

## The President

A good leader is one who can work with people and in turn get people to work with him or her for the good of the organization. He or she knows the work that has to be done and recognizes that it will take many people to do the job. The leader is able to judge impartially the interest and abilities of others and to determine where they can make the best contribution to the program. The leader keeps informed at all times of the efforts and progress of those to whom a responsibility has been given and sees that the organization is moving forward. The first duty of the president is to preside over all meetings. The manner in which this is done can make the difference between the success or failure of the chapter and its meetings. Characteristics of good leadership are indicated when:

- meetings begin on time and proceed in the pattern established by the order of business.
- the presiding officer shows a complete understanding of the matters under discussion and the possible effect of any recommendations on the organization.
- the president fully understands his or her function as a presiding officer and never interjects personal opinions or in any way dominates the situation.
- meetings are conducted by good parliamentary procedure and ample, but not excessive, time is allowed for discussion. A good president can bring the issue to a satisfactory conclusion when the discussion is being monopolized by certain individuals or when discussion is dragging because of insufficient response.

In presiding over meetings, the president should keep the following points in mind:

- Always have an agenda for a meeting.
- Read the agenda and state the purpose of the meeting at the beginning.
- Keep the meeting moving.
- Speak clearly and audibly.
- Prevent the meeting from breaking up into a series of private conversations.
- Speak to the entire group, not just one individual.
- Summarize what has been said and get a decision on a topic.
- When discussion indicates the members are not coming to an agreement, refer the item to a committee.
- Maintain control of the meeting without cutting off discussion.
- Serve as an umpire, not a contestant; don't argue with a speaker.
- Turn the meeting over to someone else if you have a point to make.
- Be aware of the physical comfort of all attending—temperature, drafts, lights, and thirst.
- Before adjourning the meeting, make sure that nothing has been omitted.

Other duties would be to:

- keep members on the subject and the discussion within a time limit.
- appoint committees and serve as an ex-officio member on them.
- call other officers to chair as necessary and desirable.
- represent the chapter at special school events and before outside organizations.
- coordinate chapter activities by keeping in close touch with other officers, the membership, and the advisor.
- keep chapter work moving in a satisfactory manner by following up on progress being made on all activities.
- call special meetings.