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**GENERAL FEDERATION  
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS**

# LEADERSHIP

## Ann Landis, GFWC Leadership Chairman

### Leading with Purpose in a Changing World

As GFWC volunteer leaders, we find ourselves in our clubs with women who are hungry for connection, clarity, and compassion. The most effective leaders today aren't defined by titles—they are defined by their willingness to step forward, lift others up, and create spaces where every voice matters. This is where GFWC clubwomen shine.

GFWC Leadership in today's world is increasingly collaborative. It calls us to share knowledge, mentor new volunteers, and recognize the quiet strengths in those around us. When we empower others, we multiply our impact. A single act of encouragement can give someone the confidence to take on a new role, speak up in a meeting, or launch a project that transforms a neighborhood.



I encourage each of you to look for opportunities to mentor, guide and inspire. Invite someone to join you in planning an event. Ask a new member for her ideas—and truly listen. Celebrate one another's gifts. These simple habits cultivate a culture where women feel supported and willing to lead.

Our clubs—and our communities—thrive when we step into leadership with purpose and generosity. Together, we can empower and educate others as we model the kind of leadership our world needs: bold, compassionate, and rooted in service.

Ann Landis, Chairman  
GFWC Southeastern Region  
[annlandis55@gmail.com](mailto:annlandis55@gmail.com)

Shelli Fehr  
GFWC Great Lakes Region  
[shellifehr@hotmail.com](mailto:shellifehr@hotmail.com)

Sandy Hauenstein  
GFWC Middle Atlantic Region  
[sandygfwc@outlook.com](mailto:sandygfwc@outlook.com)

Kathy Baker  
GFWC Mississippi Valley Region  
[bkbakers@gmail.com](mailto:bkbakers@gmail.com)

Anne Engelhardt  
GFWC New England Region  
[annehardt@comcast.net](mailto:annehardt@comcast.net)

Suzanne Simons  
GFWC South Central Region  
[srsimons@mac.com](mailto:srsimons@mac.com)

Shelli Pue  
GFWC Southern Region  
[shellipue1@gmail.com](mailto:shellipue1@gmail.com)

Carol Lopez Lucey  
GFWC Western States Region  
[cal1026ral@gmail.com](mailto:cal1026ral@gmail.com)



## Public Speaking

**Every clubwoman has a message worth sharing.** These helpful hints will guide you in crafting confident, engaging presentations that inform, inspire, elevate and educate. Step forward, speak boldly, and let your leadership shine. Use your voice to strengthen your club and community!



# THUMBS UP THURSDAY

## CRUSH YOUR NEXT SPEECH OR PRESENTATION

**1. HOOK NOT BIO**

- No polite warm-up, bio, or "Excited to be here"
- Start with a relevant question, bold claim, or short story

**2. START STILL**

- Walk out, plant your feet, pause for two seconds, then speak
- Let the room settle before you begin

**3. GROUP IN THREES**

- Break points into 3s - easy to follow and remember
- "Three things you'll learn today..." is magic

**4. SHORT STORIES**

- Keep stories under 90 seconds
- Use: Setting, conflict, payoff - and then cut the rest

**5. EDIT ACTIVELY**

- Replace passive voice and vague verbs (AI can help!)
- "it was launched" "We launched it"

**6. SPEAK TO 1 PERSON**

- Hold eye contact with 1 person per thought
- Then shift to another in a different area don't scan constantly



**7. MARK YOUR PAUSES**

- Add slashes (/) in your script where you want to pause.
- Don't just fill the space - silence can emphasize

**8. PUT AUDIENCE FIRST**

- Cut "I want to talk about..."
- Replace with "You'll walk away with..."

**9. MOVE ON TRANSITIONS**

- Step or gesture when changing topics not mid-point
- Stillness = power, movement = shift

**10. REHEARSE ALOUD**

- Practice standing, with voice at full volume
- Record yourself and watch for filler words, pacing, and fidgeting

**11. MEMORIZE BOOKENDS**

- Know your first and last 3 lines cold
- Everything else can be spoken from notes

**12. CIRCLE BACK**

- Echo your opening idea or line at the end
- It gives the audience closure and recall





## **GFWC LEADS—Leadership Education and Development Seminar**

States and Districts are encouraged to hold a LEADS program to identify and develop strong potential leaders prepared to assume club, District and State Federations leadership positions. By implementing a well-designed LEADS event, the leadership experience will be addressed, and the talent and enthusiasm of a trained, confident group of volunteers will be more effectively used. The individual members, as well as our organization and communities will benefit. State leadership can determine when the State Federation or District LEADS program is best conducted. The GFWC Leadership Committee can assist State and District leaders in creating half and full day events using materials available in the toolkit. States may choose to select one participant from their own LEADS Program to attend GFWC LEADS.

The following narratives are from two of the 2025 LEADS Graduates about their experience at the seminar.

### **What the GFWC LEADS Experience Meant to Me**

If you had told me yesterday that I'd leave this workshop with a national support network, I'd have asked you what cult did I join?

I was reminded that leadership isn't about having all the answers, -- it's about knowing who to call when you don't.

When I don't have those answers, I now know people from all time zones who are just as committed, curious and crazy as I am, and whom I'm sure can give me inspiration.

Leadership can be heavy. But today was energizing. The General Federation of Woman's Clubs doesn't just talk about support, they live it, they laugh, they listen, and they lift all of us up.

I'm leaving this gathering with a full notebook, a fuller inbox, and the hope that we're not just here to lead, we're here to lead together.

So, here's to the team we didn't know we had, and to never again having to lead alone.

**Charlotte Johnson – GFWC Monticello Woman's Cub, GFWC, Kentucky**

### **What the GFWC LEADS Experience Meant to Me**

Being in the LEADS program has opened doors I didn't even know were there! The opportunity to attend the annual GFWC Convention gave me more insight into the history, the projects and mutual goals that all members have contributed to over the years.

The seminars provided covered many topics that were relevant to membership in my Club as well as leadership roles I have assumed and will be assuming in the future. These seminars also gave valuable tips for dealing with day-to-day issues in my personal life, such as conflict resolution, prioritizing and organizational skills both at work and at home.

Developing skills in motivation, delegation and communication can help all leaders achieve the goals of their local, district, state and regional organizations.

I think one of the biggest takeaways was the value of collaboration. Learning about the ideas, programs and support available from Clubwomen throughout the country was very inspiring. Knowing that there are so many resources available, not only online and in the GFWC Club Manual, but also just an email or call away can make taking on leadership roles less stressful.

The LEADS training provided a very well planned out pathway to becoming successful in a GFWC leadership role. Being in this program with the other LEADS women was tremendously valuable. I would recommend the GFWC LEADS program to any member looking to increase their participation in GFWC.

**Lynne Sarro - Women's club of Madison, GFWC Connecticut**



**The following States offer LEADS at the State Level.  
Many other states offer Leadership Training at meetings.  
We know the value of training our leaders!**

**GFWC New England Region**

Massachusetts  
Maine  
New Hampshire

**GFWC Great Lakes Region**

Illinois  
Michigan  
Ohio  
Wisconsin

**GFWC Western Region**

California

**GFWC Middle Atlantic Region**

New York  
New Jersey  
Delaware  
Pennsylvania

**GFWC Mississippi Valley Region**

Kansas  
Missouri  
Minnesota

**GFWC South Central**

Texas  
Oklahoma

**GFWC Southeastern Region**

North Carolina  
Tennessee  
Virginia  
West Virginia  
Kentucky  
Maryland

**GFWC Southern Region**

Alabama  
Florida  
Georgia  
Mississippi  
South Carolina

**2025 Leadership TOP 10—Check out these 2 projects!**

**GFWC Woman’s Club of Colorado Springs (CO) – New Leaders Training**

The Woman’s Club of Colorado Springs believes in training new leaders. New Department Chairmen are given job descriptions, information, and training to be able to use the member portal. Each CSP chairman is charged with planning a club program. Before the club year begins, they meet to discuss their focus and plans for a program and possible projects. Members receive training on how to track programs, hours, and activities, and the importance of writing award entries is stressed.

**GFWC Tampa Woman’s Club (FL) – Fostering Inclusive and Dynamic Leadership**

The club launched a Google Form sign-up for board and chairman positions as a part of their commitment to fostering inclusive and dynamic leadership. Positions with detailed descriptions give members a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and time commitments. This innovative approach to leadership recruitment encourages greater engagement and transparency, allowing more members to step into leadership roles on a variety of levels. With appropriate training, the future is bright and exciting for this club.