



Class Length	1 hour and 15 minutes
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Change Summary	
December 2012	Lesson Plan and PPP created
December 2013	LP and PPP updated
September 2014	LP and PPP updated
December 2014	Finalized and Posted

## 1. Lesson Plan Goals

To give attendees the tools and ideas to make volunteer retention an achievable goal.

## 2. Class Length

1 hour and 15 minutes

## 3. Instructor Requirements

Management Instructor  
Advanced Management Instructor at AYSO EXPO workshops

## 4. Learning Objectives

Volunteering in AYSO carries responsibilities – demands which can generate levels of stress. This workshop identifies leadership stress and offers creative, practical and innovative ways to deal with the stress before it becomes burnout.

## 5. Prerequisites

None

## 6. Materials

None

## 7. Equipment

Power Point presentation  
Computer  
LCD Projector  
Screen (optional)  
Flip chart and markers

## 8. Special Presenter Notes

Use the notes on the Power Point to supplement thoughts shared on slides.

**Slide # 1****Introduction**

Introduce yourself as workshop leader, your topic and your co-instructors.

**Slide # 2 AYSO should be fun for everyone!**

We need to continually remind volunteers that AYSO soccer is a game that children play. If it is fun for the adults who volunteer, it will be fun for the players.

**Slide # 3 Who are AYSO's Leaders?**

- Many volunteers in AYSO never thought of themselves as leaders. When suddenly they realize that the success of the Region is dependent on what they do it becomes a challenge. We hope to help in this process.
- Ask the participants if they thought of themselves as a leader before volunteering for AYSO.

**Slide # 4**

You are a leader

Everyone in AYSO takes a turn being a leader and leadership can be a heavy burden. Volunteer leadership can generate stress, so...

...let's identify some key triggers and retrain ourselves to moderate our situations and stress levels.

**Slide #5 – ask for situations that cause stress**

Don't make the next click until you have gotten responses from attendees. Some questions to ask if the responses don't immediately come.

- What stresses do referees/coaches have? Are they different from the Regional Referee/Coach Administrator?
- What triggers stress in an RC?
- What about Division Coordinators?
- How many in this workshop are procrastinators?

**Slide # 6 and 7****Stress Triggers**

- Spectators yelling at referees
- Lack of field space
- Players who do not attend practice
- Not enough coaches or referees
- Procrastination – yours or someone else's
- Difficult parents
- Unresponsive board members

- Volunteers who do not do their jobs
- Unbalanced teams problems

### Slide # 8 Dealing with Stress

Have participants turn to a partner and name one, practical or innovative method you use to deal with or minimize stress before it happens. Let them share and then call on a few attendees to give their responsibility for their responses.

### Slide # 9

There are strategies to keep leadership stress under control...

“We are going to help you keep stress under control!”  
An AYSO Region is like a soccer team with the Regional Commissioner as the coach.

### Slide # 10 Prioritize

1. Identify high priority items first.
2. Avoid spending too much time on less important items.
3. Use calendaring skills to budget for larger events.
4. **Develop simple rating system to assess priorities.**

### Slide #11 Clarity is the Key

SMART goals keep volunteers motivated and energized – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.

Ask each Regional Board Member to list their goals and objectives for the coming season. This will keep everyone motivated and accountable. The RC should ask for a goal update at each Regional Board meeting.

Every board meeting should devote some time to updating the goals.

### Slide #12 – Sort

- Weed out those tasks that are not productive.
- Do not add to your “to-do” list without completing, removing and reducing items on your current list.

What kinds of tasks might be considered not productive?

- Looking too far in the future and not dealing with current issues.
- Worrying about what “might” happen and not what actually “did” happen.
- Let other volunteers do their jobs. Try not to interfere. Delegate.

There is satisfaction in completing something on your “to-do” list. Make sure the list includes some easy, quick items so that you feel you did something. This feeling will spur you on to complete the list.

### **Slide #13 Social Media and Region Phone**

Consider having a business Facebook page or Twitter for announcements to your families.

If you have a Region answering machine, keep it up to date and cleared, with room for messages. A dedicated volunteer to distribute messages is extremely valuable!

### **Slide #14 Region Website**

Make sure that the website is up to date with all of the information which the families will be searching for. A list is on the slide of the important items.

### **Slide #15 Remain Positive**

- Challenge is a key part of leadership; it helps us keep up our creativity and competitiveness.
- Thinking positively will do a lot to ward-off stress-producing negativity.

Other volunteers in the Region will follow your lead. If your attitude is positive theirs will be also.

Describe what it feels like to be around a negative volunteer? Do any of you have one in your Region?

### **Slide #16 - Delegate—Rules of Thumb for Successful Delegation**

- Know what to delegate.
  - Be picky with who you choose.
  - Check for understanding.
  - Allow for frequent progress reports.
  - Support the volunteer.
1. For example, you should probably think twice before delegating tasks that involve sensitive or confidential volunteer information. And you may not want to delegate a task that hasn't been clearly defined.
  2. This step is one of the most important and the most difficult. It takes a lot of time to find people you can delegate to that meet all of the necessary criteria for a successful relationship:

- Trust and loyalty
  - Necessary skills
  - Adequate availability
  - Work ethic comparable to yours
  - Positive performance history
3. Are the expectations clear?
  4. Periodically ask: "How are you doing? Do you need help?"
  5. The volunteer needs to know that you support him/her.

### Slide #17 Stay Active

Exercise is a great mechanism to control anger, depression and other elements of leadership stress.

What are some exercises you think would be effective?

As leadership stress mounts, learn when to break away.

Engage in some physical activity that you enjoy:

- Take a walk.
- Stretch.
- Play with the kids.
- Go for a jog, do anything that gets the blood flowing.

### Slide #18 Organize Yourself

- Clean up your desk/workspace.
- Sort and organize computer data files.
- Group or classify your email and cell phone contacts.

It's crucial to take time every-so-often to organize your workplace as well as your mind. Ask the participants if they have any organizational tips to share.

### Slide #19 Talk out Tough Issues

- Sharing "war stories" can relieve unwanted tension.
- Keep your volunteer responsibilities in perspective.
- Try not to "dump" too many stress-related concerns on the home front.

Most leaders experience similar types of stress.

Seek out a fellow volunteer or trusted friend.

**QUESTION:** What are the dangers of sharing "war stories" with the entire Regional Board?

**ANSWER:** *You could be dealing with confidential, sensitive or legal issues.*

**Slide #20 Be Honest**

If someone around you is causing you a lot of stress, stop and talk it over. Be respectful but be truthful and tell them how you feel about their role on “the team” and what can be done to improve tensions.

**Slide #21**

Pull Out Tools from the AYSO Toolbox

- E-newsletters
- Manuals
- Webinars
- On-line courses
- Region Toolkit
- Marketing Toolkit
- AYSO.org
- RAP

**Slide #22**

eAYSO Can Also Help

- Track registrations of both players and volunteers
- Maintain records of volunteer assignments and training
- Create training course rosters
- Build teams
- Validate volunteer credentials

**Slide #23**

More eAYSO Stress Relievers

- Assign access rights so volunteers can perform their duties
- Accept credit card payments
- Manage secondary programs
- Facilitate timely volunteer background checks (e-Signature)
- AYSO invoice and bank statement tracking
- Etc., etc.

**Slide #24 Leadership Qualities**

Ask participants. Write some of the comments on the flip chart.

- Reliability
- Honesty
- Resourceful
- Kindness
- Intelligence
- Responsibility
- Strength
- Integrity

## Slide #25

An AYSO leader wears many “hats” and plays a variety of different roles. In each situation the leader needs to decide which “hat” or role to use. Each situation is unique. As you go over these qualities, ask your co-instructor or an attendee to list the qualities on a flip chart. You will use them later. **(You could also have these already prepared on the flip chart before the workshop begins.)** What else could you add to the list?

## Slide #26 Give it a Try

Scenario 1: An RC talking to an RRA who’s negative and always late.

Scenario 2: A coach trying to convince a parent not to yell at the referees.

Scenario 3: An RCA dealing with a coach who refuses to attend training.

This is where you will use some of the leadership qualities that you have written out on a flip chart from Slide # 24. In the discussion after each role play ask for participant observations. Accept all answers whenever possible. Everyone has their own interpretation. You can do these role play scenarios with your co-instructor or a willing participant:

- An RC talking to a Regional Referee Administrator who never meets deadlines and is always negative. **Referee or motivator roles might work here.**
- A coach trying to convince a parent not to continually yell at the referees. **Referee, firefighter, or counselor might work.**
- A Regional Coach Administrator dealing with a coach who refuses to attend training. **Goalkeeper or team manager might work.**

## Slide #27 Reflection

When leadership stress becomes overwhelming or you are feeling stressed... schedule some time to relax and reflect.

Reflection helps regain perspective and better equips you to manage your stress.

Ask attendees what helps them gain perspective when things are stressful.

## Slide #28 Maintain a Balance

Don’t overextend yourself! Balance your life with work, AYSO, family, friends and hobbies.

What do you do for fun?

Schedule time to devote to your volunteer responsibilities but . . . schedule time to be yourself and do those things you enjoy or that need addressing in other parts of your life.

Ask attendees what they like to do that has nothing to do with soccer.

- Hobbies
- Pastimes
- Guilty pleasures (crazy TV shows, foods you should be avoiding, long naps, etc....)

**Slide #29 Control Contact Time**

Set hours to be on-the-job. Communicate these hours to your Regional Board Members.

Stick to it - and train those around you to respect your "off hours".

Especially during busy seasons, the families we serve believe that we work for them and can have little regard for our personal time and space.

Communicate your AYSO working hours to your Regional Board Members.

**Slide #30 Have Fun**

Humor makes our perspective more positive and help us deal with challenges in a more constructive way.

Laughter:

- Connects us with others.
- Detracts focus from anger, guilt or stress.
- Is contagious and reduces stress levels.

It just might catch on!

**Slide #31** Stress is all around us but as we have discussed there are lots of ways to deal with, minimize and even prevent it.

Keep a smile on your face, keep organized and breathe!

**Slide #32 Thank you**

*Instructor note: Thank the attendees for coming*