

COMMUNITY GARDENING 104

POLITICAL SCIENCE: LEADING YOUR GARDEN EFFORT



It is important to develop a strong core of leaders who can take charge of the project and nurture it. Anyone with a desire to take responsibility for the well-being and improvement of their community can be a leader.

1. Choose the Garden Coordinator

A person with any one of these qualities is a possible leader. All leaders continuously work toward possessing all of these characteristics.

Vision: Leader has the ability to envision something different.

Creativity: Leader is a creative problem-solver.

Critical Thinking: Leader can inspire others through their actions, such as dedication, persistence, and kindness. People are inspiring when their values and actions correspond. A leader needs to have a deeper source of inspiration that can carry them through difficult challenges.

Perspective: Leaders can see the forest AND the trees (big picture and practical steps).

Trustworthy: People follow those they trust.

Confident: Leader is not afraid to speak out about what is right.

Humility: A true leader does not hold power over others, but encourages others to participate and take charge as well.

Cooperative: When many people are encouraged to lead, individuals need to be able to put aside personal agendas of status or control in order to achieve goals that benefit the whole group.

Motivated and reliable: A leader shows up and sticks with it.

Integrity: The actions and words of a leader are consistent with one another.

Time: A leader spends time walking around the neighborhood, meeting folks, attending community gatherings, listening to community members, visiting with individuals, and chatting about how their week went. Time is invaluable in developing relationships and trust with community members and for understanding the community's interests, skills, and needs.

Caution: A leader should be aware of pre-established power dynamics, alienated individuals, and relationship histories between community members.

2. Outline the mission, vision, goals, and tasks of the garden

Refer to your reasons for starting the garden on Community Gardening 102

Rewrite your reasons as mission and vision statements

Refer to your list of garden components on Community Gardening 102

View each component of the garden as an individual goal to accomplish

Refer to the site details and issues that you discovered from Community Gardening 103

View each issue as a task to resolve

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3. Delegate manageable portions to members

The most successful community gardens are not led by one person, but by many. Be the best leader you can be, and empower others to act. Several community gardens in San Antonio delegate an ongoing task to each member. Who will be in charge of:

Grants Applications: The Ghost Gardener

Membership: Garden Recruiter

Communication: The Phonetree Climber

Event Planning: The Fun Raiser

Funds Manager: The Green Economist

Material Delivery: The Garden Gopher

Tools & Storage: The Tool Guy

Organic Vegetables: The VegHead

Native Flower Garden: The Butterfly Herder

Cactus Garden: The Desert Rat

Bed Construction: The Garden Maid

Installing Irrigation: The Drip Starter

Structure Building: One Who Plants Magic Beans

Furniture & Art: The Couch Potato

Planting & Harvesting: Sower/Reaper

Watering & Maintenance: The Water Miser

Picture Taking: The Shutterbug

Publicity: The Guinness Garden Reporter

Annual Grant Reports: The Ghost Gardener

Several of these titles have been borrowed from the Beacon Hill Community Garden. Take some inspiration and come up with your own that suit your garden and your members' personalities.