing whatever is expected or desired. She waits to be directed and demonstrates little initiative. Ask her to initiate ideas and give reactions, and praise her for her contributions to the team.

How do you deal with a Controlling Team Member?

We are now going to look at three broad categories of monopolizing/controlling team members. Each includes a number of sub-types that can be easily imagined. Be alert to these types of team members

1. She may be trying to dominate or impress the group. She may be an authority or think she is. She may try so hard to stand out in the team that she talks too much. She may use the meeting as an ego-inflating opportunity. She may be in the habit of taking a dominant position. She may have a strong, competitive spirit and want to argue everyone down. She may use the meeting to blow off steam.

2. She may think faster than the group or have superior knowledge. This individual is always ready with an answer or a pertinent idea. She may be impatient with the slower members of the group. Sometimes she wants to speed up the pace of the meeting.

3. She may be unable to get to the point. She rambles in her talk. She gets off the subject, bringing in irrelevant details. She gives long descriptions of personal experiences. She is unable to come to a stopping point. Often she does not think clearly. Sometimes she has some nervous difficulty and can't express herself once she gets started. Sometimes she simply can't express herself, can't find the words, but won't give up trying.

Here are some approaches the team leader should try.

Speak with her outside the team meeting...Solicit her aid in getting others to take a more active role in the meeting.

Direct discussion away from her. Try, "All right". We have Rachel's thoughts. Now let's see what the others have to say about this."

"We've heard from Jane. Our objective at this point is to get thoughts from as many as possible. Let me hear what the rest of you think."

Interrupt tactfully. For instance, "Marcia, I believe you've suggested that we do X, Y, and, Z. Before you go on, let's consider some other possibilities. Then we'll come back and pull in the rest of your suggestions."

Help her phrase what she has to say..."Let me see if I have your points, Sheila. You feel that..." And, let her catch your eye.

Explain distribution of time. "Esther, it looks as if you and I are taking up most of the time. Let's see what the others have to say on this issue." Seat her where you can look past her.

Identify contributions to reveal that all are coming from one source. For instance, "We have suggestions so far from Amy. Who else has one?"

Let members of the team take care of her. There are times when teams will correct their own members - possibly with good-natured ribbing. This is a good time for the team leader to be as silent as possible, dramatizing the fact the team member talks too much.

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Dealing with Non-Participating Team Members

For the shy team member who hesitates to speak, engage her participation by asking direct questions that you know she can answer. Ask for her agreement. Build her up in the eyes of the team.

For the Bored – **B-O-R-E-D** - team member... Ask her to share her experience and thoughts with the team.

In *Managing Teams for Dummies*, Marty Brounstein identifies “**Ten Qualities of an Effective Team Player.**”

Quality #1: Demonstrates reliability

You can count on a reliable team member who gets work done and does her fair share to work hard and deliver good performance all the time, not just some of the time.

Quality #2: Communicates constructively

Teams need women who speak up and express their thoughts and ideas clearly, directly, honestly, and with respect for others and for the work of the team. This is what it means to communicate constructively. Such a team member does not shy away from making a point but makes it in the best way possible — in a positive, confident, and respectful manner.

Quality # 3: Listens actively

Good listeners are essential for teams to function effectively. Teams need team players who can absorb, understand, and consider ideas and points of view from other women without debating and arguing every point. Such a team member also can receive criticism without reacting defensively. Most important, for effective communication and problem solving, team members need the discipline to listen first and speak second so that meaningful dialogue results.

Quality # 4: Functions as an active participant

Good team players are active participants. They come prepared for team meetings and listen and speak up in discussions. They're fully engaged in the work of the team and do not sit passively on the sidelines. Team members who function as active participants take the initiative to help make things happen, and they volunteer for assignments. Their whole approach is can-do: "What contribution can *I* make to help the team achieve success?"

Quality #5: Shares openly and willingly

Good team players share. They're willing to share information, knowledge, and experience. They take the initiative to keep other team members informed. Much of the communication within teams takes place informally. Beyond discussion at organized meetings, team members need to feel comfortable talking with one another and passing along important news and information day-to-day. Good team players are active in this informal sharing. They keep other team members in the loop with information and expertise that helps get the job done and prevents surprises.

Quality # 6: Cooperates and pitches in to help

Cooperation is the act of working *with* others and acting together to accomplish a job. Effective team players work this way by second nature. Good team players, despite differences they may have with one another concerning style and perspective, figure out ways to work together to solve problems and get work done. They respond to requests for assistance and take the initiative to offer help.

Quality # 7: Exhibits flexibility

Teams often deal with changing conditions — and often create changes themselves. Good team players roll with the punches; they adapt to ever-changing situations. They don't complain or get stressed out because something new is being tried or some new direction is being set. In addition, a flexible team member can

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consider different points of view and compromise when needed. She doesn't hold rigidly to a point of view and argue it to death, especially when the team needs to move forward to make a decision or get something done. Strong team players are firm in their thoughts yet open to what others have to offer — flexibility at its best.

Quality # 8: Shows commitment to the team

Strong team players care about their work, the team, and the team's work. They show up every day with this care and commitment up front. They want to give a good effort, and they want other team members to do the same.

Quality # 9: Works as a problem-solver

Teams, of course, deal with problems. Sometimes, it appears, that's the whole reason why a team is created — to address problems. Good team players are willing to deal with all kinds of problems in a solutions-oriented manner. They're **problem-solvers, not problem-dwellers, problem-blamers, or problem-avoiders**. They don't simply rehash a problem the way problem-dwellers do. They don't look for others to fault, as the blamers do. And they don't put off dealing with issues, the way avoiders do. Team players get problems out in the open for discussion and then collaborate with others to find solutions and form action plans.

Quality # 10: Treats others in a respectful and supportive manner

Team players treat fellow team members with courtesy and consideration — not just some of the time but consistently. In addition, they show understanding and the appropriate support of other team members to help get the job done. They don't place conditions on when they'll provide assistance, when they'll choose to listen, and when they'll share information.

Good team players also have a sense of humor and know how to have fun (and all teams can use a bit of both), but they don't have fun at someone else's expense. Quite simply, effective team players deal with other people in a professional manner.

Team players who show commitment don't come in any particular style or personality. They don't need to be rah-rah, cheerleader types. In fact, they may even be soft-spoken, but they aren't passive. They care about what the team is doing and they contribute to its success — without needing a push.

Team players with commitment look beyond their own piece of the work and care about the team's overall work. In the end, their commitment is about winning — not in the sports sense of beating your opponent but about seeing the team succeed and knowing they have contributed to this success. Winning as a team is one of the greatest motivators of volunteer performance. Good team players have and show this motivation.

How to Build a Team

“A successful team is a group of many hands but of one mind.”

If we made a list of the benefits of being a team leader, we'd agree that the biggest benefit is the reward of seeing people grow, watching them solve problems, building their individual skills, and working well with each other. These are the components of a team of motivated, capable women working together to make a difference.

Building a team of volunteers will test all your leadership skills. While the passion and spirit of a volunteer team is often much higher than an occupational team, leading volunteers is more challenging.

In business, you have a team of people with common skills and background, who you are in a position to direct more authoritatively. The members of a volunteer team are much more diverse. Their interest in the cause or mission may be the only thing they have in common. Egos get bruised more easily in a volunteer group. Your ability to reward and recognize each person's contribution is critical to retaining her support.

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How Do You Build a Volunteer Team?

To be a leader you must be a coach. To build and sustain your team, you must concentrate on the basics of team building: **Directing, Motivating, Training, Delegating, and Gratifying.**

Directing - When you give people direction, you challenge them to use their talents and give them the autonomy to achieve a goal. You have helped them fulfill their personal potential and that of the team

Mini Mission Statements - Every organization needs an overall mission or statement of purpose. But each part of the whole – the individual teams – also needs to have a sense of purpose (i.e. mini-mission statements). Gather your team together and get everyone to participate in defining, clarifying, and structuring a team mini-mission statement. It is very important that everyone feels ownership of it. A mission statement created by someone else never has the power to inspire like one you create for yourself.

Here are the basic steps for creating a mini-mission statement:

- 1. Define the Team's Mission** - Think about and list the elements that make up the purpose of the team. Why does the team exist? Whom does it serve? Your Sisterhood? Or, the larger Jewish community? A team leader cannot allow team members to become blasé about what they do. Pride in the team's goal should be a prime motivator. The last question to ask is: What role does the team play in the larger organization? (In this specific example, your Sisterhood.) Mini-mission statements cannot be overemphasized. They have the power to unite a team and to keep it together in hard times.
- 2. Evaluate Your Resources** - Have each person on the team list her personal strengths and weaknesses. The group can then have a discussion about how its members can help each other. This doesn't mean criticizing each other. It means recognizing that people are happier and more productive when they are matched to a task for which they have skills. Next, look at the tasks your team performs. Have the team members discuss who has the skills to work on each task.
- 3. Focus on Solutions** - Remember when we mentioned problem dwellers and problem avoiders earlier? There's an old formula: "Two minutes on the problem, fifty-eight minutes on the solution." Don't get caught up in numerous meetings and long sessions about the problems. People tend to over discuss the issues and sometimes use meetings as a way to avoid action. Once the team has defined the problem area, stop discussing it, and get on with the solutions. This is one place where the team leader may have to exert some control.
- 4. Set Your Action Plan** - The last step of your mini-mission statement is to decide what you can do to correct a problem, advance an idea, or move the team forward to achieve its goal. When forming an action plan, consider individual skills, time frames, budgets, and evaluation criteria. Take the time to plan where the team wants to go, how the team will get there, and how the team will know it has succeeded.

Motivating

I can't motivate you and you can't motivate me. Motivation is something that we do for ourselves. However, a team leader can create the environment that fosters personal motivation, help each team member be more professional, no matter what her job description may be. Respect each team member and help her grow.

PMMFI (PUM-FEE) - Please Make Me Feel Important One of the most powerful motivators is the need to feel that what we do is important. Every one of us has an invisible sign hung around our necks that says: **"Please make me feel important"** (PMMFI – pronounced "pum-fee.")

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We need to feel that we make a difference. We want to be needed, appreciated, and recognized. When we tell people that they have done their jobs well, we create a special kind of pride. Women thrive on praise, but lose their commitment when good performance doesn't make any difference. The leader that understands the importance and power of **PMMFI** will be able to build strong teams of dedicated, loyal people.

Training

Training is a method of enhancing human performance. Whenever a person's ability to perform a job is limited by a lack of knowledge or skill, it makes sense to bridge that gap by providing the required instruction.

Excuse me: We need to pause here for a public service announcement, brought to you by Women's League for Conservative Judaism. Once a year every Sisterhood is entitled to have a Women's League Consultant conduct a free workshop on the topic of that Sisterhood's choice! **Now back to our Distance Workshop, already in progress.**

Opportunities for group participation

Group participation has advantages in any training program. Involving the group moves training from the passive to the active. Group activity engages participants in the learning process and makes them working partners with the trainer.

The role of the Team Leader

Team leaders have many roles, and these roles usually develop progressively. New teams need close supervision, but as members gain confidence in their ability to act as a team, leaders can give them more responsibility and authority to accomplish their goals.

New team leaders normally begin in the conventional role of supervisor because they are fully responsible for the performance and behavior of the team. If done correctly, the team will grow and the leader's role as supervisor will diminish. The important task here involves helping the team set goals and focus on key issues. Set an example! Because all eyes are usually on the team leader, she must serve as a model of team behavior.

Leaders must practice what they expect their teams to deliver. To be successful in guiding teams toward their goals, leaders must demonstrate: **Mastery of Change; Vision; Walking the Talk; and, Coaching.**

Mastery of Change – A leader must consistently challenge the status quo and empower her team to change procedures so that quality can be enhanced. Nothing is ever done so well that it cannot be improved.

Vision – A leader is the visionary who inspires and motivates members of her team. Steve Jobs, cofounder of Apple Computers, described his role in the development of Macintosh as “having a vision, being able to articulate it so that people can understand it and getting consensus on it.”

Walking the Talk – This means communicating in a way that values others' contributions and interacting respectfully with anyone who disagrees. It means quality in every task, transaction and relation. Put simply, the leader doesn't relax while others are working their tails off.

Coaching – The ideal leader is available to help where needed and knows who needs a hand and who needs only a pat on the back.

The most aggravating leadership starts with good intentions.

Here are eight good intentions that aggravate your team. Beware of these easy traps.

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Debra Green, dgreen@wlcj.org and Anise Parnes, bqlipresident@wlcj.org

- 1. Just trying to help** - Before you know it, your well-intentioned advice is over-bearing. Hanging around with your sleeves rolled up is ticking them off. Those “how’s it going” stop-ins, feel like “helicoptering.” They need space to try, grow and fail. Let them. Stop micromanaging.
- 2. Building Consensus** - You want to build consensus. But that takes time, and people want to move. Resist the urge to take over. Don’t worry about everyone’s feelings. Find the balance between consensus and action.
- 3. Looking for the best solution** - You want to get it right and there are so many ways to approach the problem. You keep searching, and encourage your team to find the best solution. Are you being a problem-dweller? At some point, enough is enough. Make a plan and move on.
- 4. Asking for Input** - You ask for input, but you have strong opinions. When you ask, but don’t listen... you really tick them off. Don’t ask if you plan to tell eventually.
- 5. Big New Ideas** - Your team loves your energy and big ideas. But, sometimes you’re confusing. Be sure to link this new idea with the bigger strategy. Stop changing gears every time you have an energetic burst. Be sure you follow-through.
- 6. Being Nice** - This can lead to wimpy feedback. If it’s bad, say so. They want to know the truth but say it tactfully.
- 7. Team-building** - You’re working hard to build a great team. Conflict is part of that. Stop avoiding controversial topics. Let them argue. Get uncomfortable but be sure to avoid personal attacks. You will all emerge stronger.
- 8. Grooming** - You want your team to learn from your mistakes. You know the best way to act in certain scenarios. But times are changing. Team members want to have other input as well. Be sure you leave room in the development process for them to become their best selves.

Delegating

The key to delegating is assigning tasks to capable, responsible, self-motivated team members, and not assigning tasks to ineffective or unreliable performers.

Make jobs meaningful by delegating an entire task to one team member rather than dividing it among several women.

Instruct team members as needed. Some may perform effectively with general guidelines and others may require detailed instructions.

Step back from a task’s details. Many leaders are poor delegators because they get too involved with technical details.

Establish checkpoints to obtain feedback on a task’s progress. A responsible leader does not delegate a complex assignment to a team member and then wait for the project to be completed.

Assign a mixture of pleasant and unpleasant tasks. Who wants to do only junk assignments? Team members should feel that desirable and undesirable tasks have been distributed fairly.

Evaluate and reward performance, including risk-taking that doesn’t produce the desired results. If a project doesn’t meet expectations, brainstorm why it didn’t work and discuss potential changes for future success.

Choose the right woman for the task, and define the responsibilities clearly to prevent reverse delegation.

This is when a team member tosses an assignment back to the leader, using the excuse of being overwhelmed, stressed or lacking the skills to meet the leader’s expectations.

Avoid dumping unpleaseant or confusing assignments at the last minute. Inform team members

in advance of all the tasks that will be included in the delegated assignments.

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Gratifying - Reward and Recognition

William Bridges, in his book, *Transitions*, writes that reward and recognition are, and I quote the “fertilizer in the garden of human growth.” It’s not enough to direct your team. Your team must want to be directed and be motivated to follow your lead. If you are trying to be a gardener in that ground of human growth, it is imperative to recognize the power of rewarding and recognizing people’s efforts and talents. Those who feel they are appreciated will be receptive to your direction.

When it comes to any of the just reviewed team-building principles (directing, motivating, training, delegating, or gratifying) there are two cardinal rules to remember.

Cardinal Rule #1 – Praise in public – correct in private. We’ve all been in the presence of someone who is being corrected in a humiliating fashion. It’s embarrassing, for everyone. The appropriate action would be to take the team member aside and correct her. And, remember sugar always gets you farther than vinegar. On the other hand, nothing builds a person up more than praise in front of others. Public praise has two important benefits: The person being praised feels good, and the listeners benefit by knowing that if they do well the leader will acknowledge them also. Another important thing to remember is that the fastest way to ruin a team is to reward only the best. Find ways to praise all your people.

Cardinal Rule #2 – Praise what’s right – train for what’s wrong. Many successful organizations have long understood this philosophy. Praise whatever people do right and train for what needs improvement. People are more motivated by the expectation of pleasure (the satisfaction derived from work) than by fear of losing their jobs. Satisfaction comes from being part of an effective team and feeling that you are important to that team.

To summarize, teams are the strength of your Sisterhood.

Why Do We Need Teams?

The combined thinking of a group is more productive than that of an individual.
The interest of members is maintained because they are involved in the work of the organization.
Talents of members may be put to use and new talents discovered.
Future Sisterhood leaders are developed.
The work is divided among several members without overburdening any single team member.

How Do You Find Team Members?

Discover your Sisterhood members’ areas of interest and/or expertise by use of: profile sheets, personal conversations, and recommendations. Make your Sisterhood board the place to be. Fun, exciting, informative, receptive and totally involved in every aspect of helping a woman to grow and use her potential to the fullest. If a member shows interest in your team’s work, seek her out and ask her to join the team. Encourage member participation and involvement in Sisterhood and Region activities.

What Should Every Team Member Know?

The importance of the project.
The goals.
The team’s responsibilities.
Individual expectations and time requirements.
Why she is important to the project.
That she is part of a team.

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That she will receive support and guidance.

And then, **Give Her the Opportunity to Do the Job.**

Be a Successful Team Leader

Define the role of the team.

Have careful time control.

Listen and respect others' opinions.

Develop an informal, relaxed atmosphere.

Be prepared.

Select team members who are qualified and interested.

Keep accurate notes.

Assess the team's performance with its members.

Express gratitude.

Accept and use the team's work.

And, finally, a cute story that encapsulates the theme of this Distance Workshop from, *You Can't Send a Duck to Eagle School*, by Mac Anderson.

A man was lost while driving through the country. As he tried to reach for the map, he accidentally drove off the road into a ditch. Though he wasn't injured, his car was stuck deep in the mud.

So the man walked to a nearby farm to ask for help. "Warwick can get you out of that ditch," said the farmer, pointing to an old mule standing in a field.

The man looked at the decrepit old mule and looked at the farmer who just stood there repeating, "Yep, old Warwick can do the job."

The man figured he had nothing to lose.

The two men and the mule made their way back to the ditch. The farmer hitched the mule to the car. With a snap of the reins, he shouted, "Pull, Fred! Pull, Jack! Pull, Ted! Pull, Warwick!"

And the mule pulled that car right out of the ditch.

The man was amazed. He thanked the farmer, patted the mule, and asked, "Why did you call out all of those names before you called Warwick?"

The farmer grinned and said, "Old Warwick is just about blind. As long as he believes he's part of a team, he doesn't mind pulling."

Your Sisterhood is your team, helping you make the work you do in your Sisterhood that much easier.

Believe in your team and it will lighten your load.

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Giving and Getting –

An Exercise that Demonstrates the Benefits of Helping Fellow Team Members

Objective: To encourage participants to “reach out and help” other team members whenever necessary.

Materials Required: None

Procedure: Ask for a loan of one dollar from a member of the group. Displaying it prominently in one hand, proceed to ask for the loan of second dollar from another member. Then carefully repay the first loaner with the second dollar, and repay the second loaner with the first dollar. Then ask the rhetorical question, “Is either of these persons now richer than before the exchange?” Then point out to the team that, by contrast, had two *ideas* been shared as readily, their respective givers would be richer in experience than they were before. In addition, of course, even the rest of us might be richer.

Prompt Questions

What factors seem to prevent us from sharing useful ideas and insights with other group members?

What factors should encourage us to share ideas and advice with others on a regular basis?

What are the underlying behavioral reasons why we should aid others (e.g., the law of reciprocity, mutual dependency and expected mutual benefit)?