

Module 6

Listening and Interpersonal Skills



CONTENT OUTLINE

MODULE NAME	Listening and Interpersonal Skills
MODULE CHAPTERS	Problem Solving Listening Skill How to Motivate Effective Goal Setting People Skills Positive Thinking Personal Development Identifying Learning Challenges Public Speaking Understanding Training Opportunities Sensitivity Training
MODULE AUDIENCE	This module will assist all members in strengthening these essential life skills to enhance their communication and interaction with individuals in an organizational environment.
MODULE DESCRIPTION	The module will focus on improving communication through the development of a set of abilities that enable a person to interact positively and work effectively with others. These skills are essential qualities for those intending to hold branch leadership roles and are beneficial in dealing with personnel issues.
DURATION OF MODULE REVIEW	Members can anticipate taking up to 2 hours to review all module content.
LEARNING OUTCOMES	Members completing the module will be able to recognize the importance of interpersonal skills and understand the effectiveness of strong communication.

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION DOMINION COMMAND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MODULE 6

PROBLEM SOLVING

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Problem solving as defined by Wikipedia is as follows:

The term problem-solving is used in many disciplines, sometimes with different perspectives, and often with different terminologies. For instance, it is a mental process in psychology and a computerized process in computer science.

Problems can also be classified into two different types (ill-defined and well-defined); from which appropriate solutions are to be made. Ill-defined problems are those that do not have clear goals, solution paths, or expected solution. Well-defined problems have specific goals, clearly defined solution paths, and clear expected solutions.

Well defined problems also allow for more initial planning than ill-defined problems. Being able to solve problems sometimes involves dealing with pragmatics (logic) and semantics (interpretation of the problem). The ability to understand what the goal of the problem is and what rules could be applied represent the key to solving the problem. Sometimes the problem requires some abstract thinking and coming up with a creative solution.

Problem solving is easily defined as what the goals and what are the barriers are preventing you from achieving them. In complex problems you will sometimes find some barriers will expose other problems that will have to be solved as well.

Generally problems identified at the Branch or Command level do not require split second decisions. Problem solving is best approached as a team (executive) effort. Clearly identifying the problem and goals, then brainstorming the problem can be very productive. Once action has been set in place then monitoring and follow up is required to ensure that goals have been met and no further action is required. You do not want to see the same problem a year later.

There are numerous examples of where problem solving techniques can be used, for the following examples:

1. Branch operations have been in the red for several years and financial reserves are being used for continued operation. You don't need to be a financial genius to see that this mode of operation is not sustainable and obviously corrective action will have to be taken otherwise the Branch will close within a specified period of time.
2. Although there is extremely good membership support of the bar, this area of operation is not showing the profit margin that it should be. Obviously this is a problem and must be dealt with. The same techniques used to identify how branch operations were to be turned around as in the previous example will be used with this problem as well.

3. The Branch has just suffered a fire and will not be habitable for at least 3 to 4 months. The executive wants to keep branch activities functioning on a daily basis while branch renovations are taking place. Again the same techniques are used to identify the goal and the barrier(s) to overcome to achieve success.

Remember Comrades no problem is insurmountable, it is just another challenge to overcome and can be achieved with a willingness by the membership.

It might help if you understand that the same problem solving techniques that are used to solve minor problems can be successfully used to solve major problems. Be sure to include your executive members and other knowledgeable members as required. If necessary contact your Zone and/or District, or provincial Command for their input and guidance as you advance through the various steps.

You will need to initially assess the problem, then determine what action can be taken, the cost related to the action and the effect it may have on the business of the branch.

You may need to contact your insurance company; their guidance will be invaluable.

Above all do not panic, do not assume you can take on the problem alone or that you know more than others.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

DEFINITION

Personal development covers activities that improve awareness and identity, develop talents and potential, facilitate employability, build capital, enhance our quality of life and contribute to the realization of dreams and aspirations.

Over the near century of the Legions existence the question: “Why Join the Royal Canadian Legion”, has often been asked. The reasons for joining are as individual as are those responding to the question.

Many have joined to continue their service following separation from the Canadian Armed Forces or one of its allies. Others have joined to memorialize a family member, to support those who have paid the supreme sacrifice, those who have returned from service with wounds and disabilities, as well as those who continue to serve.

As a member we rarely give much consideration into personal development or gain. The pure at heart will often give of their time, talents and their wealth. All to ensure that the needs of the Veteran and their families are met and to ensure the continued success of Legion. For many the thought of direct personal development or gain is the furthest thing from their mind.

Others will join to take advantage of one of the many programs the Legion has to offer. A good example is our sports program. Still others join to provide Legion with a special talent they may have such as; accounting skills, secretarial skills, building trades, cooks, cleaners; the list could include most every skill known to exist.

So, can we gain personally from being a member of the Royal Canadian Legion?

The answer is, definitely. In fact there are very few who do not gain something during their years of service to the Legion.

If you ask the membership for examples of personal development they might say, Friends, Comrades and a feeling of accomplishment. Others find employment in a branch or command. In your personal business life you may find that if you have a service or product another member can use, they will come to you as a Comrade rather than go to a non-member down the street. Often members will not notice that they have gained by their membership in legion, but be assured almost everyone does in one form or another.

We frequently see new members who are shy and withdrawn that will blossom later in their service to Legion, as they participate in one of our many programs; or as they “Chair” one of our many committees; or as they advance through the various officer roles and levels in the Legion.

It is not unusual to find a member who has found employment in a new area of life as a result of the knowledge and experience gained through their service as a member.

Travel can be another gain we might not realize immediately. The opportunity to attend a Provincial or Dominion Convention/Rally can see a member travel to a previously unknown part of their province or Canada. While traveling to these places we will not only see the beauty of our province or country, we will find new cultures and ideas, experience new culinary delights and make new friends.

While at that Convention/Rally you will have the opportunity to participate in debate, to vote on motions and resolutions which can and have affected provincial and national policy and law, both within Legion and outside Legion.

Additionally, the Royal Canadian Legion, through its many levels, provides awards for services rendered. These awards can be in the form of certificates, medals and bars. Each level has a series of awards specific to that level as a means of recognizing the work provided by members. Extraordinary service can be rewarded by either: the Life Membership Award, a Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) or a Palm Leaf to the MSM.

At some point many members will notice an increase in their general well being. Be it from an interaction with others, from service to our veterans and their families, through visits to shut-ins and veterans/seniors homes, or just by knowing you have made a difference in someone's life.

Personal Development in Legion can only be achieved by taking part, by giving of your time and talents, selflessly. Ask questions, get involved and before long you will see change.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

INTRODUCTION

One of the most common fears that people have to face is the fear of speaking in public. However, it is inevitable if one is to pursue a position within the Legion that there will be times when some form of addressing a gathering will be required. It is also inevitable that if you care strongly about the message you are going to deliver you will never totally overcome the nervousness of presenting it but there are certain things you can do that will help.

TIPS TO OVERCOME NERVOUSNESS

1. Know your material thoroughly – but no matter how familiar you are with the material make brief prompting notes that you can easily read without drawing attention to them.
2. Practice – practicing in front of a mirror will give you a visual of how you appear to an audience and you can then change facial expressions or mannerisms as required. Practice with an individual who is supportive but also objective.
3. If you are using a prepared script – Make it Your Own- change the wording if necessary to words that come naturally to you. Use words and phrases that are familiar to your audience. An older group of people are not appreciative of modern buzz words whereas if you are speaking to youth it may be perfectly acceptable to say “like” every third word.

4. Avoid creating distractions for your audience. Keep your hands out of your pockets, especially if you have coins in them that might jingle. Some motions with hands or other body movements are acceptable to accentuate a comment but if used to often lose their effectiveness.
5. Humour is good but needs to be used with discretion and limitation otherwise your audience will start listening for your next hilarious remark instead of absorbing the points you are making right now and are in danger of walking away only remembering the jokes you told.

CONCLUSION

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, join a Toast Masters Club. They are professionals and will greatly assist you in finding ways to hold the attention of your audience and relax as much as possible while doing it.

