

THREE MARKS OF A GOOD DIRECTOR

As Seen From the Perspective of a Ringer!

by Kevin McChesney

From time to time, I ask the members of Pikes Peak Ringers to let me know about anything that I can improve as their director. It's a form of evaluating me and the group – we are not as formal about this as other groups, but it gets the job done. I'm fortunate in that 100% of my ringers are very open and honest about how we can make improvements in the organization, and they are generally good communicators.

For this article, I'm simply quoting one of my ringers. It turns out she didn't have any considerations for me to improve, but receiving this kind of positive affirmation is valuable, too, and gives me some things to examine in my work as director. I hope you are inspired to look at these three qualities in your own leadership.

She says:

“Because of the nature of the jobs I have had in my life (she is an elementary music teacher), I have had many supervisors, and I've learned what I think good management looks like.

There are three characteristics my favorite managers have had in common.

- 1) **Each one knows who he is.** This may sound simplistic, but it isn't. Every person has some level of self-confidence, and some level of a lack of it. The good managers know which areas those are. A strong director knows this and lets other people take care of the ‘lack of’ areas while offering opinions and preferences without trying to look better than he/she is. A good director also knows his/her strong areas, and is comfortable in those without belittling others.
- 2) **Each one allows others to be who they are, individually and collectively.** The best directors not only allow it but also celebrate it – repeatedly. At some point in almost every rehearsal, **EACH** person receives some kind of individual meaningful affirmation. Every person can **ONLY** blossom in that kind of setting.
- 3) **Each one refuses to ‘settle.’** Having watched my favorite managers at work helped me to solve an assignment for a class I was taking. We were charged with writing our own personal mission statement. As much as that phrase makes me cringe :), it's a valuable exercise. Mine is that ‘every student in every class everyday will feel challenged and encouraged to do and to be more than is possible while being accepted and affirmed just as they are.’ This is what the best directors do.”

Special thanks to Kate Myers, member of Pikes Peak Ringers