

# *Seeking Opportunity and Challenge With MO State Lead*

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## **Opportunity**

Opportunity is a key component towards not only leadership development, but growth in all areas. Something I have noticed through my time in a university is the plethora of opportunities given to students everyday, and the small amount of them that are actually taken advantage of. One of the most powerful lessons I have learned from a best friend and mentor of mine, is the idea of “yes, and...” Many of us are hesitant to just say yes, take what people have given us, and add onto it for whatever the reason may be.

In most instances the refusal of an opportunity is most likely due to the fear of discomfort, and this is exactly where “yes, and...” comes into play. At an improv show, the performers must say yes to every opportunity thrown their way, no matter what it may be. Refusing one of your teammates ideas can destroy the illusion, possibly underwhelming the current scene. Every good performer must learn to trust in their team and this trust turns into comfort with just saying “yes.” A performer must have faith that no matter what opportunity they are accepting, ultimately the scene will complete itself with the natural flow of teamwork and progression.

Obviously, at an improv show it’s a safe environment of storytelling. Outside of a theater not every opportunity should be taken, but it’s with this mindset that the most efficient leaders achieve success. There is no telling where an opportunity may take you, there’s never a straight path in life. I challenge you, next time an opportunity comes your way, to go outside your comfort zone, and just say yes. Have some faith that the scene will ultimately complete itself in the end.

## **Challenge**

Being a leader not only means guiding others towards growth and achievement, but being able to put your ego aside and recognizing where you can personally grow and achieve. There is no such thing as an individual who is exceptional in every area. The best leaders can name areas in which they can grow.

Every good leader seeks to constantly challenge themselves, because leaders simply are not born. This particular skill set comes from resilience to objection and learning from critics. No one is capable of setting aside their ego and insecurities at first, but it is a key component in personal development, especially with the more you achieve or the higher you climb.

Ultimately, the term “leadership” is that of teamwork. By this I mean it seeks to benefit the whole, not the individual. With this in mind, an experienced leader knows to challenge back. Confrontation is a beautiful thing, when done correctly. An efficient leader knows how to address an issue in the frame of “adding to” instead of “subtracting from.” Anyone can point out a flaw, but the aspect of leadership comes into play when the mistake is addressed in a manner of “I’m challenging you, because I know you can do more” rather than, “This isn’t good enough for what I had in mind.”

An atmosphere where a team seeks to constantly challenge one another, is a team that is constantly growing. In college that is the atmosphere that students have the opportunity to obtain.

*If you are interested in pursuing opportunity and challenge to become a more efficient leader, use the contact information above to learn about MO State Lead's leadership development programs on campus.*