

## Concept IX

### Concept IX:

The making of estimates has several aspects. We look at past and present experience to see what we think it means. From this we derive a tentative idea or policy. Looking first at the nearby future, we ask how our idea or policy might work. Then we ask how our policies or ideas might apply under the several differing conditions that could arise in the longer future. If an idea looks like a good bet, we try it on – experimentally when that is possible. Later we revalue the situation and ask whether our estimate is working out.

At about this stage we may have to take a critical decision. Maybe we have a policy or plan that still looks and is apparently doing well. Nevertheless we ought to ponder carefully what its long time effect will be. Will today's nearby advantages boomerang into large liabilities for tomorrow? The temptation will almost always be to seize the nearby benefits and quite forget about the harmful precedents or consequences we may be setting in motion. (Service Manual p. 41)

Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

No matter how carefully we design our service structure of principles and relationships, no matter how well we apportion authority and responsibility, the operating results of our structure can be no better than the personal performance of those who must man it and make it work. Good leadership cannot function well in a poorly designed structure. But weak leadership can hardly function at all in the best of structures. But once we have created a basically sound structure that job is finished except for occasional refinements.

With leadership we shall have a continuous problem. Good leadership can be here today and gone tomorrow. Furnishing our service structure with able and willing workers has to be continuous activity. It is therefore a problem in its very nature cannot be permanently solved. We must continuously find the right people for our many service tasks. Since our future effectiveness must thus depend upon ever – dash new generations of leaders, it seems desirable that we now proceed to define what a good service leader should be.

Hence great care needs to be taken by the groups as they elect these representatives. Hit or miss methods should be avoided. Groups who name no G.S.R. should be

**encouraged do that. In this area a degree of weakness tends to persist. The needed improvement seems to be a matter of increased care, responsibility and education.**

Experience has refuted the idea that changes which are needed to meet altered conditions are necessarily unwise.

### **Qualities of Service Leaders:**

- 1. Has a personality**
- 2. Does not need to have perfect judgment, morals and inspirations**
- 3. Dedication**
- 4. Stability**
- 5. Vision**
- 6. Special Skills**
- 7. Do not drive by mandate but lead by example "Act for us but do not boss us"**
- 8. Puts principles, plans and policies in such dedicated actions that others want to follow**
- 9. Not an order taker, must be able to exercise judgment**
- 10. Open minded and seeks input from others**
- 11. Able to think of what is best for the group rather than driving personal agenda**
- 12. When delegated responsibility good leaders carry out the responsibility within the guidelines of A.A. principle.**
- 13. Not scared to speak up as a minority even if there is a big majority against you**
- 14. Leaders give reasons for their visions that are based on experience and spiritual principles**

**Summary of Leadership:** Tolerant, responsible, flexible and vision are needed for leaders at all levels of service no matter how big or small the size of the operation.

Maybe this seems like an attempt to stake out a specially privileged and superior type of A.A. member. But it really is not so. We simply are recognizing that our talents vary greatly. The conductor of an orchestra is not necessarily is not good at finance or foresight. And it is quite unlikely that a fine banker could be a great musical performer. So when we talk about A.A. leadership we only declare that we ought to select that leadership on the basis of obtaining the best talent we can find (Service Manual 42).