



***VAISHNAVA
TRAINING &
EDUCATION***



STUDENT'S HANDBOOK

for Graduate Course on Book Distribution

*The International Society of Krishna Consciousness
Founder - Acharya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

Student's Handbook for the Graduate Course

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CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	
Using this Handbook	2
Course Schedule	3
Norms for Classroom Behaviour	4
Foundational Principles for Book Distribution	
Statement of Principles and Values	5
Principle and Values Unpacked and Explained	6
The Seven Purposes of ISKCON	8
The Aims of Book Distribution 9 Standards for Book Distribution	10
The Purposes of Training and Education for Book Distributors	13
Lesson Notes	
The Basic Skills of Book Distribution	14
The Psychology of Book Distribution	16
Guidelines on Customer Care	18
Dealing with External Challenges	20
Organisational Skills	22
Guidelines on Appropriate Lifestyle	24
Book Distribution and Making Devotees	27
Prospects for the Book Distributor and the Customer	28
Worksheets	
Principles and Values Assessment Worksheet	29
Assessing Our Performance Worksheet	30
Skills Worksheet	31
Lifestyle Worksheet	32
Follow Up	33

Sankirtan Leadership Course

Principles and Values of Effective Sankirtan Leadership	36
The Purposes of Training and Education for Book Distributors	37
Roles and Duties of a Sankirtan Leader	38
Three Distinctions Between Leadership and Management	39
Four Functions of a Leader	39
The Three Pillars of a Trustworthy Character	40
Three Types of Power	41
The Emotional Bank Account	42
ISKCON Personnel Philosophy and Ethics - Guideline	43
Four Part Clean Up (how to apologize)	44
SANKIRTAN SERVICE AGREEMENT	45
Communication Skills	46
Open the Front Door	47
Empathic Listening	48
Six Steps for Conflict Resolution	49
Appreciation	49
Four Phases for Correcting Improper Behavior	50
Guidelines on Proactive Time Management	52
Delegation	53
THE SIX KEYS FOR EFFECTIVE EMPOWERMENT	54
Vision for the Future – Worksheet	55
Organizational Skills	56

Using this Handbook

Welcome to the Graduate Course on Book Distribution and to your Student's Handbook, which you'll be using over the next five days. In here you'll find concise reference notes on all aspects of sankirtana, not only for use during the course but afterwards as well. Therefore, please look after this booklet (perhaps putting your name on the front to avoid losing it). Further copies can be ordered from the VTE, whose details are listed below.

I anticipate and hope that after this seminar you will wish to continue using the assessment worksheets (found in the last section of this handbook). In that case, please ask your facilitator for an extra copy of each, which you can later reproduce and use at your leisure. These worksheets are also found in the VTE's "Book Distribution Syllabus and Trainers Manual."

If you have any queries, please do contact us. In the meantime, all the best for the course and in your continuing service to Srila Prabhupada.

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The Graduate Course

Schedule

DAY ONE The Identity and Character of a Book Distributor

Lesson 1	Welcome and introduction - the purpose of book distribution
Lesson 2	Principles and values behind effective book distribution
Lesson 3	The character of an ideal ISKCON representative
Lesson 4	Practical/workshop session

DAY TWO Skills, Techniques and Standards (1) - Skills

Lesson 5	Basic skills
Lesson 6	The psychology of book distribution
Lesson 7	Assessing our performance
Lesson 8	Practical/workshop session

DAY THREE Skills, Techniques and Standards (2) - Challenges

Lesson 9	Dealing with external challenges
Lesson 10	Dealing with internal challenges
Lesson 11	Objections/excuses and further transactional challenges
Lesson 12	Sources of inner-strength and inspiration

DAY FOUR Skills, Techniques and Standards (3) - Organisation

Lesson 13	Leadership, team-work and organisation
Lesson 14	Lifestyle
Lesson 15	Standards of practice and behaviour
Lesson 16	Practical/workshop session

DAY FIVE Towards a Bright Future

Lesson 17	Review of the week and further discussion
Lesson 18	Co-operation and integration with other ISKCON services
Lesson 19	Prospects for the book distributor and the customer
Lesson 20	Feedback, evaluation and round-up

Norms for Classroom Behaviour

1. All members of the group are equal (ie. no special status).
2. All contributions are valid and valued regardless of whether one agrees with them or not.
3. We will accept full responsibility for success in achieving our desired outcomes.
4. We will confront issues or behaviour, not people.
5. We will each agree to honour any agreement reached.

Statement of Principles and Values

Effective book distribution is based on:

1. Long term vision
2. Customer care
3. Devotee welfare
4. Accurate representation
5. Ideal character
6. Honesty
7. Sound spiritual practice
8. Regular study
9. Harmony with other services
10. Systematic training and education

These principles and values, and their implications, are further explained on the next page.

Principles and Values Unpacked and Explained

1. Long-term Vision

- The long-term results of book-distribution are more important than short-term benefits. Interaction with the public at the cost of the Society's reputation is therefore counter-productive.

2. Customer Care

- The book distributor should endeavour to make every exchange with the public a positive experience, thus cultivating a favourable environment for continued book distribution and other preaching activities.

3. Devotee Welfare

- ISKCON nurtures the spiritual, physical, mental and emotional development of each book distributor, by looking after their individual needs and providing them with realistic prospects.

4. Accurate Representation

- Members of the public evaluate ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada, and Lord Krishna on the basis of their personal contact with devotees.

5. Ideal Character

- All book distributors are expected to display ideal character and to interact with the public with politeness and respect.

6. Honesty

- Devotees should be scrupulously honest in all their dealings with the public.

7. Sound Spiritual Practice

- Consistently good sadhana is an essential source of strength, inspiration and character development for the book distributor and should not be neglected.

8. Regular Study

- Book distributors should be conversant with Srila Prabhupada's books through regular study and should thus become expert in presenting and selling books on their own merit.

9. Harmony with Other Services

- A mature book-distributor appreciates the value of each devotee and their unique contribution, and comprehends how all services are interdependent.

10. Systematic Training and Education

- Systematic Training and Education is essential in equipping the devotee engaged in book distribution with:
 - a) knowledge of the subject
 - b) necessary skills to perform that service
 - c) values and attitudes consistent with a representative of Krishna consciousness.

The Seven Purposes of ISKCON

When Srila Prabhupada first registered ISKCON as a legal entity in New York in 1966 he gave the following seven purposes as its aims.

- 1) To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.
- 2) To propagate a consciousness of Krishna, as it is revealed in Bhagavad Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam.
- 3) To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Krishna, the prime entity, thus developing the idea within members, and humanity at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Krishna).
- 4) To teach and encourage the sankirtana movement, congregational chanting of the holy names of God, as revealed in the teachings of Lord Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.
- 5) To erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes dedicated to the personality of Krishna.
- 6) To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler, more natural way of life.
- 7) With a view towards achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, books and other writings.

The Aims of Book Distribution

- 1) To fulfil the desires of Srila Prabhupada and the parampara for mass book distribution
- 2) To introduce large numbers of people to the philosophy and practices of Krishna consciousness, thus providing spiritual education and opportunities to engage in devotional service.
- 3) To make available that knowledge by which society can be successfully organised to meet everyone's needs, both material and spiritual.
- 4) To directly engage people in the service of Lord Krishna.
- 5) To begin the process of devotional exchange between the Society and the individual members of the public.
- 6) To provide further information on opportunities for devotional service through continued interaction with the Society.
- 7) For self purification
- 8) To create auspiciousness in society
- 9) To firmly establish the authenticity of ISKCON
- 10) To contribute towards a healthy economic foundation for each temple or preaching programme.
- 11) To offer financial support to international ISKCON projects.
- 12) To establish the understanding that Sri Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and to deliver the world from the clutches of atheism and impersonalism.

Standards for Book Distribution

These standards fall within eight categories, as follows.

1. Qualifications of the Book Distributor
2. Customer Care
3. Dress Code
4. Driving and Vehicle Maintenance
5. Finance
6. Free Books
7. Sadhana
8. The Congregation and Book Distribution

1. Qualifications of the Book Distributor

The book distributor must :

- follow the four regulative principles and chant sixteen rounds daily
- accurately represent the movement
- cooperate with temple and sankirtana authorities
- be of balanced character
- have completed the appropriate level of training

2. Customer Care

- A devotee should always act as a perfect lady or gentleman thus leaving members of the public with a favourable impression.
- Book distributors should give clear information on their identity and about the books they are selling.
- An ISKCON representative should never give the false impression that the books are free.
- If someone insists on returning a book, the devotee should oblige.
- A devotee should offer customers the opportunity for further interaction with the society (by giving out invitations, taking names and addresses, etc.).

3. Dress Code

- Clothes should always be neat and clean.
- Srila Prabhupada said, "First dress, then address".
- Avoid mixing of devotee and non-devotee clothes.
- The devotee should wear respectable, functional clothing according to the climate and season.

4. Driving and Vehicle Maintenance

- Ensure that you meet all legal requirements.
- Absolutely no driving while feeling sleepy. Either swop drivers or stop to take rest.
- No japa or listening to Walkmans whilst driving.
- Vehicles must be serviced at the specified intervals.
- Vehicles must be regularly cleaned, inside and out.
- Oil and water must be checked at least weekly.
- Cookers, heaters etc. must meet all health and safety standards.

5. Finance

- All income and expenditure, without exception, must be accounted for and recorded.
- Grihastas may be allowed to keep some Lakshmi towards their maintenance - generally 50% of the profit (though this figure may vary according to the decision of local authorities).
- Congregational devotees (ie. those living outside of the temple) should pay a 50% mark-up on the BBT price and may keep any profit they subsequently raise.

6. Free Books

The general principle is to avoid giving out free books. Nevertheless, there are notable exceptions namely:

- those who are very interested but genuinely have no funds to spare
- V.I.P.'s or other people at special functions
- books specially sponsored for distribution to places where they will be used and valued (eg. prisons, libraries and schools)

7. Sadhana

Book distributors should :

- follow the four regulative principles and chant sixteen rounds per day
- read Srila Prabhupada's books for a minimum of one hour daily
- rise early and attend the morning programme, which while on travelling sankirtana may be somewhat abbreviated

8. The Congregation and Book Distribution.

Congregational members should adhere to the above-listed standards. However, non-initiated members :

- may not necessarily follow the four regulative principles, nor chant daily sixteen rounds
- must nevertheless avoid all illicit activities whilst performing sankirtana
- should not present themselves as full-time or fully-fledged representatives of ISKCON

The Purposes of Training and Education for Book Distributors

The following six purposes relate not only to the training courses outlined herein but to the ongoing and systematic education recommended for all book distributors.

1. Character Development

To ensure that those representing the Society as book distributors are men and women of ideal character and to support them in their ongoing spiritual development.

2. Integration and Co-operation

To encourage trainees to develop a broad vision and to foster a mood of co-operation between book distribution and other ISKCON departments.

3. Standards

To define and communicate clear standards for book distribution and to ensure that all devotees strictly maintain them.

4. Skills and Techniques

To equip students with appropriate skills and techniques and to encourage the sharing of ideas and realisations.

5. Future Prospects

To provide book distributors with realistic prospects and appropriate support so that they can perceive and realise a positive and progressive future in preaching Krishna consciousness.

6. Assessment

To help book distributors become thoughtful and introspective about their progress in a lifelong commitment to practising and preaching Krishna consciousness

“The Basic Skills of Book Distribution” (Lesson 5)

The basic skills of book distribution are broken into three categories, as follows:

Approach and Opening

- Draw people’s attention by using eye contact, gesture and speech.
- Present the book as soon as possible after greeting the person.
- Use standard opening lines which will evoke a positive response e.g. are you from this area?/ this is for all nice people/ today we are making a special presentation.

Presentation/Interaction

- Ask the right initial questions, particularly those which evoke a positive response, for example:
 - I’m sure you like to read and learn about things?
 - Are you a hard-worker? What do you do for a living?
 - Are you responsibly married, or single and happy?
- In developing the interaction, try to find and develop the customer’s area of interest.
- To do this ask appropriate questions, eg.
 - How is the family doing and who reads the most?
 - Are you more interested in history or philosophy?
 - I guess you’ve thought about karma and reincarnation?
- Listen to the customer without getting distracted. Remain calmly in control.
- Standard mantras are useful especially for less experienced devotees. Try to increase your repertoire and develop spontaneity.
- Make the person feel comfortable, and lead a smooth conversation.
- Speak clearly and at the appropriate volume.
- Present the books in a positive and attractive way.
- Repeat key phrases as necessary.

Securing a donation/Closing

- Start off by presenting one or two books and observe how the customer reacts. If he or she is interested, add more and negotiate a package deal.
- For very enthusiastic people, introduce complete sets.
- Mention the normal price of the book (or the equivalent) in shops and reveal our cost (usually double the BBT price).
- Inspire people to give more if they'd like to contribute towards our work.
- Don't get hung up on asking for money. People have money and are interested in buying something they value.
- Understand and value our tradition and the books we are selling (through regular study etc.).
- Encourage customers to read the books.
- Give customers invitation cards, other publicity material and, if possible, prasadam.
- Take names and addresses of interested people.
- Always part on a happy note.

Note: *According to the predominant form of book distribution in your yatra, the course facilitator may amend these points slightly*

“The Psychology of Book Distribution” (Lesson 6)

How to speak to people and find their areas of interest

- Involve people in conversation by asking the right questions.
- Don't ask questions which invite a negative response.
- Be personal and actually care for people.
- Speak from the heart.

Use of praise

- Praise is helpful to make people feel good.
- Show that you appreciate them.
- Don't be artificial; be sincere and really mean what you say.

Use of language

- Speak clearly and assertively, with a loud enough voice.
- Articulate your voice, so as not to sound flat and boring.

Use of humour

- Humour is very helpful to make people feel at ease (but don't overdo it!)
- Develop your own style of humour which people can relate to.
- Avoid using jokes which are sexist, racist or otherwise judgemental.
- Do not use humour with sexual connotations.

How to use mantras effectively / repetition of key phrases

- Remember that a good mantra has a structure (a beginning, middle and end).
- Check that the person understands you properly.
- Repeat key phrases and important points throughout the presentation.
- Be confident and speak about subjects you are familiar with (don't speculate).

Reading physiognomy and body language

- Learn to recognise and adjust to the type of people you meet and to understand their corresponding values, occupations, motivations, etc.
- Learn to perceive the mood and attitude of people, and relate to them accordingly.
- Watch carefully and listen attentively.
- Accept people the way they are and don't discriminate against them on the basis of bodily designations.

The state of mind of the book distributor

- Be convinced that people need these books and really want them (since they're all looking for Krishna).
- Don't be surprised if the going gets tough (sankirtana means declaring war on maya). Be determined to stick it out.
- Develop the attitude of service, of doing book distribution simply to please guru and Krishna. Understand that you are the servant of everyone.

“Guidelines on Customer Care” (Lesson 8)

“A customer is the most important visitor at our premises. He is not dependent on us, we are dependent on him. He is not an interruption in our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider on our business, he is a part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him, he is giving us an opportunity to do so.

- Mahatma Gandhi

Customer Satisfaction

Statistics:

- Only 4% of dissatisfied customers ever complain to the organisation about the cause of their dissatisfaction.
- 96% of dissatisfied customers go away quietly.
- 91% of dissatisfied customers never come back.

Survey on why customers go away:

- 68% leave because of indifference toward the customer by the owner, manager or employee.
- A typical dissatisfied customer will tell eight to ten people about his/her problem.
- One in five will tell twenty other people.
- It takes twelve positive service incidents to make up for one negative one.
- Customer loyalty is worth ten times the price of a single purchase yet the average business spends six times as much to make new customers than to keep existing ones.
- Quality customer service is the key to success in any organisation.

Guidelines

Do's:

- Be correctly motivated i.e. trying to really help people.
- Be genuinely interested in the person.
- Be personal, treating each person as a unique individual.
- Introduce yourself and ask the customer's name.
- Try to always see the good qualities.
- Listen carefully and give your undivided attention.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Smile.
- Be polite and courteous.
- Be honest and sincere.
- Be warm and friendly.
- Demonstrate both courage and consideration.
- Leave your details, offering further assistance if the customer desires.

Don'ts:

- Don't ignore people who'd like assistance, even if you are busy.
- Don't force yourself upon people, nor pressurise or harass them.
- Don't be judgmental or critical of others, especially in front of your customer.
- Don't be nasty no matter how rude the customer may be.
- Don't switch off the 'charm' when it becomes clear that someone is not so interested in Krishna consciousness.

“Dealing with External Challenges” (Lesson 9)

Police and other officials

- Always be polite and respectful.
- Keep in mind that officials are often influential people. Never give them a bad impression.
- Report any significant interaction to your sankirtan leader.

Drunks, aggressors and unstable people

- Avoid them as far as possible.
- Stay out of trouble, even if it means moving to another spot.
- Be careful not to play the role of “the saviour of the most fallen” (though you can no doubt sometimes help in an appropriate manner).

Members of other faiths

- Be alert for those posing as interested but wishing to distract or abuse you.
- Discriminate between time-wasters and the sincere (to whom we shall be careful to give respect).
- If in doubt about a person’s sincerity, qualify them by asking appropriate questions.
- If someone is simply interested in preaching to you in a narrow-minded way, excuse yourself right away and as politely as possible.

Talkers and time-wasters

- Always keep in mind your aims and objectives whilst on sankirtana. Get to the point straight away.
- Refer to the book as the source of answers to all their questions and suggest purchase early in the exchange.

- Be prepared to spend time with genuinely interested people and direct them to appropriate means of further interaction with the Society.

Unfavourable weather

- Dress properly. “There is no such thing as bad weather....only inappropriate clothing.”
- If you need more clothing, make moves to get it. Don’t create unnecessary austerity for yourself which may diminish your ability to serve.
- Consider the weather prospects when choosing distribution spots.
- If nothing helps, just tolerate and carry on.

Relationships in Management

- Sankirtana leaders should work in co-operation with the temple president, department heads, etc. to ensure that support systems are functioning properly.
- Have regular meetings with temple department heads (not only when something goes wrong).
- Express the importance of book distribution but keep in mind that other services are valuable and that the devotees involved face their own challenges.

Physical Tiredness

- Try working it off, especially after prasadam.
- If necessary, go and take extra rest.
- If continually tired, consider sleeping longer at night. If this doesn’t help, consult a doctor.

“Organisational Skills” (Lesson 13)

Marathons

- Plan and prepare marathons well in advance.
- Let the devotees know about it and get them mentally prepared. Build up the proper spirit and consciousness.
- Designate areas, vehicles and parties.
- Marathons are ideal opportunities to fix the mind on the orders of the spiritual master.

Sankirtana meetings

- Sankirtana meetings are best held weekly (either in the temple or in the van), usually on the day off.
- Include in meetings the following items:

Kirtana/reading of scores/speaking from realisation/good stories/
questions and answers on important issues/strategy for the
forthcoming week.

Travelling sankirtana

- Travelling sankirtana is first class training since it purifies one very quickly.
- It's an effective way of bringing the books to everyone in your country.
- It is essential to be well organised and especially to keep vans and living quarters clean and tidy.
- It is a great challenge and lots of fun. All devotees should get the opportunity to experience it and the resultant mood of detachment.

Interacting with the temple management

- The sankirtana leader should sit on the temple council and work co-operatively with department heads. Together they should work to develop an integrated preaching strategy.

Book inventory

- Inventories should be made regularly, at specified intervals (usually every quarter) to determine the number of books distributed. The BBT has to be paid accordingly and on time.
- All temple and sankirtana departments must keep adequate records for all book purchases and sales.

Laksmi and accounting

- Sankirtan scores and Laksmi should be recorded and turned in every day.
- Every penny must be accounted for.
- No funds should be wasted or spent without authorisation.

“Guidelines on Appropriate Lifestyle” (Lesson 14)

Diet

- It is important to eat well to remain healthy and alert in Krishna’s service.
- Eat only prasadam, which has been properly prepared and offered with love and devotion. This will give one the spiritual and physical strength to continue distributing books for a long time.
- Avoid canned or processed items and food (especially grains) cooked by non-devotees. Such food pollutes the consciousness and makes the mind wicked.
- Be careful to check that all ingredients you use are bona-fide.

Dress

- All clothes should be neat and clean to properly represent the movement.
- To dress in a slovenly fashion is not a sign of genuine detachment.
- One’s dress has an effect on, and is usually an indication of, one’s consciousness (at least in the conditioned stage)

Exercise

- Regular exercise is helpful in maintaining sound physical and mental health.
- Taking care of one’s back is very important.
- Swimming and yoga are also very beneficial.
- Don’t neglect looking after the body. It belongs to Krishna but you have the responsibility for looking after it.

Sleep

- Sufficient, sound sleep is essential to good health.

- The right amount of sleep is necessary to keep the intelligence strong. Without adequate sleep the mind becomes restless and will be easily distracted.
- Different people need different amounts of rest (depending on age, constitution, health etc.). Some may need more than the “standard” six hours.
- Rest before midnight is considered more beneficial than afterwards. Be early to take rest and to rise.
- Be regulated in your sleeping and waking times.
- If you are too tired while distributing, take a nap.

Recreation

- One should regularly have time off from one’s main service.
- One should avoid becoming a workaholic (even in the name of service) if in the long run it diminishes one’s ability to serve productively
- “He who is regulated in his habits of eating, sleeping, recreation and work, can mitigate all material pains by practicing the yoga system” (B.G. 6.17).

Health Care

- Do not neglect your health. Srila Prabhupada did not approve of this.
- It’s essential to maintain health and strength for prolonged book distribution.
- Do not refrain from seeing a doctor if it becomes necessary.
- Take good care of other devotees when they become ill.
- In countries where it is applicable, devotees should have health insurance.

Regulation and Balance

- Regulation and balance are characteristics of the mode of goodness.
- Regulation makes the mind peaceful and happy, and gives one time and energy to make plans for preaching.

- One must be happy and satisfied to convince people of the efficacy of Krishna consciousness.
- Regularly take time-out to re-evaluate your performance of devotional service.

Driving

- Drive safely. Vehicles and devotees are Krishna's property.
- Leaving on time helps alleviate the need to hurry.

Sadhana

- Sadhana is an essential source of our strength in distributing books and should not be neglected, even in marathons.
- Preferably all our rounds should be chanted in the morning.

Study

- Read Srila Prabhupada's books for at least one hour per day, and preferably two.
- Discuss what you have read with other devotees.
- Know the books you are distributing

Social Life/Relationships

- Take some time to develop sincere and lasting friendships with other devotees. This is essential for happiness in spiritual life.
- One develops close relationships with devotees by serving together in the mission.
- Success in spiritual life is dependent on the pleasure and good wishes of the Vaishnavas.

Book Distribution and Making devotees” (Lesson 18)

Seeing the potential while on distribution

- See yourself as a preacher and an integral part of the preaching mission.
- Take time to give attention to receptive people.
- Get names and addresses. Follow up on them or make sure that someone else does.
- Invite these people to the Sunday feast and other programmes.
- Consider visiting genuinely interested people in their own homes.

Teamwork in the temple

- Ensure that your department and its members co-operate together with bhakta and bhaktin leaders, preachers and trainers, and management in general.
- Be unified in your attempts to spread Krishna Consciousness. Through exemplary teamwork, many people will be attracted to join ISKCON. Try to create harmony in all your dealings.
- There should be first class hospitality for all guests coming to our temples.

Caring for the newcomer

- Great care and attention should be given to all devotees, meeting their mental, physical, social and spiritual needs.
- From day-one there should be systematic training for all new devotees.
- Long term vision is essential in spiritual life. The investment made in caring for junior devotees will greatly assist our movement.

“Prospects for the Book Distributor and Contact Follow-Up” (Lesson 19)

The future for the book distributor

- It is highly commendable for devotees to stay on full-time book distribution for many years.
- Nevertheless, many devotees, through their training in book distribution, will take up further challenges and responsibilities for spreading Krishna consciousness.
- Sankirtana leaders and managers should ensure that book distributors have validated mobility in their service.
- There should be opportunity for diversification of book distribution. Different methods are as follows:
 - street distribution.
 - industrial estates
 - book tables
 - mail order
 - contract sales
 - congregational distribution
 - full sets to universities, etc
 - door to door (shops/homes/offices)
 - temple shops
 - BTG subscription
 - concerts and other events
 - Archive library sets
 - through book shops
 - sponsorship

Contact follow-up

- Collect names and addresses of interested people.
- Ensure that these are followed up, either personally or through a temple system (which should include a centralised database with corresponding administrative systems).
- Insist that there is a competent telephone answering service in your temple.
- Give out invitations and other publicity material, (e.g. for seminars, cooking classes, retreats, etc) - possibly also a book-marker or a card with your name on.
- Consider distributing feedback questionnaires to your customers.
- Remember that we are “out there” to make devotees as well as to simultaneously distribute many books.
- Refer interested parties to the preachers and trainers in your temple.

Principles and Values Assessment - Worksheet

1. **Long-term vision** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Do I have long term goals? Do I resist the temptation of short term results when they conflict with long term gains?

2. **Customer care** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Do I feel the end justifies the means? Do I care about leaving my customers with a positive attitude towards ISKCON?

3. **Devotee welfare** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Am I concerned to look after junior devotees? Do I serve the devotees and consider their needs?

4. **Accurate representation** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Am I aware of my heritage and whom I'm representing as I sell books? Do I accurately reflect my tradition and its values?

5. **Ideal Character** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Do I display the characteristics of a Vaishnava? Am I always polite and respectful to customers?

6. **Honesty** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Do I ever tell lies? Am I shy about who I am, or withhold the truth?

7. **Sound spiritual practices** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
How good is my sadhana? Am I developing any bad habits?

8. **Regular study** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Do I study Srila Prabhupada's books daily? Do I know the contents of the books I sell?

9. **Harmony with other services** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Do I feel that devotees doing other services are less sincere? Do I understand how all services are inter-related?

10. **Systematic Training and Education** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Do I assess my own performance and try to improve? Do I attend any training programmes?

Where specifically do I feel I need to improve?

How will I do this?

Assessing Our Performance Worksheet

MISSION

My mission as a book distributor:

Which purpose of ISKCON does this relate to? (tick)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

OBJECTIVES

Long term: In 3 years I will have:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Which aims of book distribution do these relate to? (write numbers)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

My daily goals:

by the end of the day I will have:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Which aims of book distribution do these relate to? (write numbers)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

ASSESSMENT

How I can assess my long term objectives?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How I can assess my deily goals?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Lifestyle Worksheet

Appropriate devotee lifestyle has to do with:

- (1) Sustainability (the ability to maintain our service)
- (2) Responsibility (especially in looking after Krishna's property)

You may wish to consider scriptural references which refer to these (optional)

Now, assess yourself on how successfully you apply yourself to each item. Ring one number for each from 0 (terrible) to 10 (excellent). A score of 5 is average. Put 5 if one item doesn't apply to you (e.g. if you don't drive). Add up your total.

Diet	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Dress	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Exercise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Recreation	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Health care	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Regulation / Balance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Driving	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sadhana	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Study	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Social life / Relationships	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

TOTAL

110

Write down the areas in which you feel you need to improve:

How are you going to achieve this?

FOLLOW UP

- **Collect the names, addresses, email and phone of the interested people.**
- **Keep a clear, up to date record of : type of person ex: pious, philanthropist, jnani, religious, impersonalist, etc., books they have, their area of interest, hobby etc., important dates like birthday etc., financial possibilities, how much they usually give for the Mission, family members names and their attitude toward Krishna Consciousness, other...**
- **Follow up personally the people you met.**
- **Contact them regularly and/or in special occasions: Christmas, birthday etc.**
- **Visit them regularly, once a year. More often in special cases.**
- **Bring them presents.**
- **Bring them prasadam.**
- **Bring them Books they do not yet have.**
- **Encourage them to read Srila Prabhupada's Books for solving their problems.**
- **Preach to them according to their advancement in Krishna Consciousness.**
- **Be patient.**
- **Listen to them, be sensitive and attentive.**
- **Give them all the time they need.**
- **Do programs at their home.**
- **Never ask for laxmi when you visit them also if you gave presents, books and prasadam.**
- **Accept whatever donation they give.**
- **Mention, especially the first time, how we use the laxmi for.**
- **Be sensitive if they do not want to be contacted any more.**
- **Always give a last try.**
- **In the Temple there should be a competent telephone answering.**
- **If you are for example a Congregational member and you prefer that the person you met is followed up by some preacher or trainer of the Temple, introduce**



*SANKIRTAN
LEADERSHIP
COURSE*

Principles and Values of Effective Sankirtan Leadership Unpacked and Explained

1. **Vision:**

Continually formulating strategic vision, sankirtan leaders should set objectives that are fresh challenges for the devotees. Leaders should inspire them to enthusiastically rise and achieve these objectives, by instilling within them a Krishna conscious vision.

2. **Exemplarity:**

Sankirtan leaders should serve as role models for the devotees in their care, through ideal character and by “leading the troops into battle”.

3. **Empowerment:**

Sankirtan leaders should be impressive not repressive, delegating objectives rather than methods, and recognizing devotees’ right and need for autonomous, independent thinking, thus encouraging devotees to take responsibility and develop themselves as leaders.

4. **Cooperation and teamwork:**

Through maintaining open channels of communication, sankirtan leaders should nurture a team spirit built on love and trust.

5. **Accountability:**

Sankirtan leaders should be aware of and be accountable for the responsibilities they bare with regards to proper engagement of the devotees and resources in their care, seeing them as Krishna’s property.

6. **Self-motivated:**

Sankirtan leaders should not need to be pushed; based on their own realization and conviction, they are self-motivated, show initiative, and exude enthusiasm and a sense of urgency.

7. **Devote Welfare**

Concern for dependents (living facility, health, spiritual development and personal satisfaction) is a top priority for sankirtan leaders.

8. **Trustworthiness:**

Effective leadership is based on trust not authoritarianism.

The Purposes of Training and Education for Book Distributors

The following six purposes relate not only to the training courses outlined herein but to the ongoing and systematic education recommended for all book distributors.

1. Character Development

To ensure that those representing the Society as book distributors are men and women of ideal character and to support them in their ongoing spiritual development.

2. Integration and Cooperation

To encourage trainees to develop a broad vision and to foster a mood of cooperation between book distribution and other ISKCON departments.

3. Standards

To define and communicate clear standards for book distribution and to ensure that all devotees strictly maintain them.

4. Skills and Techniques

To equip students with appropriate skills and techniques and to encourage the sharing of ideas and realizations.

5. Future Prospects

To provide book distributors with realistic prospects and appropriate support so that they can perceive and realize a positive and progressive future in preaching Krishna consciousness.

6. Assessment

To help book distributors become thoughtful and introspective about their progress in a lifelong commitment to practicing and preaching Krishna consciousness.

Roles and Duties of a Sankirtan Leader

(Lesson 1.1)

The basic roles and duties of a sankirtan leader are broken into the following categories:

1. Book distributor

Distribute exemplarily-role model (quality)
Distribute effectively (quantity)

2. Mentor and Trainer

Give spiritual guidance
Train practical skills
Evaluate and correct
Convey knowledge
Instill in others the values and principles of book distribution
Basic counseling

3. Friend

Cares for emotional well-being
Listens to problems and tries to help
Accessible and open-minded
Ensures ongoing personal development of all book distributors under their care

4. Manager/Facilitator of the party(s)

Organizes practical matter with regards to:

- a) Manpower
- b) Location
- c) Money
- d) Vehicles
- e) Books
- f) Strategy

5. Liaison between SK devotees and management

Ensures cooperation and a communication flow between those in their care, management and other departments

6. Sadhaka

Sadhaka bhakti

- a) 16 rounds
- b) 4 regulative principals
- c) Reading SP's books
- d) Attending temple programs

Three Distinctions Between Leadership and Management

Leadership	Management
To develop people through achieving objectives	To achieve objectives through people
Effectiveness	Efficiency
Doing the right things	Doing things right

Four Functions of a Leader

1. Provide Vision
2. Recruit
3. Train
4. Monitor

The leader must see what to do (vision), and show how to do it (example). Management entails facilitating followers and executing vision.

The Three Pillars of a Trustworthy Character

(Lesson 1.3)

Personal Leadership grows out of trustworthiness. To lead others effectively, individuals must first be able to lead themselves effectively. As individuals demonstrate trustworthiness (a balance of high competence and strong character), other people will begin to trust them as leaders.

Integrity

Creates a foundation of trust that is essential for cooperation and long term personal and interpersonal growth. It is built through making and keeping commitments and means aligning values and behavior.

Includes but transcends honesty. Honesty means telling the truth, i.e. conforming our words to reality, integrity is conforming reality to our words, i.e. keeping promises and fulfilling expectations. This requires an integrated character, a oneness with the self and life.

Means treating everyone by the same set of principals, this builds trust. The key to the 99 is the 1, particularly the 1 that tests the patience. It's how you treat the 1 that reveals how you regard the 99.

Means avoiding deceptive or condescending communication and is a fundamental source of self-esteem (purity is the force). If we can't make and keep commitments to ourselves as well as to others, our commitments become meaningless. We know it and so do others. They sense duplicity and become guarded.

Maturity

Is a balance. between courage and consideration. If a person can express their feelings and convictions with courage, balanced with consideration for the feelings and convictions of another, they are mature, particularly if it is an important issue for both. A mature person can listen and understand but also courageously confront.

Non-envy

Comes from a sense of self-worth and security. It results in sharing prestige credit, recognition, profits and decision making, opens possibilities, options alternatives and creativity.

An envious person's sense of worth comes from being compared, and someone else's success means their failure to some degree. They have a hard time sharing recognition, credit, power or profit. Even with those who help in the production, they have a hard time being genuinely happy for others successes. They give their energy for possessing things or people to increase their sense of worth. They want to clone others and surround themselves with yes men that are weaker than themselves and won't challenge them. They can't work easily on a complimentary team; they see differences as signs of insubordination and disloyalty.

Three Types of Power

(Lesson 1.4)

Coercive power

To compel by force or intimidation by exploiting fear and anxiety.
E.g. bullying them with meaningless catch phrases, derision or anger.

Expedient power

A mutual agreement, or trade off based on self-interest.
E.g. "If you just keep going for another year, we'll send you to India for the VTE course."

Legitimate power

Based on spontaneous attraction to an exemplary authority that commands respect through qualities and example. ("Purity is the force")

Authoritarianism

- Hierarchical authoritarian organizations: The lower levels need clear-cut orders (which cannot always consider necessary tactics). Otherwise they cannot take initiative because they will be considered insubordinate or neglectful. Creativity is diminished, as it is not welcomed. Ability to function according to the recommended formula of time place and circumstance is seriously impeded.
- Hierarchical authoritarian organizations hinder members learning from their experiences. Those responsible do not admit failure or incompetence, but rationalize, deny or find scapegoats. Because they do not admit mistakes, they do not learn from them, and failures tend to reoccur.
- Hierarchical authoritarian organizations can absolve the individual from being hampered by guilt, carrying out orders sanctioned by authority.

The Emotional Bank Account

(Lesson 2.1)

SIX MAIN DEPOSITS

1. Understanding the individual

- The key to the other deposits; you don't know what they consider a deposit until you understand them.
- To make a deposit, what is important to another person must be as important to you as the other person is to you.

2. Attention to details

- Small kindnesses are very important.
- Small discourtesies and little forms of disrespect, can be major withdrawals.

3. Keeping commitments

- Keeping a promise is a major deposit, breaking one constitutes a major withdrawal.
- One should be very careful about making promises and commitments, considering unforeseen obstacles.
- Others, who learn to trust your promises, will trust your judgment even if they don't share your vision.

4. Showing integrity

- Means_aligning values and behavior.
- Creates a foundation of trust that is essential for cooperation and long term personal and interpersonal growth. Without integrity, others sense duplicity and become guarded.

5. Apologizing sincerely when you make a withdrawal

- A genuine apology is a great deposit, repeated apologies can be perceived as insincere, and constitute a withdrawal.
- Possible for those with a sense of security who don't worry that others might consider admitting a mistake to be a weakness.
- Mistakes of judgment, which are usually of the mind, are easily forgiven. Mistakes of the heart, that involve pride, rationalization and ill motives, are not easily forgiven.

6. Clarifying expectations

- The root of almost all relationship difficulties is conflicting or ambiguous expectations with regard to roles and goals.
- People judge others based on the expectations they have of them.
- We create many negative situations by assuming that our expectations are self-evident.
- Initially clarifying expectations may require courage, effort and time, but will spare compounding misunderstandings, disappointment and communication breakdowns in the long run.

ISKCON Personnel Philosophy and Ethics - Guideline

Purpose: To provide a general framework for the conduct of ISKCON devotees, including leaders, staff, members, and guests.

ISKCON Personnel Philosophy:

1. ISKCON centers exist primarily to encourage and teach Krishna consciousness and to facilitate devotional service. ISKCON is an inclusive and yet selective organization. Everyone is invited to learn about and practice Krishna consciousness, but participation and membership are earned privileges. In order to effectively execute its mission, ISKCON expects its personnel and participants to pursue excellence in their behavior and their work.
2. Devotees are employed for the purpose of reclaiming and preparing lost souls, and therefore should be full of compassion for the spiritual welfare of everyone.
3. ISKCON's activities are shaped to strengthen and support an individual's spiritual advancement.
4. Devotees are the steward or guardian of the resources of Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON mission.
5. ISKCON strives for excellence in terms of quality service and quality care for its personnel.
6. Authority in ISKCON is a privilege earned by character, competence and commitment.

ISKCON Personnel Ethics:

1. Devotees shall respect the legal and civil rights of anyone.
2. Devotees shall offer everyone the same opportunity to serve Krishna regardless of race, sex, creed, national origin, or disability.
3. Devotees shall not engage in any act or conduct which is criminal in nature and/or which would bring discredit to ISKCON and Srila Prabhupada.
4. Devotees shall report to the proper ISKCON authority without hesitation and in a timely manner, any corrupt or unethical behavior which could affect ISKCON.
5. Devotees should cooperate with each other in order to promote mutual respect and to improve the quality of service.
6. ISKCON authorities shall recognize that ISKCON members are ISKCON's most important asset. ISKCON leaders shall treat ISKCON members with fairness and respect.

Four Part Clean Up (how to apologize)

(Lesson 2.1)

Acknowledge agreement

I know I promised to look after your Walkman.

Take responsibility

Unfortunately I broke it. — nb. No excuses or stories.

Make it right

What can I do to make it right? It is up to the other person. — new Walkman? Repair?

(Give them more than they ask for. E.g. buy him a new *Walkman and some batteries and blank tapes*)

Recommit

I will take full care of anything you lend me again. (Don't make promises you can't keep.)

SANKIRTAN SERVICE AGREEMENT

ISKCON Founder/Acarya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Devotee: _____ Temple: _____

Sankirtana Leader: _____

My principle service is: _____

This includes the following responsibilities: _____

The sankirtana leader will provide the following for my service: _____

To support my continued service he will provide me with: _____

The criteria on which my service will be evaluated will include: _____

Acknowledged by: (Devotee) _____

(TP) _____ Dated ___ / ___ / ___ Reviewed ___ / ___ / ___

Communication Skills

(Lesson 2.2)

**The owner
is the party
who the problem
tangibly effect.**

Who owns the problem?	Use
Me	OTFD
Them	Empathic listening
Both of us	Conflict Resolution

**Open the Front Door
Observe
Think
Feelings
Desire**

**As if
your life
depends on it**

Open the Front Door

O

BSERVE

What I actually SEE or HEAR you doing.
Simply describe the other person's
actions without evaluation or analysis.

T

HINK

My thoughts or opinions about your action.
This is what I believe you must be thinking or
Feeling about me, based on my actions.

F

EELINGS

How I feel in response to your actions.
My actual EMOTIONS and FEELINGS.
It is important to be very open and honest.
Note: Saying "I feel like....." or "I feel that you....."
Are usually disguising judgments or opinions.

D

ESIRE

What I actually SEE or HEAR you doing.
Simply describe the other person's
actions without evaluation or analysis.

OTFD

I **observe** that you are driving very fast.
I am **thinking** that we could have an accident.
Which makes me **feel** afraid.
So could you please (**desire**) slow down?

Empathic Listening

Empathic listening means listening and responding with both the heart and mind to understand the speaker's words, intent, and feelings.

The basic skill of empathic listening is helping the speaker feel understood.

Rephrase content and reflect feelings – express both their words and their feelings in your own words. Look beyond words to body language and tone that indicate feelings.

Principles and Paradigms of Empathic Listening

Two principles:

Diagnosis must precede prescription

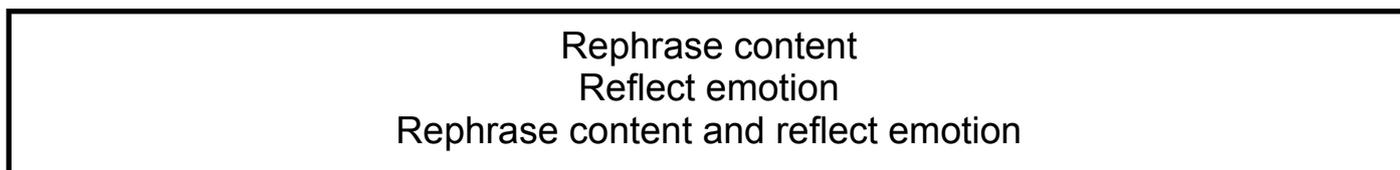
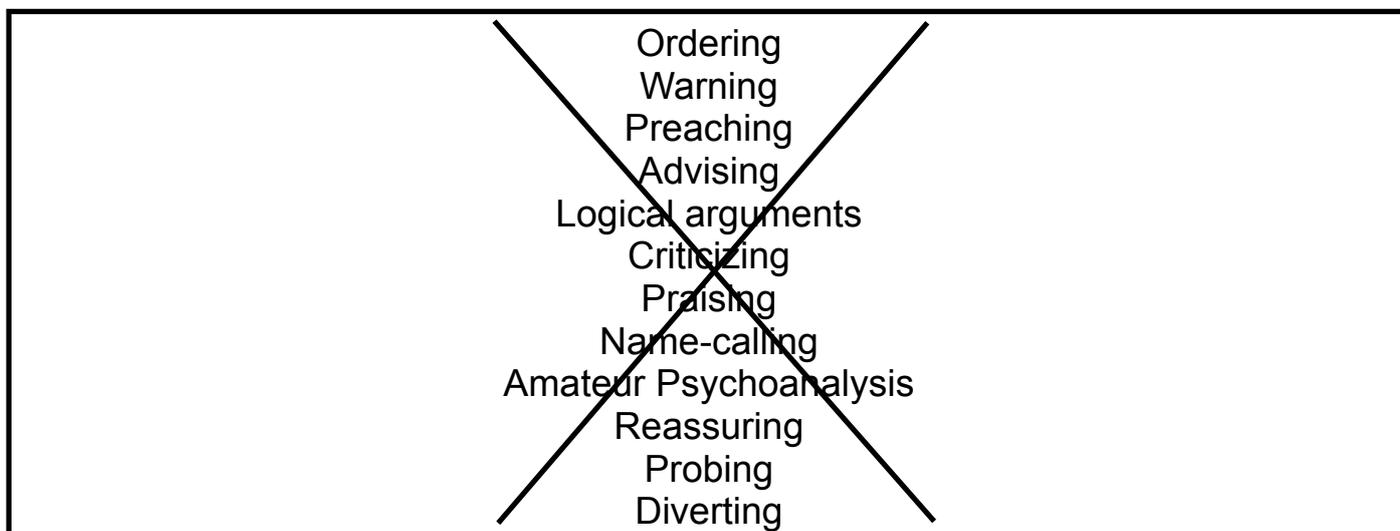
Understanding comes through listening

Two key paradigms:

“I assume I don't fully understand, and I need to listen”

“If I listen first to understand, then I will be better understood”

Blocks to Listening



Helpful phrases to Acknowledge Understanding

As I get it, you feel that...
I'm not sure I'm with you, but...
I'm picking up that you...
As I hear it, you...

Six Steps for Conflict Resolution

1. *Analyze needs* – (not solutions) this requires active listening
2. *Brainstorm solutions* – being non judgmental and spontaneous
3. *Collect win/win solutions* – evaluate seeking a win/win solution
4. *Decide one solution* – choose best one
5. *Execute solution* – implementation (who, where, when, how)
6. *Future evaluation* – see if it was really a win/win solution, was everyone really happy with it

Appreciation (Lesson 2.3)

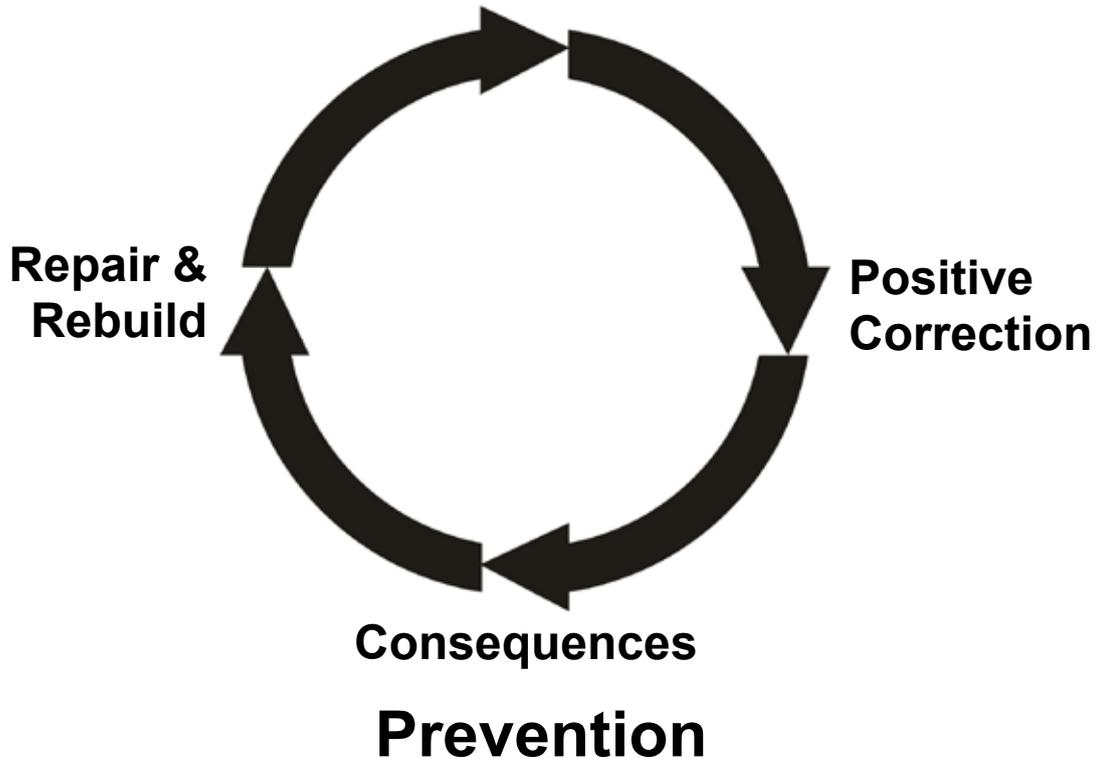
Catch people doing things right:

- Validates proper behavior
- Builds mutual respect
- Develops a culture of appreciation
- Breeds loyalty

Four Phases for Correcting Improper Behavior

(Lesson 2.4)

Prevention



Rights

- Handle basic disruptions without losing your cool (preserve party members dignity)
- Respect their rights – to spiritual development
 - to feel protected
 - to be treated with respect

Responsibilities

- Establish from the beginning, that everyone is responsible for their own behavior.

Routines

- Maintain Krishna conscious relationships
- Establish effective mode of goodness procedures

Rules

- Establish rules and expectations by preaching strongly but sensitively

Positive correction

Choose language of correction

- Choose decisive, direct, yet positive language, e.g. don't say "don't lie down during class" say "Sit up. Remember the rule?"

Select strategy

- Consider carefully when and how to correct behaviors, consider time, place, person, i.e. don't necessarily react immediately
- Consider your own state of consciousness – a cool down time might be needed on both sides

Be least intrusive

- Try for low profile and as private as possible, avoid public humiliation or being unnecessary confrontational

Stick to the point

- Concentrate on correcting the primary (mis) behavior, without becoming diverted to how the person reacts to your correction

Partial agreements

- Diffuse situation, e.g. they say, “but I didn't do it...” you say “maybe you didn't but...”

Consequences

Certainty rather than severity

- To always follow up on breaches of the agreed rules is more important than severity, it maintains credibility and consistency (substantiates correct motive)

Logically connected consequences

- Make sure they address
 - **W**hat they did wrong
 - **W**hat rule they broke
 - **W**hat they can do to rectify it
 - **W**hy they did it

Repair and rebuild

Don't bear grudges

- Make an effort to establish that you are still friends
- Maintain the working relationships

Appreciate modified behavior

- Appreciate them doing it right after you have corrected them

Dealing with you own anger

- Direct it at the behavior not the person
- Admit your anger or disturbance with an “I statement” (keep it short)
- Get angry about issues that count

Corporal punishment, screaming, and name-calling betray a lack of proper principles and/or self-control. They are:

- a breach of the principle of devotee welfare
- an affront to basic human dignity
- counterproductive as a learning method
- dangerous for spiritual life
- illegal

Guidelines on Proactive Time Management

(Lesson 3.1)

Principles of Personal Management

1. Concentrate on important activities (important contributes to your mission, values and high priority goals – opportunities), not urgent activities (urgent requires immediate attention – problems).
2. Manage time and priorities around the roles and goals. Focus on relationships and results, not on things and time; maintain a balance between producing and learning.

Important / Urgent	Important / Not Urgent
Crisis management	Proactive management
Unimportant / Urgent	Unimportant / Not Urgent
Mistaking urgency for importance	Trivia, time killing

Urgent matters – usually visible, press on us and insist on action. They're often popular with others and right in front of us. Although often pleasant, easy and fun to do, they are frequently unimportant!

Importance – result oriented. Important things contribute to your mission, values and goals.

Important/Urgent

Deals with significant results that require immediate attention. These “crises” or “problems” consume many crises managers, problem minded people and deadline-driven producers. As long as you focus on this quadrant, it keeps getting bigger and bigger until it dominates you. It's like the pounding surf; a huge problem comes and knocks you down and you're wiped out. You struggle back up only to face another one that knocks you down and slams you to the ground. Some people are literally beaten up by the problems all day every day. Their only relief is escaping the not important, not urgent activities of quadrant IV.

Important/Not Urgent

As one increases the amount of time spend on the proactive management of this quadrant, the crises and problems of the first quadrant diminishes, and this quadrant becomes larger. These activities are the heart of effective personal management. They are activities like building relationships, writing a personal mission statement, long –range planning, exercising, preventive maintenance, preparation – all those things we know we need to do, but somehow seldom get around to doing, because they aren't urgent.

Unimportant/Urgent

People who spend a lot of time engaged in these activities think they are doing something important because it is urgent. The urgency of these matters is often based on the priorities and expectations of others.

Unimportant/Not Urgent

Useless, time-wasting activities, often simply a refuge for those burned out from too many crises.

Delegation

Passing on the Leadership

(Lesson 3.2)

Authoritarian Delegation	Empowerment
Focused on methods	Focused on results
Delegator is responsible for results	Delegatee is responsible for results
Discourages commitment on the part of the delegatee	Involves mutual commitment of the delegator and the delegatee
Undermines trust	Based on trust / builds trust
Engages delegate's body	Engages delegate's imagination, conscience and free will
Gives delegatee's no future prospects	Prepares delegatee's for future responsibility and leadership
Self-limiting	Unlimited potential
System collapses in absence of delegator	Sustainable system in the absence of delegator
Creates peons	Perpetuates generations of quality leadership

The Six Keys for Effective Empowerment

(Lesson 3.2)

Right Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carefully consider the individual's:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Trustworthiness2) Ability
Desired Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Come to a clear, mutual understanding of the desired results (not methods)• Have the delegatee make a quality statement of what the desired results will be
Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify parameters within which the delegatee should operate (e.g. principles and values)• Identify possible pitfalls
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the available resources (e.g. human, financial, technical)• Offer support and coaching if possible
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish evaluation standards• Establish specific times when evaluation and reporting will take place
Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specify both positive and negative consequences of the evaluation

Vision for the Future – Worksheet

Vision

(What I want to become)

Objectives

(How I will get there)

Personal

Personal

Strengths (internal)

Weaknessess (internal)

Opportunities (external)

Obstacles (external)

Interpersonal

Interpersonal

Strengths (internal)

Weaknessess (internal)

Opportunities (external)

Obstacles (external)

Managerial

Managerial

Strengths (internal)

Weaknessess (internal)

Opportunities (external)

Obstacles (external)

Organizational Skills

Marathons

- Plan and prepare marathons well in advance.
- Let the devotees know about it and get them mentally prepared. Build up proper spirit and consciousness.
- Designate areas, vehicles and parties.
- Marathons are ideal opportunities to fix the mind on the mission of Lord Caitanya.

Sankirtan Meetings

- Sankirtan meetings are best held weekly (either in the temple or in the van), usually on the day off.
- Include in the meetings the following items:
Kirtan/reading of scores/speaking from realization/good stories/questions and answers on important issues/strategy for the forthcoming week.

Traveling Sankirtan

- Traveling sankirtan is first class training since it purifies one very quickly.
- It's an effective way of bringing the books to everyone in your country.
- It is essential to be well organized and especially to keep vans and living quarters clean and tidy.
- It is a great challenge and lots of fun. All devotees should get the opportunity to experience it.

Interaction with the temple management

- The sankirtan leader should sit on the temple council and work cooperatively with department heads. Together they should work on develop an integrated preaching strategy.

Book Inventory

- Inventories should be made regularly, at specific intervals (usually every quarter) to determine the numbers of books distributed. The BBT has to be paid accordingly on time.
- All temple and sankirtan departments must keep adequate records for all book purchases and sales.

Laksmi and Accounting

- Sankirtan scores and Laksmi should be recorded and turned in daily.
- Every penny must be accounted for.
- No funds should be wasted or spend without authorization.

