

So what does a good PD look like?

1. A good PD is a strategist. He studies the market, evaluates his competitors' relative strengths and weaknesses, and adjusts the station's programming accordingly.
2. A good PD respects their staff and is careful always to treat them with respect.
3. A good PD is an eternal student. He's not ignorant enough to think he knows it all.
4. A good PD respects their audience. They understand that the radio station's mission is to serve its listeners.
5. A good PD teaches his air staff to respect the audience. They teach them how to talk to listeners on the phone and at personal appearances. He never speaks disparagingly of listeners, because he knows the air staff will follow his example.
6. A good PD becomes an expert in the community their station serves. Not just in their "target demo" but in the community at large: the neighborhoods, the schools, recreation, local politics. During their first week in the market, they went to the local library to check out (and read) a book about the city's history.
7. A good PD doesn't program his station based on research from another market.
8. A good PD does not allow anyone else to mess with their air talents. If the Station Manager is offended by something a jock said? Tell it to the PD, not to the jock. If the Salesperson gets a complaint from a client about something that happened on-air? Take it to the PD, not to the jock.
9. A good PD is consistent in his approach to programming and in his style of interacting with air talents. Before going to talk to the PD about something, the jocks don't ask each other, "Is he in a good mood day?"
10. A good PD develops healthy working relationships with the Station Manager, the Sales Manager, and the Engineer (all senior staff).
11. A good PD knows the names of the station's cleaning crew and makes sure they realise they're part of the team too. (Good for their morale. Also good for protecting against espionage by your competitors.)
12. A good PD understands that all air talents are eager for feedback.
13. A good PD regularly schedules aircheck critique sessions with all on-air people - including casuals.

14. A good PD expects each air personality to be better today than he or she was six months ago.
15. A good PD goes to their staff and asks, "What can I do to make it easier for you to do a great job every day?"
16. A good PD is intuitive when it comes to reading a shift in the market. Rarely is he surprised by a major shift in listener attitudes, because he pays more attention to his listeners than he does to their radio or record industry people.
17. A good PD is a coach. The team gets the credit when they win in the ratings; they shoulder most of the blame when they lose.
18. A good PD inspires. We should all be sold out to serve the vision and mission of the station.
19. A good PD motivates. Some people respond well to being dealt with firmly. Others require more gentle treatment. A good PD does not have only one way (his way) of motivating people, because that would limit his potential as a PD.
20. A good PD is Protector of the Brand. Their dedicates themselves to maintaining the programming promises the station makes to its listeners, and their fights against attempts squander listener goodwill (a successful station's biggest asset) for a few easy Sales dollars.
21. A good PD challenges his staff to improve, to try new things, to take risks - to discover new and better ways of delighting the audience.
22. A good PD helps staff members reach their potential. If after five years a jock leaves the station with no improvement in their ability to communicate to listeners over the radio and with no clearer career path, the PD has failed them.
23. A good PD creates a fun workplace.
24. A good PD creates the kind of atmosphere that makes people want to be there - even if it's for too many hours per week for too little pay.
25. A good PD challenges his air staff always to do better, never to be satisfied. We can always do a better job tomorrow than what we did today or yesterday.
26. A good PD often has the loneliest job in the building. Although they can act as friend and advisor to their jocks, they can't be their buddy. They can't party with them.

They can't be "one of the guys," because there will be times when their duty as PD would conflict with their role as close friend.

27. A good PD provides the air staff with the tools they need to do a good job.

If the air conditioning in the studio doesn't work or the chair squeaks or the "airtight" door won't quite close, the PD threatens, cajoles or pleads with whoever has the ability to fix it...until it's fixed.

28. A good PD never lets anyone in the building forget that it's all about the listener, not about us. This is something I've coached announcers in for decades. We are not there for our own comfort or entertainment, we are to serve our mission/vision and target.

29. A good PD wants to win and understands that "winning" is not "beating the competition." For as long as success is measured in ratings points, the radio station that wins is the one that earns the largest number of loyal listeners and rabid fans.

30. A good PD makes the air staff glad they chose radio as a career.