PROGRAMMING WITH A PURPOSE

How Relational Leadership Shapes Union Productions

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What is union productions?

- Union Productions is the programming board of the Oglesby Union, a department of the Division of Student Affairs.

- Highlights
  - Formed in the mid-60s
  - Has a multi-tiered system with a student executive board, student staff, and student volunteers
  - Student oversee every aspect of the events that are presented by UP
  - Produces 2-5 events a week, includes concerts presented in our world-renowned on campus venue, Club Downunder.
The Structure of Union Productions

- **Executive Board**
  - *serves on Exec*

- **PROGRAMMING**
  - Director
  - Board

- **HOSPITALITY**
  - Coordinator
  - Staff

- **PRODUCTION**
  - Manager
  - Staff

- **PR & MARKETING**
  - Director
  - Staff

- **OPERATIONS**
  - Manager
  - Staff
  - Volunteers

- **CONCERTS**
- **COMEDY**
- **CO-SPONSORSHIPS**
- **CULTURE & ARTS SPECIAL EVENTS**
- **LECTURES**
- **DAYTIME EVENTS**
**Challenges to perception**

- **MYTH**: Because of our process of booking bands and events as they are routed for a largely fixed price ($4,000) or under, Union Productions has been perceived as “only bringing indie rock bands”

- **Reality:**
  - Concerts/music is only one aspect of what we do!
  - Over 120 events per year (attendance numbers)
  - Cosponsor with a variety of categories of student organizations
  - Partner with academic departments and institutional divisions
In an effort to combat the perception of being standoffish and exclusive, Union Productions engaged in an initiative to incorporate relational leadership into daily practices.

Because UP operates in many ways like a business, we opted to incorporate principles of a business that is also conscious of relationships—Southwest Airlines.

- Retreat presentation
- Lead with LUV
- Relational goal setting
Why is this a value?

Consider the Army’s acronym for leadership: LDRSHIP - a lot of these sound like values!

- Loyalty
- Duty
- Respect
- Selfless service
- Honor
- Integrity
- Personal Courage

In teaching our students leadership with these tenets in mind, values are also being instilled.
HOW IS UP LIKE AN AIRLINE?

THE GOOD

- We provide a service to students.

- Some event attendees have done this before, and know what to expect, but to some, it’s brand new.

- We don’t allow liquids inside.

THE BAD

- Sometimes our services aren’t as well suited to those who have never used them before.

- Students don’t always understand what we do, or how.

- Time is an essential part of our work.
A style of leadership created in the 1990s to emphasize the role of relationships in accomplishing goals.

There are five parts to relational leadership:

- **EMPOWERING**: to encourage members to actively engage and get involved
- **PURPOSEFUL**: to have a clear reason for what we do.
- **PROCESS-ORIENTED**: being aware of how the board interacts, and how that affects their work
- **INCLUSIVE**: understanding, valuing and engaging programming for as many groups as possible
- **ETHICAL**: completing our work based on a set of moral principles
Dimensions of Relational Leadership
EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

- **TASK:** Complete the “Recognition Register”
- **GOAL:** Take care of each other.
  - Cheer for people. When someone does good work, let them know! Do it in a way that you know they’d appreciate it, and be specific.
  - Be upfront with people. If you need something from someone, ask for it. If you have a concern or problem, give someone the chance to be aware of it and fix it, but be objective! Don’t make it personal.
  - Help others see that their work matters.
This refers to people for whom we provide an opportunity: **VOLUNTEERS**.

- “Treat your people right, and good things will happen.”
- **Use names!** Sometimes it might be tough, but make an effort to learn the names of our volunteers.
- **Be genuinely interested.** The same as you would with any other co-worker, take an interest in volunteers as people. It’ll help you interact better, and they’ll do better work when they feel recognized.
- **Be good listeners.** Ask for feedback on their experience, and really listen. We can’t always change things, but make sure they feel heard.
INVESTMENT OF CHOICE

- Two groups of people invest in Union Productions and the work we do:

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
(by allowing us to program, and giving us the money to do so)

and

STUDENT/PUBLIC ATTENDEES
(who trust us to bring programming that they can enjoy and learn from)
For both groups, this is about helping them feel they’ve made a good investment.

- Be responsive to requests.
- Ask for their opinion.
- LISTEN to suggestions or concerns.
- Keep them informed in good times AND bad.

This doesn’t mean to cave in to the demands of others!
THEORY IN ACTION
Co-sponsorship

• Rather than “renting out the space”, we opt to work with campus agencies and organizations to present events together.

• Examples:
  • Bi-annual PRIDE Drag Show
  • Academic partnerships with the College of Music for faculty and staff Jazz Nights, Blues Ensemble and Salsa Florida recitals
  • Dances with Inter-Residence Hall Council
Golden tribe lecture series

• This initiative was established in 2010 to provide a lecture series to the FSU student body and community.

• Co-presented by Union Productions and the Student Government Association.

• Mission of the Series: to engage students in issues and dialogue that will benefit their overall academic, scholastic, or humanitarian experience.

• 2011-2012 Lineup: Rebecca Skloot, Spike Lee, Elie Wiesel and Cornel West.
Departmental support

- Union Productions and its staff play a prominent role in the planning and implementation of several interdepartmental initiatives:
  - Seminole Sensation Week (Welcome Week)
  - Parents’ Weekend
  - Homecoming
    - Pow Wow and Warchant (large-scale concert and comedy show planned in conjunction with Homecoming)
  - Rez Fest (a yearly outdoor festival cosponsored by Campus Recreations)
  - Spring Fling (a year-end carnival celebration originally conceived in conjunction with Thagard Health Center)
Testimonials from students

Our group has good chemistry. We’re coworkers and friends.

Our goal for this year is to make our department feel like more of a family.

We have a good professional and personal relationship.

Now they have a better understanding of what we do.
Relational Leadership Guidelines

- Treat all who are decision makers/stakeholders in a project as equals.
- Keep lines of communication open.
- Uphold the ideals of the organization, even as you work with others.
- Demonstrate the value of collaborators to the organization.
Case study
THANKS VERY MUCH!

Questions? Concerns? Get in touch!

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