

Are you a leader, or just a follower in a leadership position?

As the leaders of the Knights of Columbus in Texas you are in a unique position, because you are in the upper echelons of the driving force in an organization of more than 1.7 million men. Leadership by definition implies movement. Leaders lead, followers follow. But you must be going somewhere in order to have people follow you. If you are just standing still you are not leading. But moving requires initiative and involves risk. Many of us try to avoid risk.

Every year our organization is reborn through the election of new officers and the appointment of personnel in vital positions. With every birth there is risk. That risk is whether or not the incumbents will in fact be leaders, or merely followers in leadership positions. A leader must be open to new ideas. Ideas that will move our order to achieve greater heights.

Why are you reading this? You are a leader! You think there might possibly be a gem of wisdom here that you can use. Hopefully there will be. But you have a choice, you can stop here or go on. Just as you have the choice in your new position. You have the choice to stop where you are, keep your head down and hope no stray bullets hit you, or you can take your council in a new and exciting direction. Leaders stand up and make decisions, provide direction, and initiate action.

Are leaders always greeted with immediate success? The answer is a resounding No. Most leaders struggle to implement new ideas. People are resistant to change. You all have heard it in your councils before: "That will never work"; "We cant do that": "We tried that 20 years ago, didn't work then, won't work now". These comments KILL councils!!

As we look out over the 700 plus councils we see some that are flourishing and some that are barely surviving. Why? What is the difference? The difference is YOU! You have it in your power as a leader to change hearts and minds. You have the power to make a new beginning. You have the power to go in new directions. You have the power to insure success. You weren't elected to merely maintain. You were elected to lead. But in order to lead you must gain the support and trust of your brother Knights. You must welcome their ideas and views. Many times younger/newer Knights ideas are squashed by attitudes of the more seasoned members. "We don't do that here", "Your time will come" etc. As a leader you must welcome these new Knights and encourage their innovative ideas.

You must also evaluate where your council has been and where it can go. What fund raisers have you held in the past? How much effort was expended? What was the pay off? Are people getting tired of the same old thing? Every great fundraiser started out as a spark of an idea in some members mind. It was then voiced, probably modified and then fought for and finally implemented, with at least a third of the Council still insisting that it wouldn't work. But it did work because the leader believed and convinced his council to follow. Your job is to be that leader. Get that new idea started; take your council to a new level; make it fun and exciting. Commitment is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism. You have a great opportunity, employ your unique talents. LEAD!!!!!!