

**C.O.O.L.-Idealist Civic Engagement Curriculum**

Developing a Solid Foundation for Managing Peers

Overview: Understanding and implementing the fundamental approaches to being a good manager is essential to one's success as a manager. This training is designed to inform student leaders about effective management, and to offer practice with the tools that are effective for leading their peers. This training should be incorporated with, or followed by, other management-oriented training that discusses the other roles of a manager.

Category: Project management; people management; leadership skills

Level: Intermediate, such as student program coordinators

Type: Structured activity suitable for workshop (e.g. retreat or training)

Focus or Goals of this Guide:

- Identify and clarify the role of a manager in relation to his or her personnel
- Familiarize participants with essential qualities of a manager
- Create a practice scenario for participants to experiment with their future roles as managers, and to implement these qualities

Materials:

- Flip chart
- Markers

How to Prepare:

Review the trainer guide and become comfortable with all information and activities. To prepare for this workshop, prepare handouts and have flip chart paper, markers, and tape ready to distribute. As the facilitator, you will be guiding participants through a series of exercises that will help them develop their management and leadership skills. You may also find it useful to have thought through your own or relevant examples to illustrate ideas or material.

How to Do/Brief Outline:

Total suggested time is 1 hour, 45 minutes (modify as needed):

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|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Icebreaker | suggested time 10 minutes |
| 2. Introduction to the Role of Manager | suggested time 25 minutes |
| 3. Role-Playing as Manager | |
| 1. Modeling of Role-Play by Facilitator | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 2. Manager Role-Playing in Pairs | suggested time 30 minutes |
| 4. Discussion and Debrief | suggested time 20 minutes |

1 Icebreaker

Suggested time: 10 minutes

An icebreaker at the start of this training is useful if this is the first training of the day. This training relies on the development of an environment in which participants feel comfortable sharing difficulties or challenges with each other. Even if participants know each other well, establishing an environment of respect, openness and repose is useful. One easy icebreaker is called simply “Checking in.”

For “Checking In,” have all participants stand in a circle. “Checking In” is focused on each individual introducing him or herself, where he or she was from, school they attend (teach at) if applicable, how they are feeling, if there are any items that may be distracting them and preventing them from focusing on the training, and what they hope to get out of the training. It is obviously essential that participants know what training they are going to have, so briefly introduce the training before this icebreaker if they aren’t already aware of the topic.

To establish a basis for establishing good sharing initiative, you as a facilitator should go first. Say something like:

“My name is Angela Talbot. I’m originally from San Francisco, but I now reside in Brooklyn, NY, and I am a student at NYU. Today, I am feeling a little tired because I was up late working on a term paper that is due this Monday in my reading seminar. This paper is pretty important and counts for 25% of my grade, so I’m sort of distracted by it because I have a lot left to do. But I am glad to be here on a lovely Saturday morning, and am ready to learn more about the keys to effective management. Maybe more importantly, I am looking forward to practicing giving feedback because I haven’t always been as productive and positive in my approach in previous situations.”

After you speak, simply go around the circle, until all participants have spoken. If you are facilitating a large group, you might break up into two groups. Ideally there should be about 7-10 people in a group. People in large groups may give less thoughtful introductions, and feel less comfortable later on. Individuals will take about 30 seconds to a minute to present themselves. After all have “checked in” move on to the next part.

2 Introduction to the Role of Manager

Suggested time: 25 minutes

The crux of being an effective manager lies in understanding your role and implementing certain qualities and ideals into your leadership style. The first step in understanding that role is to identify what exactly a manager is and what exactly a manager does.

1. What is a manager?

The definition of manager can vary according to the field, type of management, etc. Merriam Webster's Dictionary defines manager as a person who "handle[s] or direct[s] with a degree of skill." Managers have four basic roles: planner, organizer, leader, and overseer. As a project coordinator, participants will have to take on each of these four actions at one point or another. This training, however, is focused on the key function of a project coordinator— as the manager of his or her peers. The rest of the material of this training will be focused on personnel management and its fundamentals.

(Write the boxed material on a flip chart)

Definition of a Manager:

A manager is a person responsible for leading and directing individuals, enabling them in the process to be better individuals and work to their greatest potential.

Have students discuss this definition. Ask for input on any changes they think will make a more acceptable definition. Adjust the definition accordingly, but stick to its essential meaning. Remind participants that the focus is the definition of a manager as it relates to personnel.

2. What are the qualities of an effective manager?

Break down the characteristics of a manager that makes him or her effective and appreciated. Have students take a minute to envision a person, either a coach or a boss or previous project coordinator or another person, who has been, in their eyes, an effective manager. Have them brainstorm the characteristics that made this individual successful. Record these on a separate flip chart. Take just a couple of minutes to brainstorm.

Have the following chart ready to show the participants, or hand it out as a worksheet. Note the similarities to the characteristics that they came up with.

The key characteristics of an effective manager are:

<u>M</u>eticulous	Notices success and challenges, cares about individuals
<u>A</u>vailable	Provides time for conversation and discussion, is a good listener
co<u>N</u>structive	Has a positive outlook, always couples criticism with praise
<u>A</u>nimated	Is charismatic and humorous, enthusiastic
<u>G</u>oal-generator	Helps to establish goals for individuals, breaks goals down to make them more attainable.
<u>E</u>ncouraging	Believes in the individual, challenges individuals to see their own success
<u>R</u>espectful and realistic	Honors the individual, acknowledges frustrations and difficulties, and does not ask for the impossible.

3 Role Playing as Manager

Suggested time: 50 minutes

1. Modeling of Role-Play by Facilitator—“How NOT to be”

Suggested time: 20 minutes

The focus of this step in the training is for participants to practice implementing the characteristics of a good manager. Simply knowing the qualities is not enough. Adopting these characteristics is the key to being a good manager.

The role-play is based on the generic scenario of a supervisee not completing a task by a previously designated deadline. If you are co-facilitating, one of you should play the manager, while the other plays the supervisee. If you are facilitating the training solo, have a volunteer play the supervisee. The point of this exercise is to demonstrate how NOT to manage, therefore the “manager” should over-exaggerate bad managing methods. The group should brainstorm specific scenarios about bad managing **before** role-playing good managing.

If possible, it is most helpful to have students brainstorm problematic experiences from their own lives, during which a peer did not meet expectations, and use those for the role-play. There does not need to be an element of problem-solving or brainstorming solutions at the end of the role play – that will come later.

If students cannot think of a situation from their own experience, you can suggest the following scenarios:

- The failure of the supervisee to create and release an ad for the upcoming service day for the local press. The student newspaper’s advertising department has called you as the

previous contact to inquire about why the service day ad wasn't turned in, and to remind you that the deadline for the ad was yesterday.

- The supervisee was supposed to photocopy the parental release forms for the tutoring program's field-trip, but neglected to do so and you (as the supervisor) were left to copy them last minute at a more expensive rate at the library (rather than on your own copier).
- The supervisee was supposed to complete his formal evaluation of the disaster relief food and clothing drive headed by your organization, and have the report to you three days ago. Although you have reminded him several times that his report is overdue and much needed, he has still failed to provide it.

Characteristics of bad-managing the role-playing "manager" should assume:

- fails to inquire into the well-being of supervisee in general
- fails to inquire of the supervisee about what prevented him from completing the task
- isn't specific in criticism
- fails to offer praise or positives, only negative or derogatory remarks
- acts disinterested and unmotivated
- act "put-out," impatient, and unsupportive of supervisee
- lacks patience, doesn't let supervisee convey his story
- fails to ask what can be done to help the supervisee complete his task

Allow the role-play to go for about three minutes. Afterwards, have the group critique your performance as a manager, indicating everything you did that a manager should not do. Have the students move on to the next step by partnering up.

2. Manager Role-Playing in Pairs – "How TO be"

Suggested time: 30 minutes

You may approach this several different ways. You could come prepared with three different scenarios for the participants to act out. Or you could also have the group brainstorm three appropriate scenarios that every pair would act out. Or you could have each pair decide on three scenarios themselves.

Have the pairs of students decide on the specifics of the scenario before beginning the role-play. Explain that each student should take turns playing the manager. Give the first person three minutes to act out the scenario, implementing the characteristics of an effective manager outlined in section 2.2 above (also at the end of this guide as a handout: "Key Characteristics of Effective Managers"), and avoiding the characteristics discussed in "how NOT to be" (section 3.1) After three minutes, give the pairs three minutes for the "supervisee" to assess the role of the "manager." Remind the participants that the feedback should incorporate both what went well, and what could be improved. After the "supervisee" offers their feedback to the "manager," they switch roles. Using the same scenario as decided on by the pair, the second person role-plays the "manager" to the "supervisee." After the three minutes, again the "supervisee" offers his or her feedback.

As the facilitator, besides keeping record of time, you should walk around and observe individual pairs, offering your input as/when necessary.

Each pair should act out three different scenarios, so both participants have several opportunities to both act and to revise their actions based on the other person's critique.

4 Discussion and Debrief

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Have students discuss and reflect on the role-play. Ask questions like:

- *How did it go?*
- *Did you find it easy to incorporate the qualities of an effective manager into your role-play? What worked?*
- *What was the most challenging quality to implement in your training? What didn't work?*
- *How did you change your actions after each feedback?*
- *What was the most useful feedback you received?*
- *What did you learn from this training?*
- *Do you feel that the list of key characteristics of effective managers is useful in reminding you what is important in being a manager?*
- *Did you find the role-play useful in practicing being a manager?*
- *What would you do differently in this training? How could it be improved?*
- *Does this training help to clarify what your future role as a manager of your peers will be?*

Key Characteristics of Effective Managers

<u>M</u>eticulous	Notices success and challenges, cares about individuals
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