LEADERSHIP STARTS WITH YOU

Leadership begins with a choice to contribute. At your Gavel Club, you can practise leadership by listening, helping, organising, encouraging others and taking responsibility for shared goals.

1 What does leadership look like?

- Initiative: Notice what needs doing and offer to help.
- Responsibility: Keep promises, arrive prepared and complete your role.
- Respect: Invite different views and make space for quieter members.
- Service: Help others succeed rather than seeking attention for yourself.

2 You can lead without a title

You show leadership when you welcome a new Gavelier, volunteer as Timer, encourage a nervous speaker or help solve a meeting problem. A club officer has formal responsibilities, but every member can make a positive difference.

3 Lead yourself first

Build habits you can rely on: prepare ahead, listen fully, manage your time, accept feedback and admit mistakes. People trust leaders who act consistently and respectfully.

My leadership promise: “At my next meeting, I will take responsibility for _____ and complete it by _____.”

4 Practise the listening habit

In pairs, let one Gavelier describe a challenge for 60 seconds. The listener does not interrupt; afterwards, they summarise the concern and ask one helpful question. Switch roles. Leadership begins with understanding.

HELP YOUR TEAM SUCCEED

Strong teams work best when everyone knows the goal, feels included and understands their contribution.

5 Plan and run a small team activity

- Set the goal: Agree on a simple outcome, such as a themed meeting or a club speaking challenge.
- Share responsibilities: Assign tasks based on interests and opportunities to learn.
- Confirm the details: Who will do what, by when and with what support?
- Check progress: Ask what is working and what help is needed.
- Recognise effort: Thank contributors specifically and celebrate learning.

6 Communicate as a leader

Give clear instructions, explain the reason behind a task and check for understanding. Replace “You never help” with “Could you take responsibility for the introductions at our next meeting?” Keep feedback about actions, not personalities.

7 Make room for every voice

Invite ideas from members who have not spoken, rotate opportunities and acknowledge different strengths. Do not assume the loudest voice has the best idea. A good leader creates a safe environment for respectful disagreement.

> Try this phrase: “We have heard two useful ideas. Does anyone have a different suggestion before we decide?”

8 Delegate without disappearing

Delegation is not handing someone a task and walking away. Agree on the outcome, offer resources, set a check-in point and allow the person space to do the work. Step in when support is needed.

TURN CHALLENGES INTO GROWTH

Leadership grows when you face small challenges thoughtfully. You can be firm about a goal while remaining kind to the people involved.

9 Solve problems in five steps

- Notice: Describe the problem without blaming anyone.
- Listen: Understand the people affected.
- Explore: Suggest two or three workable options.
- Decide: Choose a fair next step with clear responsibilities.
- Review: Check the outcome and adjust if necessary.

10 Respond to disagreements

Stay calm, allow each person to explain their view and restate the shared purpose. Use respectful language, avoid public embarrassment and ask a Gavel Club Counsellor for help when a concern cannot be resolved fairly or safely.

11 Give feedback that builds confidence

Name a specific strength, describe its positive impact and suggest one manageable improvement. For example: “Your agenda was clear and helped us stay organised. Next time, sharing it a day earlier could help everyone prepare.”

12 Your seven-day leadership challenge

- Day 1: Identify one area where your club could use help.
- Day 2: Ask two members for their ideas.
- Day 3: Agree on a realistic goal with your Counsellor or team.
- Day 4: Divide the work and confirm responsibilities.
- Day 5: Support a teammate and check progress.
- Day 6: Complete the activity or review what remains.
- Day 7: Thank contributors and reflect on one lesson.

My challenge: _____
Who I will involve: _____
How we will know it worked: _____

YOUR LEADERSHIP TOOLKIT

Leadership is a continuing journey. The goal is not to control every situation, but to become someone others can trust and work with.

13 Lead through meeting roles

- Toastmaster of the Day: Coordinate the agenda, introduce participants and manage transitions.
- Table Topics Master: Encourage inclusive participation and guide an energetic segment.
- General Evaluator: Observe the whole meeting and help the team improve.
- Club officer or project leader: Plan, communicate, delegate and follow through.

14 Your meeting-day leadership checklist

☐ I arrived prepared and on time.
☐ I understood my responsibility and supported the team.
☐ I listened without interrupting.
☐ I invited others to contribute.
☐ I responded calmly when plans changed.
☐ I thanked people for their efforts.
☐ I identified one improvement for next time.

15 Reflect and grow

After a meeting or project, ask: What did our team achieve? Who contributed in an unexpected way? Did everyone feel heard? What could I do differently? Good reflection turns an ordinary activity into leadership learning.

A leadership strength I noticed: _____
A moment I could have handled better: _____
One person I want to encourage: _____
My next leadership step: _____

“Leadership is helping others find the confidence to contribute.”

Reference: Toastmasters International educational guidance on leadership, club participation and meeting roles. Adapt activities to your club’s procedures and Gavel Club Counsellor’s guidance.