



The Making of a Leader in a Great Organization by Sylvia Chess January 4, 2017

IMPORTANT! IMPORTANT! READ THIS! LEADERSHIP ALERT! ALERT! ALERT!

It is very rare that I write an opinion about building organizations, however, I felt as though we really need to seriously take a good look at how we lead others. I am asking that all leaders be receptive to this article. If you become upset after reading this, like Budweiser "This Buds for You" slogan, this article is for you.

Many great organizations are losing existing members by the thousands, making it difficult to retain the ones that are left to be overtaxed with all the duties that great organizations require to stay alive. Well, were you really called to be a leader? Did you just take the position because no one else wanted it? Did you become frustrated once you were sworn in and found out it was not just all fame and glory? Do you believe in the mission of your organization? If so, are you receptive to continuous education that will help you become a better leader? Are you a gossiper, backstabber, adulterer, fornicator, loud mouth, too soft, procrastinator, so forth and so on? Are you intimidated or ignore great talent within your organization? Does it bother you to accept young talent and ideas? Are you excited? Do you smile? Are you branding your organization with the proper attire that represent your organization? Are you prejudiced? Are you directing your followers to do one thing and you are doing the opposite? Are you a liar? Are you easily offended? Are you overworked and stressed? If you said yes to any of these questions, then you need to do a critical evaluation of yourself and be receptive to change.

Believe it or not, these are some of the reasons why people leave great organizations. Unfortunately, many of them do not leave quietly. They soon drag your name, and the organization name, into negative advertisement for all those they come in contact with; especially those who are interested in becoming a member.

"Make your Organization Great Again"

then

"America can be Great Again"

A great leader must be able to recognize that "BAD APPLE" within the organization and address it privately first and try to resolve the issue. However, it is very difficult to correct someone when the leader is just as rude and inconsiderate of others. No one, in their right mind, want to experience that kind of treatment, especially when they are spending their monies and volunteering their time. Believe it or not, people like to feel and believe that their ideas and contributions are appreciated.

Leaders are first partakers of being a good example to those they serve, especially if there are youth involved. REMEMBER, our youth are watching us. Therefore, if you are not sure what

is considered to be **"GOOD MORALS"** then you, yes you, need to find out! You cannot expect people to follow you when you are lost and refuse to evaluate the leadership style you are accustomed to. Too many leaders just carry the name of leader and not the heart of a leader. The HEART of a leader cares about who they serve. So, if you care then you will be receptive to new ideas and change. There are some things that mama use to do that still works today, however, there are some things that need to be upgraded. If your members are that bad, then LOVE the Hell out of them! It worked for me and I know it can work for you.

Those who are more seasoned need to remember that your voice, time and talent is needed. You must remember to pass the baton to our younger generation. **GIVE THEM A CHANCE** to be a part of a GREAT OPPORTUNITY! **KNOCK, KNOCK!** Open the door and let them in. Why wouldn't you? Someone opened the door for you.

Fortunately, there are many great leaders among us and we should be quick to gravitate to those persons. Find out what works and what has been tested to be failed attempts. This will allow us to grow beyond measure, especially in the technology error that we are living in today. When I plant flowers in my garden, I must provide the necessary care for them in order for them to grow. With that being said, we should find mentors to help us be better regardless of our age.

Sadly, many leaders become intimidated when individuals are more knowledgeable or more talented than they are. This is something you should not fear but embrace. You will be surprised how much this will grow your organization. Remember, you are training others to be great leaders as well. So, when you recognize that you have a potential candidate for any position, even yours, then you should be guilty of developing that individual not running them away. They may even become better or greater than you will ever be. Don't be intimidated or jealous but embrace it.

"Well Sylvia (In my Conway Twitty voice), I'm sick, broke, busted, disgusted, my spouse is gone, my children are hungry, my illness has taken a turn for the worse, my cat ate the dog, I don't know nothing about computers, social media, iPhones, earphones..." This is a great recipe for all the reasons why you should focus on building your leadership skills so you can build a leadership team of professionals... then you will grow. It starts at the top and works downward. If YOU are not receptive to change or being better, neither will your organization.

Daily, I try to live by the Motto of my Alma Mater, Paul Quinn College the [Quinnite Nation](#):

- 1. Live a LIFE that MATTERS**
- 2. Love something GREATER than YOURSELF**
- 3. Leave places BETTER than you found them**
- 4. Lead from WHEREVER you are**

In addition to that, I try to keep the promise that I made with the American Legion Family, daily.

"IN THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE NOT SELF"

Remember, we are not perfect but we should all strive to be perfect. This is not meant to offend anyone. However, it is meant to grow us up to become better leaders to those we serve. We should be building on the legacy that other leaders left behind. My grandmother use to say, "If the shoe fits, then wear it and wear it well. It will only make you better." Please do not become a leader if you are not willing to give your all to ensure that it does not become a dying organization. We made a promise and we must keep that promise or suffer losing our organization.

Although though I am the author of this piece of literature, it has helped me and I hope it helps you as well. I am the first partaker of truth. In the end, we are going to get tired. There are times we will become very frustrated. There are times we may want to quit, come back and quit again. Then there are times you just need a friend. Let me be your friend. Let's be better together.

LEADERS, IT START WITH YOU! Enough said...

Sincerely,

Sylvia Chess, ALA President Unit 838