

# Creating a Leadership Development Plan

## For your League

These are some basic steps to increase the leadership capacity of your League – regardless of whether it has a lot of leaders or a few. Building leadership is as important as winning an issue campaign or other program work; it needs the same kind of focus, energy and momentum to succeed. It's important to set clear goals based on sound planning, ensure regular check-ins, provide support, and evaluate. Have your board work through the steps below to establish the plan for your League.

**Note:** *This won't work* if your League is not committed to developing leaders or has not acknowledged the time it takes.

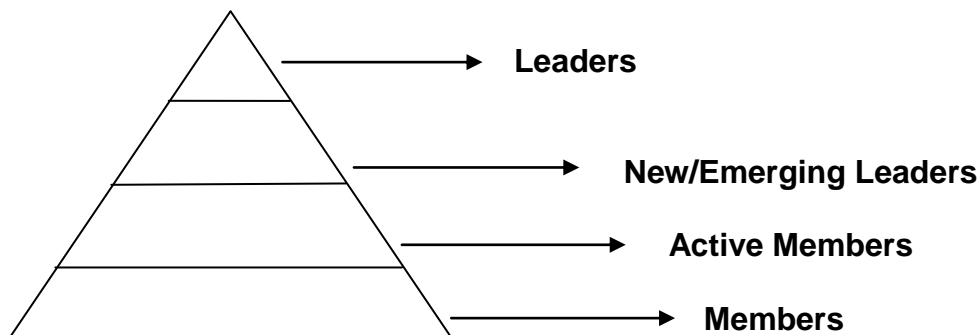
### 1 Assess the state of leadership development in your League.

Do the Pyramid for your League – with real names and numbers (use **STEP 1** on ***Creating a Leadership Development Plan Worksheet.***)

Where are the most significant weaknesses and strengths?

Is there a surplus at one level to draw on for the next level up?

Is your most significant weakness a lack of active members to develop?



### 2 Identify where to focus your leadership development work and set reasonable goals -- that make sense for your League based on its current programs -- to increase the number of leaders and improve the effectiveness of your existing leaders.

Examples:

- If you are working to develop experienced leaders, you might set a goal of working intensively with several leaders to add 2 leaders to the Board this year
- If you need to focus on building your active members, you might set a goal to interview 15 “passive” members in the next 2 months and get 3 of them to become active

Other goals might include:

- Build a 4 to 6 member committee around a League issue in the next 2 months
- Identify 5 people to run a fundraiser and 2 to co-chair it
- Find 2 key leaders for each of your current committees

**Goals:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3 Make a list of people to develop as leaders.** This can include people to recruit, or to take on additional responsibilities. Make sure that you have enough people listed to meet the goals you identified above. This will be your list for scheduling one on one interview meetings to create the Individual Leadership Development Plan. (Refer to the list of people in STEP 1 on *Creating a Leadership Development Plan Worksheet* for the leaders you want to develop.)

**Leaders:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**4 Make a list of every opportunity** from your calendar of activities in the coming months to take actions that could involve leaders and provide opportunities for development. (Use **STEP 2 on the *Creating a Leadership Development Plan Worksheet*** to identify what activities would be good tasks for new, emerging and experienced leaders).

Examples:

Attend the next event

Host the next event

Serve on a issue committee

Serve as a Membership ambassador

Help organize an event

Participate in an Action Alert

**5 Build a LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM from current leadership.**

The *Leadership Development Team* would be made up of several League leaders who want to help develop more leaders. This team can originate from: a team of several Board members; a newly established leadership development committee of the Board;

or the Team Chairperson could be a designated Board member and additional off-board team members can be solicited from the current leadership pool.

The Team will decide which team members will be involved in assessing progress, making changes in the plan periodically, evaluating the results and reporting back to the Board. This Team will begin to activate the leadership development workplan to achieve the goal(s) decided upon in Step #2. They will be the leaders who will conduct the one-on-one interviews with the leaders identified in Step #3. This will process will help find the best opportunities for these leaders to develop their skills and use their talents. (See **Individual Leadership Development Plan Interview** sheet for sample questions to conduct the one-on-one interview)

The Team members should fill out the **Individual Leader Development Plan Interview** sheet together. This will let them analyze their leadership development in preparation for helping other leaders with the one-on-one interviews.

## **6 Create an *INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PLAN* for each leader.**

This is a multi-step and ongoing process.

- The **first step** is for one of the Leadership Development Team members to **conduct a one-on-one interview** with the selected leader to discover their interests and passions. (Refer to the **Individual Leader Development Plan Interview** sheet.) Use the one-on-one with this leader to review recent activities, discuss strengths, interests, barriers and new activities. With more experienced leaders, are you inviting others to observe, support and learn about the work you do in your leadership role?
- **The second step is to assess the information from the interview.** (Use **STEP 3** on the ***Creating a Leadership Development Plan Worksheet***) Think about the areas in which you think the leader needs to develop their leadership skills. Review upcoming leadership tasks (see #4 above) and make some notes on areas you think would be good next development areas for this particular leader.
- **The third step is for the Leadership Development Team member to meet again with the selected leader** and begin to activate their leadership development plan. This will be based on the interview assessment and the opportunities available (#4)
- The following steps are to have the Leadership Development Team member **maintain contact with the leader throughout the year.** There may be a need for additional one-on-one meetings to facilitate the leader's individual development plan.
- Finally, **the Board and Team should continue with this process each year** to bring in new leaders and to renew and reevaluate the leaders and their individual plans.

## 7 Discuss Trainings and Joint Activities for Leaders:

After thinking about your leaders and their next development steps, are there some shared training needs they have? For Example: membership recruitment, making a presentation, continued leadership development. Are there some joint activities that might make sense to do with a group of leaders. For Example: Fundraising planning meeting; a voter service activity like the Voter's Guide; etc. Think creatively with current leaders about activities that might help more experienced leaders mentor newer leaders and help leaders to get to know one another. Schedule these trainings and assign responsibilities. **REMEMBER:** A training can be as simple as one person teaching a job to another or more complex such as a training put on for several leaders.

Trainings:

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Activities:

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Dates & Responsibilities:

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## 8 Put it all together.

The Board should create a workplan and timeline that breaks each of the tasks into clear pieces and identifies who is responsible for each piece. (Use the Steps in this plan to facilitate the process) Discuss what regular meetings and support are needed to keep leadership development on track. The board should revisit these steps each year with the Leadership Development Team to make sure that leaders are being identified and mentored as they move up the leadership ladder. It is important to evaluate the plan and progress to be sure that it is functioning as the League wants it to.

Workplan completion dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Supports: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Dates & Team: \_\_\_\_\_