

**Topic:** Creating an environment where kids not only learn to be amazing performers, but amazing humans and leaders.

I was sent this article about leadership. It was printed out and given to the participants to discuss. I am copying a link to the article here: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/your-job-leader-bring-out-greatness-others-tim-denning-1e> (Your Job as a Leader is to Bring Out the Greatness in Others)

This was the part of the article that stood out to us and we discussed first:

**“This leader taught me the following about bringing out greatness in others:**

- Build a genuine human connection with your team
- Support your team’s personal interests outside of work
- Do the work of leader without expecting recognition
- Push your team to do things they didn’t think they could do”

\*One way to build connections with students is to find a time to touch base with every student on your guard. There is always a handful of students that are quiet/shy and come to rehearsal, do great things and leave. We often don’t get to hear from them. So, at the end of every rehearsal I would say, “I need to see\_\_\_\_\_”. I would usually ask for 2 students. I told the guard before I ever started this that I am just touching base, you are not in trouble or you didn’t do anything wrong. I made sure that I saw every student (more than once). Sometimes I would ask to see them to just check in (“how are things going?”—didn’t have to be guard related), sometimes it was to talk about a concern (grades, friends, struggles with work), or sometimes it was to praise them and let them know I could tell they have been working hard. It was nice to see how much they enjoyed this time and looked forward to being called. We ran out of time one rehearsal and I said I wasn’t going to call anyone today, there was a collective sigh and students saying “no, I haven’t been called yet.” It was nice to know they enjoyed it as much as I did. I felt this was a great way to connect and build relationships with each student. It also was a time for a student to talk to me about something they may not have come to me for.

\*Having a Handbook, Code of Conduct or Standards that the students sign off on. This ensures that they know the expectation and holds them accountable for their actions and words.

\*Ask your students ‘what do you want this team to be?’, ‘what does this team mean to you?’, ‘what are our goals as a team?’. Even when a student is on their own time they behave in a way as to not embarrass the team or let the team down (especially if they are wearing a team t-shirt or carrying an item with the team’s name on it). They know their individual action is a reflection on the team.

\*We felt it is important that leadership starts with the staff. If students see their directors getting along with each other, and also with directors from other schools, it will help them to understand that we are all in this together. Encourage your students to support and cheer for students from other schools.

\*Have a ‘Hype Captain’ (like a social chairman). This person is responsible for making sure birthdays or special days are celebrated within the group.

**Biggest Takeaway:** Lead in a positive and encouraging manner. Be the role model and set the example for your students. Build genuine connections with the students on your team. Help them to believe in themselves and their capabilities.