

Leadership development within a water safety organisation

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Summary

Leadership as a capacity within individuals and organisations is not well understood. Training approaches to developing leadership capacity in volunteer organisations are even less well understood.

This session will look at the approach Surf Life Saving Australia is taking towards the development of leadership. The session will provide a brief overview of the theoretical framework for leadership development, and will then provide examples of programs that deliver leadership training to members. It focuses on emerging and current leaders within SLSA.

Leadership begins with self-leadership. Self-leadership revolves around individuals developing understandings relating to self awareness and their capacity to generate positive relationships around them. These emotional intelligences need to be complemented by an understanding of the 'big picture'. Leadership is rudderless unless it takes place within both an intent and a context of change. And change requires an understanding of the dynamics, relationships and factors impacting upon the organisation at that time.

Surf Life Saving Australia provides a leadership program that delivers leadership training to members across four program strands. This session will provide an overview of those strands:

1. SLSA Leadership Development Conference – Emerging leaders (20-30 year)
2. SLSA Leaders Conference – Current leaders (30+ years)
3. SLSA Leadership Forum Series – Organisational leadership on key issues (identified champions)
4. SLSA Leadership Scholarship (Sir Adrian Curlewis scholarship)

Learning Outcomes

1. To understand the nature of leadership and how lifesaving activities get to the core of developing leadership in its members.
2. To review the SLSA leadership program that develops leadership capacity within that organization.
3. To understand how leadership development in lifesaving is applicable to leadership development in the wider community and within the business context.

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