



## **ACE** (*Advisor Continuing Education*)

Consider if you will the act of bowling. Is it the ball that knocks down all the pins or the person who wielded it? Which one does the work?

Without getting into scientifics, it is probably a combination of the two that get the reaction we are all hoping for- a strike! In order to get the best score, you have to practice and build the relationship between the ball and the individual. This is just like the relationship between the DeMolays and the Advisors.

In D.A.D. training we learn that the members run the organization and make the decisions, we as the Advisors are just here to help or guide. While this concept is *eventually* true, it currently leaves the bowling ball sitting on the floor and the individual just staring at it.

The concept missed is that, if the young men could do everything now, they wouldn't need DeMolay in the first place. As much as we all hate to admit it, there is some truth to the stereotypes that men won't ask for directions or for help. Working with young men, those habits ring true as well. While we can try rationalize it all we want, we are still left staring at the ball waiting for it to "do something".

1) **Enthusiasm is contagious.** If you as, an Advisor, are tired or bored, it probably shows and rubs off onto others. If you can't find a way to be enthusiastic, fake it, you'd be surprised how quickly your mood changes. Or find someone else to be the spokesman for the event/project.

2) **Advisor training.** Somewhere in their training, or experience as a tenured Advisor, they have settled in their ways of doing things. If it isn't working, it's time to teach an old dog new tricks. Have a refresher course, or some role playing. They certainly don't mean to be old and grouchy, they just don't see themselves that way.

3) **Change your Management Type.** Most advisors are doing their best to keep up with each one of the members. Instead focus on the three Councilors and help them keep on top of everyone else. It empowers them as leaders and takes your focus off of eight to three.

4) **Remind, Remind, Remind.** Many Advisors have the attitude " I am not going to do it for them", which is fine, but reminding them isn't doing it for them. Every parent knows that in order to get your son to do anything, you are going to have to tell him two or three times. Members don't "not do something" to be lazy all the time or to simply upset others, they simply forget. Making a few phone call reminders, texts, or emails may help you get the progress you desire.

5) **Do it for them.** When you have reached bottom, it is hard to climb up. Young people now a days have their own version of what the bottom is, and find themselves there often for one reason or another. The Advisors might consider planning an event for the Chapter and executing it, if for nothing else than to show them how great it can be. They would have something to use as a guide. A favorite way to do it, is to make a checklist of the tasks that had to be done, then when it's over, offer it to them. If the list is made without the successful event, it is considered hope rather than proof.

6) **Get creative.** Doing the same events or activities, while stable and successful, lead to ruts and monotony. Add something, change something, do something to spark the event. Add glow sticks to a meeting, have a dance outdoors, use chopsticks instead of silverware, have an outdoor meeting/induction ceremony, there are lots of ways to change something while still being respectful and productive.

7) **Cost of being active.** We tell new members you pay a lifetime membership fee and that's it! While that is true, we all know it isn't free to be an "active" DeMolay. While the economy could be used as a reason currently, this tip always applies. If your chapter is going to play paintball, then go to see the basketball game, those two activities are rather expensive to do, so close to one another. Also remember families who participate, with two sons, daughter as Sweetheart, and Mom/Dad as Advisors, now we are talking hundreds of dollars! Consider other activities that have very little cost like kickball, play paintball, but with water balloons! Have a jello eating contest, a scavenger hunt, wiffle ball, miniature golf, swimming, geocaching, frisbee golf, camping, fishing, horse (basketball), dodgeball, the list goes on and on. When in doubt, think of things you used to do in gym class or as a kid. It might seem silly at first, but it sure is going to be a lot of fun while its happening.

8) **Recognition.** DeMolay International has many honors and awards and many jurisdictions offer their own. Those are all fantastic, but do they inspire the same desire in the members, advisors, or chapters that they used to? Consider revising them or add something new. There are few young men who don't enjoy competition, and yes video games are competition, so why not play to that advantage? The reward can be seasonal or for a specific program, or a new annual one given out. For example, the chapter who communicates the most (sends pictures, emails, texts, website, etc) gets a new laptop for the chapter! Or the individual who travels the most gets a free Conclave. Perhaps, the Advisory Council who turns in all their paperwork in on time gets to take a nap at Conclave! Whatever you can come up with, everyone wants to be a "winner". Generally we only think of these things in regards to membership, but enthusiasm takes some work too!

9) **Fresh Meat.** Membership is important, but most important because it offers a new prospective to the chapter. New ideas, new programs, and enthusiasm of DeMolay. If the chapters are having a hard time with membership, focus on adding some new Advisors, and/or take them to a chapter who isn't having difficulty. Sometimes it will brush off and inspire them to see that it does happen and they can do it because their peers did it. Just hearing about it certainly doesn't have the same affect.

10) **Organize your Organization.** "I don't know" can kill a chapter *faster* than "When I was Master Councilor...."

How many times have you been in a store and can't find something? How frustrated do you become? If not a great deal, at least a little? Imagine that for the Advisors, Parents, and DeMolays in your chapters and jurisdiction. It will only last a few times before they decide to shop somewhere else. Set agendas, schedules, with topics and times, then stick to them. "DeMolay Time" isn't showing our members leadership and responsibility, it is showing them poor organization and procrastination.

11) **Do Not Cancel!** Unless there is not enough Advisors, or there has been a risk management/youth protection issue, you shouldn't cancel your event. By cancelling events because of poor attendance, you only punish those who were planning to attend. Those who weren't able to go, aren't affected at all if you cancel it. Cancelling events leads to major instability within a chapter. The members don't know what will happen and what won't, so it's hard to plan for anything, or invite your friends. The best "punishment" for those who can't attend, hearing about how great it was for the next month!

12) **Communicate.** ! There are many creative and successful events going on in DeMolayLand, but unfortunately no one knows it. Send out mass emails, include pictures, start a newsletter or newsletter, put it on a website, tell everyone what is going on in DeMolay for you. We have thousands of members, advisors, and supreme council members. If everyone started talking about DeMolay, there would be no stopping us!

