

CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADERSHIP

(from Gardner, J.W., *On leadership*, 1990, Washington D.C.: Free Press)

1. *Leaders think in long term - beyond the day's crises, beyond the quarterly report, beyond the horizon.* A chapter president must be able to consider the day's events within the greater purpose of the fraternal experience - the ability to balance both "little" and "big picture" concerns.

2. *Leaders look beyond the unit they head and grasp its relationship to larger realities - the larger organization of which they are a part, conditions external to the organization, global trends.* A chapter president must be able to assume dual membership: president of the chapter and member of the Greek system. How does the actions of president contribute to the growth and betterment of the entire Greek system ? A chapter is never isolated from the rest of the system. Chapter activities must support and contribute to the accomplishment of the Greek system's mission.

3. *Leaders reach and influence constituents beyond their jurisdiction, beyond boundaries.* Leaders in the Greek system, especially chapter presidents, council delegates, and the executive board members, are visible to the entire system. A leader's influence extends beyond one's chapter. When faced with a common concern, chapter presidents or the general leadership must reach beyond chapter boundaries and work together to solve the problem.

4. *Leaders place "heavy emphasis on the intangibles of vision, values, and motivation and understand intuitively the nonrational and unconscious elements in the leadership-constituent interaction"* (Gardner, 1990, p. 4). The leadership and the membership must work together in order to bring about change.

5. *Leaders have "the political skill to cope with conflicting requirements of multiple constituencies"* (Gardner, 1990, p. 4). The Greek leadership deals with multiple constituencies -chapter membership, the Greek Affairs office, IFC/Panhel/NPHC, national headquarters, alumni, parents, other students, university administration, town government, businesses, the community, etc. every day. The ability to understand and balance their various needs and expectations is a critical step in building the Greek community.

6. *Leaders think in "terms of renewal, accepting the revisions of process and structure that are required by ever-changing reality"* (Gardner, 1990, p. 4). Is the Greek leadership willing to risk the status quo and seek the renewal of both process and structure required by the dynamic needs of the campus, society, and its membership ? The current environmental constraints and societal concerns are forcing the Greek leadership on all levels to rethink and reformulate chapter programming. Is the Greek leadership keeping pace or even setting the tone for others to follow, or are the Greeks always trying to catch up with the rest of the world ?

adapted from Nuss, E. (1994) *Leadership in higher education: Confronting the realities of the 1990s.* NASPA Journal, Vol. 31, No. 3, p. 209-216