

student leadership
The **S**tudent **L**eadership **T**raining **P**rogram

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Alumni & Staff Newsletter

May / June, 2004

Time is running out !



The remainder of the school year is now measured in just double figures, and it is not just the seniors who are doing a count-down. That means that before you know it SLTP will throw open its door to welcome hundreds of kids to the experience of their lifetimes.

Don't be left out! Come and join us again this summer. Bring your friends. Send in your application now. The applications are starting to roll in, and soon choices may be limited.

If you are thinking about TLC – get that application in right now. There are just 4 slots left.

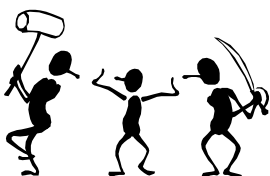
If you are thinking about ALC – please keep in mind that there were 180 kids who attended SLTP last summer, and there are only 32 spaces in ALC.

Please don't be left out – and don't let your school go unrepresented.

Attached to this newsletter were applications to ALC and LTC. Visit our website for more information or for more applications.

www.sltp.info

Spring and the Conflicts it brings



In any group conflict is inevitable because different people have different

viewpoints. A conflict can be defined as a situation where the concerns or interests of two or more persons appear incompatible. Group members may see the needs of the organization differently because of their different ages, values, situations, jobs, or prior experiences. In most organizations conflicts arise over questions such as:

- What should we be doing?
- How should we be doing it?
- Who should do it?
- Should it be done at all?
- Why can't we do it MY way?
- Who says?

Since conflict is natural AND inevitable, the goal of the group should not be to eliminate conflict, any more than it should be to eliminate mistakes. Both conflict and mistakes go hand in hand with growth! At the same time though, it is not a good idea to ignore conflict any more than it is to ignore a mistake.

When conflict is ignored, or approached on a win/lose basis, communication breaks down, animosities develop and the ability of the group to function is destroyed or at least impaired.

Conflicts need to be resolved constructively. When conflict arises and is dealt with openly, group members are stimulated to employ creativity as alternatives are considered and commitment continues because collaboration allows positive relationships to develop.

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Building Consensus *Fist to Five*



Often the biggest conflict catalyst in groups is also one of the tools that groups use to conduct their business “efficiently.” Most groups utilize some form of Parliamentary Procedure which relies on the concept of majority rules. A majority vote on most motions requires 51 percent of the members to agree. That leaves 49 percent disagreeing, doesn't it? As should be imagined and envisioned this minority voting group is ripe for resentment and conflict.

One way to avoid this black hole of negativity is to include consensus building into the decision making process. The idea behind consensus is not to have every group member agree, but simply that everyone holds a position that they can at least support an idea. Incorporated into this concept is the time saving idea that allows groups to address the issues and concerns of the minority without rehashing or arguing the majority opinion.

The method we advocate at OTS is a technique called “Fist to five.” To begin the leaders restates the group's position (perhaps the motion on the floor) and asks everyone to display their degree of support by displaying one of the following hand

signals:

- **5 fingers** *It's a great idea and I will be one of the leaders working on it.*
- **4 fingers** *It's a great idea and I will work on it.*
- **3 fingers** *I support this idea, but I am not crazy about it.*
- **2 fingers** *It is not my first choice, but I can support the idea.*
- **1 finger** *I don't agree, but I promise not to block it.*
- **Fist** *I completely disagree with this idea and I will try to block it if you try to accomplish it.*

Members who display fewer than three fingers are the root of the opposition and they are the people with the issues and concerns that most need to be addressed. By inviting them to articulate their concerns, the entire group can address the issues (not personalities) and hopefully resolve them. Frequently this will allow / enable those who don't support an idea the opportunity to persuade others to withdraw their support and thus save an organization from a costly error.

The Officer Training Seminar



Even though leadership does not require holding a title, SLTP

recognizes the need to train and prepare student officers for their SPECIFIC roles, which is the role of

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the Officer Training Seminar.

The primary objective of OTS is “nuts and bolts” preparation for the roles, procedures, duties and responsibilities associated with the traditional student officer and adviser positions.

Separate practical workshops will be held for each of the cardinal offices—president; vice president; secretary and treasurer. Other officerholders or team captains will attend either specific job related workshops or tutorials to be determined by the enrollment.

In addition to the specific officer and adviser workshops, the curriculum includes workshops on building effective teams, calendaring, **modern** meeting management, motive-action, time management, goal setting and project planning.

Since the roles and responsibilities of student officers are interdependent, student officers may only attend this seminar as a TEAM. The minimum number of officers for each team is 2 which may include any combination of student officers including the adviser.

Registration is limited and since many schools & organizations do not hold their election of officers until later in May or in early June - schools may deposit registrations to hold / reserve spaces for their officer teams.

Applications for OTS can be found on our website

www.sltp.info

Who should attend SLTP?



So, who should attend a program like this ?

Our answer is based on just one qualification.

We believe SLTP is for **any student or adviser** who is interested in learning how to make a difference ! **Student leadership does not require a title.** Nor is it defined through membership in certain activities. Nor is it defined by popularity. To that end, we do not believe that ANY one activity is THE most important activity in a school. Each activity helps to create the fabric of belonging, and therefore ALL of the activities are THE most important.

The majority of students who attend SLTP are very involved in their school and in their community. All are seeking to learn how TO DO more.

The willingness to learn is vital. So is the understanding that leadership is about DOING. Leaders are defined by what they do - - not by the titles they hold or by the organizations they belong to.

The only program requirements that exist are based on experience.

- *Delegates to the LTC's* - must be secondary students (junior high or high school).
- *Delegates to the ALC's* - must have completed the first level.
- *Delegates to the TLC* - must be graduates of both LTC & ALC.

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- *Delegates to the Adviser Program* - must be practicing or aspiring coaches or advisers.
- *Delegates to the OTS* - must be officers and /or advisers and have **at least one** other team member in attendance.

What each participant should “bring”

- *a desire to make a difference*
- *a willingness to learn*
- *enthusiasm*
- *an acceptance of growth*
- *a desire to master change*
- *a dream to work on*

What SLTP will provide

- *an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance*
- *significant learnings and understandings*
- *the opportunity to practice what we teach*
- *encouragement and support*

The 2004 SLTP Conference Schedule

at

Nichols College in Dudley, MA

Where leaders learn HOW to make a difference!

- **Leadership Training Conferences (4)** July 6 - 10; July 13 - 17; July 27 - 31; Aug 3 - 7
- **Advanced Leadership**

Conferences (3) July 14 - 17; July 28 - 31; Aug 4 - 7

- **The Leadership Center** - - July 7 - 10
- **Officer Training Seminar** - - July 1 - 2
- **Adviser Certification** - - July 28 - 31
- **The ReEnergizer Conference** - Saturday, November 27

visit

www.sltp.info



Thank you for all of the contributions, notes and emails in support for our newsletter during this school year. Next year we do hope to be able to post our newsletter each month to our website.

This issue will probably be the final edition for this school year as we must concentrate all of our effort in the next two months on preparation for the summer conferences.

Just a reminder that contributions, suggestions for the SLTP newsletter are quite welcome. Send them to: SLTPlead@aol.com

We'll see you “at camp.” Good luck closing out the school year.