

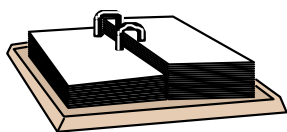
The Strand

The Newsletter of PRLS

Volume 7 Issue 2

October 1, 2004

PRLS Calendar



October 2: Basic PRLS,
CalState, Bakersfield

November 6: Basic PRLS
Mid-State Bank, Cambria

December 4: Master PRLS 4
Peaceful Point, Arroyo Grande

December 11: Master PRLS 3
Peaceful Point, Arroyo Grande

January 8: Master PRLS 1
CLU, Thousand Oaks

Want to be an in-print author? Send your "Strand" contributions by e-mail to rbm717@adelphia.net.

PRLS Registrar **Mary Howard** asks that those in receipt of the printed version of this newsletter send her your updated e-mail address.

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Well, What Do We Expect? (Part 5)

By reading about business leadership traits in the various periodicals available to all of us, you come across some decent lists of qualities possessed by those whom we consider "successful." Here's the last of five in the newest list I've read.

They were comfortable with risk and not afraid of failure.

What risk? Well, the risk of looking like a fool in front of your friends. No one has ever led a Rotary club and escaped an entire year without at least one incident that made the president look like an idiot: notes that disappeared, food that was awful, lights that didn't work, names mispronounced or forgotten, missing programs, a fund raiser that lost money — all the things calculated to keep people from seeking leadership positions. Regrettably, not all can stand the heat in the leadership kitchen. Yet somehow, somewhere, every year we find brave people to lead our clubs *in spite of the risks of failure and embarrassment.*

Can anyone predict who will do well? Sure, there are lots of ways. Do potential leaders have successful businesses? Are they people whose livelihood depends on getting other people to do things—insurance salesmen, stockbrokers, active real estate professionals, for example? Have they performed well in one or more Avenues of Service? Do they attend club social functions? And so forth.

Can they stand the risk of *not* succeeding? If they're willing to take that chance, give them a shot at it!

This is the end of the five-part series on "Leadership Traits." I suppose there are other traits that could have been mentioned—curious, opportunistic, competitive are traits that come immediately to mind. And maybe there's nothing new here at all.

But these traits serve as reminders that the basic recipe for success in leadership positions remains the same. It was undoubtedly as true for Genghis Khan and Robin Hood as it is today for our Rotary officers. Those who attend PETS see a ton of these traits on display. May it ever be so.

Don't play taps over Rotary just yet.



Joy to the World (Part 1)

As one series ("Well, What Do We Expect?") comes to an end, another begins. This is the first of a seven-part leadership series happily plagiarized from a LOT of sources.

During this coming Holiday Season and in every such season to follow, there is a noticeable concentration on a typical gift of the times – Joy. Joy, however, is not just a gift specific to time of the year; instead, it's a necessary accompaniment to all times in all places.

"Well," you say, "That's pretty obvious. Why bring it up now?" Among other reasons, the concept of Joy is part of our normal relationship with our club. In addition, it would be difficult to mention the subject close to April 15 or to May 30 or to November 11. There are other emotions in play on those dates, and Joy would be *way* out of line.

At this coming time of year, though, it's an easy trait to consider, even if there are some barriers to joyful living. I counted three:

Worry. There are advantages to planning ahead, aren't there? We're able to get ready for what can possibly derail our future. Planning ahead, though, is a form of worrying. Someone wrote one time that "Worry is

the interest you pay on tomorrow's troubles." And if that were all worry was, we'd be in pretty good shape. Another writer has put it in another context: "We worry away our lives, fearing the future, discontented with the present." So, worry can be positive in nature as well as negative. In its negative form, it's a barrier to joy and, indeed, can rob you of happiness.

Boredom. "I have seen all the things that are under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind." Does that sound like anyone you know?

But people who are bored are sometimes not aware of the options available to them. Children are frequently bored because they don't see the significance of their action options. "Read a book." Or "Pick up your room." Or "Do your homework." These aren't options, not *real* ones at any rate; they're adult suggestions presented to help un-stick a child's imagination, but the child doesn't see any significance or meaning in any of the suggestions, and so remains "bored."

When were Rotarians any different? "It's the same old, same old—go to boring meetings, listen to the same stuff, do the same stuff at the annual fund-raisers, read the same stuff in the same meaningless bulletin." "Stuff" is not significant. "Stuff" is a barrier to joy. George Carlin used to describe "stuff" in much

more cogent terms, but these will do for this forum.

Selfishness. Some say, "I have the means, I have the time, I have the energy to do anything I want to do. With the help of my friends in Rotary, I'm able to do meaningful things for others. That gives me pleasure, and in most cases pleasure is my only reward for all my work. I love it!"

Others, who possess this barrier to joy big time, feel that humanity owes them, and they wait in their small negative worlds for the first payment. Know anyone like this?

Can we—should we—expose them to these words spoken by Past RI President Albert Adams in 1919-20? "The great thing that Rotary is doing for Rotarians is furnishing the opportunity and creating the desire to 'do something for somebody else.'" Is there a chance that selfish people would heed Adams' idea? Sure. Give it a try.

Can we help those with full plates of worry, boredom and selfishness? Sure we can. First we can get them to join us; then we can show them what we do that keeps us alive as the premier service organization in the world.

We can use the leadership traits built into each of us to bring other people back to life in significant, meaningful ways. We can make real human beings out of people who are now half dead. Do we owe it to other people to get them

moving again? No, we owe it to ourselves. We need joy, too.



**District Staff Meeting,
September 11, 2004**

It's a law someplace that anything called a "Staff Meeting" is boring and ultimately meaningless. Like everything else in our world, sometimes laws are broken, and the results are positive.

The meeting of principal District 5240 Staff at the University Club in Santa Barbara on Sept. 11th was one of those times when breaking a natural law resulted in the beginnings of positive actions.

Somewhere between the desires of DG **Jan Lindsay** (Ventura East) and the inner workings put together by EAG **Jane McClenahan** (Ojai West) and Education & Training Director **Dick Wieler** (Thousand Oaks) were the makings of a productive, informative day of proposing actions and exchanging views.

Three questions were posed:

1. **"How can we as District Leaders more effectively promote the World Peace Scholarships and better educate our Clubs as to the importance of this relatively new RI program?"**
2. **"How can we create increased awareness and response in the areas of Youth Service, International Service, the Eradication of Poverty, and the Centennial Year Celebration?"**
3. **"What are the Pros and Cons associated with ethnic**

and cultural club exclusivity?"

Well, what were all these things about? Why gather together District Principal Staff to deal with these parochial questions of small note to the effective management of an active district?

Dick Wieler put together a summary of what the group proposed in each of the three categories shown above. It's available in its entirety on the District Website. There is no club president in this or any district who won't be able to pick off a kernel of wisdom and suggest club-level action from the compendium of the hundreds of years of Rotary experience represented in that room.

Take a long look at what these experienced, innovative participants came up with. Then, be aware that:

1. The people in the room were all PRLS or MPRLS graduates.
2. They had all been hand-picked for their current District-level positions.
3. Some had driven over 100 miles to get there, talked for three hours, then driven another 100 miles home again.
4. They offered their experiences and expertise without any expectation at all that anyone would actually pay attention to what they suggested relative to each of the questions considered.
5. There was an aura of eager participation in the room, as dedicated people brought their intelligence to the questions.

6. We could not do without Master PRLS 3 (Facilitation Skills), the brain-storming how-to that forms the basis for problem solving in all we try to do to stretch our District.

The results will stretch minds as much as the exercise itself.

Take a look:

<http://images.mychurchesimages.com/410/pdf/staffreport%20904.pdf>

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