

# WHAT MAKES A LEADER?

## THE PURPOSE OF LEADERSHIP

Groups without leaders or with poor leadership fall apart or go nowhere.

- ✓ Leaders bring groups together to work towards a common purpose, keeping the group on track and fostering participation by all its members.
- ✓ Leaders help group members get to know one another, communicate openly and effectively, and expand their skills.
- ✓ Leaders help members understand the phases of group development (see “Leadership and Group Development”) and assist in working through the phases successfully.
- ✓ Leaders help the group evaluate itself, its members and its program.
- ✓ The group benefits when its leaders grow as individuals, too. Group leaders need to continually learn, take risks, share their skills, and evaluate themselves.

## KEY LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

- ✓ **Character:** Trustworthy, reliable, honest
- ✓ **Conceptual skills:** A clear vision of the big picture, the goal everyone is working towards
- ✓ **Good judgement**—a willingness to make hard decisions after listening to everyone’s input
- ✓ **Track record:** a history of achieving results
- ✓ **Maturity:** Level-headed, not emotional, works well with all individuals
- ✓ **People Skills:** an ability to communicate, motivate, and delegate
- ✓ **Awareness:** of self, of others, and of the “playing field”

## LEADERSHIP ROLES

Often, the most important role for the leader of a community group to play is that of **convener**. While leaders of companies, or organizations with paid staff, are expected to achieve certain results or take their staff in new directions, a community group leader who can bring different partners together while keeping an eye on the big picture will help their group achieve success.

In addition to this position, leaders may play a variety of other roles within a group, depending on their personality and the group’s needs. Generally leadership roles fall into three categories: **Task**, **Maintenance**, and **Individual Roles**.

### Task Roles: Interested in Achievement

- **Facilitator:** helps the group make decisions and take action.
- **Entrepreneur:** enthusiastic, creative and engaging. All things are possible to this member.
- **Quality Control:** questions, inspects and challenges ideas and decisions to keep the group focused.
- **Doer:** task oriented and gets things done.

### **Maintenance Roles: Interested In Relationships**

- **Team Builder:** brings the group together and focuses on consensus.
- **Synthesizer:** blends the individual ideas to provide an overall group plan.

### **Individual Roles: Interested in Individuals' Development**

- **Mentor:** helps individuals within the group find ways to expand their skills and resources.
- **External Contact:** provides access to resources outside the group.