

Chapter Twelve

Direct Leadership Techniques

Learning Opportunities

Through studying this chapter readers will have the opportunity to

- Describe the many steps of preparing for leadership.
- Understand the importance of knowing demographic information about the group one is about to lead.
- Learn about four different levels of recreation goals.
- Practice writing goals and objectives.
- Outline a method of game and song leadership.
- Explore the idea of leading meetings.
- Consider key points to successful oral presentations.



Photo courtesy of Nina Roberts

One of the most exciting and enjoyable aspects of leisure services leadership is putting into practice all of the leader competencies one has learned. Being in front of a group, sharing one's talents and enthusiasm, teaching new skills, and helping people to achieve a higher quality of life is the highlight of the profession for many leisure services leaders. Part of this is because direct leaders have a tremendous impact on the groups and individuals they lead. A leader's personality and leadership style can incite people to stretch themselves and truly enjoy all of their leisure experiences—this is accomplished through direct leadership.

Direct leadership techniques are those methods and approaches used when leading individuals and groups in parks, recreation, and leisure settings. Direct leadership involves the act of working with a person or persons directly in a face-to-face situation. In the delivery of leisure services, examples of direct leadership include game and song leading, facilitating a leisure education session, giving a guided tour, coaching a youth sport, and leading exercise classes.

To be successful in leisure services, direct leadership skills are necessary. Understanding what goes on “in the trenches” and being successful at working directly with people are two of the most important aspects of success for leaders in the leisure services field. These techniques and skills are used in all leisure settings and with all ages of people.



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Being responsible for direct leadership involves establishing the environment, leading people in a variety of recreation and leisure activities, exploring different leadership styles, and applying theoretical concepts to situations that exist in the provision of leisure services. Successful leadership consists of three phases: *preparation*, *priming the group*, and *delivery*. Each of these phases will be discussed in this chapter.

Leadership Preparation—Phase I

Leadership and being an effective leader do not simply happen; a leader must make them happen. Every leader has her or his own style, methods, and competencies which make leadership work for her or him. Yet, within those personal styles, methods, and competencies common elements of leadership can be identified that help prepare a leader for successful face-to-face leadership.

Everyone has been in situations where ineffective leadership was recognized (e.g., the activity flopped, was disorganized, the environment was chaotic, people were bored), yet few have gone the next step to determine exactly what it was that led to that evaluation. If the leadership presentation and interactions were closely examined, one would likely notice that a hallmark of a good leadership was lacking—being prepared.

It becomes evident very quickly when a leader is ill-prepared for an activity or session. Whether it is facilitating a staff meeting, leading a group of senior citizens in low-impact exercises, or leading songs while waiting for an overdue bus, effective and ineffective leaders can be spotted easily. The ineffective leader comes in, sits down, and says, “So, what are we here to talk about?” An effective leader has an agenda prepared and a copy at each place. An ineffective leader fumbles about trying to decide how she or he wants the room to be set up, an effective leader has the chairs and room arranged prior to participant arrival. An ineffective leader does not know any songs and is trying in vain to maintain order; an effective leader is one around whom the children flock as they take turns leading songs.

This section of the chapter will help set the stage for effective leisure services leadership. Setting the stage is about being prepared. Among other things, good leaders are prepared for the people, the activities, and the unexpected. Leaders interact with people; most recreation leaders work primarily with groups, although there are situations where a leader works with only one or two leisure participants at one time. As a part of leader preparation, understanding something about the participants and the group will help ensure effective and upbeat leadership.

Group Composition

Knowing something about the group one is about to lead makes direct leadership much easier than if one goes in without any information whatsoever. The more a leader knows about a group, the better decisions she or he can make relative to appropriate leadership styles, type of communication, potential difficulties, and the probable needs and desires of the participants. As previously discussed, people of different ages, physical and/or mental abilities, sex, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnic background respond differently to different styles and techniques of leadership. To be best prepared, leisure services leaders might want to ask and answer several questions about the group composition prior to beginning. Questions might include the following:

- How large is the group?
- What is the approximate percentage of females and males in the group?
- What is the mix of ages of participants?
- Do any group members require special considerations due to physical or mental ability differences?
- How experienced are the participants with the planned activities?
- What are the group members’ reasons for participation?
- Do group members know one another?
- Are medical histories available to the leader?

How large is the group?

Group size will impact preparation, implementation, and leadership style. Typically, large groups require more



Photo courtesy of Deb Jordan

Preparation can include ensuring that all participants are focused on the same task.

structure than small groups for a leader to maintain control. They also require additional equipment, time for breaking into smaller groups (if needed for the activity) and receiving instructions. Additional leaders may also be needed to help with supervision of activity leadership. On the other hand, smaller groups tend to complete activities more quickly than do larger groups and demand a higher level of social intimacy and attention from the leader.

What is the approximate percentage of females and males in the group?

This information is sometimes helpful in determining attitudes and comfort levels of participants. As previously discussed, females and males are socialized differently from one another, communicate somewhat distinctly, and have differing expectations of leaders. The effects of socialization last a lifetime, and this knowledge, combined with other information about a group, may give the leader a fairly good picture of what to expect. For instance, if there is a large percentage of boys in a group of thirteen- to fifteen-year-olds, a leader might expect an overall desire for sports and active leadership. On the other hand, if the group consists of women over fifty years old, there might be a stronger desire for socially oriented activities and a more subdued leadership style.

What is the mix of ages of participants?

Knowing the approximate ages (or age cohort) of group members helps a leader select appropriate leadership techniques based on knowledge about developmental maturity, level of sophistication, types of preferred activities, and appropriate complexity of rules. It has already been noted that leading children is different than leading teens and adults. A wide range of ages in one group presents special challenges for a leader to fully engage all participants as much as possible. For example, how a leader presents activity instructions, approaches behavior management, makes decisions, and addresses participant motivation all vary depending upon the ages of the participants.

Do any group members require special considerations due to physical or mental ability differences?

Full involvement of all group members should be a goal of parks, recreation, and leisure services leaders. A leader should always be prepared to adapt activities for someone with special needs; it is helpful to know of specific needs in advance. This information is not always available, however, and simply because one hears that none of the participants have special challenges does not negate the need to be prepared to adapt or change activities and leadership

techniques. For instance, if a leader knows in advance that one group member has poor hearing, she or he can prepare to present activity instructions through physical demonstration as well as verbally. In addition, it may be important to minimize potential noise distractions (e.g., poor acoustics, music playing in the background). Again, no matter what a leader knows ahead of time, she or he should be prepared to make changes based on the actual needs of the participants.

How experienced are the participants with the planned activities?

A leisure services leader can be much more effective if she or he knows whether participants are beginners, experts, or if the group is of mixed abilities. With this knowledge leadership techniques and activities can be modified appropriately to match skill levels and participant goals. As an example, novices may require closer leader supervision, more repetition, and more structure than those who have expertise in a particular activity. In addition, sequencing, pacing, and progression are impacted by previous participant experience, as are risk management concerns.

What are the group members' reasons for participation?

People participate in leisure activities for a variety of reasons: because they were invited to participate, their parents desired it, peer pressure, or they wanted to participate (also for a variety of reasons). Each reason has different implications for the level of readiness and motivations of participants as well as approaches leaders may take in their leadership efforts. If, for instance, a child has been forced to attend because her or his parents needed the supervised childcare, the child may not be positively motivated to participate. She or he may require much leader intervention to participate in an appropriate manner and gain maximum benefits of involvement.

Do group members know one another?

Group members who know one another have likely established some elements of group dynamics. Levels of trust, group roles, decision-making processes, and norms have probably been developed to some extent. This may be an advantage or disadvantage for the leader, depending upon the goals of the group, leader, and agency or organization. In previously formed groups the leader may be perceived as an outsider and may have to work to gain influence and be fully effective. In groups not yet formed, the leader often is influential in deciding the norms and internal processes from the beginning.

Are medical histories available to the leader?

The importance of this information may depend upon the nature of the organization and activity. In a therapeutic recreation setting knowing medical histories could be critical to successful leadership. In all settings, medical history forms for participants and staff members should be a prerequisite to field trips and other off-site trips or activities. A leader who has access to medical background information (as necessary) would be able to make decisions about both activities and leadership approaches that would be most effective and safe for all participants.



Learning about a group prior to leading leisure service activities is one step to effective and successful leadership. A concerned leader will gather information about group composition and weigh it in relation to her or his own experiences, abilities, and limitations to determine appropriate styles and techniques to utilize. The more a leisure services leader knows about the people she or he is about to lead, the easier, more enjoyable, and successful she or he will likely be in guiding any activity.



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Risk Management Considerations

In addition to understanding as much as possible about the participants one is about to lead, it is very important to consider and address issues of risk management. Knowing about the group can help a leader understand concerns of risk management related to the participants, the environment, and her or his own leadership skills and approaches. Effective risk management will protect not only the leader but also the participants, equipment, and facility.

As a competency of direct leadership, effective risk management begins with the development of policies and procedures designed for the health and safety of everyone and everything. Addressing the considerations identified in the following questions prior to engaging a group in leadership will help a leisure services leader ensure safe leisure activities.

Have you gone through the risk management checklist?

An example of a risk management checklist is presented in Chapter 11. To be fully prepared as a leader, all areas should be checked for and cleared of potential hazards. Both a visual and hands-on check should be conducted on a periodic basis as established by agency/organizational policies, and a visual check should be conducted in an activity area prior to each and every activity session.

Are the staff assigned to this direct leadership opportunity right for the job?

As a direct leader, knowing about the skills, temperament and limitations of oneself, as well as peer leaders, is vital to the safe conduct of activities. Utilizing individual strengths and managing limitations helps to spur staff growth and maintains a level of quality and safety for which all parks, recreation, and leisure services leaders should strive.

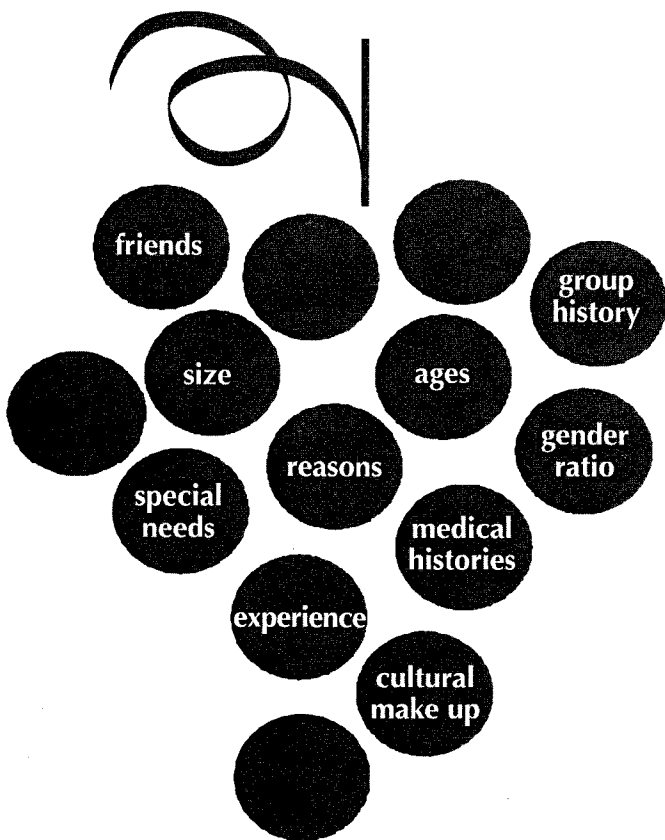


Figure 12.1 Knowing the composition of one's group is a prerequisite to effective leadership.



Knowing about the group can help a leader understand concerns of risk management related to the participants, the environment, and her or his own leadership skills and approaches.



Do you know enough about the participants to be safe?

Learning about group composition not only makes a leader's job easier but it is also an important risk management tool because it helps in activity selection and sequencing, decision making, behavior management, communication, and so on. A review of the chapter on human development and the planning questions in the previous section may help to ensure a thorough understanding.

Are the activities appropriate for the group?

Once having learned about the group composition and having checked safety issues, a leader may now turn her or his attention to the activities. Effective leaders will want to be sure that activities are age and developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive to differences among group members, and meet the goals of the session.

What if...?

If done thoroughly, the preparation phase of direct leadership can be a lengthy process. In fact, preparation time often exceeds the time spent in direct leadership. With experience and practice solid preparation can become second nature. In addition to addressing preparation issues already mentioned, another aspect of direct leadership that is critical to being well-prepared is playing "What if?" "What if?" is an activity and a process that helps a leader to prepare for the unexpected.

Brainstorming questions, scenarios, and potential issues before they happen is a key to facilitating enjoyment, maintaining safety, and managing participant behaviors. Until one is practiced at it, it is best to engage as many people as possible in the generation of "What if?" questions and related issues. In addition to generating questions and issues, it is important to identify appropriate responses. Simply raising the questions without appropriate answers does little for leader readiness. Many "What if?" questions can be asked in preparation for the delivery of leisure services. For instance:

- *What if* someone has to go to the bathroom in the middle of presenting an activity? It is fairly com-

mon for many children to have to go to the bathroom when one child expresses the need. Will the entire activity be stopped for the whole group to go? Does the child have to be escorted to the restroom? (If in a public setting, this would be wise.) Is it possible for participants to come and go as they need? Where is the bathroom in relation to the activity space (e.g., distance, street-crossing hazards)?

- *What if* a participant forgets her or his lunch at an all-day event? If an activity is a full-day activity and a lunch is forgotten, leaders will want to be prepared to assist the hungry participant. Do the leaders bring extra fruit and bread to share? Does the agency provide emergency money for such contingencies? Will all participants be asked to share? Or is the participant left to go hungry?
- *What if* a minor does not bring a completed parental permission slip for a field trip? Parks, recreation, and leisure services organizations usually have strict policies on this issue. Permission slips are required for liability reasons, and allowing a child to participate without one can put the leader and agency at risk. What is your agency or organizational policy? Is the child sent home? What if parents are not at home? Is there someone available to stay with the child?
- *What if* a participant arrives early or late? Participants arrive at structured leisure activities at various times; some arrive 15 to 20 minutes early, while others arrive 15 to 20 minutes late. What do the

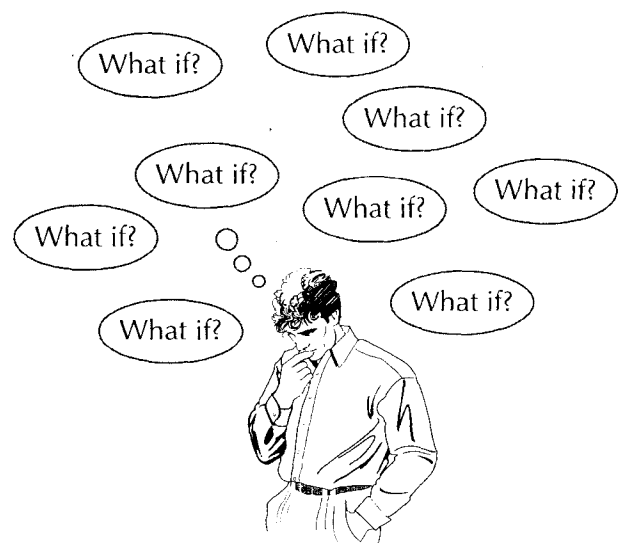


Figure 12.2 *What if?* prepares the leader for the unexpected.

early or late arrivals do? Are staff assigned to assist them? How long will an activity be postponed while waiting for latecomers?

- *What if* the facility is not accessible and a person who uses a wheelchair arrives to participate? Do you turn them away? Find an alternative location? Find some way to make a quick modification? Let them figure it out themselves?
- *What if* someone is not wearing appropriate footwear? What are the safety and participation implications?
- *What if* someone refuses to participate? Should she or he be “forced” to participate?
- *What if* someone gets injured or becomes ill? Is the emergency medical system in place? Do all leaders know what to do?
- *What if* a fight starts? Do the leaders break it up, call police, or report it? to whom?
- *What if* it begins to rain on an outdoor activity? Is the activity over? Is the activity moved? If so, to where? How will this be accomplished?
- *What if* the equipment breaks? Are there replacements available? Can it be repaired? Are repair materials and tools handy?
- *What if* the power goes out? What are the safety and participation implications?
- *What if*...?



Asking and answering “What if?” questions will help to minimize hazards, maximize participant satisfaction, and make leadership easier and more enjoyable. After learning everything possible about the group, going through the risk management checklist, and playing “What if?” the next element of preparation is to consider and develop goals and objectives for the leadership session. Understanding participant goals and articulating leader goals and objectives will provide the focus and direction for the leisure experience.



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Goals and Objectives

While therapeutic recreation specialists commonly articulate goals and objectives for clients, in many other areas of our field, direct leaders do not engage in this practice. For many years now, school teachers have been articulating and writing goals and objectives for their students, but in the leisure services field the connection between effective teaching and effective leadership is often missed. However, just as effective teaching is effective leadership, effective leadership involves effective teaching. During activities parks, recreation, and leisure services leaders may teach participants songs, games, or new leisure skills; thus, teaching is integral to leadership.

Goals and objectives are the bedrock of effective and sound leadership. They provide the structure around which leisure activities are built and help leisure services leaders define their tasks. An effective and well-prepared leader knows what she or he hopes to accomplish prior to engaging in the leadership experience. Among other impacts, this knowledge influences participant involvement, how instructions are given, and what group leadership techniques are used.

Goals

A goal may be short-term or long-term; it is a course of action that one intends to follow—an aim. Objectives are the steps to reaching the goal. A well-prepared leader is one who has a solid sense of the goals and objectives she or he hopes to accomplish. A lack of goals and objectives may result in aimless activities, unsatisfied participants, and ineffective leadership. Russell (2005) suggested four types of goals.

Societal goals. Societal goals are aims or ideals of a community; they often relate to issues of social justice and environmental stewardship. These goals tend to be culturally relevant (meaning they change with the times), and may or may not be in the best interest of all community members. Examples of societal goals include the goals of stopping child violence, preventing teenage parenthood, and maintaining a litter-free neighborhood. These goals may directly or indirectly impact the provision of leisure services. In fact, it is quite common for leisure programs to follow in the wake of articulated social goals. An example of this is the rise in 24-hour programming in response to shift work.

Professional goals. These goals relate to several subcomponents that expressly impact face-to-face leaders: professionalism, performance standards (including certification), and ethical behaviors. A high level of dedication and commitment to the organization and the profession will facilitate personal development in these areas. Leaders who have professional goals strive to meet professional

standards as evidenced by ongoing personal evaluations and gaining appropriate certifications. In addition, exhibiting personal values and ethics that are in line with those adopted by the profession are other types of professional goals.

Agency or organizational goals. Agency or organizational goals are those espoused by the parks and recreation agency or organization. Often, these goals are identified in the mission statement or a statement of purpose. Agency/organization goals might include things such as: to make a profit; to provide the highest quality services at the lowest price; and to see that all people, no matter their socioeconomic status, receive the benefits of leisure services. As an example, one goal of Special Olympics International (SOI) is to provide sports training to help develop physical fitness for people over eight years of age who have mental retardation. This goal drives the specific program goals and objectives of SOI. If an agency is tax supported, its goals typically will be in line with the prevailing societal goals and norms of the local community.

Participant goals. Participant goals are quite diverse. People may desire to participate in leisure to exercise, to learn a new skill, to be with others, to do something different, to experience excitement, to respond to peer or parental pressure, and for many other reasons. As the leader, it usually is best to focus on one or two participant goals in the planning and leading of programs. As an example, an SOI participant may have a personal goal to improve skills specific to a particular sport—in order to address this participant goal, a leader will first have to be aware of the participant's desire for improvement.

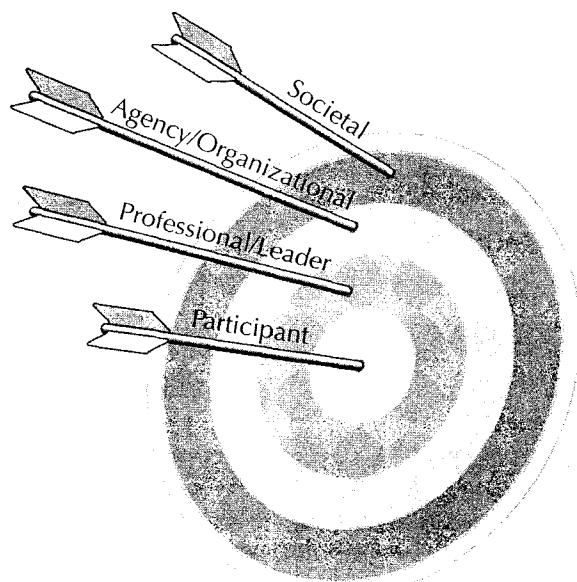


Figure 12.3 Four types of goals

To provide structure and focus to leisure experiences, an effective leader identifies the goals and objectives of each activity. Oftentimes goals and objectives are established for an entire day, week, or session. For maximum effectiveness it is important that a direct leader's goals and objectives be compatible with the goals and objectives of the agency/organization for which she or he is working. Goals are broad statements that describe the anticipated or desired behaviors of participants. Common participant leisure goals include the following:

- **Skill/Knowledge development.** Skill development can include physical skills such as dancing, fly fishing, jumping, or painting; it can also include cognitive skills such as critical thinking, recognition, or memory. Knowledge development includes such elements as local history, rules of a game, or obtaining factual information about natural phenomena such as stargazing or plant succession. A session or activity that has skill or knowledge development as a goal will encourage teaching and practice sessions. A skill and/or knowledge development goal will tend to dictate that information and activities be presented in such a progression as to allow participants time to develop an understanding of basic material and competencies prior to moving on to more complex skills and knowledge.
- **Interpersonal skills** (e.g., decision making, problem solving, communication) and social goals (e.g., being with others, sharing, helping) are common reasons people participate in a wide variety of leisure experiences. Enhancing the likelihood that these types of goals will be met is often a secondary aim of leisure services leadership. This may be accomplished through manipulating the physical environment and purposefully planning activities that will enhance these types of goals.
- **Democratic living skills** (e.g., cooperation, ideals of fair play, equality) may be the focus of leisure activities for a variety of people. Through leisure, where fun and enjoyment are the primary foci, lessons about being a good sport, how to win



Goals are broad statements that describe the anticipated or desired behaviors of participants.



graciously, lose with dignity, and work together are learned and practiced.

- *To have fun and serve as diversionary (i.e., non-utilitarian) activity* is a perfectly legitimate goal of recreation and leisure activities. In fact, many participate in leisure experiences with having fun as the primary goal. This enhances health and quality of life in a number of ways.
- *Health benefits.* Many people engage in leisure for the physical exercise and mental health benefits derived from participation. Physical exercise makes participants feel better physically, emotionally and mentally. The health and wellness benefits of many leisure activities are tremendous. Physical exercise is often seen as a secondary goal or positive “bonus benefit” of leisure participation by many participants.

People engage in leisure for a variety of reasons and have a variety of goals for which they aim. As a leader, it is perfectly acceptable (although it can be confusing, initially) to work toward more than one goal at a time. To meet each goal leisure services leaders develop objectives, which are the stepping stones to achieving goals.

Objectives

Objectives serve as the practical and identifiable steps to reaching goals. If one were to picture a staircase, objectives would be the individual steps and the goal would be

at the top of the stairs. Each step can have three different types of objectives: *cognitive*, *behavioral*, and *affective* (Bloom, 1956). *Cognitive* objectives are those that deal with thinking, *behavioral* objectives deal with physical actions and skills, and *affective* objectives deal with feelings and emotions.

In leisure services all three objectives are addressed through direct leadership although one may be more emphasized than another. For instance, in working with the frail elderly one might focus on cognitive objectives dealing with mental stimulation and memory retention; participants in rehabilitation may focus on objectives such as coordination and strength; and when working with children with developmental disabilities a leisure services leader might focus on affective objectives such as sharing and cooperation.

As steps to goals, objectives are statements that indicate very specific actions to be taken to help meet the goal. They are necessary elements of program or treatment plans. In leadership, articulating the goal or general purpose of what one does first is important for structure; clearly stating the related objectives helps make goals achievable.

While writing objectives can be a challenge to learn, practicing and learning how to write them are well worth the effort. To those just learning how to write objectives, practice and feedback become very important to successful writing and use of objectives. In essence, objectives may be defined as specific, measurable statements needed to



Skill Development



Interpersonal Skills



Democratic Living Skills



To Have Fun



Health Benefits

Figure 12.4 Common types of participant goals

reach a goal. In that light, objectives must be related to goals. Thinking *SMART* helps a leader to remember that objectives are:

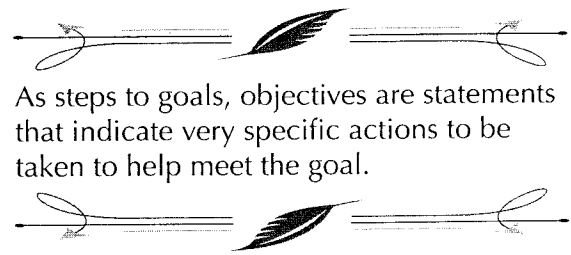
- S = Specific
- M = Measurable
- A = Achievable
- R = Realistic
- T = Trackable

If any one of these individual components is missing or weak, the objectives will not be as effective as they need to be. Writing down objectives as they are developed aids in focusing the leader, and provides a framework and reasoning for leadership actions taken. The aim of writing objectives, whether they be cognitive, behavioral, or affective, is to design them in such a way that if they were turned into a question, an individual could answer without hesitation, “Yes” or “No.” If the best answer is “sort of” or “maybe,” the objective is not written as specifically as needed.

ABCDs of Writing Behavioral Objectives

To aid in the development and writing of objectives, some people find it helpful to follow the ABCD method. Remember, objectives go hand-in-hand with goals. Thus, prior to writing objectives, one must know the goal for which one is striving. Since objectives are the steps to achieving goals they must be specific, measurable and meaningful. Objectives are used to serve as guideposts to measure whether or not an individual has done the action named in the objective.

Writing an objective is much like writing a sentence—there is a *subject*, *verb*, *object*, and *modifier*—and every objective must have all these components. In this case, the subject is *who* will do the behavior, the *what* is the verb (or behavior the subject will be doing), the *how* is the object that explains the behavior to be done, and *how well* corresponds to the modifier. These elements are the *ABCDs* of writing objectives and are further defined here:



As steps to goals, objectives are statements that indicate very specific actions to be taken to help meet the goal.

A = Audience

The audience identifies *who* is doing the action or behavior described in the objective. The audience should be identified as specifically as possible. Audiences commonly found in leisure and recreation objectives include campers, children, participants, swimmers, clients, runners, players, adults, guests, customers, teens, and other terms that describe an individual or group of people. For example,

The participant....

B = Behavior

The behavior is the *action* the audience must do — It is the verb and is required in a behavioral objective. There should be only one verb or behavior in each objective; otherwise, the objective is extremely difficult to measure. Common behaviors in leisure and recreation objectives include throw, hop, jump, count, answer, demonstrate, build, run, lift, read, speak, introduce, play, sing, take initiative, control her or his emotions, collaborate, and other actions or behaviors common to the accomplishment of a particular leisure task. For example,

The participant will introduce three group members to the rest of the group....

C = Condition or Criterion

A condition helps to *describe* the behavior in specific terms. Anything that serves to further identify the behavior in the objective is considered a condition. Often, a condition can be recognized by the way it describes how or when an action is to be accomplished. For instance, if an

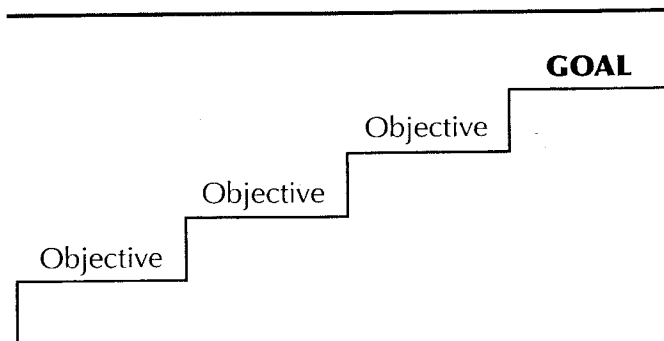


Figure 12.5 Objectives as stairsteps

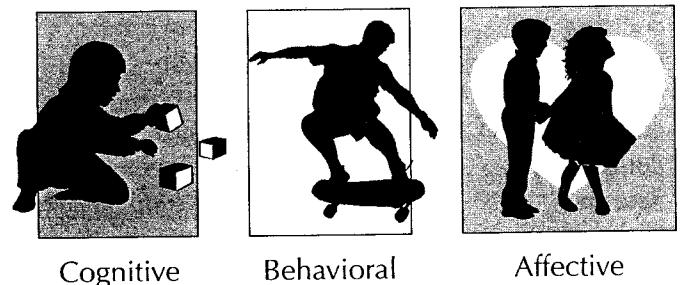


Figure 12.6 Three types of objectives

objective specified that the audience was to throw a ball, how would participants throw it (e.g., overhand, underhand, with two hands)? In addition, what kind of ball must they throw (e.g., a football, basketball, playground ball, tennis ball, Koosh ball)? When will the throwing occur (e.g., by the last session, before the session is over, by the end of the season, at the beginning)?

Several authors further characterize this element of an objective by identifying possible types of conditions or criteria (Shank & Coyle, 2002; Stumbo & Peterson, 2004). The types of conditions are listed along with an example (in the parentheses):

- Amount of time (...within five minutes)
- Degree of accuracy (...within two feet of the end line)
- Degree of assistance (...without any assistance from the leader)
- Form (...using the correct formation as described in the playbook)
- Number of trials (...4 out of 5 times)
- Percentages or fractions (...70% of the time)
- Specific subskills (as evidenced by being able to make eye contact, remember the other person's name, respond appropriately to another person's statements, and so forth)

Continuing with the objective we are developing, an example would be

The participant will introduce three group members to the rest of the group *by saying each person's name and identifying her or his favorite leisure activities....*

D = Degree

The degree in an objective describes *how well* the behavior will be accomplished. To what degree of competence will the audience be held? Various ways of stating degrees include such things as 90% of the time, with fewer than four errors, without any leader prompts, without losing her balance, and so on. The degree must match the behavior—it should answer the question, “How well must the audience do the behavior?” Therefore, if the action is throwing, how well must the person throw (e.g., hitting the target 8 out of 10 times)? If singing is the behavior, how well must the individual sing (e.g., without any mistakes)? If playing jacks and the goal is improved social skills, the degree might be “without arguing over lost points.” As an example,

The participant will introduce three group members to the rest of the group by saying each person's name and identifying those members' favorite leisure activities *without making a mistake.*



Leaders who get in the practice of writing goals and objectives will be well prepared to address the needs and wishes

Table 12A Sample verbs for use in writing objectives

Cognitive (thinking and knowledge)		Behavioral (actions and skills)		Affective (feelings and attitudes)	
analyze	exemplify	catch	recognize	accept	express loyalty
apply	explain	draw	roll	acknowledge	follow
assess	identify	grasp	run	advocate	group
combine	illustrate	hit	sing	assist	obey
compare	interpret	hop	sit	assume responsibility	organize
conclude	justify	jump	skip	be aware	prefer
construct	label	leap	smell	care for	rank
contrast	list	listen	stand	choose	respond
define	name	observe	step	comply	show concern
describe	plan	pick up	strum	contribute	support
design	recall	pivot	swim	control	value
differentiate	select	plant	swing	cooperate	volunteer
evaluate		play	talk	express emotions	
		read	touch		

The degree must match the behavior— It should answer the question, “How well must the audience do the behavior?”

of their participants. The preparation that is done as goals and objectives are written help a leader to consider many of the “What if?” questions. Competence in writing goals and objectives demonstrates a professional commitment to the groups with which a leader works. In particular, those in therapeutic recreation or who are working in the inclusion field will need to develop some proficiency in this skill area to meet the needs of the participants (and meet the requirements of the treatment or inclusion plan). Figure 12.7 presents a flow chart to aid in writing objectives.

Setting the Tone

Setting the tone is a very important skill, and the responsibility for it rests with the leader. This stage of leadership begins in leader preparation and continues through the second phase of Priming the Group. It is integral to the planning and preparation component of leadership. One way leaders begin to set the tone is by manipulating the environment. Leaders manipulate (in a positive sense) situations, people, and activities all the time. In fact, those who are highly skilled at positive manipulation are often very successful leaders; participants seem to lead themselves. Positive manipulation, then, is the artful handling of an environment or situation to positively influence a leisure experience.

An effective leader manipulates the environment to set the mood, to encourage participation, and to make general leadership easier. Leaders purposefully arrange the physical environment to enhance the socioemotional and psychological elements of leisure settings. The *socioemotional* element is concerned with individuals’ feelings of belonging, affection, comfort, and acceptance. All of these elements are very important to successful leisure service experiences. Positive affect is developed through manipulating the physical and activity environment. The *psycho-*

Positive manipulation, then, is the artful handling of an environment or situation to positively influence a leisure experience.

logical environment involves feelings of identity, achievement, and mastery. By changing the physical environment, leaders can contribute to meeting the diverse needs of participants.

An effective leader might consider altering the physical environment in the following ways:

- The use of color in leisure settings is a subtle, but highly effective way to manipulate the physical environment for social and psychological purposes. “Hot” colors (e.g., red, orange, yellow) tend to increase both cognitive and behavioral activity levels, while “cool” colors (e.g., green, blue, violet)

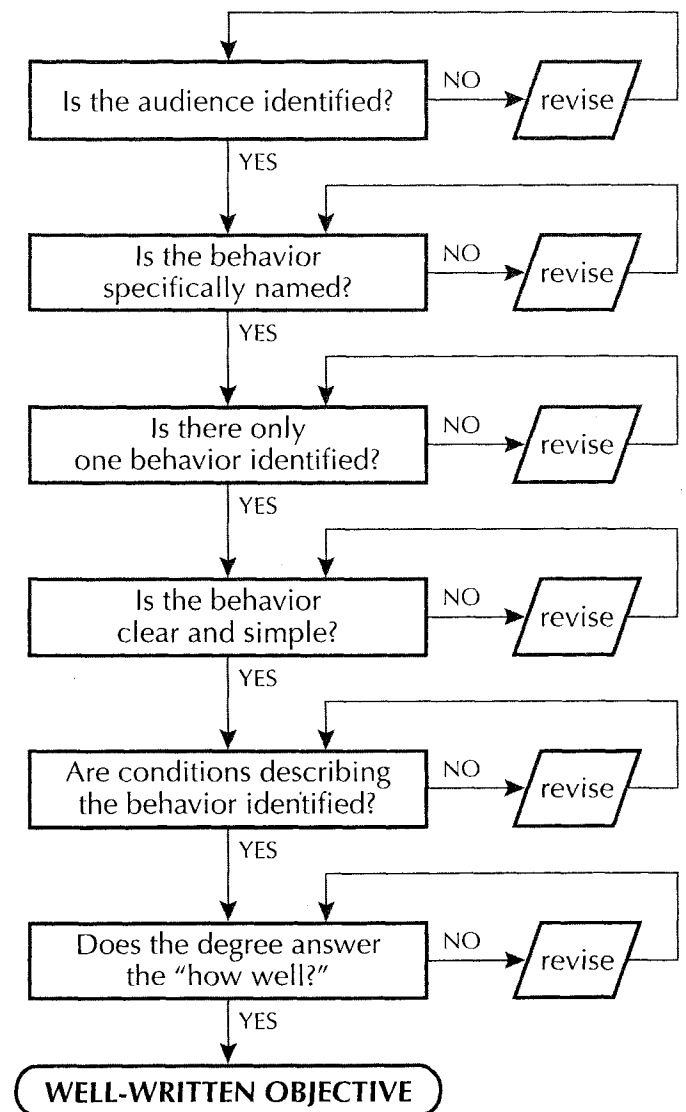


Figure 12.7 To determine if an objective is well-written and meets needed criteria, ask these questions (adapted from Mager, 1984)

tend to induce a calmer, more quiet response. In addition, bright colors tend to excite participants while pastels and muted colors help to maintain a more relaxed atmosphere. Leaders would be wise to decide what is appropriate to meet the desired goals and objectives, and manipulate the environment to meet them.

- Lighting is another physical element that can be manipulated; it is often used to enhance socioemotional responses in participants. Bright, white lights set a mood of excitement and alertness while softer lighting can set a mood for intimacy and group closeness. For example, we rarely see bright fluorescent lights at dance clubs—It makes more sense to have bright lights for a crafts project.
- Noise, sounds, and music also affect the mood and atmosphere of a leisure setting. Amusement parks, malls, and eating establishments have been using various types of sounds, noises, music, and colors to enhance our buying and eating habits for years. Loudness, style of tunes, and tonal quality all impact how people feel about others, the activity, and the situation.
- Artwork, murals, posters, pictures, and the use of various media contribute to the atmosphere as well. Involving participants in the creation of wall hangings can enhance a variety of emotions and, at the same time, create a feeling of ownership. Often, leaders cannot change the color of the activity space, but the effect can be accomplished through the use of colorful pictures, posters, and wall hangings.
- Arrange space and equipment for maximum safety. This involves following a risk management checklist and putting away or guarding hazards (e.g., benches or chairs in a gymnasium). Separating incompatible structures and activities is an important consideration in arranging space for safety.
- Arrange space and equipment for maximum efficiency by having equipment and structures to be used in a convenient location. Has the needed gear and equipment been arranged nearby, yet is it out of the way of other activities?
- Arrange activity space and equipment for maximum effectiveness. It is not particularly effective to have an activity that utilizes loud music next to an area to be used for individual skill instruction (this seems to happen all too frequently). A tip for leisure services leaders is when giving instructions (or simply trying to talk to an individual) for an activity in an area where there are many potential

distractions, arrange and focus the group on the leader. As the leader, stand in a corner or constrained space and arrange the group so they face you and are less likely to be distracted by other stimuli.

- Consider the type, size and shape of the open space. How will it be utilized to its maximum benefit and usefulness for the anticipated participants?



Helpful Hints

- Do unto others as they would want to be done unto.
- Involving participants (especially children) in decision-making processes takes extra time; do it anyway.
- Ask questions that will require more than a yes/no response.
- Never ask a question if you are not prepared for the answer.
- If out-of-doors, let the group face the leader; the leader faces the sun.
- Avoid wearing dark glasses (unless for safety), it hides your eyes from participants.
- Flexibility and being able to respond in ambiguous situations are hallmarks of good leaders.
- Always end an activity while the participants are having fun.
- Safety should never be compromised, nor negotiated.
- End an activity on a positive note, even if the participants were not always positive.
- Love the person; it is okay to dislike the behavior.
- Provide structured choices.
- Power is like love—the more one gives away, the more one has.
- Be aware of your surroundings, arrange participants to minimize outside distractions.
- All children need to run, jump, and scream—Let them.
- Always be honest with children, teens, and adults.
- Adult logic and reasoning does not always make sense to a child.
- Participants will be excited about things leaders are excited about.
- Remind yourself (and other adults) to *play* every once in a while.

Figure 12.8 Helpful hints for successful leadership

As one can see, from manipulating the physical environment to articulating goals and objectives, playing “What if?” when attending to risk management concerns, and learning about the group one is about to lead, there is quite a bit to do prior to ever meeting the group. This preparation phase is essentially the first “contact” a leader has with a group and is very important to the overall success of the leader. Once well-prepared, a leader is then ready to meet the participants and engage in the second phase of direct leadership—priming the group.

Priming the Group—Phase II

Phase II of leadership in parks, recreation, and leisure services is priming the group for an activity, song, or other type of leisure session. Completing preparation steps first will provide the information a leader needs for selecting the types of leadership techniques that will be most effective in the anticipated situations. Priming the group includes getting a group’s attention, dividing a group into subgroups, and learning participant names.

In general, it is best to think of ways to accomplish the priming tasks that are fun, experiential (i.e., active and interactive), and integrated into the actual activity. This will help to keep things from feeling choppy, thereby increasing leader effectiveness and participant satisfaction. The examples for the various priming elements provided below are appropriate for adults, children, and people of different physical and mental abilities. Understanding the group culture helps make for an understanding leader. It is during these initial priming minutes that the tone is set for the remainder of the leadership interaction. In addition, it is during this phase that leaders will make an impression (first, and often lasting) on participants; thus, this is a critical phase for successful leadership.

Getting a Group’s Attention

Prior to beginning an activity with a group, part of the leader’s role is to get the group’s attention. Initially, getting a group’s attention may be a bit chaotic. Particularly in large groups, there is a lot of noise, fidgeting, and movement as people expectantly await the start of an activity.



Priming the group includes getting a group’s attention, dividing a group into subgroups, and learning participant names.



An effective leader strives to use this excitement as the group moves into the conduct of the activity itself.

Recreation and leisure activities should be fun and enjoyable for all; fun is one of the defining elements of a recreation experience. Therefore, techniques where a leader stares a group into quiet submission, incessantly blows a whistle, or berates individuals with voice tone and, “Quiet please,” are antithetical to meeting the goal of having fun and promoting the leisure ideal.

Basic principles for activities used in priming a group include being:

- fun
- unexpected
- respectful
- experiential

Making some type of loud noise is a common method of getting a group’s attention. If this is the leader’s preferred technique, it should be as fun and unique as possible. One noisemaker to avoid is a traditional whistle; a traditional whistle is loud, piercing, and reminds many people of authority figures (e.g., referees, police officers) for whom they do not necessarily hold positive leisure connotations. Using a nontraditional noisemaker such as a party horn, a drum, or a dinner (or cow) bell maintains a level of fun, is unique, and is usually unexpected. It is best to use a noisemaker that utilizes low tones and pitches; high-pitched whistles and horns are difficult to hear for some people. In addition, the louder high-pitched whistles



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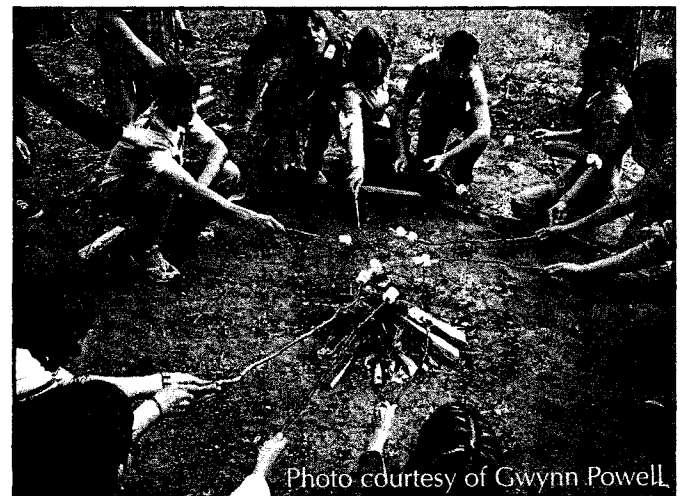


Photo courtesy of Gwynn Powell

When a group is in a circle formation, everyone is on equal footing.



Basic principles for activities used in priming a group include being:

- fun
- unexpected
- respectful
- experiential



are, the more shrill and displeasing they sound. Leisure services leaders will want to experiment with a variety of noisemakers, and use them sparingly—Frequent use of a noisemaker may lessen its effectiveness at getting a group's attention.

Dividing Groups

For some activities or because of the nature of the participants it may be necessary to divide the group into smaller subgroups. Again, leaders are challenged to remember that leisure settings should have an element of joy and fun—even when dividing a group into subgroups. Following the same guidelines as mentioned for getting a group's attention, dividing a group should be fun, enjoyable, experiential, and leave people with their dignity; this requires conscious thought and planning on the part of the leader. It is particularly helpful if the methods used for dividing a group relate to the goals and objectives of the session. If a primary goal is to enhance social skills, the leader will want the group to divide in such a way as to facilitate social interactions. If skill development is a goal, dividing a large group into groups where skills can be developed (e.g., people of like skills and abilities together in one group) will be important. Likewise, if maximum participation is a goal, then subgroups should reflect that need. There are many ways to divide a large group into smaller groups that are creative, equitable, and do not negatively impact participant self-esteem. It is the leader's responsibility to learn, practice and select methods that enhance, rather than detract from, the larger leisure experience.

Several techniques for dividing groups should be avoided in most leisure settings: using team captains, counting off, and dividing by sex. At one time in many of our lives we have experienced someone dividing a group by using team captains. As a child (or adult), being the last one chosen can be a hurtful and humiliating experience. There are few, if any, circumstances in leisure services that warrant using this method to divide a large group into smaller ones.

Another undesirable technique used to divide a large group is by counting off. This is commonly used in school systems, and when used with children often will evoke a



flurry of activity as youngsters quickly try to realign so as to be in the same group as their best friend. Used with adults, counting off may be viewed as childish and paternalistic. An advantage to counting off when dividing a group, however, is that it is a time-efficient way to break a large group into smaller ones. If time is running short, counting off may be an acceptable technique to dividing a group; it should be used sparingly.



Yet another less than desirable technique of dividing a large group into several small groups is to divide by sex—females in one group and males in the other. Unless for an activity-based purpose or to meet a particular goal, this method of pitting females and males against one another often perpetuates stereotypes of “us versus them” and may establish a negative tone within the group.

Learning Names

Success in leadership is a combination of many things, one of which is earning the respect of participants. People like and respect those whom they believe like and respect them. One way to show this is by using people's names, and by using and pronouncing names the way people wish to be called. For example, an individual who introduces herself as Tomika should be called Tomika, not Tommi or some other derivative that the leader feels is cute, nice, or easier to pronounce.

Learning names is a task often overlooked (it is assumed it will simply happen) or completed very quickly and without a lot of innovation. This may be due to time constraints, inappropriate assumptions, or inexperience on the part of the leader, but learning names of individuals is vital to the enjoyment and productivity of the group. Calling, “Hey, you in the green-striped shirt” is both disrespectful and oftentimes ineffective in actually getting that person's attention. Leaders have the opportunity to facilitate the learning of participant names for themselves as well as other participants. Leaving the learning of names up to individual participants may result in group members who are uncomfortable, lack trust among themselves, and



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are slow to come together; this may result in the leisure environment feeling somewhat stilted and uncomfortable. A leader can remedy this situation through planning and using creative activities to facilitate the learning of everyone's names.

At this stage the leisure services leader has completed preparation for the leadership session and has primed the group. It is now time to provide activity instructions or directions to participants. Leaders are reminded that throughout this process, considerations and modifications should be made to accommodate the needs of the group based on the characteristics of the participants.

Delivery—Phase III

Once the preliminary tasks of being prepared, getting a group's attention, dividing a group, and learning names has occurred, it is time to move into the delivery phase of the activity. Delivery refers to the aspects of activity and song leadership that involve introducing an activity and giving directions or instructions to participants so they can play.

Leading games and activities is part art and part science. The art of leadership includes the intangible qualities of leadership that are critical to success such as using sound judgment; integrating one's personality into activity leadership; and having a positive, upbeat attitude. These leadership elements are difficult to teach and are acquired and internalized over time.

The science aspect of activity leadership can be readily taught. It involves following a series of steps and much proper planning. Children and adults can be taught these steps as they begin to lead others in a variety of games, sports, arts-and-crafts, and drama events.

Introducing an Activity

Introducing an activity, song, or leisure experience continues to refine the tone that was established when the



Learning names of individuals is vital to the enjoyment and productivity of the group.



group was learning names and dividing into smaller subgroups. Typically, a leader does four things when introducing an activity: (a) identifies herself or himself, (b) identifies the activity, (c) explains the object or goal of the activity (e.g., to score goals, to cooperate, to run from here to there), and (d) tells a short story (i.e., fact or fiction) to help set the mood of the activity.

Leader Introduction

An oversight of many leisure services leaders is to neglect to introduce or reintroduce themselves when they work with participants. Staff members who have worked at a particular organization or agency for a long time often have the mistaken belief that everyone knows their names. Since group members continuously change in leisure settings, the leader will want to ensure that everyone knows her or his name; thus, it may be best to introduce oneself at the beginning of each session.

Name the Activity

After introducing oneself to participants most leaders will then tell participants the name of the activity or song. This is to help participants understand and put into context what is coming next. Bear in mind that although some people might say that they have played "this game" all of their lives, they may know a version different from the one you are about to introduce. Leaders should not assume people know how to play even "standard" activities or sing common songs. There are many local variations in activities, and various tunes and melodies for common songs.

Identify the Goal of the Activity

Prior to beginning an activity, it is best to remind or tell participants about the aim of the activity. This serves to



The art of leadership includes the intangible qualities of leadership that are critical to success such as using sound judgment, integrating one's personality into activity leadership, and having a positive and upbeat attitude.



ensure that everyone is aiming for the same goal. While the leader may have “to enhance social interaction among participants” as a goal, the goal that is shared with participants at this point is the goal of the activity. For example, although a leader may select checkers as an appropriate activity to increase fine-motor control in the hands, at this time participants would be told that the goal of checkers is for one player to take all of her or his opponent’s pieces before the opponent takes her or his pieces.

Tell a Story

After clearly stating the goal of the activity, it becomes important to further establish the mood (i.e., the leader has already altered the physical environment to maximize the desired activities and affect). This is often accomplished through telling a short story (i.e., 60 seconds or less). The story might be fact or fiction, and its purpose is to engage participants, to draw them in, to get them “psyched.” Using all of her or his enthusiasm, a leader might personalize the story (e.g., “I used to play this when I was younger,” “My great-great grandmother taught me this.”), make it pure fantasy (e.g., “Picture the days of long ago, when dragons ruled the skies;” “A UFO landed in a field and creatures I had never seen before got out of the spaceship”), or teach with the story (e.g., “This game originated in Africa and was played by people during the harvest season.”). The story helps to set the mood and accomplish the leader’s goals for the day.

Giving Directions

Once the activity has been introduced it is time to give participants the directions for how to play. As stated earlier, a leader should be careful not to assume, and not to allow others to assume, that they know how to play a particular activity. Games, activities, and songs have many variations, and it is usually important for participants to be playing by the same rules. In stating directions or guidelines for an activity, a leader might remember the following acronyms: *KISS*, *KIP* and *PLAY*.

KISS

Keep It Short and Simple is the most important guideline for giving directions for activities and songs. An effective leader will speak in clear, unambiguous language, say what she or he means, then stop. This of course, requires that a leader be very familiar with the activity. A leader who is unfamiliar with the activity instructions often will hesitate, give contradictory instructions, and otherwise confuse the participants. Well-prepared leaders will have played the activity and practiced their leadership of it prior to leading it.

KIP

Keep It Positive is another guideline for effective leadership. This refers to stating the rules of an activity in a *do* rather than *do not* fashion. For example, teen centers often post rules—no smoking, no drugs, no cursing, no fighting, no horseplay. This long list of what one cannot do can set a negative tone before the leader even introduces herself or himself.

Without explicit directions about the desired behaviors, people will often generate their own ideas. In addition, constantly being told to not do things may leave a person feeling small and powerless. If leaders state rules in a positive fashion, they will likely be better respected and, therefore, effective. Leisure services leaders should get into the habit of telling people what they can do when leading activities.

PLAY

PLAY means just what it says. Once the leader gives enough instruction to participate safely and within necessary guidelines, leaders should stop talking and allow participants to play, sing, experience, or otherwise participate. Whether it be a crafts class for senior citizens, sports in a youth league, or aquatic movement in a rehabilitation setting, leisure services leaders need to get out of the way and let people play. Play is when participants are engaged in the leisure experience, and it is when objectives and goals are being met; it is influenced by leadership.

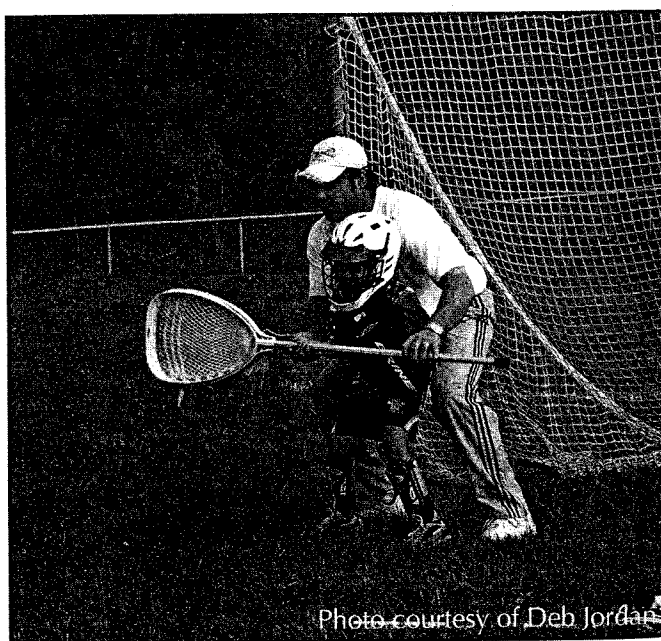


Photo courtesy of Deb Jordan

At times, the best way to give instructions for an activity is to model it with the participant.

Leading Songs

Leading songs is much like leading activities in that the techniques described above work equally well with either. The important thing to recognize about song leading is that one does not have to know how to sing (e.g., be able to carry a tune) to be an effective song leader. Many great recreational song leaders are not at all musically inclined.

Music, particularly singing, is an element that in and of itself is joyful and uplifting; it is difficult to sing and be somber. Singing can be a magical element in any setting and with all ages. Singing can be used during down time, as a start up activity, and as part of closing an event or day. It can help get participants energized, calm them down, or get them in a particular mood.

As with activity leadership, when leading songs leaders should begin with a leader introduction, name the song, tell a story, and then give directions. If a round is to be sung, it will be necessary to divide into a number of groups. Leaders may choose to divide the group into sub-groups after learning names or after singing the entire song through once.

Sing the Song Through Once in Its Entirety

So that participants have a context, it is usually best for the leader to sing the entire song through once, using hand and body motions as appropriate. This might be done alone, or with the assistance of participants from the group; more than three assistants may make it difficult for listeners to make out the words of the song.

Steps to Leading Songs

When analyzed step-by-step, leading songs commonly follows these steps:

1. Once the participants have heard and seen the song (and motions) the leader sings a verse and has the group repeat line-by-line.
2. Depending upon the length of the song and the abilities of the group, the leader may wish to sing two lines at a time and have the group repeat.
3. Sing the entire song through with the participants.
4. If there are hand or body motions in the song, the leader goes through the song again, using the



One does not have to know how to sing (i.e., be able to carry a tune) to be an effective song leader. Many great recreational song leaders are not at all musically inclined.



motions. Making one motion at a time and having the group imitate it allows for learning by demonstration. Depending upon the length of the song and the abilities of the group, the leader may wish to sing two lines at a time with the motions and have the group repeat and imitate.

5. Sing and act out the entire song. The song should be sung a minimum of twice through to help all participants to best learn the song.

Teaching a Song in a Round

There are a few extra steps to teaching and leading a song to be sung in a round:

1. A round is usually sung as many times as there are groups. This evens things out so that every group has an opportunity to sing the song through the same number of times.
2. Follow the steps listed for song leading.
3. Once the entire group has “a handle on” the song, divide the group into appropriate numbers. Three groups are most common, but depending upon the age group and the song, this may be adjusted up or down.
4. It is the leader’s job to engage all participants in singing their part of the round at the appropriate times. An engaging leader will use her or his entire body to engage the group. By physically moving from group to group, using grand arm and hand



Photo courtesy of Deb Jordan

Music can be joyous and uplifting, and all leaders can become good song leaders.

gestures, and mouthing the words in front of each group so the members are sure when it is their turn to sing, a leader can enthusiastically engage the subgroups.

Transitions

Transitions are psychological links between two or more different experiences which help smooth out leadership and interactions with the group. Transitions provide the connection between activities, programs, or sessions in a leisure setting. They serve to maintain momentum in activities, help to reassert leader positioning, and provide a psychological bridge so participants feel comfortable with where they are and where they are going. Commonly, transitions are verbal links made by the leader; they occur between the phases of activity leadership and between activities themselves.

Transitions often link activities together by what is similar between them. For instance, if the group was moving from playing wallyball to playing crab soccer, a leader might make a transition by commenting on the use of the ball: "We just finished playing a game that used a small ball; now we are going to play an activity that uses a large ball." Leaders may also use transitions to comment on what is different between activities: "We just finished playing a game where we used our hands; now we are going to play an activity where we use our feet." Some transitions include a combination of commenting on similar and dissimilar elements: "We just finished playing a game that used a small ball where we got to use our hands; now we are going to play an activity that uses a large ball, and instead of our hands, we'll use our feet."

Whatever the preferred technique, transitions are important to the effective leadership of any activity or session. Transitions are used within activities, between activities, and even between activity sessions. Effective use of transitions tends to lead to increased participant satisfaction.

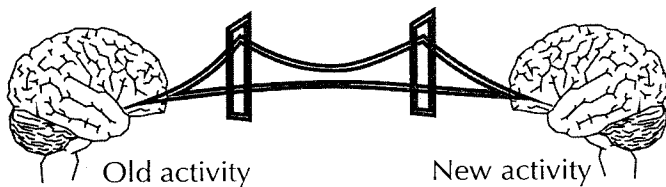


Figure 12.9 Transitions serve as psychological bridges between steps of an activity and between different activities.

Concluding a Leadership Session

Some activities come to their own natural conclusion with very little effort on behalf of the leader. Others require the leader to provide direction to the wrap-up of the activity or session. Usually, it is best to stop playing while people are still having fun. This way participants will want to re-engage in that leisure experience at another time. A solid and well-planned method to conclude activities or leisure sessions is just as important as a strong beginning to the activity. Poor conclusions occur when there is a lack of planning and a lack of focus by the leader. Weak conclusions are endings that leave participants hanging, wondering if the session is really over, or if there is more yet to come.

The conclusion is a leader's last opportunity (at this session) to influence the leisure experience. It is a time that can be used to bring people together, to summarize, to leave people with positive feelings, and to leave participants wanting more. If the event or day has been competitive, for example, and individuals are feeling less than friendly and supportive toward one another, at the conclusion the leader might emphasize the strengths of each group member. In addition, the leader can guide the group into summarizing the events of the day and do a quick review of how things went.

Furthermore, a conclusion serves as an opportunity for participants to leave the experience on an upbeat note. It is fine to acknowledge difficulties, whether they are leader or participant generated, yet speaking in positive terms will leave participants feeling good about the experience. "I know we had a difficult time getting started, but once we got going, the group came together and..."

One of the more critical elements of a successful conclusion is that it be definitive. People need to know something is over when it is over. Whether the leader leads the group in a rousing cheer or comments about things accomplished, a concluding statement should be made which leaves no room for doubt about the session being over.



The direct leadership techniques of preparation, priming the group, and delivery are used in activity leadership, the



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implementation of treatments, instructional sessions, and other leader-to-participant interactions. Consciously engaging in these three phases of leadership will facilitate successful leadership experiences. Other settings exist where leaders will be involved in direct leadership with others—holding meetings and making oral presentations. This next section of this chapter presents information to help leaders be successful in these two venues.

Conducting Successful Meetings

In addition to leading activities and songs, leisure services leaders will often be asked to lead or facilitate meetings. Meetings might be held with sport league coaches, fellow staff, boards of directors, treatment teams, and the public, among others. Having appropriate leadership skills to facilitate a meeting in a firm task- and people-focused fashion is necessary for effective and efficient meeting leadership. Time, resources, and people are much too valuable to waste in disorganized or unnecessary meetings.

Leisure services leaders and participants are often involved in multiple tasks simultaneously; therefore, it is desirable to hold meetings that are purposeful, succinct, and held only when necessary. Meetings are called for a variety of reasons, which include: when various components of a team project need to be coordinated (e.g., special event); when information needs to be shared among a group of people with similar responsibilities (e.g., youth sport coaches) and leaders need to share information with everyone; when messages sent out via email are getting too complicated, lengthy, or generating confusion; when it is necessary to engage in a rich or in-depth multi-directional conversation; and when problems or difficulties arise (Schlegel, 2005). Certainly, leaders will want to avoid calling meetings when there is no agenda (i.e., nothing to talk about)—even if a meeting is regularly scheduled for that date and time. Announcements often can be made quite efficiently via written memoranda or through electronic postings.

Generally, meetings are either formal or informal in structure. The nature of the meeting usually dictates the level of formality. For instance, advisory board meetings for public parks and recreation departments are often required by law or ordinance to follow a formal, predefined structure. These meetings typically fall under open meetings laws, which stipulate when and how business can be conducted.

Formal meetings commonly follow *Robert's Rules of Order* to maintain flow and an organized structure. These meeting rules control who speaks when, how to make and decide a motion, what material may be considered at what time during the meeting, and they serve to manage other meeting functions in an organized and predictable manner. There are several good resources available in local libraries and bookstores that explain *Robert's Rules of Order* in an easy-to-follow format. Informal meetings are a bit more free-flowing and allow people to freely interact as needs arise. Many leaders prefer to conduct meetings by loosely following *Robert's Rules of Order* to maintain an organized and friendly tone.

Prior to the Meeting

Meeting leaders are expected to accomplish several tasks—some are addressed prior to a meeting being held, other tasks occur during the meeting, and there are follow-up tasks to attend to as well. An effective and efficient



Figure 12.10 All leaders are involved in meetings.