

# Jumpstart Your Organization

A Guide for Leaders of JCI Local Organizations

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## *Prologue*

This manual is meant to serve as a guide-book for Local Presidents of JCI organizations looking to breathe some new life into their organization. However, it may be especially useful to a Local President who inherits a stale chapter or a chapter that is in a downward spiral. It offers specific suggestions on how to reverse the trend in the Chapter, refine the Chapter's vision and rebuild the membership base with active quality members. Why am I writing it? Well, what happened in my local JCI chapter (Coconut Grove Jaycees) in 2001 was nothing short of remarkable and I say that not to toot our own horn, but because once we reversed the trend, our Chapter took a life of its own and exceeded our expectations greatly. We started with 72 names on our roster, but only 35 real members. Meetings had 10-15 people at best, we were \$4,000 in debt and there did not seem to be any candidates for President.

New blood came in to the organization and a Board of Directors with very little experience we turned everything around attracting 152 new members in 2001, \$30,000 was raised and donated to charities and over eighty projects were run in all Areas of Opportunity. Due to our success (and probably because we received some exposure winning the Marks Award for Most Outstanding Chapter in the United States), I began to receive e-mails and letters from all over the country asking me how we did it down here in Miami. So, I decided to put together a guide-book for other Presidents who want to try it "our way."

Does this mean that all of our suggestions are good? Not necessarily, and different ideas might work for different organizations, but the point is that I know this system worked to return our organization to prominence and I have heard good reports from organizations all over the world that have tried this method with success. On that note, you may find that some of our ideas are not politically correct and you may disagree with some of them, but I guarantee that there are some suggestions in this packet that you can use and regardless of whether you like all of our ideas, the overall concept contained in this packet for rebuilding an organization should be the model for the future of this organization. I have met so many enthusiastic young new members in the last few years and I have seen such amazing new leaders starting to emerge all over the country, so now is the perfect time to climb on Board and jump start YOUR organization. Do not get left behind!

That being said, we encountered a whole new set of issues and concerns in 2002 due to the resurgence of our organization in 2001. New members were enthusiastic, but they were also inexperienced in running an organization. So, our number one priority in 2002 was to train leaders for the future of our organization and because of that priority, I wanted to leave the next Coconut Grove President with a handbook they could use as a guide for success. Our organization continued to succeed in 2002 being named the Most Outstanding in the United States for a second year in a row and even being named the Best in the Americas.

Even before JCI, creative ideas for membership recruitment and improving organizations always seemed to come natural to me. As the Rush Chairman of my fraternity, I came up with many unique methodologies to give my medium size fraternity the second largest pledge class at the University of Illinois campus out of 57 fraternities. While everyone else was doing the

traditional formal rush process with a few barbeques and happy hours thrown in, we were holding flag football tournaments, free-throw shooting contests, sports memorabilia auctions and timed-bids that expired before the end of the rush period. This resulted in our 75 man house getting a larger pledge class than all but one of the 125 – 150 men fraternities on campus. It was a different way of thinking and recruiting by focusing on the needs and wants of the targeted underclassman. In addition to JCI and Sigma Nu, I have been involved with numerous other organizations, including: Miami Council for International Visitors, Summer Fun for Kids, the Great Grove Bed Races, Rotary International, Toastmasters, University of Illinois Business Mentoring Program, Florida Defense Lawyers Association, Easter Seals, Hands on Miami and Miami Heart Research Institute.

In JCI, since 2002, I have served twice as a National Officer and once as a State Officer for the United States Jaycees and twice served as an international JCI officer. Most recently, I served as the 2011 JCI Training Chairman. I also was a part of the 2004 JCI Strategic Planning Commission and I became a JCI certified trainer at the International Training Fellow level. This has allowed me to travel the world and see numerous ideas from JCI chapters around the world, which I have used to revise this manual in 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010 and again in 2012. I hope that this packet helps you develop a plan that will work for your organization and if I can ever be of assistance in helping you achieve your goals, please feel free to contact me.

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## **The Overall Model**

Do not waste energy trying to re-invent the wheel. First, you need to know your product. If you look at the JCI Mission Statement, it tells you that our mission is to provide development opportunities that empower young people to create positive change. In a nutshell, we create positive change by offering opportunities for young people in the four main areas of our organization. Thus, if you simply implement balanced programming tailored to your target market and market it properly, you will experience success in your local chapter. But you only have one year to lead this organization and there must be a sense of urgency to determine your vision. Remember, however, that vision without action and results is merely conversation.

### **The Basic Model for Rebuilding an Organization:**

- (1) Identify your target audience (i.e. kind of members you're looking for)
- (2) Figure out what they want
- (3) Refine your product to meet the needs of those potential members
- (4) Market your product through every means possible
- (5) Follow up with the fruits of your labor (i.e. contact and involve new prospects)

### **Theory Behind the Jumpstart Your Chapter Method**

Do not aggressively recruit! This does not work and you will lose as many potential new members as you gain. Instead, develop a fun, balanced portfolio of projects and events that will draw people to your organization and then make sure you spread the word about what you are doing and people will come to you. Potential members must see value, they must see people in your organization with whom they want to socialize, and all information about your organization must be concise, interesting, and easy to find for those looking for it.

In short, you attract bees with honey. You do not attract bees by sending a thousand other bees after them to aggressively recruit them to join a “honey-less” hive. People have different expectations and interests than ten years ago. We need to fine-tune this organization and develop a package that is attractive to these potential new members. But most of all, if we tell them who we are and what we do, they will join.

To put it another way, think about this example often used by Edward de Bono: imagine you have a tree trunk with branches on top of branches and twigs coming off the branches until you pinpoint one leaf at the end of a twig. Now put an ant at the base of the tree and send it off to find that leaf. What are the odds the ant gets there on the first try? One in a thousand? Greater?

Now, put that same ant on the leaf and send the ant off to find the base of the tree. What are the odds that the ant gets there on the first try? One in one, right? (By simply going down each branch, he cannot miss the base of the tree). Well, your JCI chapter is at the base of the tree: the foundation. We need to develop a package through individual development and training, community service, business opportunities, international networking, charity fundraising and, of course, socializing, that is so attractive to quality prospective members, that

when we shout up to the whole tree (through marketing efforts in the community) about what we are doing, there is a *one in one* chance that quality prospects *will come to us*.

### **So, Where Do I Start?**

- (1) **Background Knowledge of JCI:** No matter how long you have been in this organization, I can tell you that there are many things about JCI that you could learn better. This is why it is so important to read JCI publications, visit the JCI website, visit your national organization website, visit other local organization websites, etc. You need to become very familiar with JCI if you are ever going to “sell” the JCI vision to others. Plus, you will pick up on some great ideas and concepts.
- (2) **Personal Goals:** Obviously, there is some reason that you want to be a Local President and different people have different reasons. Determine in your head why you want to run the local organization and what you hope to achieve out of your year of leadership. Ideally, you would have done this in July or August of the year preceding your term as President, but it is never too late to make this determination. Until you know what you want out of this year, how can you know what you want for the local organization? (I hope you want more than awards because that’s a wrong approach).
- (3) **Speak with your members before you are elected.** Talk to the people in your local organization and determine if they are ready for change and if they will support you and the JCI vision. Don’t just tell them what you plan to do with the organization, but give them concrete examples of how you are going to do it. Paint a picture for them so that they can see the vision, too. If people see and hear about a plan that will work, they will get excited and if they are excited, then you are half way there. However, you must very careful that you do not undermine the current President’s reputation and credibility (even if you completely disagree with him/her). Many times, jumpstarting a local organization can be a little bit hostile and, in those situations, you really need to bite your tongue and use tact while talking with members in the year before you are President.
- (4) **Start Recruiting Your Team:** Even before you are elected, you need to find your core group of Board members. Now, this is not to say that other people are not going to be elected to certain spots on your Board, but you need to have at least three or four people around you that truly believe in the JCI vision and balanced programming. They will be YOUR TEAM. With only five people, you can rebuild a chapter to greatness, but they must believe in the vision. In that vein, don’t just try to fill up all the spots on the Board. It is okay to have an empty position that could be filled by a new member as long as it is not a key office. When approaching people, you really need to sell the vision to them and gain their loyalty to the vision (not by asking them for it, but by listening to them and including their ideas in the vision for the local organization). Finally, remember that the people that you have speaking in the front of the room at each meeting are supposed to be the ideal kind of people you are trying to recruit, so don’t just put a body in each position,
- (5) **Brainstorm:** As you begin to speak with people in your local organization and also with community leaders outside your organization, write everything down. Keep track of every idea, every potential project, all prospective members you meet or know from work and every resource you find about JCI. Focusing on your Plan of Action will come later,

but right now, be open-minded to any concept or idea that will help you accomplish the JCI mission in your local organization.

### **Step One: Identify Target Audience**

Before you begin to develop the projects and events that your local organization will run during the year, you need to think about what your current members want and, also, what kind of members you are trying to attract. Are you in a rural area where there are very few professionals? Are you in a metropolitan area where you are trying to attract lawyers, bankers, managers and entrepreneurs? Whatever you and your local organization decide is the best direction for your chapter will determine the types of members you attract, so you need to evaluate potential members from the beginning. You also need to be aware of the age range that you are targeting because this will go a long way in determining the kinds of projects your organization plans to organize. Obviously, your local organization would take members that fall outside of the target group, but you must determine where your focus will lie when planning your calendar of events.

Once you figure out what people you want to attract, start to think about where those people go in your community. For example, young lawyers probably hang out at bars and restaurants near the courthouse. They probably belong to the local Bar Association for your city. You will often find them at networking events looking to find new clients. See how easy that was to do? Now, think about all the various types of diverse people you might want to attract for your organization and write down as much information as you know about these types of people and where they might be found in your community.

### **Step Two: Figure Out What They Want**

After you determine your target audience, the next step is to evaluate what kind of projects these people would attend. If your target audience is 18-22 year old students (i.e. a university chapter), the expectations will be different than if your target audience is 27-32 year old professionals that work down town. A basic course on public speaking or interviewing for a job might be great for the former group, but the latter group would probably want more advanced seminar topics. Similarly, younger people often like to hold social events at different locations than their older counter-parts. Both groups, however, want to make a difference in the community and create positive change. All of these things must be taken into consideration when determining your target audience and trying to figure out what these people want from an organization such as JCI.

Now, assume that you only have about seven active members to begin building your vision. How do you go about finding out what your target audience wants? First, I suggest that you see if any of your seven people fall within the target audience. Then, have your seven strong members write down a list of friends and co-workers that fall within the target audience. Further, you can go to events where these target prospects will be attending and strike up a conversation with them at those events. Simply, get to know these people, find out what creates value to them and then get their business card for later follow-up. (after the local organization refines the product). Presently, you need to also incorporate social media and networking sites as a “place” to go if you want to figure out what your target audience is looking for in an

organization. Your presence on the internet and the way you use social media goes a long way in how today's young prospective member determines your credibility.

Important note: It is key that you do not sound desperate or aggressive when talking to prospective members or young professionals in the community. Too often, JCI members are quick to bring up JCI and talk about the many benefits of joining the organization. But you must remember that you are trying to make a connection with someone and you do this by finding out who that person is and what he/she is interested in doing with their time. It is like going out on a date and having the other person talk about themselves all night. No one likes that approach, so do not do it with your JCI sales pitch either. Once you find out what a prospective member is looking for, it is easy to sell him on this organization because JCI *is* what most young professionals are looking for in an organization.

### **Step Three: Refine Your Product**

The next step is to think about project ideas and project locations that will attract your target audience. That old "hole in the wall" pub may have some great Jaycee memories for your local organization and you can still go there once in a while for a happy hour, but how about trying to have an upscale cocktail hour after work in the new Japanese Restaurant downtown? You need to get inside the heads of the people you are trying to attract and think about what you need to offer them in order to pique their interest to check you out. Maybe think about doing a networking event in an area where young professionals already go after work. Try and determine what projects will give value to your target audience. Make sure that your local organization is impacting the community with projects that offer solutions to community problems and touch the lives of other people. JCI members want to create a positive change so you must offer them the opportunity to do so. Finally, offer this diverse and balanced slate of projects in locations that are attractive to all prospective members.

**Local Plan of Action**: This is the most important piece of advice that I can give you - *have a Plan of Action*. I am not going to go too much into what goes into a Local Organization Plan because you can get that from various websites and JCI publications. But, I will tell you that you need to have goals for everything and then try to achieve them. You need to analyze your weaknesses and come up with realistic solutions on how to solve them. Don't just make a Local Plan so that you can qualify for awards, but really think about how you can be a better organization and figure out what pieces are missing from the puzzle. For example, you could decide that you want to grow by two new members per month. How are you going to achieve this? You can determine that a major weakness is that members do not know about projects. What will you do to make this situation better? Be specific and really think it through.

I have personally watched local organizations around me that had dedicated and enthusiastic new members who joined the Board and spun their wheels all year (spending enormous amounts of time doing JCI things), yet they accomplished very little in the long run. Two of their most dedicated new members quit the Board (and one quit the organization all together). You must have a Plan of Action or you will go nowhere and that plan must include a strategy for attracting and retaining members.

Also, get creative and look past the ways that it has been done in your local organizations for the last ten years. Think big, but don't go overboard scheduling a ton of projects. Instead, make sure you are running quality projects. Don't plan on huge membership numbers because that will force you to start focusing on quantity, when your focus should ALWAYS be on quality. Include training for your Board on how to "recruit" in a savvy manner. Finally, don't worry about JCI Awards, but rather try to be the best organization in your community. If you do it the right way, awards will come, I promise.

**Balanced JCI Projects:** Most of you should know all about the concept of "balanced programming", which calls for a balanced portfolio of projects. So then, why am I going over it in this manual? Because I will bet that 50% of the local organizations around the world do not subscribe to this philosophy. Case in point: how many times have you heard someone describe a particular JCI chapter as a community service organization in some countries? And in others, you may hear that it is only for training seminars on personal and career development? In some countries, it is solely business-oriented with no community projects and in others, they do nothing on an international level.

It is rare that a JCI Chapter will be the best organization in its community for any ONE specific area. For example, in Miami, there are pure business networking organizations that hold bigger and better business card exchanges than us. There are pure community service organizations, like the Red Cross, American Cancer Society and many local community groups with large budgets and paid staff members, that may hold more "major impact" community projects than our local chapter. There are pure charity fundraising organizations like the United Way of Miami, that raise several million per year in comparison to the \$50,000 we raised for charity in 2002. What's my point? Well, if you limit your local organization to one specific Area of Opportunity, the odds are huge that you will not be the most attractive option to a quality member in your community who is looking for that one area.

But the reason JCI is the best organization for young leaders in the community is because JCI can offer opportunities for young people to create positive change (in themselves, in their companies and in their communities). I cannot think of one time that a prospective member came to me and said he was looking to join an organization for a specific reason that was not offered by our Chapter. For example, international projects and networking with local organizations around the world may not seem so important to you or your chapter, but I bet that there are prospective members in your community to whom it will matter and you are ignoring their interests if you do not offer international projects. And, if you really want to attract more polished members (young professionals, business leaders, government leaders, etc.), you have to run networking projects and business opportunity projects. There is really no debate on this point. Most importantly, you must run projects that impact the community because that is what JCI is here to do. So, now that we covered why it is important, let me give you a brief overview of the four Areas of Opportunity.

**1. Business Area of Opportunity** - This area provides the opportunity to the individual member to contribute to the development and enhancement of the economic infrastructure, prosperity, and well-being in all nations. (Business net-workers, directory, leadership training, Business Plan Competition, webinars, Creative Young Entrepreneur Award).



**2. Individual Area of Opportunity** - This area provides the opportunity for the individual member to realize his or her personal potential through training programs. (personal improvement projects, family/spiritual projects, communications, JCI Trainer, Designer, Presenter, Admin, Networking, CSR, Achieve, competitions in speaking, writing and debate, seminars on social media, how to use viral marketing, etc.)

**3. Community Area of Opportunity** - This area develops the sensitivity of the individual member to societal problems, and knowledge of community dynamics in solving these problems, through actual experience. (human services projects, government involvement, community improvement, charity fundraising, Ten Outstanding Young People Awards)

**4. International Area of Opportunity** - This area provides the opportunity to the individual member to contribute to the development of goodwill, understanding, and cooperation among all peoples. (JCI involvement, networking with international LOMs, projects that help people in other countries, UN Millennium Development Goals)

**5. Fellowship (social)** – I understand that this is not an actual Area of Opportunity. However, it is worth mentioning because young professionals do not like to work all the time, so you have to have some events where socializing is the point of the project. If your members have fun in your local organization, they will keep coming back out.

### **In the Beginning, It's All About Perception**

So, you found your core team, you identified your target audience and then you developed a well-rounded Local Organization Plan that will appeal to this audience. Now it's time to do marketing like crazy, right? Not exactly. You have to remember that typically our local presidents are taking over chapters that are not always very strong and often times there are only a few good members in the chapter that believe in the true JCI vision. Moreover, it probably also means that the majority of your local organization's membership may not be of the highest quality. Some would say you are doomed, but I say if you just have an eclectic bunch and if it is all you have, then you better come up with a good plan to make use of them. How do we do that?

Well, when God gives you lemons . . . then I say you invite a bunch of apples, oranges, bananas and grapes out to the fruit bowl to hide the lemons. That's horrible to say, right? But whether you like it or not, people want to come hang out with polished people that have similar interests to themselves. It is rare that you will have a new guest walk in and say, "thank goodness that you have sloppy drunk people at your meeting dressed in T-shirts, tattered shorts and flip-flops or I would feel out of place." I know this is a little blunt, but it is reality in today's world.

So, what are some ways to change the perception of your local organization? Well, in the beginning of 2001, I invited my attractive young professional friends out to meetings and projects knowing that most of them would never join. Moreover, I never hounded them about joining, ever. Why? Because perception is half the game and if you can fill up a meeting or happy hour with forty people and twenty of them are attractive professionals who have no intention of joining, that's okay, because the ten new prospects that come to the happy hour will assume they are members and they might then be interested in joining your organization. That's how you start to develop your new core group of general members. Within a matter of months, you will never need to rely on those other "non-joining" types to fill up your room, because all the new members you have, will start inviting their friends and the snowball effect is amazing to watch. However, even when your membership base starts to pick up, you can still invite those attractive young professionals that don't want to join. It never hurts to have a full room and maybe someday, they will join when they see how many other people like them are becoming members.

Another way to alter the perception is to do joint projects with other organizations. Do a happy hour with the Young Lawyers Association. Again, invite your friends out because the young lawyers won't know that these friends are not JCI members. In fact, they will assume that these people are Jaycees because they are clearly not young lawyers, and they will think your membership is a little better than the reality of the situation. It's also an easy sell to your friends because you tell them that they can meet young lawyers and other JCI members. Now, at the function, your friends won't know who is a Jaycee and who is a young lawyer, all they will care about is whether they had a good time and met people. If they did, they will be more inclined to join JCI.

How about this little trick? Grab one or two of the other enthusiastic young attractive members in your group and stop by a net-worker or social function of another organization. Hand out business cards from JCI and talk to people like you are stunned that they haven't heard about JCI or the Jaycees. Tell them about your very best projects and say that they should come check out the happy hour you are hosting next Friday so they can meet other Jaycees and hear what you are doing in the community. If you go to six different functions (and also invite people you meet at work, on the train, etc), then your happy hour could potentially be filled with thirty people, but with only five of them being JCI members.

Again, everyone there assumes that everyone else is a Jaycee. Why else would they be there unless they were a Jaycee, right? In reality, there are four people from the Young Lawyers Association, five from United Way, three from American Cancer Society, four from the Podiatrist Association, etc. If done correctly, you may end up with five to ten new members that night and when they come to the next meeting, they will see each other again and not ever realize that they are all brand new members. Get it? Perception is half the battle in the beginning! Once you are able to get these enthusiastic young polished professionals into your local organization and once they begin moving toward your vision, you will be accomplishing your Plan.

Lately, I have seen successful chapters using a new concept for creating the buzz about a "membership-building" event. Utilizing Facebook, going to chat rooms and participating in blogs, some chapters are getting twenty-something professionals to start talking about an event or networker long before the event takes place. Sometimes, they use E-vite or a similar e-mail invitation and sometimes, they set up a group on Facebook. The purpose is to get people

somewhat committed to coming to an event electronically, so that you have a pool of interested people to target when you are in the final weeks of promoting the event.

Now your job is not over simply because you were able to get the new members to join because they will quickly realize that the group they joined is not necessarily what they thought it was going to be. You need to continuously introduce them to other new quality members and you must speak with them quite often to tell them about your plan (your vision). Get them excited about what you want to do and where you want to take the organization. If you do not get them on board with your plan right away, there is a good chance that these new members will leave and never come back. So, ask them to be one of the two or three people you bring with you to net-workers of other organizations. Get them involved in a project right away. If they feel that they are part of the plan for rebuilding, they will feel more committed to the organization and they will not leave you. If nothing else, utilize these new members for short-term projects or administrative tasks, so that both member and chapter get value for their brief time in the group.

It is equally important of a chapter on the rise for you to be involved as an active President. Once you start implementing your Local Plan of Action, it is very easy to assume things are getting done just because it falls under the responsibility of one of your VP's or because someone actually told you that it is being done. In the beginning, you need to be very involved in every aspect of the organization and, if need be, pick up the ball and finish the job when someone fails to do a task. Now, I'm not saying do the job yourself first, but you need to be following up with people and making sure deadlines are met, jobs are finished and paperwork is done. When you are jump-starting an organization, it is more important for you to regain credibility in the community by throwing a quality project than it is to let one of your VP's fail miserably on a project as part of the learning process. Trial and error training can come later, but in the beginning, you need to establish credibility and this means not allowing projects to fail.

### **Levels of Commitment: The Rings in Your Organization**

Regardless of how much you would like every member to be fully committed and involved, the reality is that members will have varying levels of commitment and you need to identify that characteristic in your members immediately and keep track of the different "rings" of members.

- (1) **President:** Hopefully, you are the most dedicated member because you are the President and everything falls on you even when it is not your job.
- (2) **Core Board Members:** These are your Board members who have unwavering loyalty and really believe in the JCI mission. They attend all the conferences, pick up the ball for you when other VP's have dropped it and tend to show interest in learning more about how things are run rather than just getting their responsibilities taken care of. You must appease these core Board members and bite your tongue when they screw up. Never let a disagreement over a project or idea come to a full blown heated argument because you need these people more than anyone else in your organization. Stroke them often, give

them all the credit, make sure you always personally thank them and remember to do anything (and I mean anything) to stay in their good graces. Ask for their opinions and advice often and most importantly, listen to their answers. They can make you look like a hero and they can also make you fall on your face. Remember that.

- (3) **Other Board Members:** These are the people that are on your Board and, whether they actually do the job or not, are only interested in getting their limited responsibilities accomplished. They may be ten year members who joined the Board only because there was a vacancy that needed to be filled or it may be an enthusiastic new member who gets involved as a Director and then realizes they over-committed. I'm not advocating that you play favorites among your Board members, because you need to stroke these people, give them credit and personally thank them as well. It is just that you need to be aware that there is a difference in thinking among the members on your Board and it is the Core Board Members that typically lead the organization in the future.
- (4) **General Members - Inner Core:** Ever notice that you can have fifty people show up to six different types of events and about fifteen to twenty of them are the same people every time? That's your inner core. These members love the Jaycees and although they don't have time (or sometimes desire) to join the Board, they will turn out for projects, chair projects, pick up ice for you on the way to a project, etc. Get to know who these people are and learn all of their names quickly. Constantly ask them for their opinions and ideas for projects. Ask for their assistance often because many times, these people are your next Board members. Also, make them feel important by pairing them up with guests that come to meetings (rather than always introducing guests to your Board members).
- (5) **General Members - Outer Core:** These are members that come out to a meeting every other month and maybe just the social projects or the bigger events. With these people, the best approach is to make sure they are getting all the information (i.e. through newsletters, Facebook, weekly e-mails, etc.), but don't pressure them to come out more than they want to come out. One of our selling points is that people can get as involved as they want to, so try not to pressure them into getting more involved than they are ready to commit to at any given point. The only thing you might want to consider with these members is that if you have a project that is a perfect fit for them, tell them that. Back when I was local president, we set up a Charitable Foundation to govern our Summer Camps for Foster Kids project and we needed a website designed by someone, so I called up a fairly new member who comes out once in a while, and he is a website designer. He then became much more involved with the organization because he felt needed and I found something that interested (and benefited) him.
- (6) **General Members - Fringe Members:** These are members that may come out every few months and there does not seem to be a whole lot of rhyme or reason to when they come out. Just be happy that you have them as members and make sure that they consistently get the information about all of your projects. It is also good to call them or e-mail them a line once in a while or give them a call to let them know you are thinking about them. Many chapters require their members to be active all the time and if that works for you, then stick to it. However, I have found that a fringe member often times may come

through with a sponsorship from his company or be a contact that helps you reach out to your mayor or other important person in the community.

- (7) **Alumni** - Here is one area that many local organizations neglect. Think about it: JCI in the 1980's had four times the members that we have today. Do you know how many resources this could lead to if you just contact some of those alumni? If you have no alumni base to use, start looking through old project management plans and rosters to locate names and former addresses of these members. Or, put an ad in the newspaper asking all former Jaycees to contact your local organization for a special alumni dinner and build the alumni base that way. With Facebook, Google+ and Linked-in, it should be even easier for you to find former members and officers of your local organization. Your alumni are a valuable source of money, donations, contacts and referrals. Don't just ask them for money, but get advice, ask them to mentor a new member or assist you in making a contact with a key member of the community.

### **Step Four: Marketing**

Everything is starting to slowly take off, so what's next? Well, now that you have truly refined your LOM and narrowed the focus of what you want to do with the LOM, you need to tell the whole world what you are doing. But isn't advertising expensive? Yes, but you do NOT need to spend a dime to market effectively. There are many local newspapers with a calendar of events that are free. You can use Facebook and Google+ to create a buzz about your organization. There are even more community service / business/ civic websites that will put your events up for free. You can develop an e-mail group list from business cards you collect and send a weekly e-mail calendar of events to everyone you know around town. You can visit other organization's functions and network with them while sharing the JCI mission. Again, you can utilize other social media, Twitter, blogs and chat rooms to find prospective members.

You can ride the coat tails of established organizations when they hold events or projects and simply offer man-power in return for some recognition on the event. (i.e. if the Young Lawyers Association is having a special "Lunch with the Judges", offer to help coordinate the event, sit at the sign-in table, etc., in exchange for some recognition on their flyers and agenda). Make JCI business cards and give them out . . . often. Develop a flyer that has a few pictures on it, a list of your best projects and a description of your organization, including the date and time of your meeting.

Then, have members choose various buildings around town and have them drop off a flyer in an envelope addressed to "Administrator" or to "Community Service Representative" and ask them to please post the flyer on their lunch room bulletin board. (the cost of this project is about \$15 for copies and the worst case scenario is that 100 administrators around town now know who you are and then they throw the flyer away, but if just a quarter actually post them in the lunch room, your next meeting will be huge).

Talk about the Jaycees EVERYWHERE you go and speak about our organization like the prospect should know who we are just as he/she would know who the United Way is in the

community. Never push membership or attendance at the next function too much, but always make sure to give them a card or flyer with information on it, and more importantly, get their business card or e-mail address. The chance of them coming out to your organization or joining your group is almost 75% higher if you take their information to follow up with them, rather than hoping they will come on their own simply by having your business card.

Have poster boards with pictures at your events or have photo albums out for people to look at them. If you are more technologically savvy, set up I-Pad tablets or laptops that allow prospects to click on photos of your organization or see how you offer them opportunities. Get your name seen anywhere possible (like on the screen at the local movie theatre, on T-shirts that you give away at festivals, on signs that are attached to your booths at any event). Name recognition is the most important factor in marketing.

Also, don't forget to incorporate the JCI logo into your newsletters, flyers, etc., because this is our logo that is used all over the world (similar to how you recognize the Volkswagen symbol or the initials BMW). Incorporate it into your marketing efforts. Use video contests or other teamwork activity competitions for young professionals to get excited about what you do.

One new piece of technology that you can utilize is a Quick Response Code (QR Code). In case you haven't been using it much, a QR Code is a type of matrix barcode that has become popular in advertisements and other places to provide additional information about something due to its fast readability and fairly large storage capacity. The QR Code is a little box about the size of a UPC Code and it is filled with little black and white computer squiggly lines and shapes. A user downloads an app to their smartphone that can read these codes and it takes you right to the website or video that you have attached to that QR Code. The 2012 JCI USA President has such a code on the back of his business cards.

For your best projects, send out press releases or hold press conferences. If no one prints your newsworthy piece, consider spending some money to take out a quarter page ad in the local paper to give your local organization the recognition it deserves. If you have members that work for various media outlets, use them to help you get covered by the media and make sure that your event has the qualities that a newspaper or TV station look for in stories that they put on the news. Utilize all avenues of social media in order to get the word out. There are many more ways to market, but these will give you a start.

## **Networking for Your Chapter as a Form of Marketing**

In the beginning, when you are trying to grow as a chapter, and while you are seeking credibility in your community, one of the easiest things to do is to network at the events and projects of other organizations. As I said earlier, go to the Young Entrepreneur's Business Luncheon wearing your JCI pin, carrying JCI business cards, and smiling continuously. Talk to people and let them know about JCI and what we do in the community. Be confident and talk about the organization like you are surprised that they are not a part of it. People hate to feel left out of the loop and you need to learn how to speak about your chapter in a positive light that will appeal to those you are trying to attract.

Further, don't get bogged down doing so many Jaycee events, that you don't have time to see what else is going on around town. One of the biggest mistakes made by most small, struggling chapters is that they try to hold many projects and events to qualify for awards or compete in the parade of chapters. However, they do this to their own detriment. Instead, these chapters should be doing combined events with established organizations. Don't be afraid to use the credibility of these organizations and ride their coattails to attain your own recognized name in the community. Grab ten of your members and just attend other functions around town. A few quality projects combined with you and your Board members being seen around the community at other functions can go a long way to re-establishing the credibility of your local organization. Again, be confident and speak about JCI in a positive light.

On that note, here are a few tips for how to make yourself a better "schmooser":

**Develop a "soundbite" introduction for yourself.** Come up with a two or three sentence opener, tailored to the event, your role or purpose there and the profile of other attendees. For example: "Hi. I'm Patrick Knight. I'm President of JCI Coconut Grove, which is an organization for young leaders looking to make an impact in the community." Or: "Hi. I'm Jane Saleswomen. I specialize in getting low-cost medical supplies to hospitals."

**Do some research before the event.** Think about the other likely attendees. Will they include government officials? Celebrities or VIPs? Potential clients? Other people in your field? Sometimes it is possible to find out in advance who will be present. If it's a relatively small, private event, you might consult the host. Conference materials often include a list of all registrants. Alternatively, you can scan the name tags at the registration desk. Are there one or two people in particular that you especially want to meet? What topics of conversation would intrigue them?

**Have an "agenda."** Go to every event with at least one specific goal - to connect with the Mayor or the organizer of the event, for example, or to pitch membership in your organization to a recent graduate, or to lay the groundwork to invite a government official to speak at some future meeting. Having an agenda both ensures that you will accomplish something concrete at the event and helps put you at ease by giving a focus to your attendance.

**Get "in the mood."** Before leaving for an event, take a moment to switch gears. Scan the newspaper to arm yourself with current affairs, anecdotes, and information on books, movies, sports, restaurants, travel and cultural events, so you can contribute confidently to conversations. Silently rehearse your "soundbite" introduction, mentally recap the list of likely attendees, and review your "agenda," so everything is fresh in your mind.

**Place your nametag strategically.** The line of sight of someone approaching you goes to your right, so sophisticated networkers wear their nametags on the right for maximum readability. In addition, if you write your own nametag, it's a good idea to include your title and employer or other identifying information. For example, if you are attending an event for business owners, you may want to include your position with the Chamber of Commerce.

**Make your entrance.** Don't just wander into the event. Enter the room. Step to the right. Survey the room. See who is there. You want other people to see you. After you locate the first person you want to approach, then move purposefully and confidently into the crowd.

**Fight the urge** to make a beeline for the bar or buffet table. They are the last refuge for wallflowers. Your primary purpose in attending the event is not to eat or drink, but to mix and mingle. Hovering near the refreshments is counterproductive.

**Work the room.** Circulate. Avoid the temptation to spend most of your time talking to people you already know. Generally, your goal at an event should be to make as many new acquaintances as possible - focusing particularly on any specific individuals that you have targeted in advance.

**Avoid awkwardness in introductions.** If you remember a person's face but not the name, don't despair. If you smile, extend your hand and simply state your name, the other person almost always reciprocates. Similarly, politicians and other seasoned networkers who are uncertain whether they have previously met someone have a trick of the trade: they finesse the point by greeting the person with "Good to see you" (rather than the more common "Good to meet you.").

**Keep the conversation short and sweet.** Don't try to exhaust a topic or clinch a commitment at an event. Instead use the function to gain entree, or lay a foundation to be followed up on later. It is considered poor form to monopolize another guest with a lengthy conversation, or to press someone for a firm commitment at what is essentially a social occasion.

**Stay "in the moment."** When you are talking to someone, give the conversation your undivided attention. It is the epitome of rudeness to be looking over a person's shoulder to survey whether there is someone else more interesting or more important to whom you'd rather speak. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, when Henry Kissinger shook your hand, "for that moment, you were the only person in the room." No doubt that laser focus contributed in large measure to his legendary charm and charisma.

**Keep your business cards handy,** so that you can exchange them with other guests with whom you want to follow up with later. Indeed, politicians and other seasoned networkers often jot notes on the back of business cards that they receive to remind them of details of their conversations or other information that may be useful in later follow-up conversations (for example "new to area" or "send a membership application").

**Extract yourself smoothly** from conversation when it is time to move on. One way is to request the business card of the person with who you are speaking. Or you can point out someone else you need to speak to and excuse yourself from the conversation. But if you are standing with just one other person, try to avoid stranding him or her. Instead, approach or invite a third guest into the conversation ("Sue, this is Mike. He was just telling me about recent skydiving escapades . . ."); then take your leave. Another alternative is to invite your conversation partner to the refreshment table. ("I think I'm going to refresh my drink. Would you care to join me?"), and move on from there.



**Make the most of photo opportunities.** Before anyone snaps your picture, remove your nametag and put down your drink (and, if you are a woman, your purse). All are distracting in photos, and politicians in particular know the potential for damage to reputation of photos that can be misconstrued to convey the image of a problem drinker.

**Make a graceful exit.** Don't be among the last to depart. Always leave while other still want to see more of you. And, as you prepare to exit, seek out and thank your host (for example, the president of the organization or the chair of the committee sponsoring the event).

**Follow through after the event.** Time is of the essence. Immediately after the event, send a brief note to the host. (For example: "The annual BNI young professional networking event is always a top-notch event, and this year was no exception. Congratulations once again to you and your Board"). Also review the business cards that you collected (and the notes you jotted down on the backs), and follow up promptly - whether it's with an invitation to lunch, an article you've clipped that might be of interest, the flier for some upcoming program you are promoting, or just a short letter saying how much you enjoyed meeting at the event. Mother was right: You never get a second chance to make a first impression. Learning how to "work a room" like a pro helps ensure that the first impression is a great one.

*The above networking tips come out of an article written by Delissa Ridgway, a judge with the U.S. Court of International Trade.*

### **Step Five: Follow-up**

If you have followed the first four steps of the Jumpstart method, then you will likely notice an increase of prospective members calling you, visiting your website, attending your meetings and checking out your events. This is excellent news, but it will all be wasted effort if you do not greet them appropriately and follow up with them after the initial meeting.

With regard to increasing membership, I almost shudder when I hear the word "recruit." It makes me feel like I am a cult member trying to convince others to drink the special Kool-Aid with me. As you will hear me say over and over, aggressive recruiting does not work and you will turn off many members if you try this method. So, I prefer to simply think of this section as follows: *How to Increase Membership Through Follow-up*. Specifically, I will discuss what you do with a prospect when he shows up at a meeting or happy hour after seeing it listed in the paper or after meeting you at a different net-worker.

Obviously, you need to have a welcoming table at a meeting or a designated greeter at projects and socials. When guests come in to a strange place, they feel awkward and uncomfortable. Our job is to ease their fears, greet them with a warm smile and introduce them to our members. However, it is very typical for a guest to come to a meeting and be bombarded with Jaycee information, applications to join, and a lesson on the background or history of the local organization. Although it is meant with good intentions, this is the wrong approach. Your focus should be only on the guest and what he does for a living, what his interests are, how he found out about the group. The reason is simple: everyone comes to a JCI function looking for

something, so you need to find out what the guest is looking for and then you let him know how he can benefit from something JCI offers in that area.

For example, suppose a guest comes to the meeting and you greet him at the door. Typically, the guest will clue you in to his reason for being there within the first three minutes. If he just moved into the area, he is looking to meet people. If he just started a new dental practice, he may be looking for new patients. If he works at a foster care agency, he may be looking to join and get the Jaycees more involved with his agency. If it is a newly divorced gentleman, he may be looking to get back into the social scene and meet women.

Now, after three minutes, if you have not picked up on why he would be interested in JCI, it is perfectly acceptable to say: “So, what intrigued you about our organization?” or “what made you come out tonight to check us out?” Once you have the angle, the Jaycees are an easy sell because you have already refined your local organization to offer projects in every Area of Opportunity, remember? But don’t forget to finish the spiel by adding: “and that’s not all we have to offer, because we also do the following other types of projects . . .”

After the initial contact, make sure you introduce him to one or two other members right away so they can continue to get to know the guest and this will free you up to go back to the front door and greet the next guest that comes in. When trying to introduce guests around at meetings and happy hours, keep in mind that they will feel most comfortable in the beginning speaking with someone that has similar interests. So, if a realtor walks through the door, you may want to introduce him to another realtor in the group or a mortgage broker. (This, of course, is thrown out the window if the guest tells you that he is interested in meeting people that are not in his profession).

We never ask a guest if he/she wants to join at the first function they attend. If you start off on that foot, then they will come to expect that question every time they come out to a function and it may turn off those members who are just checking you out. Be confident in the ideals behind this organization because it truly is the best “bang for the buck” in town. It is rare that someone actually makes the effort to come to a meeting and check us out, only to realize that this organization is not what he/she is looking for at that time.

Instead, make sure that you have very good follow up with prospective members. Have your Membership VP give them a reminder call before meetings and your better projects. Send around a weekly calendar of events (covering the next fifteen days of events) via e-mail to all prospective members so that they can pick and choose what they want to attend. Send personal Facebook messages or e-mails to the prospects based on conversations you had with them at the last function. (I.e. “Hey Jeff. It was great to meet you at the meeting and I hope you are getting settled in down here after the move. If you ever want to hear about some cool clubs to go to, just give me a shout and I’ll let you know which places to avoid and which places are hot. Hopefully, I’ll see you at the meeting on Wednesday at Monty’s starting at 7:30 pm. See ya. -Patrick”).

The more information they have about your projects/meetings and the more they feel welcome by your group, the more likely it is that they will come check it out again. In other words, make it very easy for them to find out what you are doing and this can best be done by contacting them soon after each visit.

As for the time frame for when a guest should be asked to join, it is a case-by-case decision and it really depends on how excited the person is about the organization and how many events they come to right away. We always tell people that we would love to have them, we explain the benefits of joining and then we tell them that they should feel free to check it out as much as they want before committing because we want to make sure that it is a perfect fit for them.

Many people will disagree with this approach, but I have found it to be very successful because I believe in the JCI mission providing development opportunities through balanced programming and its appeal to any prospective member. At some point, there is a limit to the grace period of checking us out. For example, if a person comes to four meetings and three projects in two months, I would be surprised if he/she had not joined yet and we would probably start asking them to become a member in a subtle, yet firm way.

On that note, there comes a time when you have to “close” on a member and this is honestly the most difficult skill to learn. So here are a few closing techniques that we use in Coconut Grove:

- 1) If you see them at a meeting or if you e-mail them or call them, you can say: "Hey David, I know you've come out to a few things, what do you think of the group? (positive response) Well, listen, I'm trying to finalize the February class of new members and I'd love for you to be in that class. No pressure or anything, but I'm just trying to figure out who has told me they were interested and I thought you said you were, so what do you think? (if response is "yes, I'll join", say) “Great, I can put it on your credit card if you want, because I want to get you in this month's class, but we can't submit anyone until we have payment . . .” Then, get them involved in an orientation, give them the JCI information and sit down with them to see how they can be an active member of the chapter.
- (2) If they have come to 2-3 meetings and/or 4-5 total meetings plus projects, then start casually dropping remarks: "I'm so glad you are out here tonight, when are you going to become an official member" or "We are a group of young leaders, movers and shakers in the community, do you think this is the kind of organization you are looking for?"
- (3) Another way to get people is to tell them that people in the group have been asking about them. Again, it is all about making people feel like they fit in and if they think that others in our group like them and have been talking about them, they are more likely to join. The reality is that some people have been asking about them (at the very least: the President and the Membership VP)
- (4) When you are following up with people by e-mail or phone, it is imperative that you or one of your directors is sending "personal" e-mails or Facebook messages to them for the meeting. (This is in addition to you forwarding the weekly e-mail or Facebook message to everyone on your prospective member list). On your note cards, start jotting down info about prospects every time you

talk to them at meetings or contact them via the internet or call them. If people see that you remember them and stuff about them, then they are more likely to join with one of the tactics above.

Keep in mind that you will need to train all of your Board members on your plan for increasing membership. Every once in a while, I hear one of my older members say to a first time guest, “so what do you think, are you going to join or what?” That makes me cringe. You need to make sure all of your members are on the same page and that several of them become skilled in the follow up and closing techniques for prospective members.

Now, that being said, there is one type of direct recruiting that I do endorse. Sometimes, it can be a good idea to set up a dinner or wine tasting with six of your best JCI members and ask each of them to invite 4 or 5 friends that are prospective members. Keep it very informal and eventually, the idea of JCI will come up. You can point out the other people at the dinner who are a part of the group and then you might act surprised that the rest are not members. In this atmosphere, the prospect will be seeing quality polished members and other prospects and they may be more inclined to join. Plus, you can find out their interests on a more intimate basis. This technique is especially effective if you do not have a lot of the members that are of the quality you are striving to attract.

Finally, once you have new members, you need to quickly get them involved in helping you to build the local organization. Get them on a committee, give them an easy job for a project and just let them know that you need their help and support. Most people respond well when they are given a well-defined task or responsibility, so make sure that when you give them a task, they are clear on what they are to do and how they should go about doing it. Also, make sure that you have good internal communications in place as discussed in the next section.

## **Internal Communications**

Without a doubt, this is the single most important aspect of activating new members (and long-time members for that matter). If your members do not know what is going on or if they have to go searching to find out what events are coming up, there is little chance that you will consistently have good attendance at meetings and events. People are too busy these days to have to search for information and many times, they cannot make the meetings because of prior commitments. So, make it easy for them and they will respond. I have had members that come up to me after being absent for three months and they actually apologize for their absence but they assure me that they have kept abreast of everything we have been doing because of our communications system. You cannot rely on any one of these communications avenues to be your sole means of communication. Technology is great, but a human voice and personal contact are necessary, too. So here are some tips for internal communications:

- (1) **Have a website.** I cannot begin to tell you how much this has helped communications with our members. Plus, people expect you to have a website if you are a reputable organization. There should be a calendar of events (updated regularly) and a “Breaking News” link that is updated weekly with all the information any member would absolutely

need if they were going to attend something that week. This includes addresses, directions to projects, phone numbers of the chair people, etc. Also, make sure you post pictures from the events on your website because this will attract more of your members to the site (to see the pictures) and they, in turn, will see the other information posted that week.

In addition, a website is a tremendously effective tool for attracting new members. We make sure to upload pictures of attractive young people having fun and enjoying themselves at whatever project is portrayed. I have had countless people end up at our site simply by surfing the net as well as all the people that go there because our website address is on every agenda, flyer, business card, etc. that we pass out to the public. I have also had people come to our site and e-mail me asking about local organizations in other cities because they say, "I couldn't find their web page." However, the site has to be easy to navigate, it has to have all the information people would want to figure out who the Jaycees are and where we meet, and it has to look professional or it will give the appearance of disorganization. You can even get a free website through JCI.

- (2) **Weekly E-mail / Facebook Message:** This is the single greatest improvement we made to our communications system in 2001 and it has received great feedback from our members. Every Monday morning, a weekly e-mail was sent out to all members (and prospects) that has a list of our events that are coming up in the next two weeks. Along with the date and title of the project, we include a description of the event, starting times, addresses, directions, names and phone numbers of the chair people and other pertinent information. Our members typically print out the weekly e-mail and have it sitting on their desk as a constant reminder. We also added a "News and Notes" section to the bottom of the e-mail to pass along information to our members on a weekly basis about things they may want to know about our local organization.

These days, people are using Facebook to accomplish the same task and that's okay. Just give all the information needed for that week in one nice message so that your members are not bombarded with ten messages a week. The biggest problem with Facebook is that a user gets so many unwanted messages and requests that it can become "white noise" if you bombard your members with Facebook messages. Be careful.

- (3) **Other social media:** Are you on Facebook? Google+ and Twitter? Do you have blogs and/or podcasts on your website? Do you frequently use Skype to connect with JCI members from around the country and all over the world? If not, you are not utilizing the cutting edge of technology available to keep the organization relevant and attractive to Gen X and Gen Y members. Get yourself connected to Facebook, Xing, Twitter, Linked-In and other business networks. Understand how to use social media in a way that appeals to Gen Y members rather than turns them off.
- (4) **Newsletter:** An organization without a newsletter is like a major city with no newspaper. This is still a great tool to thank your members, brag about your projects and give dates and information about upcoming projects. Members love to get newsletters (especially when their names and pictures are in them). So, even if it is a one page (front and back) newsletter that you created on Microsoft Word in color, send it to your members. It is

worth it and maybe you'll get a new member who is really into the creative side of creating newsletters and it will take off. If nothing else, you should have an e-newsletter, Facebook group page or a weekly blog that can be updated with information. Technology has really improved to send e-newsletters that have the look and feel of a personal newsletter.

- (5) **“Personal E-mails”/Facebook Messages to Members:** Here's another little trick I used in 2002 and then my entire Board did this with our membership. Suppose you want to contact your forty members asking them to come out to the next meeting or happy hour. You quickly realize that you don't have much help for this in the beginning and the few people you have working with you are already swamped with tasks. Phone calls are out of the question because the last thing you want to do when you get home is spend an hour and a half on the phone calling people. A group e-mail or Facebook message blast would work, but the response rate from that is not as high as you would like it to be and some of your members might start deleting e-mails/messages they know are written to the group.

But if you personalize the e-mail or message, I guarantee that at least half of the people will contact you back and tell you if they are going or not. Why? Because people think that if the President took the time to personally contact them with an invite, then the least they can do is respond and let you know why they can't come or that they are coming. Now, I know you are thinking about how long it would take to personalize every e-mail or message, but here's the trick: you make up the body of your e-mail or message with one or two paragraphs that give all the details of the event and other information. Then, you simply copy that paragraph, type in the name of the member, add one personal line, and paste the paragraph into the e-mail or Facebook message. It will look like this:

**To: David King**  
**From: Patrick Knight**  
**Date: 4/3/02**  
**Subject: Are you coming to the meeting tomorrow?**

**Hey David-**

**What's up? I haven't seen you since the football game at the Orange Bowl and I'm still waiting to see your new car. A black Mercedes, are you kidding me?**

**Anyway, I hope everything is going well for you. I just wanted to let you know that we have a membership meeting tomorrow at Monty's in the Grove and there should be quite a few people there. I want to introduce you to some of the new members that have joined recently because I think you'd like them. As always, our meeting starts at 7:30 pm and then I think we will stick around at the back bar. Let me know if you can make it, otherwise I'll probably see you at the Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday. –Patrick**

Again, these days, people are sending most messages through Facebook or some other social media outlet. This is fine, but you do have to make sure that your “personal” Facebook messages are sent using this same methodology. As said before, we get so many invites to events and groups on Facebook that most get lost in the clutter.

However, when you send a personal Facebook message, you have a much better chance to receive a reply.

- (6) **Group Phone Calls:** This is a good old fashioned way to get reminders out to your members and it is still very effective because people like to hear a human voice. Even with all the technology, it is still nice to call people. However, in the beginning, this is mostly just a pain in the butt because you don't have the help. So, try to get two or three people who are willing to make a few phone calls and split up the list. Don't try to make all the calls yourself, because you'll use up the little free time that you have. If you are forced to make the calls yourself, start with the people on the list that you think would actually appreciate a call the most, because you may run out of time or energy to finish the list. I have also seen people use texting as a reminder for meetings, but this has advantages and disadvantages. For example, if they are not personal, then it is a wasted text message in my opinion.

## **Flagship Project**

Along the lines of developing quality projects, you need to start thinking about whether your local organization has that one big project that everyone around town knows about. You need that one project that will attract the press and that will get you covered by the local TV station. Are you having trouble thinking of which one of your projects fits this category? Well, then you need to brainstorm and come up with a project that would qualify as your flagship project. It might be a fireworks display for Fourth of July, summer camps for foster children, a giant beach party to benefit Family AIDS Network, an awards ceremony for the Local Police Officer of the Year, or simply running the Best Business Plan in the World Competition sponsored by JCI. Think big, but be realistic.

Prior to 2001, JCI Coconut Grove did not really have a flagship project, so we turned our End of Year Gala into one. Starting in March, we planned for a black-tie optional gala at a five-star hotel in down-town Miami that would be attractive to our members, potential sponsors and local politicians. We chose the Miami Heart Research Institute as our charity for the night and we gave an award to the wife of Miami-Dade Mayor Alex Penelas. The event drew six corporate sponsors and had 160 young professionals and business leaders in attendance, including 100 of our members, plus Miami-Dade County Mayor Penelas and City of Miami Mayor Manny Diaz. The public relations that we received from the event was enormous and we now have re-established credibility with both mayors and the charity fundraising community. We had no idea what we were doing when we started, but if you follow a plan (i.e. Chairman's Planning Guide) and really think it through, anything is possible and the project did wonders for our local organization.

This new found credibility opened doors for us that we did not expect and we have raised the bar for 2003 as we hosted a festival with bed races and a concert with fireworks that we drew 30,000 people and with a \$100,000 budget. The purpose of the 2003 event was to increase the local business traffic into Coconut Grove during the slow summer months and provide free fireworks and a concert to our residents without having to go downtown to Miami. We still do all of our other projects and events, but we found that a flagship project is needed if you want to take a place of prominence in your community. Otherwise, you will always be known as the

nice little group that pours beer at festivals and does some good in the community. If we truly want to be the organization of choice for young leaders, then we need to be visible, and a flagship project is one sure way to get your name out there.

## **Motivating Members**

There are many ways to motivate people to help you out, but in JCI, you have to remember that you're not paying people and you can't really fire them, so you have to think of other ways to motivate them. I have developed a system using the five P's for motivation.

**(1) Public Recognition**

Your members love to have their name called out at a meeting when they have done well at a project, they look through your newsletter and weekly e-mail to see if they have been mentioned for a job well done and they like getting a small round of applause if a particular event went extra special. Plaques, certificates, medallions and other rewards can be good motivators as well, but the things mentioned earlier are free and can really excite your group.

**(2) Private Thank-you**

When you do something special for someone or give them a gift, you like to hear a "thank-you", don't you? In fact, you expect it a little bit. So, when one of your members goes above and beyond the call of duty, make sure that you seek them out and give them your sincere appreciation for their work. They are volunteers after all and the work they just did probably made you look good, so make sure they know it. This builds loyalty and may just get them to volunteer again in the future.

**(3) Personalize It**

People do not generally do things for you just because you are the President of your organization. They often do it because it is for you or because you asked them. Whether you like it or not, much of what you do successfully in your organization occurs because you have developed personal relationships with those people who you are leading, so make sure to keep building and maintaining relationships with your members. In other words, you don't always need to talk about the organization or what you need them to do every time you speak with them. Try finding out about who they are as a person, take an interest in that person and see what makes them tick. People are more likely to step up and help out their friend John Doe than President John Doe.

**(4) Positive energy**

It is very easy to be negative or pessimistic, especially when things are not going well in your chapter. At all costs, you must find a way to put a positive spin on everything and keep a visionary energy in the organization. Great leaders are dealers of hope and your members will often look to you for guidance, vision and positive energy in leading the chapter to success. Don't disappoint them by draining such energy with negativism.

**(5) Passion**



Have you ever listened to a speaker who really gets you excited about whatever it is that he is talking about? Well, that's probably because he was passionate about his message and you should be, too. Passion is contagious and if you seem excited about the organization and the possibilities for the future then your members are more likely to be that way, as well. Avoid any negative comments about your projects, your meetings or any aspect of the organization. Make sure you use the "glass half full" approach to talking about where your organization is and where you plan to take it. People with passion have energy and they really believe in what they are doing. If you don't seem interested in what you are doing or what you are saying, do you think your members will be interested?

\* \* \* \*

Apply these five P's and you can concentrate on being an effective leader, rather than concentrating on doing everything yourself. If your members are excited and motivated, you can accomplish more and the results will be show greater success. Remember: excited and motivated members are usually involved members and that is a key ingredient for the success of your organization. As for other suggestions that can help keep your members motivated and active try these tips:

**Easy first projects** - build their confidence by giving them an easy job, like working the sign-in table at a business networker or making a flyer for an event. Not only will they be more likely to volunteer for an easy job, but it will probably go well, which means you found yourself another active member. Also, it will help you weed out those people who are unreliable and it is better to find out on a little project than a big one.

**Make it fun** - need help folding newsletters or stuffing invitations? Get some food and drink and invite over other fun members to hang out and help for a little while. If you invite over all our hard workers, but none of them are fun, then they will think of it as work and will be less likely to volunteer again. Make sure you always have a good mix of new members, old members and even prospects.

**Make them feel important** - This is a fine line because you don't want to come across fake or condescending, but you need to let them know that what they are doing is important for our organization, no matter what their job is. Explain why we do things the way we do them, let them get involved in the brainstorming process, ask for their opinions about things and listen to their responses. Don't come down hard on them if they are lagging behind on deadlines, but make it clear that there are reasons it has to be done by a certain day. Finally, point out the rewards of doing the project and there are always plenty of reasons. (For instance, "as Arts Festival beer booth captain, you can run the show and work the crowd" or "as chairperson for Charter Night, you can help pick the location and entertainment").

**Be confident yourself** - people like to be with a winner and if our members feel like they are contributing to our success and that we are a well-oiled machine, then they will be more likely to jump in and help. If things seem disorganized or if you, as an officer, seem to lack confidence in the group or your project, who would want to help you?

## **Tax/Corporate/Legal Stuff**

As President of a struggling local organization, you invariably will come across some alarming circumstances in your chapter and if you don't think they are alarming yet, then you need to read this section closely. Does your chapter have insurance? Have they filed tax returns in the last year or two? Have you complied with your country's reporting requirements for corporations? Are you registered with the local organization that monitors non-profit organizations? If you answered "no" or "I don't know" to any of these questions, you need to find out the answer quickly. For your benefit, we will provide below a brief synopsis of these various issues that affect your local organization (in the United States). Keep in mind that state or national laws and requirements may vary, so you need to contact your National Legal Counsel as soon as possible to get the information most relevant to your local organization.

- (1) **Insurance:** Our nation has become too litigious, don't you think? Too many lawsuits, too many lawyers are in existence (and I'm one of them). But this is exactly the reason that some local organizations buy insurance. The last thing you want to see happen is for your local organization to raise \$20,000 by running your flagship project, only to have someone injured at that project who sues the chapter for personal injury and gets a judgment for that very same \$20,000. Why take the chance? For around \$500, your local organization should be able to get liability insurance that would cover you for these types of claims. Sometimes, it is even required by the local government or a venue for a specific project that you might organize.
- (2) **Tax Returns:** Every year your local organization should be filing a tax return with the IRS. You are a non-profit organization that doesn't have to pay taxes, but you should still report the income regularly just to avoid any appearance of impropriety. I know it may say that a return is not necessary if your income is less than a certain amount, but it is a good idea to have a tax return filled out each year. Further, if it is less than \$25,000 in income, you can fill out the 990 EZ form, which takes only a few minutes.
- (3) **501(c)(3) Foundations:** In the eyes of the IRS in the United States, there is a difference between a non-profit organization and a non-profit charitable organization. Most likely, your local organization falls under Section 501(c)(4) of the IRS Tax Code. This means that you do not have to pay sales taxes and you are categorized as a non-profit organization. However, people cannot deduct donations made to your organization from their taxes. (There are ways to pass along a tax deductible donation to your donor if a portion or all of the money was donated to a charity and you can contact your State Legal Counsel if you need more information on that).

If you are a charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Tax Code, however, anyone making a donation to you can deduct it from their taxes, in addition to sharing the

other benefits of being a non-profit organization under Section 501(c)(4). The major factor in becoming a 501(c)(3) charity is that ninety percent of your activities must be for a charitable purpose or educational purpose and those activities must be described in detail in your Articles of Incorporation.

For this reason, most JCI local organizations do not qualify because we run social, business, community, international and management projects, some of which do not fall under “charitable activities.” However, you can set up a separate corporation (i.e. Coconut Grove Jaycee Charities, Inc.) and have all money raised by this corporation used solely for community service activities. In your Articles of Incorporation for the new entity, you would have to clearly delineate what projects and events would be funded by this corporation.

But it would allow you to have people donate money to that account and it could be a tax deduction for them. On the flip side, any money you make from car washes, beer pouring or raffles could be deposited into your normal operating account for the existing corporation in order to run the local organization and pay for administrative costs. This gets a little complicated and a more detailed explanation is warranted, but this is an option that you should consider once your local organization experiences its re-birth. (i.e. After starting the corporation, you need to file for tax-exempt status with the IRS and fill out Tax Form 1023, but while you are waiting for the status, you have up to 12 months to operate as a 501(c)(3) organization anyway, etc., etc.) Please check with a lawyer in your state for laws specific to starting such a charity or foundation.

- (4) **Corporate Reporting Requirements:** Each state has different requirements, but in Florida, all corporations are required to submit an annual report to the state that consists only of the current list of officers, the current registered agent, the current street address of your local organization and a current mailing address. If this is not submitted by the deadline, you will not be a valid corporation and it could affect your ability to operate as a non-profit or cost you late fees. Usually, they send a card and booklet to you in order to remind you of the reporting requirements. Also, in Florida (and probably most states), you can now do the corporate report on-line.
- (5) **Non-Profit Monitoring Organizations:** In many states and/or local areas, there are local government organizations or agencies that specifically monitor the activities and funds raised by all non-profit organizations. In Florida, it is the Division of Consumer Services and if you are not registered with them, they can fine you \$1,000 every time you solicit money from anyone. Often, they get their information from the state, but there are some other government organizations that require all non-profit groups register with them, so ask around and find out if you are registered with the proper entities.

## Corporate Fundraising

Once you regain credibility in your community, you need to start thinking of ways to reel in the big money. Increasing membership will give you the base that you need to start doing bigger and better projects, but money will really help you gain exposure. Holding a charity fundraiser that raises \$750 is great, but it probably won't get you much exposure in the media. Try raising \$75,000 and watch those little reporters come running. Impossible, you say? Well, if you don't think big, you never will be. However, the best way to raise large sums of money come from grants and corporate sponsors. In this section, I am only going to discuss corporate sponsors because grant writing is a whole other complicated topic that you can learn about in the year or two after your local organization has its resurgence.

With corporate fundraising, you have to jump into the minds of the Marketing Director or PR Coordinator that you are targeting at each company. Sending one type of package to each company is inefficient and ineffective because each company has different needs and wants when they think about sponsoring an event. So, to begin seeking corporate sponsorships, the first thing you should do is see if you have any people in your local organization who work at an advertising firm. If not, I would suggest you go out and recruit such a member. They are an invaluable source of information for companies and corporations in your community. It is possible they can even snag their companies list of corporate entities and the contact people for each company. If you cannot get such a list, then just look around town at the various companies you have or open up the phone book.

Before sending out a letter or creating a package, however, you need to come up with a plan. (Ahhh, there's that word again: "PLAN"). What is your target group of companies? What can you offer them? What are you seeking from them? Why would they want to be involved in your event? What do they need to know about the event in order to give them enough info to make an intelligent decision about participating? If you answer these questions for starters, you are well on your way to effective corporate fundraising. Also, make sure that you send out your requests for money early in the year before budgets close for the companies. Some companies have quarterly budgets, so it does not matter, but if it is a year-long budget and you are not factored into it, you may have no chance at getting any money no matter how great the event is for that company.

Depending on the event, you will need to develop a letter or package to send to each company. If you have a lead on a contact, it is a little easier, but a blind mailing can also work. Your letter/package should answer all of the questions in the preceding paragraph. Also, it should be concise and have something in the first three lines that grabs their attention. Most of these people receive so many letters and requests each week that they will throw your letter right in the garbage if it is not eye-catching in some way. Incorporating a photo or two from last year's event into your package can help them visualize what it will look like. Clearly delineating the benefits for the corporation is a must. Offering different options for sponsorship is also a good idea. (i.e. the company may not be able to give money, but may be able to donate bottles of wine from their catering budget).

Just with increasing membership, follow up is the most important aspect to raising money from corporations. It is possible that the company never got your package or that they are waiting for a follow up call. Remember, it is unlikely that they will contact you about the package you sent to them. But be ready when you call them to answer all their questions about the event and be positive when discussing the Jaycees and the event. Stress the community

service and charity work we do on a monthly basis and let them know that we are a leadership development organization. (You might even get the Director of Sales to come to your next meeting).

Never let them reject you without trying to explore other options for the company's involvement with the event or another event you have coming up that may fit their needs better. Again, you must listen to what they are saying and figure out what they are looking for in community involvement/ sponsorship, because then it is an easy sell for you to find a project that may appeal to them down the road. For instance, they may tell you that your event is too small or there is not enough exposure. They might want to be able to come out and have a booth to come out and push their wares or give out pamphlets. You need to know what they are looking for so that you will have a head start on another event that may be perfect for them. How do you keep track? Just make sure you take good notes and it may help to use an EXCEL spreadsheet for something like this.

Also, remember that any deal is negotiable, but you have to be careful about giving different deals to different sponsors. For instance, suppose you are seeking \$1,000 per sponsor for a Crawfish Festival you are organizing and each sponsor gets a full size logo on the T-shirt, in the event guide, on the print ads and they get a booth at the festival. Suppose a smaller company is willing to give you \$500 or \$750 but that is all they have in their budget for this type of sponsorship. I say take it and make a deal with them. But, you must be very careful if you give them the same benefits as a \$1,000 sponsor. If one of your \$1,000 sponsors finds out that another sponsor paid less for the same benefits, it will cost you credibility and possibly a future repeat sponsor. Instead, maybe give them a smaller logo, or less print ads where they are mentioned or something to show your big sponsors in case there is a question.

Finally, make sure you send a thank-you letter or card to each sponsor and you may even want to include copies of the print ad or your newsletter where they were mentioned. That way, they can see that the ads actually came out in the paper and your newsletter may even spark interest in their employees joining your local organization.

### **JCI: World-Wide Organization**

You should know about JCI around the world, in addition to what is going on in your own country, if you want to effectively sell this organization. Did you know that there are over 4,000 local organizations in over 100 countries around the world? Did you know that many of these local organizations are doing great things in their communities, like building schools, starting mentoring programs and hosting international conventions? Did you know that many local organizations are loaded with corporate Vice-Presidents and CEO's? As I said before, you must offer a balanced portfolio of projects or you will never achieve great success and you definitely will not be on par with the ideals of the model JCI local organization.

Once a year, there is a World Congress where JCI members from around the world descend on one city to socialize, receive training and share experiences within JCI. It has been

held in Barcelona Spain, Las Vegas USA, Copenhagen Denmark, Vienna Austria, Osaka Japan, and many other amazing cities. In 2011, it was in Belgium and 2012 in Taiwan. I suggest that you go to one of these World Congresses to experience the global unity of JCI. It will change your whole vision for your local organization and you will get a new found enthusiasm for what you can do in your country.

Each World President has embarked on a crusade to make JCI more savvy in the technological world and the new website for JCI is both informative, high class, interactive, and user friendly. If we are to garner credibility as the international organization for young leaders, then we need to climb aboard the World President's vision for advances in technology and corporate social responsibility. That means that you should get a website up and running, upload your chapter information to the JCI website so that they can create a database of hundreds of thousands of members. This will attract corporate sponsors and media attention. We need to become more technologically sound and to develop a better corporate identity among our local and national organizations.

One of the unique and most fascinating aspects of this organization is the international networking that is possible, especially now through advances in technology. I have met people from over 60 countries around the world that share my feelings and ideas for the JCI. It is amazing to meet people from Japan and Nigeria who are very similar to me, and you will think so, too. Once you meet a few people from around the world, you can find a local organization that is similar to yours and enter a Twinning Agreement between the local organizations. This allows you to share ideas, cultures, member rosters and projects with another chapter from around the world. Our local organization (JCI Coconut Grove) in Miami has found a perfect match with a local organization from Panama City, Panama. It is a great opportunity to make new friends and impress your local government by showing initiative to spread the word about your city to other areas of the world.

Finally, there are two aspects of JCI that you really need to take advantage of because they will give you credibility. First, incorporate the JCI brand and logo into all of your newsletters, web pages and publications. If we want to present a unified front to the world and if we want to be a strong organization, we need to have uniformity and a recognizable logo. When you see the big "K" for Kiwanis, you instantly know what stands for, right? Well, we are striving for that same type of recognizable logo.

Second, you and your members should check out the JCI website frequently. There are many programs that are offered to local organizations by JCI for free. These programs include manuals for running your organizations and projects, training seminars that can be conducted by your local trainers, conferences that can be attended around the world and news from around the JCI world.

## Training

In 2002, we had experienced a whole new set of hurdles to overcome. The resurgence was great, but 160 new members meant inexperience and unbridled enthusiasm. So, our number one priority in 2002 was to train officers for the future using JCI seminars and the following:

**Information Officer Training:** At the mid-point of the year, well before our December elections, I held a two hour informational session that was videotaped and it covered everything from JCI World Congress to early close-out in Florida. I asked all people that were interested in being on the Board to attend because I wanted the prospective officers for next year to have a basic understanding of the organization before they chose a spot on the Board. This was a very important training session because, as President, you tend to forget that other people in your group sometimes know very little about the Jaycee organization outside your local organization. There was also an interactive component to this training seminar that covered "how to run a project", "responsibilities of Board members", "the Blue Chip Program / Local Plan of Action", "expectations of a local officer in our LOM" and "marketing/networking/membership growth".

**Portfolio Team Training:** Each portfolio needs to meet with the President to discuss what is expected from that TEAM. Everyone needs to understand that the VP is in charge of the portfolio, but the VP has to delegate tasks to his/her directors. The President should be there for the first TEAM meeting to answer any questions or concerns.

**One-on-one Training:** As President, you always have to be available for one-on-one training of any officer and this is usually the most effective training anyway. Sit down and really show the officer what they need to do and what you expect from them. Encourage them to be creative and have new ideas. Really listen to what they are telling you and what their vision is for this portfolio. Training is as much about listening as it is about talking.

**Leadership Series:** This is something we have been developing in 2002 to give our members a quick overview of certain skills and information they need if they want to be effective leaders in the organization (especially President or a Vice-President position) For the first ten minutes of every Board meeting, the Coconut Grove Junior Chamber offers a Leadership Series to help train officers for the future. Each mini-seminar comes with a detailed hand-out for those in attendance. All members are welcome to attend the Board meeting or just these mini-seminars and the topics covered include: Creative Thinking, Synergy Between Portfolios, Roberts Rules, Motivating Members, Time Management, Delegation, Networking for the Organization, Group Dynamics, Member Activation, JCI Protocol, Tax Issues for a Non-Profit, Setting Goals, and Fundraising.

**Other Training:** Check out the JCI website for information about JCI Presenter, JCI Trainer and JCI Designer. The first two courses are imperative for all State Officers and really should be taken by anyone who wants to know how to be better at public speaking and training adults. It teaches you how to present a seminar, how to train adults, how to improve your speaking skills and how to market and network for your organization. JCI Achieve teaches the nuts and bolts of running a non-profit and JCI Admin teaches about elections and running a board of directors. JCI Networking teaches your members how to sell themselves and the organization. JCI CSR teaches your members how to become more socially responsible as active citizens. Also, see your national websites for other training opportunities available that you can utilize in your chapter and outside in the community.

### **Become an Anchor Organization in Your Area**

The basic definition of an “anchor” local organization in my opinion is one that is strong enough to not only train leaders for the future of that chapter, but they are also strong enough to support, mentor and/or build other chapters in their image for the immediate area around them. This “anchor theory” was first presented by me at the State President’s Retreat in Nashville (Dec. 2002). The basic premise is that the State organization needs to focus just as much on its strong, thriving chapters as it does on the small, struggling chapters because otherwise, the “anchors” will either isolate themselves from the State organization or they will crumble.

I am actually more worried about the latter situation because no matter how strong your chapter is right now, it can crumble in one year’s time due to any of the following occurrences: tyrant president, failure to train next year’s board, one juicy scandal, a focus on awards or a plan that places form over substance. So, the State Presidents were encouraged to pay attention to their “anchors” to avoid just such a situation and to encourage members of these anchor chapters to participate in State/National functions while moving forward as leaders at the State level.

Now, let us further define an “anchor” chapter. Is it enough to win awards or have a large membership? No. Are you an anchor because five people do all the work in your chapter but you raise \$100,000 in a year? Big no. If you know how to manipulate the Parade of Chapters point system to be consistently ranked every other year, are you an “anchor”? Definitely not. So, what makes you an anchor chapter?

- (1) strong president that knows his or her stuff
- (2) trained VP’s who have 1-2 years of experience in the chapter
- (3) at least 3 projects in each area of opportunity for the year
- (4) a system in place for activation of new members, renewals, follow up with prospects
- (5) leadership seminars or other system to train future leaders of the chapter



- (6) structure to help people continue to lead this organization at the next level
- (7) ability to extend a new chapter (knowledge, resources and desire to do so)
- (8) flagship project that is recognized in the community
- (9) has Legal Counsel in chapter or an attorney on the Board of Directors
- (10) has Treasurer that is a CPA, bookkeeper or accounting background

## **Vision, Creativity and Focus**

A Chapter President must understand the vision and mission of the organization if he or she ever expects to sell the Jaycees to prospective members, government leaders and corporate sponsors. Anchor chapters deliver a consistent message to the general public across the country and that message is NOT: “we are a drinking organization with a community problem.” If your Chapter wants to get on board with this JCI revival in the United States, then it is time for you to truly understand what we are all about.

### *What is our vision?*

A vision is a statement that gives the reason for existence of the organization and paints a picture of what we are striving to achieve in the future. Do you know what the vision is for the Jaycees? Are we a community service organization? A leadership development organization? Do our members know who we are, what we do and how we do it? Let’s start here with our mission: JCI is an international organization that wants to provide development opportunities to empower young people to create positive change. (see Mission Statement of JCI). We do this through leadership and personal development, community service, business opportunities and international impact. Our vision is to become the leading network of young active citizens in the world. In the United States, we want to become the organization of choice for young people ages 21-39, by developing leaders that impact their communities and make a difference in this country. You must truly understand this vision and our mission if you want to sell it to other people.

Now that you know the vision, what do we have to do in order to be the organization of choice for young people? To figure out the answer to that question, we need to go back to the first question any prospective member will be thinking when they consider Jaycee membership: **what do I get out of it?** Remember that if you want to increase your membership with active

young people, you have to do three things first: (1) figure out what type of member want to attract; (2) determine what those people are looking for in an organization; and (3) give them what they want.

So, if you did that last year and now your chapter has 100 polished new members that are anxious to see the return on their investment, get ready for this: you will not meet their expectations at the time of their first renewal. Surprised? Of course you are, but remember that we are a society that says, “you were great last year, but what else can you do for me?” That’s why many TV shows lose ratings in year two, why the best NFL rookies are scrutinized harder in their second year and why movie sequels are rarely thought to be as good as the original. (the exceptions being *Godfather II* and *Empire Strikes Back*).

What am I getting at? Well, think about it: in the first three months, your new member has a honeymoon phase where projects seem fun and they are meeting new people but they do not see the politics or problems that occur behind the scenes. In the next six months, if you have been keeping them in the loop with communications, if you have been personally inviting them out and introducing them to people, and if you have been getting them involved with projects as a committee or chair person, then they will be even more active and excited.

But it is the final three months of the first year of membership that may be the most critical because now they have “been there and done that” for most of your better projects and they will start saying: “this year was great, but what’s in it for me next year?” They will get the renewal notice and wonder if they want to commit for another whole year and pay the money again. That is why it is so important to make sure that they share in our vision, that they want to help JCI achieve our mission and that they have a sense of ownership in the Chapter. (How to get renewals and create a sense of ownership are discussed later). In addition, it is critical that your Chapter is constantly evolving and growing (in all aspects), rather than getting caught up in the old stand-by line: “but this is what we always do and this is the way we always do it.”

#### *How do I think outside the box?*

Imagine a world where the Jaycees do not exist. (All of a sudden you have a ton of free time, huh?) Now, imagine that you have decided to start an organization for young people with the purpose of creating positive change by building young leaders. What would you do? How would you attract members to your organization? What types of events, projects, activities would you organize for your members? In an organization with no history and no boundaries, your opportunities are endless, right? Why then, do we stay inside our “box” in the Jaycees? As a local chapter president, you need to first envision the type of organization you want to be before you can figure out how to get there. In short, see your chapter as what it can be, not what it is in the present.

If you were to play along with the exercise above, you would develop a plan for your ideal organization. With input from your Board and your general members, you would have even more ideas for what would be a utopian organization. So, I say that you should do just that! Too often, we focus on trying to figure out how to improve upon our present situation. We focus on specific problems and try to fix them. We complain about certain obstacles and then we try to overcome them. We identify areas of weakness and then talk about improving these areas. These approaches, however, start with negativity and can keep you stuck inside your box.

For example, suppose you are a 70 person chapter and you are meeting at the local Knights of Columbus building. Your membership meetings consistently attract 20-25 people, which include: you, your seven Board members, your ten inner core general members and a few other random general members plus the occasional guest or two. You would like to increase your membership at these meetings, so you and your Board tackle the problem. One approach is to focus on what “is” and correct it: “our meetings are too small, but if we all agree to bring out one co-worker or friend to the next meeting and if we advertise in the paper, maybe we can get more people to come out. Will everyone agree to do this?”

A better approach is to focus on what “could be” and finding a solution to get there: “I envision a chapter meeting with 50 people attending consistently and having fun during an interactive meeting. In order to do that, what do we need to offer these people? Better location? Rotating location? Better meeting time? Good speakers? Networking opportunities? How can we get the word out each month?” Approach number one might produce a solution for one meeting, but approach number two pulls the Chapter out of its comfort zone and talks about what could be at EVERY meeting in the future.

This holds true for your projects as well. Suppose you have been organizing a large festival for ten years and it nets you a profit of \$15,000 a year. Your Board members and the chairperson believe the event could be even larger, with maybe a net \$50,000 a year for the Chapter. Again, the common approach is to start with what you have and try to improve it (i.e. get more corporate sponsors, try to do more marketing of the event on radio and in print, and getting more people to the festival by promoting it more and earlier). These are all valid options and probably will improve your festival, but why not start with a fresh idea?

Instead of a Fourth of July Festival with food, music and fireworks, what if we did a Fourth of July Festival that incorporates Bed Races, a BBQ Cook-off or a Car Show? Do we attract families and kids? Then what if there was a Children’s Village with clowns, face painting and balloons? Maybe we can get one giant sponsorship for the festival instead of six smaller ones (or vice versa). Is the radio station that sponsored our festival for the last six years the station that is targeting the audience we are trying to attract? In short, start with a blank CPG and imagine how you would organize the project if it had never been done before and once you figure you want your final product to be, then you can determine how to get from Point A (current situation) to Point B (ideal situation).

If you are looking for sources of innovation, try watching those people that seem to always come up with creative ideas. Watch their thought process and analyze the way they approach situations. Ask them for their ideas often and do not criticize the idea or even comment on it, just listen and contemplate it later. Also, go to your new members and prospects for advice. Since they have a fresh perspective on the organization, do not know how it has always been done, and have little idea about the Jaycees in general, their ideas can be quite refreshing and innovative. It is not a sign of weakness as a leader to ask for input or listen to ideas from other people. In fact, it has the opposite effect on your members, who will be more inclined to follow you if they believe their input and ideas are contributing to the overall goals and mission of the chapter.

Another technique for stimulating new ideas is to offer half-thoughts to your Board members, mentors, and general members to see what they think of your “near idea.” Often, they will have the other half to complete your thought or they may give you a new twist on your idea to make it even better. It is perfectly acceptable as a leader to not have all the answers, but if you are constantly engaging people in discussion about potential ideas, the sparks of innovation begin to fly and that is what you are trying to achieve in the first place. Moreover, you may want to start working on an idea before the plan is fully formulated. Don’t go overboard expending time or resources on an unfinished idea, but sometimes, an unfinished idea can turn into a full blown innovative solution during the planning and brainstorming process.

Finally, brainstorming with your Board or your general membership can be very effective. At one meeting, allow your people an opportunity to offer anything that is on their mind that will help the chapter move forward to create positive change. Set no parameters and give few guidelines. Do not critique any idea and it is up to you whether you want to have discussion after each idea (I usually do not encourage discussion unless it is another idea to work hand in hand with the one on the floor). If people know that they can speak freely with no debate or criticism, the ideas will be offered in greater quantities. Encourage this!

#### *So many problems, which do I tackle first?*

John Maxwell, a well-known authority on leadership has said: “you can measure the size of the leader by measuring the problems he tackles . . . he always looks for ones his own size.” Nowhere is this more true than in the Jaycees. True leaders step up to the plate and try to improve the quality of the organization for years to come by confronting the large institutional problems faced by the Chapter. Wanna-be leaders take power and attempt to solve little problems with stop-gap measures that only resolve the issue momentarily while leading to many Jaycee awards and accolades for having one good year. In which category do you want your legacy to lie?

So, whether you are a fairly strong local organization or one that just was “jump started”, there is room for improvement. Once you have determined your ideal organization and you are trying to get from Point A to Point B, sit down with your Board and write down the problems and obstacles you face in achieving your goals. Then, separate the problems into two categories: problems that affect your vision and goals versus problems that affect your daily operations. Determine a way to resolve problems that fall inside category one first. Often times, the problems in category two seem to go away when the larger institutional problems are resolved, but if there are still unresolved daily operations problems after you complete step one, then by all means, find a solution to those problems, too. Finally, as stated above, don’t look for stop-gap solutions, but get to the heart of the problem and find realistic, but effective solutions.

#### *How do I stay in focus when things are going well?*

When things seem to be running on all cylinders in the first few months, it can be easy to lose your focus. Even worse, if you see that your main goals are being fulfilled quickly, you may want to start solving all major problems at once and/or instituting entire new systems of operation. If you feel the urge to do this, remember the following phrase: *if you chase two rabbits, they will both get away.* If you and your Board have chosen to resolve certain issues and if you have determined that you are going to do one or two things very well in order to restore order to the Chapter, then stay the course and do not get distracted by other things you

can be doing until you are sure that these few things are going well first.

For example, suppose that you have decided as a Chapter that you are going to focus on following up with prospects, keeping current members well informed and marketing the chapter through new media. Make sure that those things are being done in the first two to three months before focusing on other major issues. I have watched chapters that have good systems in place for the above three issues and they conduct several training seminars to insure that the current Board understands their roles in these systems. However, the President then assumes that everything will run fine and he or she ignores these three issues while concentrating on new flagship projects or other new chapter fundraisers.

Moreover, the President then pulls certain people and/or resources from the systems in place because they seem to be running so well, in order to use these good Board members on other issues. Guess what happened? The systems began to fall apart, there was no person checking to make sure that the systems were implemented and in the third month of the new year, a crisis management meeting had to be held to figure out a way to re-implement the systems that could have been running smoothly from the beginning.

Another common problem encountered by a Chapter is when the Board or its President loses focus or changes the vision mid-year with no warning or discussion. If a Chapter decides that it wants to activate its members, increase membership and become more of a leadership development and business opportunities chapter to balance with the social and community service, then the Chapter needs to move toward those goals. Sometimes, a Chapter President can be wooed by awards, suggestions from someone else, or simply by something that president read in a leadership book. **STAY THE COURSE!** If you need to change the vision and focus of the Board, then it needs to be discussed and approved by the Board. Again, you need to understand our vision and mission, develop an innovative plan for your ideal organization and then keep your focus. In anchor chapters, this will lead you to success.

### **In the End, Perception is Everything**

Remember this from earlier: *In the Beginning, Perception is Everything?* Well, nothing has changed just because your chapter has made a comeback. You may have heard this cliché in the past: Perception is Reality. That's actually very true, especially when you are trying to run an organization of volunteers who may or may not understand exactly what the Jaycees are all about. Just because you were able to get people to come to your meetings and just because you may have convinced them to join the Chapter, that does not mean that they will be impressed with the make-up of your Chapter or the projects you run. As a President, it is your job to continually sell the organization both to prospects AND to your members. One way to do that is to be aware of the situations you are placed in and make sure that you spin it in a positive light.

*How do I learn "spin" ?*

Give two lawyers a set of facts and each will come up with a very different spin on those facts when presenting it to a jury. (One positive and one negative, depending on who you are

rooting for). Similarly, as a leader of your chapter, you have choices in how you want to present any issue to your members and you must learn to spin every situation into a positive message for your chapter. For instance, if you have now rebounded to a 70 person chapter and you show up at a meeting where the only people that are in attendance are: you, five enthusiastic new polished members that just joined, two members of your Board, three guests and three other members, you better come up with something to say that will inspire the people that are in attendance.

At the same time, what you say has to encourage them to join you in building the group rather than becoming discouraged and quitting. *Note:* if you have been in this situation before, you know that the most common thing to happen is that only 1 of those 3 guests may ever be seen again, three of those enthusiastic new members will probably lose some steam possibly not coming out very much anymore and you will be ready to tear your hair out (especially since your last meeting had 41 people at it).

So, when you walk to the front of the room to start the meeting, if you go right in to your same opening of a meeting and run through the projects coming up, your people may be excited, but more realistically, they will probably look around and think: “who is going to be running all these projects because I don’t have time, there are only 13 people here and 3 of them are not even members.” Even worse, I have heard local Presidents who apologize for the small attendance, criticize other members for not being there, are visibly upset in front of their members, or beg for help during the meeting. Talk about creating a negative vibe and looking desperate! When you are asked to go out on a date planned by someone else, do you like to hear the other person talk about how miserable they think the date is going, how it is not what they planned, how it is someone else’s fault or begging you to plan it next time? No. Your brain would start conjuring up thoughts like: loser, needy, psycho, pathetic, or hopeless. Obviously, we want to avoid those same types of thoughts from the members and guests at this meeting.

A better approach is to find a common ground and spin the situation in the light most positive to your chapter. An example might look something like this: “Good evening everyone. It is great to see so many of our new members out tonight. We have had so many people joining lately that we are getting some great new ideas on projects we can run in the community. That’s the beauty of the Jaycees, you can come out to those projects and meetings that you want to attend and with a greater variety of projects, you will have even more to choose from. When I looked out at the 41 people at our last meeting, I realized that we are really creating something special here and I am glad that you guys are getting into this on the ground floor because I see big things happening this year. To talk about some of those things coming up, please welcome our Community VP . . .”

*Here’s an example:* If a recent project just bombed.

Suppose you had a business networker at a nice restaurant and only seven people showed up after you thought you had confirmed attendance of 25 people and you promoted it all over your community. At the next meeting, you need to avoid the urge to blast your membership for not coming. Instead, stress only the positives and just leave out the negatives. (Remember that only the seven people at the event will know the extent of the project and you might even show them something positive about the event.) So, you may say: “If you did not attend the last business networker, you are really missing out. Morton’s Steakhouse was the perfect location and they gave us free steak tip appetizers and half price drinks. Special thanks to Henry for

organizing the event and thank you to all of you who brought out your friends and co-workers to network with the young leaders we have here in the Jaycees. I definitely saw some people making good business contacts. Make sure you come out to the next one in July”

## **Advanced Training and Mentoring**

The greatest gift you can give to your Chapter is a new crop of young dynamic leaders who are ready to take the helm when you move on after your year of President. To do this, you need to train them and cultivate them as leaders. They might be your replacement someday. In other words, be a mentor to a future Jaycee leader!

*What’s the difference between teaching and coaching?*

The essence of teaching vs. coaching can be seen from the following situations. Scenario One: as a local president, you organize many seminars, give your board members leadership manuals (including this one), leadership hand-outs, CPG training, etc., yet they still do not understand their job and they are having trouble covering their responsibilities. Scenario Two: as a local president, you tell your Board members that you are there to help them, you walk them through projects, follow up with them, devise systems for the chapter to run smoothly in membership renewal and activation, give them advice and encourage them, but the projects and officer responsibilities are just not being performed up to par. Sound familiar?

Scenario One is about “teaching”. Teaching or training consists of instruction and education of individuals in the fundamental skills of their job. Thus, an educator needs to transfer knowledge to his or her successors while at the same time enlightening them about successes and failures from the educator’s own experiences as a leader. A teacher of leadership shows his pupils how to be leaders in their own right, not just how to do what they are told or work within a system. The measure of a teacher is not in how well his or her team does in implementing instructions given to them by the teacher, but rather do they have fundamental soundness and a skill level to be leaders themselves someday? But, Scenario One shows that training seminars and hand-outs by themselves will not adequately prepare your future leaders, because they need to be coached as well.

However, Scenario Two, which is about “coaching”, is also inadequate by itself. Coaching typically consists of team preparation, encouragement, the devising of systems and game plans to deal with problems or issues in the organization. Coaching deals with strategies, utilizing the strengths of one member of your team and overcoming the weaknesses of another. It is about encouraging and motivating the members of your team to do their best. The measure of a coach is the quality of the development of his or her system and how well he orchestrates his or her players *during* the action.

Accordingly, as it applies to your organization, you need to train your people how to do their jobs, but also how to run the organization as a whole. Your Community Vice President needs to understand how the Membership Team works. Your International Vice President needs to realize where the money goes after a fundraiser and how it is processed through the Treasurer.

Moreover, your team needs to learn how to train others the same way they were taught by you and your predecessors. Your Board should become graduates of JCI Presenter, Trainer and Achieve so that they understand JCI and how to train those coming up in the organization behind them. I cannot stress enough the importance of taking these JCI courses either at an International Conference or by flying in some trainers to your area for the seminar. It will open your eyes to what this organization can be and you will learn one of the most important skills in life: the art of teaching. Remember this saying: Give a man a fish and feed him for a day, but teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.

Then, once they have the tools to run the organization, you need to devise the systems (with their input) that will best help the organization to run smoothly and deal with problems encountered along the way. You need to encourage them and motivate them. If they have been taught well, your job as a coach will be much easier and you will see much greater results in the long run. Once the resources have been given to your team and the systems are in place to achieve success, you are able to truly give them yet another wonderful gift: a mentor.

#### *How do you mentor?*

Mentoring involves the art of teaching and coaching with a special dose of tongue biting. The biggest mistake you can make as a mentor (and I know because I have done it) is to constantly give your two cents and tell them what they should be doing. Should you encourage and motivate? Yes. Should you keep them from ever failing? No. Less than 20% of leadership skills can be taught in the class room or in a private meeting. So, regardless of the talent level of any leader, most skills are learned on the job through experience and you need to let the next generation of leaders develop these important skills, to some degree, on their own. Further, while it is great to train and give resources to an up and coming young leader, it is equally important to show them where to go to get the resources next time.

One great thing about the Jaycees is that you never stop learning and evolving as a leader. Developing your skills as a mentor is just the next step in your journey. It is not an easy skill to learn, but the best thing to do is let them know that you are there for them, you will offer advice and you will offer constructive criticism if they ask for it. If they start to fail, you cannot get negative or talk to certain Board members about the shortcomings of other Board members whether you are frustrated with them or not. You must remember that you were not perfect when you were at their level and today's slacker may wake up and become tomorrow's Chapter President.

As a final thought, you may want to encourage your future leaders to seek advice and input from other leaders in the organization: past presidents, state officers, their bosses at work, local business men in the community, etc. You do not want your future leaders to get into the habit of running to you every time something goes wrong. They need to be accustomed to figuring out problems on their own or determining where to go to find the solution. (and the solution should not always be to come to you). Don't always be the one that trains the chair people and future officers. Let the new graduates of JCI Trainer do the training so that they will get the practice they need. Don't forget that the goal is to have many new leaders and trainers come out of your Chapter each year, not just one good one.

## **Motivating members (Part II)**



Earlier, there were many useful tips for motivating your membership and getting people excited and active in your Chapter. The three most important ways are: public recognition, private thank you, and making the request personal to you. However, there is a bigger principle involved here and it is a principle that can keep your members motivated for years to come: a sense of ownership in the organization. Think about it - why do we invest so much time and energy running an organization that does not pay us anything and monopolizes a lot of our free time?

Among the other reasons (improving ourselves, making business contacts, etc.) is the real answer: "I want to make our local organization the best it can be." It is your baby and you want to see it succeed, evolve, grow as a major player in the community. That is also why it is so hard to be a good mentor when your year of presidency is over, because you still want to be very involved with YOUR organization. Now, imagine the impact you could make in your community if every member of your chapter had this same sense of ownership.

### *Creating a Sense of Ownership*

Why do we spend a Saturday at Local Presidents Summit or stay up until midnight finishing the Blue Chip submission? What causes a Chapter President to drive to a Board member's house at 10 p.m. on a Friday night to pick up the early close out list? The answer is: a sense of ownership in the organization. It is your baby and you want to make sure that it succeeds. Well, imagine a world where your whole chapter started to feel that sense of ownership. Think about what you could accomplish then!

The easiest way to create a sense of ownership in your members is by staying positive and asking for their input. Too often, Chapter Presidents have a certain vision for where they want the chapter to go and they forget to ask their members if they are on Board with that vision. Or even more importantly, they forget to include their members on the decision making processes. You need to regularly approach your members and find out what they are thinking, ask them their opinions about certain projects and see where they stand on major decisions affecting your organization. Then, here's the critical part: LISTEN TO THEIR ANSWERS.

When you approach your members to be chair people, you have yet another opportunity to create this sense of ownership. Instead of standing at the front of the room asking (begging?) for someone to be the chairperson of your Easter Egg Hunt, try a new approach. Walk up to a new member and start talking about the project in a very positive light. Then ask for his or her input. "Where do you think we should hold it this year? What kind of prizes should we give? Do you have any ideas for potential sponsorships? How would you market this event?"

If you cannot tell, I am simply going through a lot of the questions on the CPG. Then, you need to let this person know that their ideas are wonderful and ask them if they would be interested in making this project happen with their new ideas. Here's the best part: you then offer the services of you and your Board to help them with their project. So, instead of this person organizing a project for you, the approach allows you to help them with their project, which creates a sense of ownership.

### *But What if My Board Stinks?*

With every situation, you have two choices: stay positive and find a solution or get negative and complain. Which path will you take when you come to this fork in the road? If your Board is not doing their jobs, you need to re-evaluate your vision and their sense of ownership. Are they not on board with you or are they lazy and incompetent? Most Chapter Presidents tend to do one of two things when their Board does not perform: (1) they do it themselves; or (2) they complain to anyone that will listen how their Board stinks. Neither action is an acceptable solution.

For a detailed description of how to deal with situations like this, please refer to the Book by the U.S. Jaycees or any of the leadership resources on the JCI website. They offer approaches for dealing with Board members that are not performing and it gives you solutions to moving forward. However, if you are quick to remove Board members for inaction, just look past them to see who is going to be their replacement, because sometimes that is worse. My suggestion is that during all of this, you stay positive. Do not do everything by yourself and do not succumb to the negative approach of complaining about them. As hard as it may seem, you need to keep a positive attitude because everyone else feeds off of your energy and if you do not exude passion and positivity, then they will not have any either.

Also, try to find new members or long time members who are willing to do one thing to take a responsibility away from a VP. For instance, if someone is willing to only do the weekly e-mail or just the website updates. Maybe you can find a member who will only be responsible for making sure your meeting is listed in as many papers and websites as possible. This can help free up your Board to do the things they need to get done and it will encourage new members to get involved with one fairly simple task.

### **No one told me I had to be a Kindergarten teacher!**

About one month into your leadership, you will realize that you have undertaken several roles: manager, inspirational leader, trainer, coach, ambassador and Kindergarten teacher. The first five you expected because those are the five roles of a successful leader. The sixth role probably shocked you a bit because you thought you were leading adults, but you will soon find out that adults have an uncanny ability to resort to 5 year old mentality when they do not get their way. Board members may get catty, you will hear gossip that can devastate a member, Board members may start dating, people bring their private lives into the discussion, and people will challenge your leadership simply because they can. To be successful in this sixth role, you need to avoid sinking to the level of a 5 year old and simply deal with the situations delicately with intense forethought.

#### *In-fighting and Gossip*

How many of you have heard this before: “I cannot work with that person and if they are going to continue being on the Board, I am thinking of resigning.” Or, you get two calls after 10 p.m. and it is all about “he said / she said” with an extra dose of “I don’t need this and I’ll quit.” You, of course, have many other stresses in your life - with work, your family and your chapter- but now you have this added problem that you just cannot understand. So, you try to be diplomatic about it and calm each side down, but sometimes, they will call for you to deal harshly with the other person and/or do something to remove them from the Board. What then?

Well, this part is not easy and I would suggest that you listen to each party, then when you want to speak, listen to them some more. Many times, they just need to vent. Then take some time yourself to think about the situation and a possible solution. Talk to your mentors, your regional director or your confidant if necessary, but do not bring it up to your general members or the other members on your Board. There is no right answer to this question because each situation is different and every scenario has unique circumstances, but you do need to address the issue or you could lose one and maybe both of these Board members.

### *Cleaning Up Other People's Messes*

In this organization, we teach skills to our members and we rely on them to get projects done. However, there is a fine line between allowing people to learn through mistakes and allowing the chapter to look bad because of mistakes. The best thing to do is have a system in place to follow up with project managers. Small mistakes are okay, but the organization's leadership has to be ready to pick up the pieces to make sure projects run smoothly for the sake of new and prospective members who might be in attendance.

*"Pick up your room . . . I mean, clean up the meeting"*

It will frustrate you that at the end of a meeting or project, many people will just leave or go have a drink while you are left to clean up afterward. This is true about a lot of menial tasks that need to be performed and, if no one else helps, you find yourself doing it because you cannot leave a messy room behind, just as you know that the bill must be paid at a happy hour even if your Treasurer has already left. If it happens, just try to remember how important it is to make the organization look good and clean up the mess. Usually, others will come back to help out, but it starts with the leadership.

### *How Can I Stay Inspired?*

If you find yourself looking in the mirror on several occasions this year asking yourself why you are doing this to yourself, you are not alone. Being a leader in any area of your life can be a fascinating and exhilarating journey, but it can also be lonely and stressful at times. Character is built during hard times, not during easy times. If being a leader was easy and fun all the time, everyone would be a leader. So, on those mornings that you wake up and you want to quit, you need to dig down deep within and find the courage to complete your commitment, but most importantly, if you keep yourself positive all the time, you will have fewer and fewer "self-pity" days. How do we do this?

First, I find that it is very helpful to read books on leadership, inspiration and motivation. It will help you identify leadership characteristics that you need to work on, but these books will also keep you going when you read about the road to success. If I find a good quote or story, I write it down and then share it with my Board members or general members. Remember that if you are sending a positive message out there to your members, they will respond with positive

energy and that will keep you going.

Second, I reach out to my Board members and general members one on one to get their input and see what they are thinking. I thank them for their help and support (and I really mean it). But guess what? When you reach out to them with a positive message and ask for input, they will again probably respond to you with positive feedback about what you are doing as a leader. When you hear people tell you that you changed their lives, or that the Chapter is headed in the right direction because the members are behind your vision, the adrenaline rush is incredible.

Third, you need to have your own mentors and utilize them. The Jaycees have produced some great leaders and most of them are willing to give advice or just be a sounding board for you to vent. If you have trouble finding a Jaycee leader in your area, then try your boss or a community leader. It is flattering to anyone to have another young leader come up and ask you to mentor them in some way. These people can give you the encouragement you need, they can say the right thing at the right time, and they will often remind you of the reward at the end of this journey.

Fourth, connect and rely on your fellow Local Chapter Presidents. They are going through the same things that you are going through and they understand your frustration. Sometimes, they will not have the right answers, but they will always listen with compassion and they will understand your pain. I truly believe that if the local leaders in this organization worked together and supported each other, we would be an unstoppable force in this country that could not be ignored by anyone.

## **Running An Effective Meeting**

True or False: your members love to sit through long meetings just to hear about the projects you have going on in the coming weeks. FALSE! Why then do so many chapters run their meetings with each Vice-President coming to the front of the room talking in detail about each upcoming project when the members already get all that information on the weekly e-mail blast, the flyers at the meeting and from the website? Remember that you are selling a product to members and prospects and part of that product is your meeting. So you need to think about what these people want from a meeting and GIVE IT TO THEM.

### *Short and Sweet Reports Plus Speakers or Activities Equals Success*

For starters, the officer reports need to be a whole lot shorter. I suggest 2-3 minutes, but they could get it done in as short as 45 seconds if nothing is going on in that portfolio for the next two weeks. Your officers should be going up to the front of the room with more excitement and passion than information. In other words, officers should point them to the flyers in the back of the room, encourage them to speak with an officer after the meeting or check the weekly e-mail, and then the officer should give a few details to get them excited about the project.

For example, part of a report could look something like this: “Good evening everyone. My name is Patrick Knight and I am the Individual Development Vice President for the Coconut

Grove Jaycees. The ID portfolio involves projects that will help you with leadership and personal development, including public speaking abilities, debate skills or salsa lessons. This Thursday evening we will have a great project on How to Make Sushi. For \$20, you will receive a lesson from a local sushi chef and all the sushi you can make in two hours. Event starts at 7:30 at Sushi Siam in downtown Miami. For more information or directions, please see me afterward, grab a flyer in the back of the room or check the weekly e-mail. I hope to see you there. End of report.”

Speakers can also be a great enhancement to your meetings. In fact, many anchor chapters have speakers slated for every other meeting so that their members know when they are likely to hear from someone in our community. However, make sure that the speakers discuss topics that are interesting to your members. We have had lawyers come in to discuss How to Beat Speeding Tickets, What to Do in a Situation of a DUI Stop, and What Happens When You Buy a House. Speakers from Toastmasters, Dating Services and Fitness Centers were also big hits. Bringing in a local politician or celebrity can also add spice to your meeting as evidenced by two of our biggest meetings when the Mayor of Miami came to speak and when a Channel 4 weatherman came in to talk to us about hurricane preparations. The key is that the speakers have to be limited in time (10-15 minutes usually unless it is a special guest) and you have to make sure that the speaker has a message to give and not an infomercial.

### *Greet, Socialize and Network*

Another thing your members probably want is time to socialize or network. Have you ever noticed how some members seem to always come right at the end of the meeting to hang out with everyone afterward? That is because they probably joined to meet people or network for business. In fact, most of your members will tell you that they joined the Jaycees to meet people. This is exactly why you need to keep the formal part of the meeting short. If they are sitting there listening to you and your Board, then they are not meeting each other. Also, your officers should have name badges and you may want to seriously consider having everyone wear a stick-on name tag. This makes it a lot easier for people to meet each other. One trick you can use is to have people make a name tag when they walk in and have members use a black marker and guests use a red marker. This helps avoid the embarrassment of you or your Board confusing new members and guests.

Obviously, a greeting table is necessary for many reasons. It allows your attendees to sign in, you can display pictures and awards there, you can have your project flyers and sign-in sheets available and you can use this area as a place for Board members to greet your guests. Always remember to ask about the guest rather than to talk about the Jaycees or yourself. You are courting them, remember? Finally, remember to introduce the guest to another Jaycee within 2-3 minutes so that you can go back to the front table and meet other guests as they walk in.

### *The Creed - Is this a Cult?*

I have heard that some chapters do not say the Jaycee Creed at the end of their meetings and this distresses me. They say that they are too afraid of sounding like a cult, but I believe that

the Creed has the opposite effect. Think about it: you never know that you are in a cult until the last ten minutes before you regain sanity (“it is time to drink the special kool aid . . . oh my gosh, I’m in a cult”).

In reality, the Creed is a statement of our unified beliefs in the Jaycees no matter where we live around the world. The words are very powerful and the concepts are often taken for granted in the United States. I usually begin the Creed by telling members that when we talk about “free men through free enterprise” or a “government of laws rather than of men,” we should be appreciative that our country affords us these liberties and we should be mindful and supportive of our Jaycee brethren in other countries who do not have these freedoms.

After telling them to truly pay attention to the words, I remind them that Steven Covey (author of 7 Habits of Highly Effective People) said during his key note address at our World Congress that the reason he chose to speak to our group and the reason that he is now going to be our ambassador around the world everywhere he speaks, is because we have such a powerful Creed that addresses the very issues at the core of freedom and humanity. So, if you feel awkward reciting it at a meeting, at least display it and discuss it at some point.

### **A New Concept: Smaller Board with Many Project Managers**

As a JCI leader and trainer at many different levels in this organization, I have always tried to identify cutting-edge ideas that will keep the organization relevant with young prospective members. While traveling around the world speaking with local JCI presidents and with leaders of other organizations, it became clear that there is a need for an alternative structure in certain local leadership organizations. In order for certain chapters to attract members in their twenties, a new concept is needed for the way a chapter is structured, so that JCI chapters can continue to fulfill our mission with a new generation of young leaders.

The basic idea is to reduce the size of the Board of Directors and to focus on creating project managers for 75% of the organization’s functions, including projects and events. As will be illustrated in this section, the structure appeals to prospects in their twenties because they can immediately contribute to the organization while learning real skills that give them value. Whether they decide to be active for six months or six years, this new structure will allow them to leave the organization as strong ambassadors of JCI and the local chapter will be able to utilize the efforts of each and every member for however long they are in the organization.

It is an idea that I had been playing around with for years while watching the rise and fall of chapter upon chapter, that would have a good two to three year run of rising success, followed by three to four years of mediocrity and survival. I examined the make-up and structure of some

of the most successful JCI chapters around the world. Then, I started to look at the success of many other leadership organizations that have popped up around the world to see how they are capturing the hearts and minds of the 18 – 29 year old audience.

In addition, one of my main seminars as a professional trainer, teaches corporations how to blend the different generations they have in their company's workforce. The insight gained from researching and conducting this seminar helped me to develop a structure that would really work for this new generation of young leaders in JCI. I have spoken to many other JCI trainers and international officers to refine the concept and then presented the idea during the pilot seminars for the new JCI Admin course. (it has since been incorporated into the course). Thus far, the concept has been well received by progressive JCI chapters in several countries and it is definitely a model that you might want to consider using in some form or another. However, the beauty of this organization is that different ideas work for different chapters, so if you already have a successful model or a better idea for chapter structure, I encourage you to share it with all our young leaders. Be better!

### **History of the JCI Chapter Model**

- Mission: Learning by doing
- As chapters grew, the structure grew
- Some chapters have eight VP's, six directors and other appointments

### **Problems and Concerns With Today's Model**

- Two or three people do all the work and get burned out
- Majority of members join, never get really involved and do not renew
- Each year, new board members are learning from scratch
- Board members that stop doing work continue to hold title

### **The Mind-set of Prospective Members in their Twenties**

They are often called Gen Y or Generation Next, but one thing is certain: the majority of young people in their twenties share certain characteristics that must be understood if our organization wants to attract these prospective members. People in this generation have a confidence and optimism about their future that is greater than prior generations.

- [ Influencing events: Their own over-planned lives, Columbine massacre, tech boom
- [ Values: Optimism, confidence, diversity,
- [ Skills: Working in teams, multi-tasking, technology, quick learning curve
- [ Philosophy: "Live, then Work" attitude, Speak-Your-Mind philosophy
- [ Perspective: Eager to contribute, high expectations of themselves
- [ Potential conflict points: Lack of social skills, over-reliance on technology, dependent on parents
- [ Outlook: Entering workforce wide-eyed and ready to contribute immediately

To communicate with Gen Y and manage them to success:

- [ Be clear in your requirements for a task
- [ Give answers to all of their questions and be patient.
- [ They like opportunities to learn and develop new skills.
- [ Use Gen Y employees to help with research on-line and through other digital sources.

- [ Challenge them with assignments that really matter and explain the importance to them.
- [ Ask them their opinions, find them a mentor, and provide constant and timely feedback.
- [ Help them learn discretion and discernment, which they might lack due to a MySpace mentality.
- [ Teach them realistic expectations and challenges.
- [ Help them learn patience in the workplace with co-workers and with complex problems.
- [ Show them importance of proper grammar and spelling.
- [ Give them seminars to improve face-to-face communication skills, public speaking skills and management skills.
- [ Show that you want to help them get where they want to go and explain how “dues are paid.”

#### Recruiting and Retention Strategies

- [ Stress online mentoring tools, virtual meetings and technology in your organization
- [ Let them know that time off is a reward in this organization
- [ Have lightning fast turn-around with the introduction to organization process
- [ Make your website attractive to Gen Y
- [ Recruiting efforts should be attractive to parents as well as their Gen Y kids
- [ Give them mentors and a training program to get Gen Y members to stay
- [ Consider allowing them to try several different skills in organization before settling down

#### Characteristics of our Target Market

- This is our target market
- They like collaboration
- Technologically savvy
- Used to Facebook, Myspace, Xing, Linked-In
- Instant gratification and need to find info fast
- Want to move up fast and lead now
- Have difficulty with face-to-face leadership, negotiation, motivation, etc.

In many parts of the world, people in their twenties are starting to re-write the formula for what makes a successful organization. Most of the younger members of our local organizations are technologically savvy, they are extremely resourceful and most importantly, they are impatient. They want immediate opportunities to become involved, but they may not stay long in the organization.

The new philosophy for young professionals seems to go like this:

- (1) Join a company or organization;
- (2) Learn as much as you can while you are in the company or organization;
- (3) Become involved immediately and look for an opportunity to move up quickly;
- (4) Keep eyes open for other opportunities in a different organization or company.
- (5) Move on to the next company or organization once it feels right to leave.

Sometimes, this process can take as little as one year and sometimes, it lasts for several years. However, the research seems to indicate that it will be rare to find young professionals staying with the same company or organization for long periods of time. This dramatically



affects JCI local organizations and alternative ideas need to be discussed for potential chapter structure in the future.

## **The New Chapter Model – Leaders Leading Leaders**

### *The Chapter Structure:*

In a small or medium sized local organization, one solution that may keep these younger members active and involved is to have a small Board of Directors that emphasizes the use of Project Managers for nearly every task. I am talking about five officers and a bunch of project managers.

For example, the Board of Directors would consist of the following: President, Internal Vice President, External Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. All of these positions are supervisory roles and project managers should be used for everything from community projects to the newsletter to membership recruitment. The local organization would have to set bylaws and parameters, but a member could be the Newsletter Project Manager for three months, train someone else to take over that task and move on to be the Project Manager for a business networking event. By utilizing a small Board, the local organization forces its Board members to constantly find and mentor new Project Managers who will learn by doing.

### Options for Using Project Managers (PM's)

- Newsletter (3 month intervals)
- Membership (Face Team, recruiting, membership table, activation)
- Using former PM's to train current PM's
- Training coordinator for 3 months

### Advantages:

- (1) Members can get involved immediately;
- (2) If a Project Manager is irresponsible, it does less damage to the organization than if a Director or Vice President is irresponsible (in the current system);
- (3) Project Managers can learn to organize several different types of projects, events and administrative tasks prior to taking one of the few Board positions;
- (4) Young members could rise quickly through the organization if they are talented.
- (5) In this age of short attention spans, members can utilize group for smaller time period

## **My Ideal for JCI**

Our focus needs to be on Gen Y and moving leadership opportunities to younger members.

Sample break-down by age group:

Age 18 – 24: General membership base and Project Managers

Age 25 – 28: Local JCI Officers and Project Managers

Age 29 – 32: Local President

Age 32 – 36: State, National, International Officers

Age 36 – 40: Trainers, mentors, sponsors and speakers

**Note:** Obviously, this is not a strict requirement or hard and fast rule. There are always exceptions (i.e. World President will usually be in his/her late Thirties), but our focus should be on creating new young leaders.

## **The Future Structure**

Chapters need to be aware of all the ways they can offer value to twenty-somethings. This section is not meant to discuss how to give value to members, what projects to run or how to be truly successful with your chapter programming. Rather, this section focuses on the narrow concept of chapter structure. However, to truly be successful, we must also identify unique and creative approaches to enticing these prospective members in their twenties.

- Social networking websites
- Use of videos
- Interactive qualities on our websites
- Incorporating smartphones, apps and QR Codes
- Showing these young prospects how JCI skills translate to real life skills
- Using seminars and speaking opportunities to help them develop these skills
- Helping them make connections in the community
- Easy to find information
- Opportunities to create an international network

The real value of the organization in the future will remain the same constant that has kept JCI great for so many generations: the opportunity to learn by doing. We can be the training ground for future entrepreneurs, trainers, managers, HR professionals, and all kinds of business people. By giving people a chance to taste leadership and practice project management on a small scale, we can get our members involved, educated and experienced in the ways of the organization.

This same model is starting to be used in many top corporations around the world who want to allow this new generation an opportunity to test-drive different career paths and job skill-sets in the office. We don't want our young members to dabble in the organization and move on quickly. We want them to dabble in one part of the organization and then another part of the organization and then another, until we create a future leader of the organization.



## **Pearls of Wisdom for a Local Chapter President**

- (1) Always be positive and confident in yourself and your chapter
- (2) Always appear positive and confident, even when you don't feel that way
- (3) Don't let the size of your chapter determine the size of your projects
- (4) Don't get caught up in awards or paperwork; try to be a strong organization first
- (5) Sometimes it is better to be happy, than right
- (6) Don't come down hard on your Board members when they screw up; use tact and diplomacy
- (7) Listen to what others have to say and when you want to speak, force yourself to listen
- (8) Look through the eyes of your newest member or guest when describing events and projects
- (9) Utilize social media, learn how to attract Gen Y members and always be forward thinking.
- (10) Don't gossip about people and if you hear it, squash it
- (11) Avoid negativity on your Board and in your group
- (12) Hard workers with negative attitudes hurt you more than help you
- (13) Bite your tongue when you want to put someone in their place
- (14) Have one confidant that you can speak with freely about things that upset you
- (15) Make hard decisions and stick to your guns
- (16) Don't promise too much to anyone
- (17) Rebirth and regrowth may not happen right away, so don't get disappointed
- (18) Try not to cancel projects or give up on events unless absolutely necessary
- (19) Follow up with your Vice-Presidents often, but be supportive and inquisitive, not nagging
- (20) When someone drops the ball in your chapter, it is up to you to pick it up and run with it or find someone else who will finish the job
- (21) Develop thick skin because you cannot please everyone all the time no matter how successful you are as an organization or how hard you try to make everyone happy
- (22) Recognize your star members at meetings and in print
- (23) Personally thank those that support you and help you the most
- (24) If the "Old Guard" won't let go of the control, show them your plan for success and if they don't get on board with your vision, go around them
- (25) Train your Board and your members to be leaders themselves!!!

## **Miscellaneous Information and Things to Know**

This section is mostly written for the Coconut Grove President of 2003, but it may remind other Local Presidents of things they need to do.

- (1) Have an officer training in October and November in the year prior to get your new Board ready for the new year.
- (2) Sit down with each VP and tell them what you expect of them and their position
- (3) Get each VP to come to planning session with a list of projects and tentative dates
- (4) Prepare your Officer Handbook prior to the Planning Session, which should be in the first three weeks of January. The Officer Handbook, should include: the bylaws, the PR packet, list of officers and contact info, calendar of events (inserted later), sample CPG, sample POS form, sample LOM Plan from that Area of Opportunity and anything else you think is necessary)
- (5) Right after Planning Session, order nice name badges for your Board and get them JCI Local Officer Pins to wear at all meetings and networking functions
- (6) Order Business Cards for you and your VP's by February
- (7) Make a general flyer with pictures, info and events on it to pass around at all functions
- (8) Prepare a poster board and/or photo album to display at all functions and meetings
- (9) Keep a running list of projects that you conduct, trainings, committee meetings, etc. Also, keep track of how many people went, how much money was raised, etc. for each project. This will make your Year-End Annual Report so much easier to prepare.
- (10) Monitor your website often and listen for feedback - make sure there are fun pictures
- (11) Attend National Conventions/State Conventions
- (12) Create an alumni list and send them a letter to let them know you are still alive
- (13) Learn the names of all your members and try to remember information about them. (To cheat, you can get their business card and write notes on the back of it after speaking with them. This will help you write great "personal" e-mails to them).
- (14) Watch your VP's closely and if they need more training, give it to them. Offer to sit down with them one on one and go over everything with them. Many times, your VP's don't want to admit that they don't really know what they are supposed to be doing.
- (15) Keep your eyes open for opportunities all the time, whether it is in government, charity fundraising, events you can participate in, etc. If you snooze, you lose.
- (16) Go to JCI International Conferences and Congresses
- (17) Early close-out / late close out numbers (renew your members early and try to avoid scrambling at the last minute)
- (18) Reach out to your Senators for additional support
- (19) Utilize the JCI training programs often and create your own JCI trainers in your chapter.
- (20) Develop a blog, a Facebook page, streaming video on your website and other social media.