

# PEER-LED TEAM LEARNING LEADER TRAINING

## FACULTY GUIDE MODULE: COMMUNICATION



U. MAINE CHEMISTRY EDUCATION GROUP  
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### *The Importance of This Topic*

Communicating effectively and clearly will be an integral part of the peer leader's role. It is essential for leaders to use communication effectively to help the students in the group progress to a more highly productive stage.

### *Putting Theory into Practice*

Heather D'Adamo's article in the PLTL Progressions Newsletter discusses how the leaders can use questions as action. By asking the student questions, the leaders allow the students to gain confidence by solving problems on their own.

Nonverbal cues offer additional and sometimes opposing information to verbal cues. A person's tone of voice, body position, distance, etc, can all affect the way their verbal message is communicated and perceived. The leaders should be aware of these cues when speaking with students as well as listening to them.

### **What the Leaders Will Gain From this Module**

- An understanding of how tone of voice can alter the message being conveyed
- An understanding of nonverbal communication and how to use this skill to identify a struggling student
- How to help students who have negative feelings toward PLTL
- How to use questions to guide the students toward correct procedures/theories when solving a difficult problem

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## Outline Of Module and Expected Outcomes:

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### Sentence Game

Each person in the group writes one sentence on a paper and places it in a cup or a hat. One person from the group chooses a sentence from the hat. Each person in the group must say that sentence using a different tone of voice, and/or action.

#### Outcome

Ideally the leaders will come to an understanding that one sentence can hold several different meaning based simply upon how it is presented and that in order to communicate effectively they must pay careful attention to what they say and how it is said.

#### Objective

To show various aspects of communication and how they affect how we communicate.

#### Possible Discussion Questions for Weekly PLTL meeting

- How did the meaning of your sentence change, when a different tone of voice/body language was used?
- What steps should you take to communicate more clearly as a leader?

## Scenarios

The leaders will read the following scenarios and choose one to discuss within their group.

- A student in the workshop does not understand how to solve net ionic equations
- An outwardly confident student appears confused and worried when actually working on the workshop.
- A student who had been doing very well in workshop has stopped attending.

### Outcome

The leaders should discuss communication cues and techniques in order to work through their chosen scenario.

### Objective

Through their discussion the leaders will learn the role that communication plays in learning and in handling difficult situations.

### Possible Discussion Questions for Weekly PLTL meeting

- How did your group respond to the scenario that you chose?

## Round Robin Exercise

There is a list of negative comments made by hypothetical students. The leaders are to choose several statements to read, analyze and discuss using the round robin method.

### Outcome

Ideally the leaders will learn how to appropriately respond to negative statements made during workshop.

### Objective

This session should help the leaders understand why students might feel so negatively toward PLTL and how they can help the students change their opinion

### Possible Discussion Questions for Weekly PLTL meeting

- Read one of the negative comments your group chose and explain how you responded and why.
- How can you prevent students from making such comments?

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## Leader/Faculty Meeting Outline

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**1. Hand out sign-in sheet**

**2. Questions to ask to open up discussion (20 min)**

**Sentence Game**

- How does the meaning of a sentence change by changing your tone of voice?
- What steps should you take to communicate more clearly as a leader?

**Scenarios**

- How did your group respond to the scenario that you chose?
- Why is it important to answer questions with other questions?

**Round Robin Exercise**

- Read one of the negative comments your group chose and explain how you responded.
- How can you prevent students from making such comments?

**3. Points To Emphasize**

- Leaders should communicate positive and negative situations via first class conference
- Leaders should immediately communicate through e-mail with any student who stops attending the workshops.

**4. Leaders work on workshop problems (30 min)**

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## References

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D'Adamo, H. (2012). How Can the Peer Leader and the Student Use Questions as Action? Peer-Led Team Learning: Leader Training. Online at <http://www.pltlis.org>.

Roth, V., Cracolice, M. S., Goldstein, E., Snyder, V. (2001). Workshop Leader Training (Chapter Four). In Gosser, D.K., Cracolice, M.S., Kampmeier, J.A., Roth, V., Strozak, V., Varma-Nelson, P. *Peer Led Team Learning: A Guidebook*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

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