

Community Garden Leadership – 21 Tips

1. Learn to be a listener.
2. Learn to facilitate problem solving – rather than always have the right answer.
3. Provide guidance with decision making by sharing consequences and options.
4. Question yourself. Should I be doing this? Or making this decision? How can I facilitate others to make these decisions?
5. Let go of the stresses of the garden and situations that you cannot control.
6. Learn to understand what motivates people and support this.
7. Appreciate that every group functions differently. No two groups are alike nor are any two garden sites alike.
8. Gardeners love to garden. Ensure that they are successful at gardening. And get their hands in the soil as quickly as possible.
9. Learn when to hold hands and when to let go.
10. Developing permanent garden leadership groups and gardens takes time. Think in terms of a “three year plan.”
11. Learn not to impose your will on the group or the project.
12. Teach people to observe. Push them to articulate what they believe and see.
13. Invest time in planning.
14. Be prepared to alter your plans based on new information.
15. Work with people to dream and help them realize their dreams (with a dose of realism!)
16. You don’t have to have all the answers.
17. Let the group move as fast or as slow as they need.
18. It’s not your garden, do not impose your will on others.
19. Take time to celebrate the accomplishments. Use a checklist that has big things and little; it helps everyone feel like things are moving along.
20. Suggest that the group give their future garden a name at the first meeting. And make a sign announcing it.
21. Don’t support one-man shows! Sustainable gardens and groups involve everyone and foster new leaders to emerge.