

BULLET POINTS

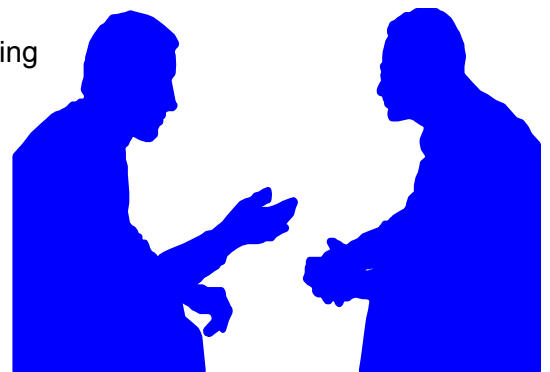
Play Nice!

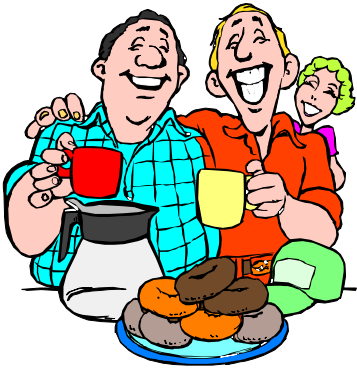
The Ins and Outs of Working Well Together on a Show

The Randy Lane Company puts a lot of emphasis on working with Program Directors and Operations Managers on managing and coaching shows. We are spending more time these days working with show hosts to help them manage the show staff. Some of radio's most creative and talented hosts are often not as skilled in managing a staff of people, particularly shows with multiple on and off-air players. Even shows with only 2 or 3 total people have issues such as what to do when one of them is having a bad day and bringing the room down. Here's a look at how to avoid and resolve a myriad of issues that can impact a show.

Here's what the host can do:

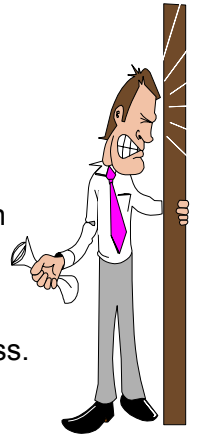
1. Do one-on-ones with each player on the show at least twice a year. Among other things, make sure to ask, "What ways do you want to contribute more to the show? What do you want to do (or not do) that you aren't doing now?"
2. Always (try to) involve all players in decisions that impact the show.
3. Ask the other players "what's the one thing that I do that drives you crazy" and vice versa.
4. Anonymously ask all the players three things that will help make the show better.
5. Remember that you cannot control talent (or anyone for that matter). Concentrate on positively influencing them with useful insights, observations, suggestions and questions.
6. Asking is better than telling. Telling or dictating actually only gives you the feeling of being in control. Develop the art of asking questions, even if they're leading questions. You are likely to get the talent themselves to arrive at the point you want to make, which gives them ownership and makes them more likely to follow through.
7. Try to empower the team by setting up an atmosphere allowing the other players to challenge and question you.
8. If you're not sure how to manage a particular player, ask them how they like to be managed.
9. Be supportive, even when they fail, so they feel safe trying new ideas. Share success and failure.
10. Praise in public, criticize in private.





What all the players can do to get along:

1. Recognize that trust and communication are the foundation for having a harmonious relationship with a group of people on a show.
2. Use language like “am I hearing you right?”, “I hear you”, “I understand my part to be”, “I feel some tension around...”, “how can we work to change this?”, “this isn’t easy and I appreciate your willingness to try”, etc. Avoid language like “you are...”, “I can never”, “why don’t you...”, “you never...”
3. Establish clearly that what the show does is create conflict and tension for entertainment purposes. Create an agreement among the players:
 - No one will take anything personally, that it’s all for the show
 - Everyone will practice “deep listening” when the mike is on. You listen with your entire being – body, mind and soul.
 - Make it a rule that if something is bothering someone they have to bring it up within 24 hours.
4. Do a “Let’s Be Completely Honest” exercise off the air to flush out any issues that are simmering beneath the surface. Fight against a natural human reaction – defensiveness.
5. Be supportive of one another. In a team you have to have one another’s back. This includes the host helping the others out.
6. Each player on the show should take one personal growth seminar, class or attend a convention at least once a year. The more fulfilled you are within yourself the better you get along with the group.
7. Bring in an outside facilitator if you reach an impasse and can’t solve the problem (PD, manager, talent coach, etc.).
8. Make sure to set and reset goals for the show and for each individual at least annually.
9. Have the day belong to each player on the air occasionally (“It’s Jen’s Day today – she picks what we do and also critiques the show today”). Also take turns having each player lead prep meetings.
10. Have weekly planning and brainstorming meetings, some of which can be off-site. This will help give all the players in the show the feeling of being a part of the process.
11. Acknowledge and reward good performance. (E.g. Bit of the Month Award). Praise in front of people, and in writing when possible. All show members can vote on this. Don’t forget the personnel file—which so often is relegated to memos documenting only problems.
12. Make some form of journaling a part of your daily show prep. You’re ‘getting stuff out’ so it’s less likely to cause a problem.
13. If you are having a bad day, be conscious of it and try to get yourself out of it or allow the others to jolly you out of it. When the room realizes it but the person doesn’t realize it, bring it up lightheartedly, with humor. (And if it’s a woman, don’t ask if she’s PMS-ing – that trivializes what



she might be feeling.) You can even make it a game, “Who’s Bringing the Show Down?” Follow these steps to pull out of ‘having a bad day’.

Step 1 – Stop the negative momentum. Reset and pivot. (“I realize I’m having a bad day, I’m going to reset and start over with a whole new attitude.”) Get altitude – step back and get some perspective.

Step 2 – Look for a small win. Try to do something well just to get yourself feeling better. Ask someone to make you laugh (“Help me here!”).

Step 3 – Have ‘best-of’ promos running during your show. Hearing them will remind you that you are good.



14. Do things as a group occasionally, such as taking an improv class or even go bowling.

15. One of the best things you can do for the show is to take care of your health. Get enough sleep. Do some kind of exercise. Once a week for a two-hour period, do something for yourself, by yourself.



Contest for a Listener to Fill an On-Air Spot

1. The JB and Sandy morning show in Austin had an on-air contest to replace a departing Traffic Person and ended up with an excellent personality who became a permanent part of the morning show. It also created a lot of buzz in the market. Here are some of the details:
2. Solicit videotapes no longer than 2 minutes from listeners who want to be a radio star (specify what formats are acceptable, VHS, digital, mail, email, etc.
3. Watch all of them as they come in or it will become overwhelming. The morning show should commit to watching them together.
4. 20-40 are chosen as possibilities and are invited on air to do one break. They have to roll with the flow. If it's news time, they do the news. If it's a contest, they do the contest, etc. The other contestants are waiting in lobby.
5. 10-20 are chosen to come back for 1 hour (2 per day: 1 in the 7am hour, 1 in the 8am hour)
6. Five finalists are chosen to do an entire show on final week
7. After doing their entire show, each candidate has to pass an interview with the PD/GM

8. All are told to be ready to join the show on Monday morning for winner announcement.
9. On that Monday morning the four runner-ups are called on the air and told they didn't make it. The winner is called last.

Other notes:

- JB and Sandy did remote appearances where the contestants that couldn't send tapes were able to come have a tape made by a local TV station they partner with.
- JB and Sandy played some of the bad tapes on the air (which was fun).
- They received 3000 videos total.
- After having been through this, they recommend watching closely for ANYTHING compelling. Some of the ones that started off slow or bad or dull wound up being some of the best on air.
- Remember that although you are mostly looking for a traffic person you also want someone who can add personality to the show and provide the female perspective in discussions, topics, etc.
- Look for interesting stories: the mother of six, the new immigrant from another country, etc.
- Sales department came up with all the cool stuff the winner would win, massages, car, pizza etc.



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