

Tips for Officers

Congratulations, your JA company has elected you to serve in a leadership role.

Whom do you think of when you are asked to name a “leader”? A politician, sports hero, famous business executive, teacher, family member, or friend? What qualities or characteristics make these people leaders? Intelligence, enthusiasm, vision, speaking ability, experience, and compassion? What other qualities can you think of?

You have been selected to help guide your JA company. Even if you do not believe you have all the skills demonstrated by experienced or famous leaders, you still can be effective! Few natural leaders exist; in fact, most people must learn the necessary skills. Leadership is the ability to help a group achieve its objectives. Gaining education in this capacity is important to your success as a company officer. You will have many opportunities to work with other officers and your entire JA company to further develop your managerial skills.

Helpful Hints

Demonstrate a positive attitude.

- Treat all company employees with respect. Be friendly and sincere. “Bossing” people is not leading.

Be enthusiastic.

- A positive and optimistic attitude will help you gain employees’ respect. Be the first to arrive and the last to leave, always ready to lend a willing hand.
- A perfect attendance record will help your creditability as a company leader.

Make people feel important.

- Each employee must feel free to contribute ideas to the company’s success. Make sure each employee feels needed and valued.
- Listen to suggestions. Praise good performance—frequently!

Ask for and listen to advice.

- Ask the individuals most affected by a problem for advice. For example, the production staff probably knows best how to eliminate excess inventory, and the top sales person likely can describe the most effective sales presentations.

Be goal-oriented.

- Work with the other officers to establish goals and accomplish them. Use “we” instead of “I.” Demonstrate a concern for helping the company achieve its goals.
- Be sure that all JA company employees have the information they need to perform their jobs well.

- Develop a timetable to accomplish all your department's tasks, making sure everyone on the team understands what needs to be done.
- Expect progress. Have your staff report progress toward their objectives at company meetings. Stress the importance of completing company tasks on time!
- Give support. Give credit, and take the blame. Tell others of your department's achievements and accept public responsibility for failures.

Be courteous.

- The key to being a successful leader is really quite simple:
"Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you."
- Good leaders have the ability to treat others as they would like to be treated.