SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND CONFERENCE OFFICERS
A LEADER IS ONE WHO

• Organizes, delegates, and supervises
• Doesn’t do all of the work
• Selects others who can help
• Delegates authority and then supervises
• Sees each part contributes
  • - Ensures harmony and peace

Can organize, delegates, and supervise

Doesn’t do all of the work – A servant leader doesn’t do everything and doesn’t know everything

Chooses capable men/women for each part of the work and then lets them do it

Doesn’t jealously hang on to each job

Delegates authority and then is available to supervise the whole project
  - To see that each part contributes to the final goal
  - To ensure harmony and peace
ACTIONS OF A GOOD LEADER

Serve
• Organize
• Communicate
• Delegate

Coach
• Innovate
• Stimulate
• Encourage
Leadership positions in the Society, at any level, are always to be accepted as service to Christ, to the members and the poor. Servant leadership is done in imitation of Jesus, who said:

“For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Rule: Part 3, Statute 11)
Especially Presidents, following Christ's example, at all levels of the Society are to be servant leaders.

They provide an encouraging atmosphere in which the talents, capacities and spiritual charism of the members are identified, developed and put to the service of those in need and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

The President of the Conference or Council will have special responsibility for promoting Vincentian spirituality. (Rule: Part 1,3.11)
A SERVANT LEADER

• Searches and listens
• Members need to be led
• Open to inspiration
• Everything depends on the Providence of God
• Becomes a listener-leader
• Challenges members to grow
• Looks for practical solutions

Is always searching, listening, expecting that a better solution is possible
Recognizes that members need to be led rather than pushed and persuaded rather than told.
Is always open to inspiration
Recognizes that everything depends on the Providence of God
Works to improve his/her listening skills and to become a listener-leader
Always accepts the person, but always challenges them to grow as persons to become wiser and freer
Always looks for practical solutions
CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

• Respect for others
• Desire to serve
• Consensus builder
• Well informed
• “We” attitude
• Learns from Mistakes
• Listens well
• Able to compromise
• Able to “lose face”
• Sense of priorities
INTROSPECTION TIPS

Asks appropriate questions of self

• Self-examination related to approach
• Self-examination related to coaching ability
• Self-examination related to interpersonal relations
• Self-examination related to aspects of Society

Do I lack knowledge ---- have I asked for help?
Am I using available resources?
Is my ego or pride in the way?
Have I allocated enough of my time?
Would a change in the organization help?
Do my priorities reflect those of the members?
Does my perception agree with that of the members?
Have I communicated clearly what needs to be done?
Do I ensure that members make the decisions?
Do I demonstrate respect for the Society and its Rule by my words and actions?
Am I placing proper emphasis on helping members to grow spiritually?
CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP ACTIONS

- Attract new members
- Consider the diversity of community
- Develop new leaders
- Improve member participation
- Increase charitable work
- Increase meeting attendance
- Provide meeting agenda
- Keep meetings focused

Attract new members

Consider the diverse population in your parish community

Develop new leaders (Conference President identifies and develops his/her potential replacement) – succession planning

Improve member participation

Increase charitable work e.g. home visits, etc…

Increase meeting attendance

Provide meeting agenda and follow it

Keep meetings focused on accomplishing agenda items
CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP ACTIONS (CONT.)

- Members treated with respect
- The Rule is followed
- Solidarity and insurance are up-to-date
- Audits
- Submit reports
- Enhance charitable services

Ensure members are treated with respect and provided opportunity to speak

Ensure the Rule is followed

Ensure solidarity and insurance are paid when due

Ensure Audits and Reviews are performed

Submit reports on time

Encourage members to find ways to help our friends in need to determine and solve their financial problems
CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

- Progress of Conference
- Supports Conference members
- Succession planning
- Conference/Council communications
- Develops relationships with parish and other organizations
- Represents the Conference to the community

Attends to the progress of the Conference.

Supports the Conference members in their Vincentian action, helping and assisting them as circumstances require.

Responsible to develop members so members can be qualified candidates for his/her replacement.

Ensures that links and communication are effectively maintained between the Conference and the Council to which it is attached.

Develops working relationships with neighboring Conferences, the Parish Council, and with agencies and governmental welfare organizations.

Represents the Conference in contacts with religious and civil authorities.
CONFERENCE PRESIDENT (CONT.)

- Dedicated to the service of the poor
- Responds to needs of Conference
- Follow up on non-attendance
- Maintain and increase membership of Conference
- Presidency a responsibility, not an honor
- Compliance with the Rule and other Governance documents

President does not deny authority when ensuring compliance with Governance Documents

must be dedicated to the service of those in need and ready to respond to the needs of the Conference and of his/her brother and sister Vincentians.

should make inquiries when members do not attend meetings.

is responsible to see that new members are recruited in order to maintain and increase the membership of the Conference.

The presidency should be considered as a responsibility, not an honor.

Ensure Conference compliance with the Rule and other Governance documents. It is essential for a Conference President to possess a working knowledge of the Governance documents and how they are to be applied.
The Conference President:

Explains to potential members how they can gain a Plenary indulgence upon completing the requirements and becoming a member of the society. This can be found in the U.S. Manual.

by reason of his/her office, is an important member of the District Council to which the Conference is attached.

is responsible for attending and participating in meetings of the Council. The president represents his/her Conference.

If unable to attend a particular meeting of the District Council, he/she should designate an officer proxy for that meeting.
The Conference President is elected through a secret vote for a three-year term which may be renewed once. (Rule: Part 3, Statue 12)

After serving two consecutive terms, a retiring President is not eligible for re-election as President until a further term of three years has elapsed. (Rule: Part 3, Statue 12)

Term always ends on the last day of September. New term starts October 1st.

The President is at the service of all those aided by the Conference and of all the Conference members.
CONFERENCE OFFICERS

- President appoints Officers with approval of the Conference
- Includes at least one Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer
- Other members may be entrusted with particular duties
- Officers’ term ends when a new President takes office

Conference Officers
The President is assisted by members who are appointed by him/her with the approval of the Conference.
Conference officers includes at least one Vice President, a Secretary and a Treasurer.
When necessary, other members are entrusted with particular duties.
Officers assigned by a President terminate when a new President takes office.
CONCLUSIONS FOR SUCCESS

For Your Background
- Learn about Society
- Comply with Rule and other Governance documents
- Make the Mission Statement your guide
- Use resources available

On Vincentian Leadership
- Serve and teach
- Officers and Spiritual Advisor a top priority
- Run good meetings
- Communicate

For your background
Learn the society history and philosophy
Understand and comply with the Rule and other Governance documents
Make “the Mission Statement” your guide
Use the many resources available

On Vincentian Leadership
Serve and teach
Keep your Officers and Spiritual Advisor a top priority
Have good meetings
Communicate
CONCLUSIONS FOR SUCCESS

Improve the Conference

• Sustain Aggregation
• Develop successors
• Meet all reporting requirements
• Assess — “How is the Conference doing?”
• Resolve issues with the Members

Sustain Aggregation: Aggregation refers to a Conference’s formal status as a part of the Society. This can only be sustained by a Conference in compliance with all that is expected of it. There is a document on National’s website titled “What is Expected of a Conference.” This document explains all the various aspects of Conference life on which it will be evaluated.
SERVANT LEADER PERFORMANCE

Three foundational questions:
1. Do those served grow as persons?
2. Do they become wiser, freer?
3. What is the effect on those we serve?

Three foundational questions to check the servant leader:

Do those served grow as persons?

Do they, while being served, become wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?

What is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?
Conference Servant-Leader
Serves the Conference – not vice versa
Recognizes Conference members make decisions and are in control – not the officers, not the pastor
Ensures Group decision making by Conference members (Majority rules) - by consensus – then by vote, if necessary. The President (or small group of members) does not make decisions for the Conference. It is the members of the Conference who make the decisions.
Ensures full disclosure to the Conference of all matters (financial and otherwise)
Listens – seeks to understand
Provides guidance – does not dictate
Encourages group to develop themselves (both spiritually and in service)
Ensures that communication is maintained and clear
Is also a referee along with the Spiritual Advisor when disagreements occur
Must correct when errors in work and attitude occur
Ensures compliance with the Governance Documents
OTHER CONFERENCE OFFICERS

- Vice Presidents
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Spiritual Advisor is required – but is not an officer
The designation of two Vice Presidents can be useful, when Conference membership is fairly large.

The First Vice President can then be charged with developing SVDP activities. He/she sees that members have important work to perform.

The Second Vice President can devote his/her energies to the recruitment of new members. May also contact members that miss meetings.

The Vice President, or one of them as the case may be, replaces the President at Conference and as Proxy at Council and other meetings when the President is unable to attend.

The Vice Presidents collaborate constantly and effectively with the President and are kept informed on all aspects of the conference.

The Conference VP organizes the election of the next President if they are not a candidate. This responsibility is delegated to another officer if the VP will be a candidate.

The Vice Presidents should be charged with specific duties to be productively involved.

Performs specific duties as assigned by the President and supports other Conference officers.
The Secretary carefully prepares the minutes of the meetings and reports thereon.

The Secretary’s Minute Book should contain copies of the Quarterly/Annual Reports.

Responsible for keeping the records and reports and for the statistical and clerical work of the Conference.

Maintains the Resolutions/Motions Book and ensures it is available at every Conference meeting.

Maintains membership records

Processes the administrative (non-financial) functions of the Conference.

Develops assistants/back-ups

Coordinates with treasurer

Coordinates with District Secretary to ensure appropriate assumption of duties.
TREASURER

- Responsible for funds, budget, and accurate and appropriate records and reports
- Follows Council defined process
- Audit annually
- Up-to-date financial report at every meeting
- Develops assistants and back-ups
- Coordinates with Secretary
- Coordinates with District Treasurer as needed
- Conference records to be kept seven years

Responsible for the Conference funds, for preparing the Conference's budget, and for keeping accurate and appropriate records and reports of all the receipts and expenditures.

Follows Council process for receipt and expenditure of funds

Keeps the accounts which should be audited at least once a year by two members delegated by the Conference or by a qualified person or organization. (If Conference does not perform audit, Council may do it)

Keeps up-to-date the financial report, reflected in the Conference's Official Minute Book. In this way, the true financial condition of the Conference is known at all times.

Develops assistants and back-ups

Coordinates with Secretary

Coordinates with District Treasurer to ensure appropriate assumption of duties.

IRS requires Conference records to be kept at least seven years.
Conference funds should be deposited regularly and promptly in a bank account in the Conference name.

Funds belonging to the Society have always been, and must always be, kept separate from the Treasurer's personal assets and parish funds.

A bank balance should be reported at every Conference meeting and submitted with the Conference quarterly report and verified annually by the President or an audit committee of two members.

For auditing purposes, invoices and statements are obtained before any disbursement is made or receipts should be collected and retained for all disbursements.

Whenever possible, all payments should be made by check.

The credit of the Conference must at all times be safeguarded and, therefore, all just accounts should be paid as they become due.
One thing to keep in mind: the annual report is prepared by three people:

- The Secretary provides all of the statistical information,
- The treasurer provides all of the financial information, and
- The President reviews the report, approves the report, and signs off on it.
Each Conference must have a spiritual advisor.

The role of a spiritual advisor is to help the development of the spiritual life of the members and to enable them to better understand the meaning of charity and its practical application toward those in need.

The spiritual advisor should attend meetings on a regular basis. The reading for meditation may be supplemented with spiritual reflections given by the SA. The reflections are not a sermon or a homily. There needs to be a discussion among the members of the material presented. Only the SA may prepare material for reflection, however members can read it.

The presence of the spiritual advisor strengthens the bonds between the spiritual activities of the Conference and the apostolic activity of the Church.
SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE USA

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR (CONT.)

- Priest, deacon, member of a religious order or a lay member
- Must be properly trained by the Council Spirituality (or Formation) Committee
- Full Conference member
- Clergy cannot be an Officer or signer for an account

A priest, a deacon or member of a religious order may not be available. A lay member with a sincere spiritual orientation is considered preferable.

If a lay person is to be selected, it must be coordinated with the council president and the lay person and all SA's selected must be properly trained by the Council spirituality or formation committee (Rule, Statute 15)

The spiritual advisor is a full Conference or Council member but does not serve as an officer of a Conference or a Council.

Permanent deacons are clergymen and their role in the Society corresponds to that of priests. Clergy can not be an Officer or a signer on Conference accounts.
SPIRITUAL ADVISOR (CONT.)

- Meeting prayers, spiritual reflections, and discussions
- Compliance with Rule and Gospel values
- Seeks material and aids
- Special masses and Vincentian celebrations
- Coordinates with District Council Spiritual Advisor
- Retreats, Days of Recollection, etc.
- Attends Spiritual Advisor training

Leads/arranges meeting prayers, spiritual reflections and discussions

Intervenes for Conference balance and compliance with the Rule and the Gospel

Seeks appropriate material and aids

Encourages special masses and Vincentian celebrations

Is a member of the Council Spiritual Advisor Committee and coordinates with District Council Spiritual Advisor on related issues

Participates in helping to plan and conduct District Council special events such as Retreats and Days of Recollection, etc…

Attends Spiritual Advisor training for the position
SPIRITUAL ADVISOR FUNCTIONS

Assist Members

- Deeper faith awareness
- Holiness
- Friendship, openness and respect
- Vocation
- Person-to-person service
- Community

Assist members to:

- strive to reach a deeper faith awareness
- express how being a Vincentian has helped them to grow in holiness
- grow in friendship, openness and respect for each other
- strengthen their vocation as Christians and Vincentians
- serve and minister to others person-to-person
- grow in community with the poor and needy
SUMMARY

- Conference officers — Vice President(s), Secretary, and Treasurer
- Vice President — Election of the next President
- Secretary — minutes, records, and reports
- Treasurer — Conference funds, budget, and required reports

Conference officers consists of Vice President(s), Secretary and Treasurer

The VP organizes the election of the next President if they are not a candidate.

The Secretary carefully prepares the minutes of the meetings and is responsible for keeping the records and reports and for statistical and clerical work of the Conference.

Treasurer is responsible for the Conference funds, for preparing the budget and required reports, and for keeping accurate and appropriate records and reports of all the receipts and expenditures.
All payments should be made by check.

The presence of the Spiritual Advisor (SA) strengthens the bonds between the spiritual activities of the Conference and the apostolic activity of the Church.

The SA strives to help members reach a deeper faith awareness and to grow in friendship, openness and respect for each other.

SA coordinates with District Council SA and participates in helping to plan and conduct the spiritual portion of the District Council special events for members such as Retreats and Days of Recollection, etc....