



# WING WISDOM

Gold Wing Road Riders Association  
Leadership Training Division Newsletter

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## Words from the International Directors



Leadership Training - When is the best time to make our seminars and presentations available to the Members? There are many possible answers to this question. First, we want to make it available whenever the Members need it. An example might be to prepare new Officers and Staff before they assume their new positions, and the right time for this could be anytime throughout the year.

Some other areas of thought are to present the materials at a District or Region Rally. This is a good time to present topics for Members who might not be able to attend at any other time, and there should definitely be the opportunity to attend some Leadership Training at a Rally, much like we provide at Wing Ding each year. Another possibility is during the time of year that some folks might call “non-riding weather”, or even “non-Rally season”, and this could depend on what area of the country you live in. During these “slower” months, it allows an opportunity to get people together and still stay involved.

So what is the best time? There should be a good mix of all these times! We are providing a service to help our Members, and therefore we should take advantage of each and every one of these times. Consider that as you plan the schedules with your District and Region Staffs. Let’s aggressively promote our programs, and our organization will continue to grow and advance to new levels of success.

What is Leadership? People have so many misconceptions about leadership. When they hear that someone has an impressive title or an assigned leadership position, they assume that he is a leader. *Sometimes* that’s true. But titles don’t have much value when it comes to leading. True leadership cannot be awarded, appointed, or assigned. It comes only from “influence”, and that can’t be mandated- it must be earned. The only thing a title can buy is a little time—either to increase your level of “influence” with others, or to erase it.

“Influence” comes from “actions”- people need to know that you care, and they will know this not from what you tell them, but by what you accomplish. Keep your act together, plan for each situation, and present your ideas and seminars with confidence. Above all, stay honest with everyone, and keep good communications going.

One of my favorite stories that illustrates the idea of “influence” concerns Abraham Lincoln. In 1832, years before he became president, young Lincoln gathered together a group of men to fight in the Black Hawk War. In those days, the person who put together a volunteer company for the militia often became its leader and assumed a commanding rank. In this instance, Lincoln had the rank of captain.

But Lincoln had a problem. He knew nothing about soldiering. He had no prior military experience, and knew nothing about tactics. He had trouble remembering the simplest military procedures. For example, one day

Lincoln was marching a couple of dozen men across a field, and needed to guide them through a gate into another field. But he couldn't manage it. Recounting the incident later, Lincoln said, "I could not for the life of me remember the proper word or command for getting my company to do what I wanted. Finally, as we came near (the gate) I shouted: "This company is dismissed for two minutes, when it will fall in again on the other side of the gate".

Fortunately for Lincoln - and for the fate of our country- he overcame his inability to influence others. He followed his time in the military with undistinguished stints in the Illinois state legislature and the U.S. House of Representatives. But over time, and with much effort and personal experience, he became a person of remarkable influence and impact.

This was accomplished with much training and experience! Deep down inside of each of us is a person of great influence, maybe just waiting for a chance to emerge. Here is my favorite leadership proverb: "He who thinks he leads, but has no followers, is only taking a walk."

If you can't influence others, they won't follow you. And if they won't follow, you're not a leader. That is the effect of "influence." No matter what anybody else tells you, remember that leadership is "influence"—nothing more, nothing less.

Strive to promote "influence" in others- that is one of our goals in Leadership Training, to prepare others with the tools they need to become better "leaders" in their lives as well as in GWRRA. It may be slow at first, but look at the great success Lincoln finally achieved!

Remember to *"Promote the Experience - Share the Excitement"*.

Steve and Carolyn Cotton  
International Directors – LTD

***"Leadership is action not position."***  
- ***Donald McGannon***

## **The Curriculum Corner**

Hello again fellow Trainers. Now that the Rally season has wound down, I'm guessing that some of you are planning some Horizon Program sessions. That being the case, I thought that I would share some ideas we have found very well received and spread throughout Region 'N'.

Thanks to the hard work and thoughtful insight of the Kentucky District Trainers, Dave & Edie Richardson, we have added several fun exercises to the original program. It wasn't that the old program was bad or anything like that. It just needed a little perking up. The folks in Kentucky felt that spicing up the program with some Team Building "games" would keep everyone on their toes and spark up things in general. They also added a Trivia styled game as a "gathering tool" to help get the participants back from health breaks and meal breaks. Judging by the feedback from the participants in three of our five districts, the competitive atmosphere that these games encourage has really added a lot of fun to the sessions.

Another change that we have experimented with is the schedule. Since the national economy took a serious downturn, everyone has had to watch his or her personal finances. With that in mind, several of our Districts have asked that we find ways to reduce the number of hotel nights involved in attending a Horizons Program. We found that by eliminating the Friday evening social and starting a little later on Saturday, most (if not all) participants could skip the Friday hotel cost. We just delivered three modules on Saturday and two on Sunday and presto, money saved/members happy. Of course this change meant that Module 4 had to be delivered before Module 3, but that presented no logistical problems. The late start, coupled with the addition of the

“games”, did make for a slightly longer day on both Saturday and Sunday but so far, everyone has responded positively to our post session surveys.

The last change that I'd like to share with you has to do with the “team exercise” at the end of the program. As it was originally laid out, this exercise had very little structure. In fact, the instructions said that the “chapters” should have fun with this exercise and even visit other chapters and “steal” ideas from each other. All too frequently these instructions led to chaos, confusion and a total breakdown of the learning environment. In an effort to channel the energy of the participants and reinforce some of the teaching points covered in the various modules, we set up some structured scenarios for the chapters to portray. And just to make sure that the situations created the desired results, we even planted “sleepers” on each team. These scripted scenarios have gone over very well because they made every “skit” an extension of the learning experience.

If any of you would like further information about these changes, copies of the games and copies of the skit scenarios please drop me an e-mail at [karcanes@surry.net](mailto:karcanes@surry.net). Please note that I have a filter on my e-mail account, so if you use a business or business-like e-mail address you may get blocked. If I don't respond to you within 3 or 4 days, feel free to call me. Our phone number is in the LTD Directory.

Take care and keep training,

CJ & Bo Karcanes  
Region 'N' Trainers

***“Do not fear the winds of adversity. Remember: a kite rises against the wind rather than with it.”***  
- ***B.J. Marshall***

## **👉 Operations Changes from the International Office**

Many of you have heard about recent changes affecting financial responsibilities of directors. It is important to keep in mind that these changes are intended to protect our volunteer leaders from being wrongly accused of mishandling funds. The entire Forms section I in the *Officer's Guidebook* has been renumbered with these changes. Please keep the following items in mind during your upcoming training events until updated files can be sent out to you:

- ✓ Financial reports must be submitted using the new pages I-14 and I-15. (Look for the 5/01/03 date on the I-15 page to ensure that you have the most current form.) A GWRRA equipment list is not in the guidebook yet, but was forwarded to Regional Directors in late October 2003 for distribution. Copies of bank statements for each month of the report are also required.
- ✓ New Officer Change/Appointment Worksheets are now page I-2.
- ✓ New MOUs for Director Positions (does not affect Assistant Directors) who will be active in their position as of January 01, 2004 should be submitted with the Financial Reports this year.
  - Chapter and District Directors: reference Form I-8
  - Regional Directors: reference Form I-10
- ✓ Reminder: All checks must be signed by two parties (i.e., officer and treasurer)

***“Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anybody expects of you. Never excuse yourself.”***  
- ***Henry Ward Becker***

## **↔ Three Keys to Successful Leadership ↔**

Knowledge: By knowledge we mean more than just “book learnin’.” In this case, diplomas or grade point averages do not measure knowledge. Those are measurements of education. In our case knowledge equals understanding - understanding what our membership wants and needs. All of the education in the world is of little use if we don’t have understanding. You need to understand what is needed to be a successful leader.

Ability: We feel ability is equal to knowledge for our leaders. You need to be able to clearly define a job or task to be able to speak before a group. You need to be a good listener to understand what a member or group needs, and to honestly react to what you hear and see. You need patience and understanding. Listening ability, patience, speaking, and problem solving, are all topics covered in our Leadership Training curriculum. We can, hopefully, help you in these areas.

Desire: Most important of all the key elements is desire. No matter how much knowledge you have, or what your level of ability is, your potential will never be realized if you don’t have that burning desire to lead. On the other hand, there are many of you that have the desire to lead, but lack polish on the knowledge and ability keys. Those that possess the desire to learn can acquire knowledge and ability. Desire is the great equalizer. With desire and a proper attitude you can attain nearly anything.

We assume that you have become volunteer leaders and staff because you have the desire to serve your fellow members. You have attained the most important key. We will attempt to help you succeed by helping you polish those skills in knowledge and leadership.

“To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming is the only end of life.” -Robert Louis Stevenson

Bill & Carol Cook  
Iowa District Trainers

***“The great essentials of life are something to do, something to love, something to hope for.”  
- Thomas Chalmers***

## ☹ **Emotions and Attitude** ☺

These two things have an enormous impact in our lives. As GWRRA is a part of our lives, let’s examine the impact that emotions and attitude have on our motorcycling hobby. Let’s first begin with riding, then discuss “chapter life.”

The best emotions to have while riding are the *feeling of freedom*, the *enjoyment of the beauty of nature* around us, the *camaraderie* we share with our friends, the *comfort* that is inherent with riding a reliable machine, and the *relief of stress* that many of us experience when rolling through the hills, leaning through the curves, feeling the flow of the air, and when we are away from urban areas, experiencing the sounds of nature that our quiet engines do not drown out. This must go hand in hand with our attitude. The attitude must be one of respect for the inherent dangers of our sport. Our attitude must include the commitment to use our faculties (be sober and alert) to minimize that risk. Conversely, we don’t want to have the attitude that we are such good riders that we are not susceptible to an accident. Nor do we want to be preoccupied with an attitude that we are so cool that we focus our attention to see who around us is recognizing how cool we are. That is my personal opinion of emotions and attitude when riding, and I am confident many share those or similar views.

How about emotions and attitude in chapter life? In a chapter, the emotions and attitude most visible are those of the officers and staff. All staff members are leaders of sort, and their emotions and attitude are typically either amplified or rejected by the chapter participants. There are certain chapter participants that are leaders, by personality, who also have a significant influence within a chapter. Finally, all chapter participants exert some

influence into the combined “attitude” of a chapter. For that reason, I am suggesting that we review our attitude on a regular basis, and look objectively at our emotions.

A positive attitude focuses on the good in a situation, the good in a person, the value of an experience, and the lesson learned in a defeat. A person with a positive attitude can have an enormous impact on a chapter, especially if in a leadership position. The damage to a chapter can be great if the leaders focus on the negative. For example, it rained; only 2 bikes showed up, the food was bad, or we didn’t take 1<sup>st</sup> at District. Negative attitudes, like positive attitudes, are contagious. The results of a negative attitude is a self fulfilling prophecy – dwindling participation on rides, lower attendance in chapter meetings, lack of volunteers for staff positions, no participation on committees, and apathy in general. If there are other chapters in the area, members will elect to participate with them. If not, they will most likely leave GWRRA. If you accept these statements as reasonably factual, it becomes evident of the enormous impact attitude has on our lives and in GWRRA. You’ve heard the saying, “attitude is everything.” The truth is, “**positive** attitude is everything.”

Emotions tie in to attitude. Negative emotions tend to foster a negative attitude, and vice versa. If we were able to dissect our emotions, we would have a better chance to increase our objectivity, and hopefully, understand our emotions and not let negative emotions affect our attitude. To that end, here is something that was presented to me over 20 years ago, and has had a very positive impact on my attitude and my life. It is a simple explanation for the existence of any **negative** emotion. Any time you have a negative emotion, this simple statement will always explain why. *A negative emotion is caused when your beliefs contradict reality.*

So when you have a negative emotion, you can decide to be objective, try to apply logic and identify your belief and the reality it contradicts, and hopefully disconnect the negative emotion from your attitude. Apply and practice this process and you can maintain your positive attitude even when the world disappoints you. As a person with a positive attitude, you will find that you contribute to rather than detract from the world around you, in both tangible and intangible ways. People will enjoy your company more, and you will be viewed as a role model. “***A Positive Attitude is Everything!***”

John & Bonnie Simonick  
Texas District Trainers

***“Discovery is seeing what everybody else has seen and thinking what nobody has thought.”***  
- ***Albert Szent Gyorgi***

## **Overcoming Procrastination (Part 2)**

We procrastinate about a number of big and small things – chores, gifts, relationships, phone calls, deadlines. Last month’s article included some tips for helping you to feel less overwhelmed by a particular task, making an unpleasant task a little more tolerable, and using your mind to work in your favor. Hopefully at least one the ideas presented will be of help to you in some way.

Rewards can sometimes be used to motivate you to finish a task. Some people find it easy to reward themselves at the end of project. In this way, a little more enjoyment may be possible since you are looking forward to the reward. A slight variation to this method would be to “deprive” yourself of a reward until a job is completed. Rewards don’t have to be anything fancy or expensive. Perhaps a trip to the movies, a motorcycle ride, a visit to the new restaurant down the street, or a guilt-free evening at home relaxing will be enough of a motivator to help you tackle one of the first items on your “to do” list. Make a list of the things you want to accomplish, as well as a list of things that you would like to do (that could be used as rewards). Then match up each task to an appropriate reward. The larger the task, the larger the reward.

Some people procrastinate about “trouble areas” in their life. In fact, just thinking about these trouble areas may cause anxiety. Make a list of the things in your life that you dread doing. They may be seasonal like taking

down holiday decorations or doing your taxes. Perhaps there are things you can do ahead of time to better prepare or organize yourself. Trouble areas may also be something that is part of your everyday life. For example, mailing bills on time or finishing fix-it projects around the house may be addressed by organizing a desk or work area so the necessary supplies and tools are more readily accessible. Once you identify your trouble area, do some brainstorming to think of ways to organize yourself or set up systems to help you overcome these procrastination pitfalls.

What are the things that you've been meaning to do some day? Chances are good that this list changes throughout your life. Take some time to make a list of the things that need to be changed, cleaned, found, returned, purchased reorganized, repaired, remodeled, etc. This list can also apply to areas of your life like family, pets, career, physical health, mental health, social activities, and the like. Start making a list whenever you feel overwhelmed. Guilt and anxiety often take over when there are a number of things floating around in your head with an emotional attachment. From there, you can think more clearly about prioritizing these items and breaking the larger tasks into more manageable "mini projects."

As you can see, there is not a guaranteed plan that will work for everyone. The key is to use the knowledge of your own strengths and interests to overcome whatever challenges you discover. I'll leave you with one final thought for the month from Charles Buxton: "You will never find time for anything. If you want time, you must make it."

Amy Peterson  
Region E Trainer

***"You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you think you cannot do."  
- Eleanor Roosevelt***