

Strays – You, the leader

In most cases, you'd rather be the follower than the leader of an activity, an event, or even a club, because it likely requires less work, or more importantly, less time. Then again, whether it's a large club or a small committee, there's something attractive about leading a team or organization in a successful direction. The sense of achievement you plan, anticipate, and then realize, often prompts you to do more and reach even higher goals.

Keep in mind that with added status also comes added responsibility, and that responsibility can often be enlarged with time. Yet added responsibility can also mean greater headaches, but that's what you sign up for as a group leader. The buck stops at you, meaning while others in your club can glean the credit for things that go well, you take the rap for things that don't. Like it or not, not only are you responsible for every bad thing that occurs in your club, regardless who's actually at fault, but you need to own up to that as well, to demonstrate your leadership.

Off the record

One thing to keep in mind as an organization leader is that everything you say, regardless of situation, surrounding, or context, is a reflection on the team. The same goes for your actions, because ***you represent the group in all you do and say***, whether or not you believe that. When others see you, they don't see the person, they see the organization. So for you, there's no such thing as *off the record*; it's always on the record.

This means that, once you accept the role of a leader, your behavior and attitude need to be elevated a



little higher than they might normally be. That's not to say you need to display a false front to everybody, especially since most can see right through you anyway. But it does mean that you should probably hold yourself to a higher standard of morality and ethics than before. People know that you're not perfect; there's just no need for you to prove it.

Relevance

Ok, maybe you don't want to be the club president or the committee chair. Still, if you teach a class or even share your enthusiasm for amateur radio with another, you are suddenly the leader to those people who look up to you. It might be an awesome responsibility, but the example you set and the words you use can make or break their amateur experience.

Support your leadership

One of the best ways to show leadership is to lead the charge yourself by supporting your own leaders, even if you don't completely agree with them. Your support for your leaders does not mean that you agree with everything they stand for, and it doesn't mean you believe they're perfect. But your example as a good follower will go a long way to encourage your leaders while helping others rally around them.

If you have an objection to a particular policy, action, or point by one of your leaders, feel free to bring it to their attention. But once they've made their decision on it afterwards, the discussion is over, and you need to ***support and demonstrate support*** for your leader. To continue criticizing, pointing out disadvantages, and announcing alternate points of view afterward are not only bad form, but destructive to the unity and good will of the amateur radio (or any other) community.

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