



The Many Facets of Leadership

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EDITOR'S NOTE: We've talked about the duties of the Nominating Committee, and the delegates who elect the officers. Now might be a good time to talk about the duties of the newly elected President – the appointment of other officers and chairmen.

MAKING GOOD APPOINTMENTS IN A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

Making good appointments is a little different from staffing a business. Volunteers stay involved because they feel valued, useful, and successful, so the goal is to match people with roles where they can contribute and enjoy the work. Here are some practical guidelines many successful organizations use.

1. Match the Person to the Job

Before making an appointment, consider:

- Interests – What topics or projects excite them?
- Skills and experience – What have they done before?
- Available time – Some volunteers prefer small roles; others enjoy leadership.
- Personality – Some thrive organizing events, others prefer behind-the-scenes work.

A good match increases commitment and satisfaction.

2. Look for Potential, Not Just Experience

In volunteer groups, it's helpful to develop new leaders.

- A member who shows enthusiasm or reliability may grow into a leadership role.
- Pair newer volunteers with experienced mentors.
- Avoid always choosing the same people.

This builds future leadership for the organization.

3. Clearly Define the Job

People feel more comfortable accepting appointments when they know what is expected.

Explain:

- Purpose of the role
- Main duties
- Approximate time commitment
Length of service (one year, event-based, etc.)

Clarity prevents misunderstandings and burnout.

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4. Ask Before Appointing

Whenever possible:

- Talk privately with the person first
- Explain why you think they would be good for the role
- Give them time to consider

Volunteers who choose the position are more likely to succeed.

5. Balance the Team

A strong committee or leadership team usually includes a mix of:

- Experienced members
- Newer members with fresh ideas
- Different skills (organization, communication, creativity)

Balance keeps the group productive and welcoming.

6. Consider Reliability and Attitude

The most effective volunteers are often those who:

- Follow through on commitments
- Communicate well
- Work cooperatively with others

A positive attitude can be more valuable than perfect experience.

7. Provide Support After the Appointment

Once someone is appointed:

- Offer guidance and resources
- Check in occasionally
- Recognize their work publicly

Support helps volunteers succeed and feel appreciated.

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“Leadership is influence, nothing more, nothing less.” John C Maxwell

“A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way” John C Maxwell

“You don’t need a title to be a leader.” Mark Sanborn

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Comments and suggestions for future topics may be sent to cfwleadership@gmail.com



EDITOR'S NOTE: Sometimes we hesitate to talk about declining appointments, but in many organizations it is actually healthy and respectful. Members may have family, health, or work commitments and giving them a gracious way to say yes or no helps to keep the organization positive.

Accepting or Declining a Volunteer Appointment Gracefully

In a volunteer organization, every appointment is an opportunity to serve. At times members are able to accept; at other times it may be necessary to decline. Either response can be given graciously and with appreciation.

When Accepting an Appointment

If you decide to accept:

- Express appreciation for the confidence placed in you.
- Ask questions so you clearly understand the responsibilities.
- Be honest about your availability.
- Commit to doing your best.

A simple response might be: "Thank you for asking me. I appreciate your confidence and will do my best to serve."

When You Need to Decline

Sometimes circumstances make it difficult to accept an appointment. Declining politely helps maintain goodwill.

- Thank the person who asked you.
- Briefly explain if necessary, but long explanations are not required.
- Express continued support for the organization.

For example:

"Thank you for thinking of me. Unfortunately, my schedule this year would not allow me to give the position the attention it deserves, so I must decline. I truly appreciate being asked."

If You Might Serve Later

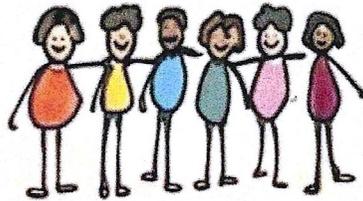
If the timing is the issue, you might add: "Please keep me in mind for another year."

Remember

Volunteer service should be meaningful and manageable.

Accepting when you can serve well—and declining when you cannot— helps both the member and the organization succeed.

**What strong
leaders say to
keep great teams
engaged**



"Thank you.
That made a real
difference."

"That one is
on me."

"What do you
need from me to
do this well?"

"I should
have been
clearer."

"That one
is on me."

"What is
getting in
the way?"

"What do
you see that
I might be
missing?"

"This was
done well.
Here is why."

"Do you have the
time to take this
on properly?"

"I trust your
judgement."

"What did we learn,
and what will we
change next time?"