

**THAT'S A CHOP!: DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP THROUGH TEAMWORK**

Contributed by Denise Knight, Ed.D. and Jan Miller, Ed.D.

**Objectives**

- Build leadership, character, and ethical behaviors through healthy physical activities
- Develop communication skills among team players
- Motivate team members toward the achievement of a common goal

**Audience**

- Current or emerging leaders
- Large group (12+)

**Time Required**

20-25 minutes

**Materials and Equipment**

*That's a Chop!* Reflection Worksheet

**Area Set-up**

Large open space; preferably outside or in building with open space (i.e., gym)

**Process**

1. Distribute the 'That's a Chop!' Reflection Worksheet
2. Introduce the fundamental principle of trust within The Student Leadership Challenge, as Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner describe when they say, "Studies show that the more trusted people feel, the better they innovate. Trust is the most significant predictor of people's satisfaction with their club, team, work group, or other organization. Trusting leaders nurture openness, involvement, personal satisfaction, and commitment to excellence. And trust begets trust."
3. Ask participants to pair up and share their thoughts regarding the idea of 'trust' being the central issue in healthy human relationships
4. Encourage participants to focus on the topics listed in the "*That's a Chop!*" Reflection Worksheet:
  - a. Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and creating a climate of trust
  - b. Facilitate positive interdependence
  - c. Support face-to-face interactions
  - d. Strengthen others by sharing power and discretion
  - e. Ensure self-leadership
  - f. Provide choice
  - g. Develop competence and confidence
  - h. Foster accountability
5. Encourage participants to share with the large group how each of these topics intersect with being a team player

6. Explain to participants that they will be participating in a physical activity: 'That's a Chop!' will allow them to physically experience each of the topics featured on the worksheet.
7. Arrange participants in two lines that face one another, creating a corridor
8. Instruct participants to stretch their arms straight in front, intersecting and overlapping at approximately a hands length with the people opposite them
9. Instruct the person at the end of the line to turn and walk down the corridor while each person raises and lowers his/her arms in a wave-like motion, providing a ripple through which the person is walking; the person walking re-joins the group at the end of the line; alternating between the line of participants, repeat this process with the each person; begin to increase the pace (i.e., walking, jogging, running, sprinting) through the corridor; now change the arm motion from waving to chopping
10. Encourage participants to return to their "That's a Chop!" Reflection Worksheet and reflect on how they feel about each of the elements now that they have physically performed as a team in enabling one another to act.

**Denise Knight, Ed. D.** is Director of Assessment and Evaluation for the College of Education at the University of West Alabama and also serves as Assistant Professor in the Department of Instructional Leadership and Support. Over her 27+ years of service in education, she has taught numerous grade levels, Talented and Gifted programs, served as a District-wide Director of Federal Programs and Elementary Curriculum, and an Elementary Principal. Her background and areas of emphasis include early childhood, elementary education, gifted education, arts integration, instructional leadership, curriculum and instruction, federal programs, data analysis, school improvement, grant writing, and professional development. She can be reached at [dknight@uwa.edu](mailto:dknight@uwa.edu).

**Jan Miller, Ed. D.** currently serves as Dean of the Division of Online Programs and is also Assistant Professor at the University of West Alabama in the College of Education – Department of Instructional Leadership and Support. With 22 years of public school experience in the state of Mississippi she has taught numerous grade levels, served as a lead teacher, and supervised two schools as principal. Dr. Miller's background and areas of emphasis include early childhood and elementary education, arts integration, instructional leadership, curriculum and instruction, data analysis, school improvement, grant writing, and professional development. She can be reached at [jmiller@uwa.edu](mailto:jmiller@uwa.edu).

## **'THAT'S A CHOP!' REFLECTION STUDENT WORKSHEET**

### **Practice Four: Enable Others to Act**

Kouzes and Posner say it best when they say, "Studies show that the more trusted people feel, the better they innovate. Trust is the most significant predictor of people's satisfaction with their club, team, work group, or other organization. Trusting leaders nurture openness, involvement, personal satisfaction, and commitment to excellence. And trust begets trust."

Leadership behavior involves how we think about new information and relationships. When we engage an individual's brain and commitment to a common goal, we generally receive a higher return. Enabling others to act requires being certain that others understand the expectations, possess the required skills, and have the knowledge and ability to meet the expectations. They must also know when to call on the leader to assist with obstacles, to provide resources, and when to seek their expertise as a liaison in a challenging situation.

Reflect on the elements below related to **Practice Four: Enable Others to Act**. Encourage participants to share with the large group how each of these topics intersect with being a team player.

After participating in the 'That's a Chop!' activity, reflect and discuss how physically participating in the team effort affirmed their beliefs or restructured their thinking.

- a. Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and creating a climate of trust
- b. Facilitate positive interdependence
- c. Support face-to-face interactions
- d. Strengthen others by sharing power and discretion
- e. Ensure self-leadership
- f. Provide choice
- g. Develop competence and confidence
- h. Foster accountability

## **'THAT'S A CHOP!' REFLECTION LEADER'S WORKSHEET GUIDE**

### **Practice Four: Enable Others to Act**

As participants reflect on each element of the worksheet, encourage understanding using the following information:

**A. Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and creating a climate of trust**

While conducting their research, Kouzes and Posner asked Bill Flanagan, former director of manufacturing for Amdahl Corporation, to describe his personal best. After a few moments of reflection, Bill confessed that he couldn't do it. He said, "It wasn't my personal best. It was our personal best. It wasn't me. It was us." Kouzes and Posner purport through their research that they did not discover a single instance where success was the result of any one person, but the result of many. It was always discovered to be a team effort.

Leaders who foster collaboration recognize that trust serves as the central concern in the development of healthy human relationships. Absent of trust, leadership cannot happen effectively. Trust is risky business, but it must start within you. You must be the first to trust so that others will trust you. The outcome will then result in effective team results.

**B. Facilitate positive interdependence**

Positive interdependence requires the coordination of everyone's efforts. Interdependence is a circumstance that is non-existent without the success of everyone.

**C. Support face-to-face interactions**

We are all in the people business. Being successful as a team is all about relationships—positive relationships.

**D. Strengthen others by sharing power and discretion**

Instilling a sense of 'able-ness' in others gives them a sense of being in control of their lives; therefore, they persevere in their efforts to achieve.

**E. Ensure self-leadership**

Personal power comes from those we lead.

**F. Provide choice**

The mentality of abundance—the more we give, the more we get—fits hand-in-glove with the idea of providing choices. Choices help build decision-making skills that lead to more competent decisions.

**G. Develop competence and confidence**

As we make competent choices, we discover the leader within us. These choices lead us to greater confidence in others and ourselves.

**H. Foster accountability**

Expectations that are monitored foster accountability. Once a person feels like a trusted member of the team, he/she also develops a sense of accountability to the team.