

## Saying Yes to Leadership

### To Lead or Not to Lead

Have you ever accepted a leadership role because your good friend needed your help, and he or she just couldn't find anyone else who could do it? You really didn't want to do it, didn't have the time to devote to being a leader, but you know the story:

Your friend says to you, "There isn't that much work. I just need a name to put on the list, and I'll help you. Please, you are my only hope...besides, it will be a piece of cake for you. Please, I need to get all the offices filled so I can turn in my report to TI."

All too often, we accept a "leadership" position because we want to help a friend out – or because we like the sound of the title. But think back. How did you feel at the end of your term? Can you honestly say that you gave the position your best and that you enjoyed it?

Leadership carries a responsibility and commitment that is time-consuming but most rewarding when done well. In Toastmasters, we are given many opportunities to assume leadership roles, and we are given the tools necessary to develop our skills such that we can be good leaders. To help you make the decision to accept or not to accept leadership, consider the following.

### Being an effective elected Leader takes a lot of work and self-searching.

A good leader:

- Knows what he or she wants to do and why. The Leader possesses a guiding vision. Passionately intends to achieve that vision and exemplifies strong integrity.
- Knows what his or her skills are. The Leader takes the time to identify his or her strengths and weaknesses, then matches those skills to the needs of the office sought.
- Knows and understands the value of volunteers. The Leader matches the skills and abilities of the team members to the needs of the organization.
- Knows that nothing is accomplished alone but requires teamwork. The Leader understands that teams are people who come together for a common goal and that achieving that goal is totally dependant upon team commitment and work.
- Knows when to lead and when to follow. A Leader finds the right time and right way to let each team member shine.
- The Leader remembers to consistently recognize the talents and accomplishments of team members and others in an appropriate manner.

### Growing as a Leader.

If you want to learn how to be a good leader but don't have much experience yet, consider being a Toastmasters Leader such as a Mentor, Evaluator, Membership Builder, and Good Speaker who sets the example, Enthusiastic Encourager of Members, Committee/Team Member, Speechcraft or Youth Leadership Coordinator. Earn your Paths in Pathways. Not only will you grow as a leader, but you will increase your self-confidence as well.

Colin Powell said, "*Organization doesn't really accomplish anything. Plans don't accomplish anything, either. Theories of management don't matter much. Endeavors succeed or fail because of the people involved. Only by attracting the best people will you accomplish great deeds.*"

Compliments of Radhi Spear, DTM, ILC Nominated Candidate for 2nd Vice President