

Richard Iotua
IV Degree Black Belt
ITFNZ 7119
ITF 4-59

To be an effective leader, you should be confident enough to ensure that others follow your commands. If you are unsure about your own decisions and qualities, then your members will never follow you. As a leader, you have to be filled with confidence, show some swagger and assertiveness to gain the respect of your members. This does not mean that you should be overconfident, but you should at least reflect the degree of confidence required to ensure that your followers trust you as a leader.

Taekwon-Do offers Honesty or Integrity, it inspires and aspires, it shows commitment and compassion, it teaches good communication skills, decision making capabilities, accountability, delegation, empowerment, creativity and innovation it connects you also to a family environment, it is a Martial Art with principles that you can use in your everyday life.

The juniors in my club look up to me and if I want them to give their all I have to display that passion. With the correct application it helps me to gain the respect of my members and fellow peers and infuse new energy in my students, which helps them to perform better. If they feel that I am not fully committed or lack passion, then it would be an uphill task for me their instructor to motivate my students to achieve their personal goals.

Until you clearly communicate your vision to your club and tell them the strategy to achieve the goal, it will be very difficult for you to get the results you want. Simply put, if you are unable to communicate your message effectively to your students, you can never be a good instructor. A good communicator can be a good instructor. Words have the power to motivate people and make them do the unthinkable. If you use them effectively, you can also achieve better results.

You cannot do everything, right. But it is important for a leader to focus on key responsibilities while leaving the rest to others. By that, I mean empowering your students and delegating tasks to them. If you continue to micromanage, it will develop a lack of trust and more importantly, you will not be able to focus on important matters, as you should be. Delegate tasks to your students and see how they perform. Provide them with all the resources and support they need to achieve the objective and give them a chance to bear the responsibility. Never throw them in the deep end either, utilise their strengths and support their weaknesses, some students are fantastic technical practitioners but lack in confidence when communicating in a group environment, we have a few introverts in club, so smaller group settings allow them to flourish. I use their strengths in one on one scenarios and move them to more isolated areas away from the spectators, these practitioners are very valuable.

Apart from the time required under the Instructor Induction Course with Mr Lowe, my students are given the space to see where they are best suited in the club utilising their strengths for example we have some good jumpers so naturally they are encouraged to develop a training package for those that are having trouble, the same applies to those that are comfortable in patterns and sparring and power breaking. As an incentive and to acknowledge their contribution the club covers their professional development fees, if they choose to apply themselves, that will benefit themselves and the finances should not be a barrier. This enhances the quality of the club. My job is to stream line and ensure that it is within the guidelines of our organisation. Participation in decision making is also encouraged, with a plan of how we can get there. My black belts cannot show that full commitment

Richard lotua
IV Degree Black Belt
ITFNZ 7119
ITF 4-59

to club due to life, work, study etc but they still have a say in our forum aka Tribal Council where the ideas are thrown around freely. I am appreciative of the ongoing support from them.

Recently, I started to seriously think about the succession of my club, who would take over? This scared me a bit as I put a lot of blood sweat and tears into it and for a little club I believe it has done well to survive. We haven't changed to fit in with the bigger clubs and we still follow our club traditions that we have had since 25 October 2001.

Sadly times are getting harder in our area and families struggle to balance needs with wants. It is somewhat annoying when I see practitioners try to take advantage of my students and others and sometimes wonder where the integrity that we had been taught and teach to others has gone. You may say it is up to the practitioner but when the practitioner is new and the right words are said to a parent this is not what our organisation should be about, sometimes false hopes damage more. For our Organisation to survive, one area I believe we need to look at are those that are individualising our organisation and turn it back to a once again family orientated martial arts group whose main focus was to build a more peaceful world, stop fragmenting our group, stop over charging, stop demeaning our rank structure, the knowledge comes from those that have earned through years of commitment not by achieving a medal here and there, it comes from working from grass root level and the contribution of running a club . I suppose what I am saying is, if you want new clubs in the organisation and maintain the old, then the organisation needs to support and protect them and their instructors from rogues, come down a bit harder on club hoppers, give limitations on what is interpreted as an instructor, limiting extra training where you apply, why, when , how long for and how will your club benefit. It seems petty, but it will assist in eliminating reoccurring practitioners from doing so. The new practitioner may not fully understand but those that have been in circulation for awhile certainly do.