

# Leadership

“Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future . . .”

“No matter how good the structure; leadership is essential to survive!”

“Good leadership cannot function well in a poorly designed structure. But weak leadership can hardly function at all, even in the best of structures.”

“Furnishing our service structure with able and willing workers has to be a continuous activity.”

# The importance of picking qualified representatives!

“First let’s remember that the base for our service structure rests on the dedication and ability of several thousand General Service Representatives (G.S.R.’s), several hundred area Committee Members, and nearly a hundred Delegates. These are the direct agents of the A.A. groups; these are the indispensable linkage between our Fellowship and its world service; these are the primary representatives of A.A.’s group conscience. Without their support and activity we could not operate permanently at all.”

“When making their choices of G.S.R.’s, the A.A. groups should therefore have such facts well in mind.”

“Hence great care needs to be taken by the groups as they choose these Representatives. Hit-or-miss methods should be avoided. Groups who name no G.S.R.’s should be encouraged to do so. In this area a degree of weakness tends to persist. The needed improvement seems to be a matter of increased care, responsibility and education. As the G. S. R.’s meet in their Assemblies to name Delegates, an even greater degree of care and dedication will be required. Personal ambitions will have to be cast aside, feuds and controversy forgotten. ‘Who are the best qualified people that we can name?’ This should be the thought of all.”

# Traits Of A Good Leader:

- Principles before personalities
- Dedication
- Stability
- Lead by example
- Originates plans, policies, and ideas for the improvement of our fellowship and its services

“Somewhere in our literature there is a statement to this effect: ‘Our leaders do not drive by mandate, they lead by example.’ In effect, we are saying to them, ‘Act for us, but don’t boss us.’”

Bill gives three specific qualifications for leadership

# Compromise:

“. . . Progress is nearly always characterized by a series of improving compromises.”

“We cannot, however, compromise always. Now and then it is truly necessary to stick flat-footed to one’s conviction about an issue until it is settled.”

# Criticism:

The ability to receive criticism, carefully consider it, and let it change your opinion when appropriate is essential for a leader.

From friends:

From opponents:

# Vision:

“Now we come to the all-important attribute of *vision*. Vision is, I think, the ability to make good estimates, both for the immediate and for the more distant future.”

“The making of estimates has several aspects.

- We look at past and present experience to see what we think it means.
- From this we derive a tentative idea or policy. Looking first at the nearby future, we ask how our idea or policy might work.
- Then we ask how our policies or ideas might apply under the several differing conditions that could arise in the longer future.
- If an idea looks like a good bet, we try it on—experimentally when that is possible.
- Later we revalue the situation and ask whether our estimate is working out.”

## Questions:

How do we pick our leaders?

What leadership experience should we require?

Is it appropriate for a single person to be given a position by acclamation instead of being challenged?

Is it better to leave a position open rather than have someone not qualified?

Is it appropriate to tell someone that they are not qualified to stand for a position?

What qualifications do we ask for our Area Service Committee Chairs, i.e. does a Treatment Chair need to have been involved in Treatment work at the Group, District or Area level first?

# The Challenge of Leadership:

- To be Strong, but not Rude
- To be Kind, but not Weak
- To be Bold, but not a Bully
- To be Thoughtful, but not Lazy
- To be Humble, but not Timid
- To be Proud, but not Arrogant