



PWOC

Protestant Women of the Chapel

Video clip/ computer
4 Targets/bulls-eyes
Tape
Bow & arrow
Chart paper/white
board & markers
Post-its

WORKSHOP: PWOC 101

by Julie McCammon

LEADER'S GUIDE

RELEVANCE: PWOC is a ministry of the Chaplain Corps of the United States military. Our organization has a rich history and operates in ways that are unique from civilian ministry. We reach a specific population, functioning in a role defined by our History, our Aims and our Mission. To be unaware of these core elements is to be limited in our effectiveness as a ministry.

CONTEXT: This workshop is intended to provide a basic, historical understanding of PWOC as a ministry. It is appropriate for training a new board, care group leaders, as well as the general PWOC population. Suggested series of workshops for an all-day board training: 1) PWOC 101 2) PWOC 201 3) Dressed for Success 4) Teamwork- Putting it all Together.

TIME: 80-90 minutes

HOOK YOUR AUDIENCE: (5 minutes)

Show the video "PWOC: Who We Are" available on TheHubPWOC.net.

I am so proud to be part of PWOC! Who we were in the 1950's is still recognizable today. We have the same motto and the same mission. We are workers together for Christ! We are *still* workers together for Christ.

Today we will be taking a look at our History, our Aims and our Mission. All three of these areas impact how we do business. Neglecting any of these core elements will naturally cause a shift away from who we are meant to be as Protestant Women of the Chapel. In order to retain our effectiveness, we must intentionally guard and nurture the distinctives that make us who we are as a ministry.



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MAKE YOUR POINT 1: Our History (10 minutes)

Take a minute to share part of your PWOC story with a partner. **How has PWOC been meaningful in your life?** *Allow a couple minutes for people to share in partners and then offer the opportunity for volunteers to share with the whole group.*

Experiences such as the ones you have just shared make you part of the long and enduring history of PWOC. Our unique experience as individuals adds to the collective voice of our story. We have the honor of stewarding an amazing ministry, birthed more than half-a-century ago. It's important for us to remember who we are and where we've come from so that we will understand where it is that we need to go.

Protestant Women of the Chapel has a vibrant history that dates back to Germany in the 1950's. Much of what PWOC is today as a ministry is exactly what it was at its beginnings. PWOC was established with the mission of serving alongside the Chaplain Corps to help minister to women in the chapel community; that remains true today. Leadership training and spiritual development have always been a part of who we are. Our boards have always been made up of all volunteers who have logged a staggering number of volunteer hours- all for love of God and His ministry. Tens of thousands of women have been involved in PWOC over the years from all corners of the globe. Our reach has been broad.

PWOC serves all Protestant denominations. We are not non-denominational, we are *multi-denominational*. Part of the appeal of our ministry is that we somehow get along! We major on the majors and minor on the minors. The result is a cross-section of Christianity that is nearly impossible to encounter in any other setting. We are radically diverse. We are diverse in church backgrounds, age, race, rank, enlisted v. officer, branches of service and active duty v. retired. Somehow we find our common ground and thrive there. The result is a slice of heaven here on earth. We admire and appreciate the broad brush strokes of our Creator, Whom we all reflect in our uniqueness.

PWOC was carried from Europe to the United States and around the world simply by individuals moving and taking their knowledge of the organization with them. Individual PWOCs sprang up all over the world. This is still happening today as our women move to locations that do not have a functional PWOC group. We're still having "babies." I wonder what that original core group from Germany would say if they could see who we have become.

Note to Trainer: Consider sharing some of your personal history with PWOC. Did you attend as a child? When were you first introduced? What has been significant or appealing about the ministry to you?



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Note to Trainer: Those interested in a thorough account of our PWOC History can find it in the PWOC Women's Ministry Manual, found both on TheHubPWOC.net and Chapnet.army.mil/pwoc/.

ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS 1: Why PWOC? (10 minutes)

Why PWOC? What makes us different from a women's ministry at a local church? Record answers on white board or chart paper. Answers may include some of the following:

- Many church denominations/ backgrounds
- A ministry TO the chapel vs. a ministry OF a church
- Military setting- meets needs unique to military culture
- Transient community
- Worldwide
- More diverse
- Represents more than one congregation
- Has a board with selected and appointed officers
- Develops leaders
- May offer multiple studies
- Programs
- Our 4 Aims

Note to Trainer: This discussion will recap the History section and will lay some ground work for the two sections that will follow on the Aims and our Mission- a "review-preview" approach. There should be a healthy sense of pride in who we are as a ministry. We are necessarily unique. As always, affirm those who contribute to the discussion. Everyone should have a voice and feel valued.

MAKE YOUR POINT 2: Our Aims (10 minutes)

As part of the classroom set-up, hang four different targets (bullseyes) labeled with: LEAD, TEACH, DEVELOP, INVOLVE. If possible, use large bullseyes intended for target practice. These create a great visual on the wall and also provide plenty of room for the Post-its, created by Participants in the Aims activity, to be displayed. Bring in a bow and arrow. Hold a brief discussion about what it would take for the arrow to hit the bullseye- what would I have to do? (Aim, use technique, stand in a certain location...). Apply this line of thinking to "hitting" the PWOC Aims.



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Briefly go over the PWOC Aims, taken from page 6 of the Women's Ministry Manual:

PWOC Aims

- To lead women to accept Christ as personal Savior and Lord
- To teach women the history, beliefs and programs of the Church, all built on a solid foundation of worship and Bible study
- To develop in women the skills of prayer, evangelism, stewardship and social service, against a background of personal spiritual development
- To involve women in the work of the chapel, in keeping with their abilities and interests

Short Version of Aims for Promotional Uses

- To LEAD women to Christ
- To TEACH women God's Word
- To DEVELOP women's spiritual gifts
- To INVOLVE women in Chapel ministries

The Aims are rooted in the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20: "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." Our ultimate goal is to make an eternal difference in the lives of our women. This focus distinguishes PWOC from relief organizations that may also involve women and allow them to exercise their gifts, but do not impact lives with the Gospel in a forever way.

Our PWOC Aims are meant to guide our leadership in planning activities and making decisions. The Aims define who we are as a ministry. All four Aims need to be present for PWOC to function properly. Consider for a moment what might happen if any one of the Aims were neglected. I'll start us off and then ask for your assistance.

- If Christ ceased to be at the center of our ministry (Aim #1), the landscape of PWOC would become vastly different. Certainly teaching women God's Word (Aim #2) would become irrelevant as well as developing spiritual gifts (Aim #3). Involving women in Chapel ministries (Aim #4) is meant to flow out of the first three. Obviously the impact of removing or neglecting the first Aim would be catastrophic for the ministry.
- If the second Aim were neglected, we would find ourselves a body of believers without a foundation- ignorant of the truth of God's Word. We'd then be in danger of making up our own religion- applying whatever is convenient, possibly adapting the status quo of what is culturally acceptable. What other consequences can you think of? *Allow input.*



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- What if we chose not to foster an environment in which our women could develop their spiritual gifts? This is perhaps the easiest Aim to let fall by the wayside. It takes time and intentional effort to educate, to inspire, to give room for practice and to foster growth in spiritual gifts. Perhaps the board is growing in this manner, but not necessarily the general PWOC body. What could be a potential downfall of neglecting this Aim? *Allow responses. Answers should include some of the following: not developing future leadership, creating a "top-heavy" environment of leadership rather than a ministry-team approach, individuals not reaching their potential, ministry opportunities missed, the PWOC body not benefitting because gifts remain dormant, individuals not aware of what they bring to the table- what their unique role in the body of Christ is.*
- What might happen if the fourth Aim were neglected? *Allow responses. Include the following if it is not mentioned in the discussion: The first three Aims show a progression. The natural next step is for our women to serve. If we are not involving our women in the ministry of PWOC and the work of the chapel, then we are stopping just short of the goal. Part of our identity as a ministry is to serve our chaplains and chapels, which we'll see in our section on Mission.*
- Having all four Aims operational creates a dynamic environment of ministry and growth available to all our women. We must be intentional- after all, in the words of Zig Ziglar, "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time."

ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS 2: (15-20 minutes)

Activity: Divide into four groups, one for each Aim (*if there are not enough attendees for four groups, have people work in pairs or have groups cover more than one Aim*). Use Sharpies and Post-it notes (one idea per Post-it) to record ways to "hit" each Aim. For example, "Bible studies" could be written on a Post-it for the second Aim: **TEACH women God's Word. What are specific ways your PWOC is (or can be) intentional to hit the Aim?** Write your ideas on Post-its and then stick them on the appropriate bullseye/Aim displayed on the wall. *Encourage participants to display their work and then "tour" the other Aims. You might suggest they take pics of the bullseyes, or note helpful ideas in their Participant's Guide.*

Note to Trainer: Circulate among the groups while discussion is going on. Provide guidance as needed. Help involve members of each small group who seem unengaged.



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MAKE YOUR POINT 3: Our Mission (10 minutes)

"PWOC functions under the authority of the Chaplaincy. The ministry is designed to help Chaplains minister to women associated with the military, especially those who participate in a military chapel. This mission remains unchanged." (*Women's Ministry Manual*, "Abbreviated History" p.24)

Look at the *Definition of a PWOC Group* taken from the *Women's Ministry Manual*, p. 6. Circle the words "chaplain" and "chapel" as you read through.

A PWOC group meets the following criteria:

1. Operates under the oversight of a designated Protestant Chaplain
2. Is the extension of Protestant U.S. military chapel(s) of a military installation designed specifically to minister to women associated with the military
3. Supports and assists the Protestant Chaplains and their ministries
4. Is located on a U.S. military installation
5. Ministers to women by promoting and fulfilling the purpose of PWOC expressed by the four PWOC Aims
6. Welcomes women of any Protestant background and from a variety of Protestant military chapel services (Traditional, Gospel, Contemporary, Liturgical, etc.) as well as those who attend church off of the military installation
7. Is led by a board of women that consists of at least two selected officers
8. Uses the Women's Ministry Manual – Leaders' Guidelines for PWOC as its operating sourcebook

Four out of eight on this list of criteria deal directly with the Chaplaincy and Chapel congregations.

The PWOC President is under the authority of the Chaplain Advisor/Sponsor, appointed by the Garrison/ Installation Chaplain. A common mistake is to assume that the chaplaincy (chaplains, chaplain assistants, office staff) is under obligation to serve PWOC, when in fact, just the opposite is true. We exist to serve the chaplaincy. We are designed to come alongside to complement the ministry of the Chaplain Corps.

What happens when we get that backwards? Describe what can happen when a PWOC sees the Chapel staff as their staff. *Allow input. The result of this discussion should reveal the ugliness of entitlement or a "serve-me" attitude.*



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That PWOC exists at all is God's mercy. We must be grateful people. We are not entitled to a budget or to watchcare, to free books, to retreats, or to anything else. We are by nature servants. We must approach this ministry with the heart of a servant. Jesus is our greatest example of what it means to be a servant leader. If anyone was ever entitled to red-carpet treatment, it was Him. And yet He served. He stuns us by taking the basin and washing His disciples' feet- the job of the lowest servant. He says, "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." John 13:13-17.

Stunning, isn't it? Just hours following this scene, Jesus is hanging on the Cross- paying for my sin- *my sin*. We have been given much, have we not? We must be grateful, gracious, serving women of the chapel. Anything less than that is less than who we are and Whose we are.

ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS 3: (15 minutes)

Activity: Keeping the example of Jesus in mind as well as the PWOC mission to serve the chaplaincy and our military chapels, **what are some practical ways we can come alongside our chaplains and chapels to bless them and offer support?**

Work in a small group of no more than 4 people. Take about 10 minutes to record your ideas on a sheet of chart paper. You will have the opportunity to share your ideas.

Again, circulate among the groups. Encourage, affirm, and help all the women feel like they have valuable ideas to contribute.

If small groups are willing, have them post their chart paper brainstorm on the wall. Have the large group do a gallery walk to view the answers of the other groups. Encourage them to make note of helpful ideas.

Note to Trainer: Make sure groups stay focused on the goal of the brainstorm session- thinking of practical ways to bless chaplains and offer support. If discussion turns toward complaint, remind them of the example of Christ and redirect the conversation.



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APPLY IT TO LIFE: (10 minutes)

Let's take a couple minutes to reflect. We talked about our rich history- the longevity and broad reach of our ministry. We talked about our Aims and how they define who we are and how we operate. We talked about our mission to serve the Chaplaincy. How does this apply to you and/or your PWOC? What are you taking away from this workshop? Take a minute to write something down and then we'll share out.

What I'm taking away from this workshop: _____

Allow a whole-group discussion. Give everyone who would like to share their answer the opportunity to do so.



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