



Welcome to Leader Lines

Leader Lines is a monthly eNewsletter written especially for Mountaineers volunteer leaders. This month we can share some of the line-up of our Leadership Conference, provide some tips for improving meetings, begin thinking about our place in the greater outdoor industry, and share some news and training for you as a Mountaineer Leader. Please take a look below for insights that might help you in your work with us. As always, I welcome your suggestions for future story ideas.

--Chris Williams,
Leadership Development Manager

Registration Open: Mountaineers Leadership Conference

This year's Leadership Conference will be on **Saturday December 5** (you told us it shouldn't be in summer!) and [registration is NOW OPEN!](#) This is a day for current and aspiring leaders to foster new ideas and skills. Esteemed outdoor community speakers and interactive sessions punctuate a program designed to **enhance your leadership and personal growth.**



Participate in this fun and exciting event spotlighting what The Mountaineers have been best at for over 100 years: Leadership Development.

We are excited to focus the conference on three primary topics our trip leaders and course instructors identified in a survey earlier this year:

1. *Decision-making scenarios and strategies in outdoor situations.*
2. *Teaching and instruction skills.*
3. *Human relations and communication skills.*

The Leadership Conference Committee has lined up an array of presenters we believe will appeal to every activity and experience level. Come hear from the **author of our [Outdoor Leadership](#)** book, [John Graham](#). We've also got [Shawna Franklin and Leon Somme](#), kayak

instructors with worldwide reputations for excellence who specialize in helping people [develop coaching skills](#) to become better leaders. There will also be representatives from the [WTA](#), [NOLS](#), [Outward Bound](#), [SCA](#), and [more!](#)

This day is a minimally-priced reward for all of our volunteers (well, a few hundred of them, we can't fit everyone in the building). [Register today!](#)



Effective Meetings

Most Mountaineers are not members because they love meetings (apologies to those of you who do!). But since meetings are necessary to run the programs we offer, let's focus on making them more effective, efficient, and enjoyable! Volunteering should be FUN.

To help, here some widely-cited best-practices for

running an effective meeting:

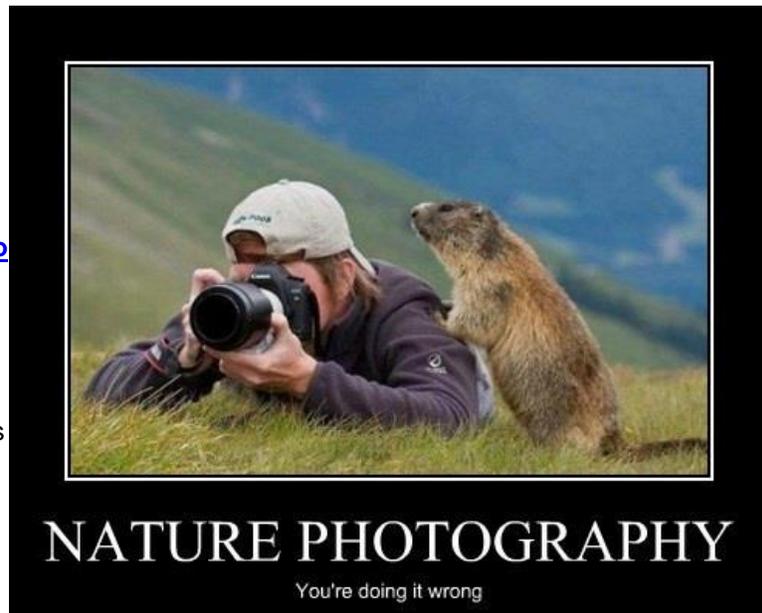
- [Set, and stick to, a meaningful agenda.](#)
- [Solicit input from EVERYONE](#) (not just the people who tend to contribute all the time).
- [Assign a moderator](#) (often the Chair) to keep the discussion on task
- [Clarify decisions made and assign someone to followup on the next steps.](#)
- [Utilize Robert's Rules when disagreements occur.](#) *What are Robert's Rules*, you say? This simplified guide explains how they help facilitate meetings to ensure input and promote a democratic decision. These rules will be in your [committee resource manuals](#) (coming soon and available online now).

Following these basic principles can save hours of time over the course of a year!

Do Industry Standards Create or Minimize the Risk of Liability?

Consider this great article from the Outdoor Safety Institute: [Do Industry Standards Increase our Liability?](#)

We work and play in an "industry" involving many people using a variety of tactics and strategies to engage with the outdoors safely. We all have preferred ways of doing things, but does this mean we should ignore new or different approaches? No.



As [mentioned last month with respect to the Dunning-Krueger Effect](#) , **refusing to learn new ways of doing things is a red flag for incompetence.** At the same time, The Mountaineers are unique in that our volunteer-lead organization trains people to become self-sufficient - *we are NOT a guiding service*, which is where many national standards evolve from.

In some sectors of our organization you may hear this distinction mentioned as a reason for not adopting certain standards promoted by other organizations. [This article explores the issues in a clear and useful way.](#) The author opines that best practices are often *found* in industry standards; however, he clearly points out that courts are well-equipped to analyze nuanced situations and therefore fear of litigation/liability *should not* deter you from evaluating any specific industry standard. Excellent food for thought.

Special thanks to Paul Campbell (again) for alerting me to this article to share with everyone!

Quick Hits

- **[Branch and Committee Leader Orientation Session!](#)** Branch elections are wrapping up and we have new leaders coming on board to relieve those that have been working so hard (*thank a retiring Branch or Committee Chair today!*). If you are taking on such a leadership role, now is a great time to ask questions about your position and how to better support your committee. Join staff and your fellow leaders for a Branch and Committee Leader Orientation October 7th.
- **[Promotive Benefits](#) have expanded:** Mountaineers leaders have always had access to significant discounts on outdoor brands on [Promotive.com](#). We recently negotiated some significant changes to our account with Promotive and our volunteers (*who have volunteered 5 or more times in a year*) can now access discounts on **352 brands!** [Apply now if you qualify.](#)

- *In addition!* Promotive is now offering us a **"co-op" incentive** for our "team" purchases. This means we as an organization will obtain an incentive payment for every dollar spent on Promotive. This great benefit will save you money **AND allow us to more fully-fund a systematic, organization-wide volunteer recognition and reward program** (all co-op funds will be invested in our volunteers).
- **Impact of this year's hot summer on the glaciers (and everything downstream).** [Check out this article many of you saw in the Seattle Times earlier this month.](#)
- **Are we appealing to everyone?** As we touched on last month, there is an obvious disconnect between our mission and a new generation of potential members. [The National Parks have the same concern and the consequences are described in this article.](#)
- **[Reminder, the Annual Meeting is on Monday, September 28 at 6pm!](#)** Hear about the "state of affairs" from staff and board members as required by our bylaws. Nominations for board candidates can also be made from the floor here.
- **All Mountaineers are "athletes:"** Regardless of whether we are entering your "off-season" or you are gearing up to take on the mountains this winter, remember to maintain your body. In Seattle, our neighbor [Magnuson Athletic Club](#) offers discounts to all Mountaineers members and their head trainer, Scott Jansen, is interested in designing activity-specific workouts for you (or your students). Keep those machines running smoothly. Also, don't forget about [all your member benefits!](#)

This year, The Mountaineers has issued 156 new Leader Badges, traveled 86,996 miles, and covered 26,292,266 feet in elevation (yes, the's 26 million feet). GREAT WORK!