Resources for Student Leaders

This handbook covers information about how to start and operate an organization while staying within the boundaries of the policies set forth by the University of Mary Washington and the Office of Student Activities and Engagement. It provides students and faculty with the information about the offices and resources available to student organizations/clubs on campus.

This section, however, is primarily for organization and campus leaders. The SAE staff compiled several resource files we think will be beneficial to you as leaders, and your organizations. This file covers a range of topics from leadership skills to delegating tasks and recruiting new members. It serves as a resource to help you manage your club more efficiently and alleviate stress. Feel free to share these pages with other members of your group. These resources are available online as well:

* Getting Started as a Leader
* Deciding on a Style of Leadership
* The 10 Commandments for Effective Leadership
* Recruitment and Retention of Members
  + Recruiting New Members
  + Finding Those New Members
  + The Golden Rules of Recruitment
  + Retention
* Basic Needs of People in Groups
* 5 Phases in the Creative Process
* Managing with Creativity
* What is Creative Thinking?
* How to Stifle Creativity . . . Without Really Trying
* Group Decisions
* Brainstorming
* Delegating Responsibility
  + Guidelines for Effective Delegation
  + Working with Student Committees/Volunteers
  + Successful Techniques for Group Negotiations
* When Delegation Fails
* Effective Meeting Checklist
* Minutes and Record Keeping
* Time Management
* Leadership Transition
  + Using a Transition Notebook

Getting Started as a Leader

Congratulations! Your peers have elected you as a student leader; you are feeling great! Yet, you are most likely a bit scared, too. You’ve received the position you’ve wanted for so long, but perhaps you are experiencing a little doubt—you want to give it your all and be the best officer your organization ever elected; you want everything perfect for the first time and no mistakes. These are wonderful intentions, though perhaps somewhat unrealistic. People are fallible and mistakes are inevitable. However, success is more than possible and below there are a few ideas to jumpstart your thinking so you can avoid many of the common pitfalls and transition to a smooth new start in your position. So, relax, get comfortable, and read on!

**IF:** You want to learn more about leadership opportunities, such as leadership classes, conferences, institutes, handouts and other resource materials…

**THEN:** Come to the SAE office and speak with a member of our staff. A number of your questions might also be answered by reviewing the Student Organization Handbook online.

**IF:** Your organization has an office in the SAE suite…

**THEN:** Submit a list of the names of your members that will require keys and after hour access using their student ID card, and make sure you and your members check out keys to your office from the front office in SAE.

**IF:** You are seeking financial support from the Finance Committee…

**THEN:** prepare a budget and submit it to the Finance Committee. Make sure to sign up to meet with the committee. Requests are due by 4 pm on the Thursday before the Sunday night Finance Committee meeting at which you wish your request to be heard. See the Finance section of this handbook for more information on the Finance Committee.

**IF:** Your organization has a Treasurer…

**THEN:** Make sure he or she keeps an up-to-date financial record.

**IF:** Your organization has a Historian…

**THEN:** Have the exiting officers submit an end‐of‐the‐year report to him or her recounting their work for the organization.

**IF:** Your organization has a Secretary…

**THEN:** Affirm that he or she has everything he or she needs from the previous secretary (i.e. meeting minutes, membership rosters, etc.).

**IF:** You would like to have a smoothly running organization right from the start…

**THEN:** Have the exiting officers provide transitional training to the new or incoming officers through written and orally guided instruction.

**IF:** You need to learn how to reserve a room in a campus building, use campus vans, or another of the dozens of University services…

**THEN:** Ask us in SAE!

Deciding on a Style of Leadership

The style of leadership that you choose will have a tremendous impact on your organization. You want to develop a style that you feel comfortable with and that will motivate the members of your organization to achieve the group’s goals. What might prove helpful is to examine the styles of the previous officers. Write down what you like and dislike about the method in which goals were or were not achieved, and why. By doing so, you can discover what you believe is important to the organization.

For instance:

* Are you people‐oriented (Focusing mainly on ***how*** your members are doing); or

are you task‐oriented? (Focusing on ***what*** your members are doing)

* Do you place a high priority on relationships (camaraderie), or is it more important to get a job done?
* Should all the members contribute to decisions, or should the officers decide the organization’s goals and then present them to the group?
* Will you achieve goals by “going it alone” or by forming different committees (e.g., social committee, publicity committee)?
* What would you suggest the group goals might be for the year?

Ultimately, which style (i.e., authoritarian, consensus, participative, etc.) – in your judgment – would help the organization accomplish its goals most effectively in each situation?

As you develop your Style of Leadership, review the following resources included in this handbook periodically. Some sections may not apply right now, but there will be times when they will and having some insights will help you become a better leader and ultimately, help you define your leadership style.

The 10 Commandments for Effective Leadership

1. Believe in someone (or something) other than yourself.
2. Listen to others.
3. Work with the team. Never be a loner.
4. Be considerate of different opinions.
5. Stand up for what you believe in—even when you’re criticized for it.
6. Be a peacemaker.
7. Be patient with others, even though they may not agree with you.
8. Stick to the promises you make (write them down so you remember them).
9. Work hard.
10. Thank people for what they do, even though you may not receive thanks for what you do.

Recruitment and Retention of Members

**Recruitment.** It’s the challenging, exciting, and often frustrating experience of bringing new members (and therefore new energy, new initiative, and new ideas) into your organization. When thinking of new members, focus on:

* Attracting people to your organization.
* Giving them reasons to stay once they join.

# Recruiting New Members

People join organizations for many reasons: they want to get involved, meet people, make new friends, explore interests, develop leadership skills, and have fun. Groups need new members because they bring new ideas and talents, in addition to replacing old members.

With over 130 existing groups on campus, as well as new organizations forming, it is vital that an organization has a well-conceived and well-executed recruitment and retention plan. These pages are designed to assist you in the development of such a plan.

FIRST, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT BOTH THE LEADERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP KNOW AND UNDERSTAND YOUR ORGANIZATION.

Have a meeting to review and discuss your organizational goals and objectives. Are they still accurate? Is it time to update them? Where would the group like to be in six months? A year? During this “organizational housekeeping” process, a certain theme or direction should become clear. These themes can then be crafted into organizational goals. What types of people do you need to help the group move toward those goals? Who would complement your current membership? It may be useful to develop a member profile, outlining the type of individual that would most likely be interested in your club, a target group of sorts.

Now that you know the types of people you are interested in, your next step is to set some recruitment goals. How many new members can your organization reasonably assimilate into the group? Will you allow people to join at any time or only during a designated recruitment period? Will you hold a mass meeting or is membership by invitation only? Then design your recruitment strategy, keeping in mind your member profile. What places do these prospective members most likely frequent? Do they have special interests? What kind of publicity would attract their attention? But most of all, try to think back to when you first became involved. What attracted you? How were you recruited? If you weren’t recruited at all, how did you hear about the group? Why have you stayed involved?

# Get Everyone Involved

Have your current members identify people they know who may want to join and personally invite them to attend a meeting. Word‐of‐mouth is the best form of publicity, and least expensive too. Talk about your group.

Recruitment campaigns need to have a visual element as well. Have those members with “artistic talents” work on your posters, fliers, and banners, etc. Be creative. Your publicity can be effective only if it’s noticed. Many groups find it beneficial to have a special welcome meeting for their new members. Group participation in some form of official initiation or induction process is one way to make your members feel wanted, needed, and appreciated. It helps to form a unique and memorable bond between old and new members and will help increase your retention rate.

However you choose to welcome your new members, it is important to include some form of group orientation program. Many groups skip this and begin by getting new members immediately involved in group projects. Although new member involvement is essential, it is equally important to orient them to your group’s goals and objectives, organizational structure, rules and norms. This de-mystifies the group and helps the members feel more comfortable with the group, fostering understanding of group processes. Proper orientation leads to better understanding, more commitment and much less frustration or tension among members.

# Finding Those New Students

Prior to actual recruitment, you should have already spent some time with your current members defining the purpose of your organization, and identifying the benefits of membership in your group. It's helpful to be able to tell potential members what your group does and what they will gain from their involvement. Establish goals for the current year and plan a few activities consistent with your Statement of Purpose (refer to your club’s Mission Statement).

***Ten Ways to Recruit New Students:***

1. Talk to your friends or students you believe would be interested in the activities of your organization. Tell people what you have to offer them. Ask them about themselves (and really listen). Tell them how the organization can benefit from someone like them. Let them know how their talents, skills and interests would help the organization.
2. Send out general notices or brochures, and use the SAE Weekly News or the campus newspaper to advertise how and when students may sign up to join your organization. Keep notices short and appealing. Include some of the benefits of involvement.
3. Sign up for a table at Club Carnival each fall and spring and use the space to gather names of interested students. Personally invite these students to a meeting - it is easier to "say no" to a poster than to "say no" to a person.
4. Have each existing member bring in one new member to the next meeting.
5. Talk to the RA's and ask them if they know of students who may be interested in joining your organization. This can be done periodically throughout the year.
6. Set up a table in the Woodard Campus Center lobby with a display highlighting some of the activities sponsored by your group.
7. If your group is sponsored by an academic department, ask for a few moments in each class offered by the department to make a pitch.
8. Keep your group as visible to the rest of the campus as possible. If you plan to order club shirts, do it at the beginning of the year when students are looking for new ways to get involved and have your members wear them on club meeting days.
9. If you need students with special talents (i.e. artists, musicians) or if your organization's purpose attracts certain majors, ask faculty in that department for suggestions. Academic Departments may also allow associated student groups to advertise on specific bulletin boards or in departmental publications.
10. Follow up all possibilities ... make sure each interested individual is personally contacted. Sending special invitations is another nice way to invite new members. Keep talking with those who don't appear at the meetings. They may still be interested but are unsure about your group and may need convincing.

# The Golden Rules of Recruitment

***Be ready with specific tasks for new recruits:***

* Have a clear idea of what you’re recruiting for.
* Develop a well-defined problem for new recruits to handle.
* Give them a realistic strategy for addressing it and a concrete, feasible way to implement the solution.

***Use active recruitment technique:***

* Try direct, person-to-person contact.
* Speak in classes and to other campus groups.
* Speak in residence halls and hand out flyers at events.

***Follow up as soon as possible after the initial contact:***

* Make a telephone call or schedule an individual meeting, depending on the person’s sense of involvement.
* Invite them to lunch and ask other new contacts as well as other members to join you.
* Follow up within a day or two, maximum, after your initial contact.

Recruitment doesn’t end with the initial contact – you have to find ways to make new recruits feel welcomed, productive and wanted!

# Retention

**So You Have Some New Members. Now What?**

After you’ve successfully completed your recruitment and orientation, spend time getting to know the membership and let them get to know you too. Don’t forget your old members since without them, you wouldn’t have had a group for your new members to join. Talk to all new members about their skills, interests and previous experiences. Once you have this information, it will be easy to get them involved in your group’s projects. To be sure that their first organizational experience is a positive one, assign new members tasks that are well within their skill level and that they can successfully accomplish.

***PEOPLE JOIN ORGANIZATIONS FOR MANY REASONS:***

* to meet new friends.
* to have their opinions heard.
* because they have a particular skill or interest they want to express.
* to satisfy needs for affiliation, power, or achievement.
* because they like to be involved in decision-making.
* because they want to learn new skills.
* because they want to list their student activities on their resume.

Basically, people join to have their needs met.

***PEOPLE STAY IN ORGANIZATIONS FOR MANY REASONS:***

* because they are making new friends and enjoying it.
* because they are learning and growing.
* because something is being accomplished that they can take pride in.
* because they feel their opinion and work are valued.
* because they feel they are appreciated.

People continue their involvement because they feel needed and their absence would be noticed. Schedule convenient and regular meeting times, make these meetings worthwhile and organized. Also keep members informed; especially those who can't make the meetings due to other commitments or conflicts.

***THE PRESIDENT OF THE ORGANIZATION CAN HELP GROUP MEMBERS MEET THEIR NEEDS:***

* by taking time to get to know each member personally.
* by showing an interest in the total person instead of just what happens at a meeting.
* by delegating tasks to different members so that each has a reason to come to meetings and to stay in the group.
* by encouraging shy members to speak up.
* by having the entire membership decide democratically on programs.
* by providing the information a member needs to work on a task he/she has been given.
* by providing and maintaining an environment at meetings where members feel safe to speak up and offer different opinions.

Especially at the beginning of the year or semester, make time to have new and old members interact and become acquainted.

***Finally....***

Allow your new members time to get involved and feel comfortable with the group. After a semester, have them participate in a group evaluation process. Go over your organizational goals and objectives and look at your plans for the future. Ask for their feedback and input. It is a known fact that people are more committed and motivated if they feel that they have a stake in what’s going on. Have them help to shape the organization but also have time to socialize and celebrate your achievements. If all you do as a group is work, it will become a burden to participate and your members will quickly lose interest. After all, what is an organization without members? What good is a recruitment campaign if no one stays? Make sure that you have fun while you work!

Basic Needs of People in Groups

Dear Leader,

If you want my loyalty, interest and best efforts as a group member, you must take into account the fact that ...

1. I need a SENSE OF BELONGING

* + - A feeling that no one objects to my presence
    - A feeling that I am sincerely welcome
    - A feeling that I am honestly needed for my total self, not just for   
       my hands, my money, etc.

2. I need to have a share in planning the group goals. (My need will be satisfied only when I feel that my ideas had a fair hearing.)

3. I need to feel that the goals are within reach and that they   
make sense to me.

4. I need to feel that what I'm doing contributes to human   
welfare - that its value extends beyond the group itself.

5. I need to share in making the rules of the group - the rules   
by which, together, we shall live and work toward our goals.

6. I need to know in some clear detail just what is expected of   
me so that I can work confidently.

7. I need to have responsibilities that challenge, that are within the   
range of my abilities and that contribute toward reaching our   
goals.

8. I need to see that progress is being made toward the goals we   
have set.

9. I need to be kept informed. What I'm not up on, I may be down on.

10. I need to have confidence in our leader; confidence that is based upon assurance of consistent fair treatment, of recognition when it is due and trust that loyalty will bring increased security.

IN BRIEF: The situation in which I find myself must make sense to me regardless of how much sense it makes to the leader.

5 Phases of the Creative Process

Creativity requires all involved to put forth a great deal of effort. This process tests the ability of groups to work together as a team to develop a concept, to openly discuss options without fear of reprisals, to allow each member to dream their dreams, and to learn more about each other while doing so!

In their book *The Creative Manager*, Russel and Evans have identified 5 phases in the Creative Process:

* **Preparation:** Involves analyzing the task, gathering data, looking for patterns, trying out ideas, and questioning assumptions.
* **Frustration:** Occurs when we are unable to resolve the issue; feel bored, irritated or despondent; and doubt our own ability.
* **Incubation:** Occurs when we give up trying, put the issue on hold, and hand it over to the unconscious mind.
* **Insight:** The inspiration, the “aha”, the moment we normally associate with creativity.
* **Working out:** Involves testing our insights and giving them form.

(Excerpt from Russel, P. and Evans, R. (1992). *The Creative Manager*. San Francisco:

Jossey-Bass.)

Managing with Creativity

**To prepare your group to embark on the Creative Process, ask them to work through the following exercise:**

To have a creative environment, we need to think in terms of what we can do and not focus on, or concern ourselves with, the outcome. Let your mind wander through all of the possibilities.

As a rule, our society does not allow us to fail or to take risks. We are taught to think of things in certain terms or in certain ways.

1. For example, given the Roman number IX (nine), change it to 6 given one single line to work with.

[Answer: Add a double curved line, or S, in front of the IX.]

1. Given the Roman number IX (nine), change it to 6 using any combination of symbols or characters.

[Answer: I X 6 = 6]

But how many of us would have thought of those approaches to solving the problem?

1. Look at the following and determine which is different:

A B C D

1. Has no points
2. Has no curves
3. Semi-circle made up of a straight and curved line
4. Symmetrical curves joined together at the ends

[Answer: They’re all different, yet they all share one thing in common. They’re all solids; completely enclosed areas.]

Use these to get the Creative Process started with your group. The group will be surprised on how they may have allowed their frustrations or inability to see a new solution to get them to put an idea on hold or even give-up while others will see how working together to determine a solution pays off!

# What is Creative Thinking?

*"Creative thinking requires an attitude that allows you to search for ideas and manipulate your knowledge and experience." - Roger von Oech*

Ten mental blocks to creative thinking:

\* The right answer \* That's not my area  
\* That's not logical \* Don't be foolish

\* Follow the rules \* Avoid ambiguity   
\* Be practical \* To err is wrong

\* Play is frivolous \* I'm not creative

When we use terms like "logic", "reason", "focused", or "exact", we are using words associated with our practical side. But terms like "metaphor", "humor", "play", or "dream", are associated with our creative or "fun" side.

We've been taught to be governed by rules. This can block our creative approach as we start to look for patterns to determine the idea's to pursue.

Example: Given 1 - 4 - 9 - 16 - 25, what's next (36)

We watch patterns in our society to determine the next move.

Consider the phrase "Rules are meant to be broken"; a new pattern can develop, thereby bringing about a change in the pattern. Sometimes breaking the rules may bring good solutions.

“Be practical” means to think in terms of the norm. Sometimes it is better to think in terms of “what if” and imagine how others would do it.

When we say play is frivolous, we sit and wait for instructions. We forget how to play; how to turn an uncomfortable situation into fun; how to make it into a game.

When we avoid involvement in another area, we start to become experts in our own area as we learn more and more about it. However, we tend to forget about all of the other people around us (kind of like the research professor). What could a coach and Student Activities Director learn from the other? Both use practice, evaluation, training aids, & goals to explore how others do it in their respective areas. Both are looking for ways to get their message across. Maybe one has the solution the other needs, but they'll never know if they avoid involvement with each other.

Avoid ambiguity? People are the only ones who can be ambiguous since it relies on   
language as a vehicle to get the message across.

Example: Remove 6 letters to come up with a common word in the English language from the following: BSAI NXLEATNTEA RS

[Answer: Banana]

This exercise used an ambiguous statement to allow you to come up with your creative   
response.

Society wants us to conform and lives by the rule "The nail that sticks up gets hammered down". Instead, we should let the nail stick up or stick our heads out once in a while. Instead of "don't be foolish", learn to reverse your thinking.

To err is wrong? We all remember our successes. But we tend to forget the number of   
failures it took to get there. Without failure, we don't look at solutions to possible problems (we don't want to be wrong). Failures are excellent opportunities to learn: about ourselves, our organization, and ways to do things better in the future.

To all who say, "I'm not creative" - the answer is “FALSE.” You create your own self prophecy.

To work creatively:

* Be dissatisfied
* Map out your plans
* Take a whack at it
* Get support
* Have something at stake
* Get rid of excuses
* Be courageous
* Give yourself a deadline
* Fight for it
* Be persistent

Following this system will help you to increase your level of creativity.

# How to Stifle Creativity – Without Really Trying!

You’ve heard them all before but have you ever looked at a list like this and asked yourself why you let concepts like these stop you and your group from exploring a new idea? Check the list over – you’ll be surprised how many times someone has used these phrases!

A great idea but . . . We've never done it that way

It won't work It's not our job

We don’t have time Too expensive

We've tried that before Not ready for it yet

Good idea but our club is different It's not good enough

There are better ways than that What will the administration think?

It’s against club policy Who do you think you are?

You haven’t considered . . . We don’t have the money

Sounds foolish Let’s not step on anyone’s toes

Too modern Too old fashioned

Let’s discuss it at some other time You don’t understand your problem

Why start anything now? They won’t understand

They won’t use it We have too many people now

That’s not how we do things here What bubblehead thought that idea up?

I just know it won’t work Let’s form a committee

Let’s be practical We need to study this more

That’s not our problem Our President says it stinks

Too many headaches We don’t know anything about it

Why waste time on that?

Think about it! Your group can spend time using these excuses or they can spend their time coming up with great ideas! *The choice is yours!!!*

Group Decisions

Every day, we all make decisions. Some decisions common to all students are:

* What time to get up and what time to go to sleep
* Whether or not to shower
* Whether or not to go to class
* What to eat, when, and where
* What time you will study and where

These are all decisions that you make as a student as you manage your daily routine.

So, what types of decisions do clubs make?

* Meeting day and time
* Meeting agenda
* Election of officers
* Programs to sponsor
* Whether or not to form a specific committee
* To co-sponsor at an event
* Community service programs
* How to recruit new members
* How to advertise events and programs

How do clubs make these? What are the factors that help them make these decisions?

What should the group look for when choosing a specific path?

Groups use the personal likes and dislikes of their members; the relationships and personalities of the people involved; and their values (things they have great feelings or passion for) as they make decisions.

Start by identifying some of the factors that affect how decisions are made:

* **Lack of Time:** Membership involvement takes time, and membership involvement is essential to quality decision making and to member commitment to a decision. To avoid pitfalls, stay on top of things and plan ahead - anticipate problems. To "take the time" may require extra meetings, special committees, and/or taking time from other priorities.
* **Lack of Skills:** Before making a decision, did your group look at:
  + Clarity - Are we sure we understand what this decision means? Are we clear on what the problem really is? Before making a decision, we must identify the problem, define the problem, find ways to solve it, and discuss the ramifications for each course of action. What does it mean if we go down this path?
* Gathering all of the information needed - By knowing all of the facts, we will be able to choose a course of action. Explore each of the alternatives fully. Appoint a recorder to take down all ideas.
* Group communication - Was everyone's opinion voiced or did someone monopolize the group or stifle discussion? Was everyone who needed to be there present to offer their opinion? Here's a perfect opportunity for group "brainstorming".
* Premature decisions - is it too early to make this decision? Do you have all of the facts?
* Climate - Are we comfortable in making this decision? Was the atmosphere in the room supportive, trusting and cooperative? If so, even the shyest of people will feel comfortable in offering their opinion.
* Conformity - Are we deciding this because that's what's expected of us? Is this the way we always do it? Am I voting for this because everyone else feels I should? Am I conforming to what someone in the group wants to avoid a confrontation with them? Did someone in the group slow down the development of different or diverse ideas?
* Inquiry/problem-solving skills - Do we possess good inquiry skills? Do we pose good questions? Do members feel comfortable speaking out in this group?
* Motivation - Why are we making this decision? Are we being persuaded to make a decision because someone else feels the need for an immediate solution? Does everyone see the importance of the problem and the necessity for a solution?

# What to look for during Group Decision Making Process

* Participation: Look at the differences in the amount of participation among   
  members. Who are the high participators? Who are the low participators?   
  Has there been a shift in the level of participation in any one person?
* How are silent people treated? Is their silence treated as consent? Disagreement? Disinterest? Who talks to whom? Who keeps the ball rolling?
* Influence: Some people may speak very little and still capture the attention of the whole group. Others may talk a lot only to be tuned out or ignored by the group. Influence may be negative or positive; it can enlist the support or cooperation of others, or alienate them. Which members are high in influence? (i.e. who's listened to when they speak?) Which members are low in influence? (i.e., who isn't followed or listened to?) Is there any shifting in influence? When? Is there a struggle for leadership? What effect does this have on the membership?

**Consider the individual “Styles” of the membership:**

* Autocrat: Tries to impose his values or will on other members of the group. Pushes for support of his decisions. Evaluates or passes judgment on other group members. Blocks action when it doesn't move in the direction they desire. Pushes to get the group organized.
* Peacemaker: Eagerly supports other member's decisions. Consistently tries to avoid conflict or unpleasant feelings.
* Laissez faire: Gets attention by their apparent lack of involvement. Goes along with group decisions without committing one way or the other. Seems to be withdrawn or uninvolved. Does not initiate activity. Participates only in response to another member’s questions.
* Democrat: Tries to include everyone in a group decision or discussion. Expresses his feelings and opinions openly and directly without evaluating or judging others. Appears open to feedback and criticisms. When feelings and tension run high, tries to deal with the conflict in a problem-solving way.

**Some Reasons for Group Indecision**

* **Fear of consequences:** Are members concerned with what others will think of the group or individual members? Of the decision? Many will ask themselves if they will be expected to act differently due to this decision.
* **Conflicting loyalties:** Everyone belongs to groups other than this one. This can cause indecisive or impulsive decisions due to divided loyalties.
* **Interpersonal conflict:** Sometimes members/leaders feel it is more important to defeat or defend against other persons or factions in the group than it is to hear and weigh the contributions of those others. Don’t treat contributions by their sources or "personalities"; treat them by their merits in relation to the problem your group is trying to solve.

Is your group stumped for new ideas? Do you do the same activities the same way year after year? Do the leaders and just a few others seem to do all the talking?

Brainstorming

Brainstorming may be just the technique to rejuvenate your organization and get everyone excited and involved. The purpose of brainstorming is to get out as many ideas as possible – the more you have to choose from, the better your final choice will be! You can use brainstorming for almost anything: program ideas, themes, slogans, publicity, group goals and problem solving. The rules for brainstorming are quite simple. Just be sure the group understands them and someone has the job of making sure they are followed.

1. Set a time limit–10 to 20 minutes, depending upon the size of your group and the complexity of the issue.

2. The best group size is 3‐15 people. If you have more than 15, break into smaller groups and brainstorm simultaneously.

3. The question or issue must be one about which all participants can speak. Focus on only one issue at time.

4. Record all responses on a whiteboard, flip chart, or big sheets of newsprint so everyone can see them. Don’t record the name of the person suggesting. Record only key words and phrases, not word for word.

**Explain or Post the Following Rules:**

1. Do not discuss ideas.
2. Do not criticize, praise or judge.
3. Be spontaneous–no hand‐raising, just call out.
4. Repetitions are ok.
5. Quantity counts.
6. Build on each other’s ideas–”hitch‐hiking” or “piggy‐backing” is encouraged.
7. Enjoy the silences‐often the best ideas come out of them.
8. It is okay to be outrageous, even silly.

**Make Good Use of Members’ Creativity:**

1. If several groups brainstormed the same idea, put the final lists on the wall and let everyone read each other’s work.
2. Group ideas into related categories for review.
3. Decide which ideas are most promising and which can be eliminated; this can be done by putting pluses and minuses by items.
4. Rank those ideas which are most promising.
5. Select those with greatest potential and high‐ranking priority for either implementation or refinement by committee or the group.
6. Follow‐up. If the ideas are to be implemented successfully by the group or by committee, ask for updates on a regular basis.
7. Review and evaluate your ideas as they are being implemented. Make any changes deemed necessary by the group.
8. Be sure to utilize the ideas generated. It is extremely demoralizing for a group to invest its time, energy and creativity and have the idea disappear. Seeing your ideas come to fruition however, is extremely rewarding.

Delegating Responsibility

How can you help people in your organization prepare for future leadership roles and free up more time in your schedule so you can do other things? DELEGATION.

Delegation is the key to a successful organization. Sharing responsibilities keeps members interested and enthusiastic about the group. You might be reluctant to delegate because you want to make sure the job is done right, but you risk allowing members to feel unimportant if you do not share the responsibility of making the organization a success.

**Good Reasons to Delegate:**

1. The group benefits:
   * Members become more involved and committed.
   * More projects and activities are undertaken.
   * There is a greater chance that projects will be completed.
   * There are increased opportunities for members to develop leadership their skills.
   * More of a chance to fill leadership roles with qualified, experienced people.
   * The organization operates more smoothly.
2. The leaders benefit by:
   * Not being over‐worked.
   * Gaining satisfaction as they see members grow and develop.
   * Acquiring more experience in executive and administrative functions.

**Appropriate Times to Delegate:**

* When there is a lot of work.
* When a member has particular qualifications for or interest in a task.
* When someone can benefit from the responsibility.
* When routine matters need more attention.

**Do NOT Delegate when:**

* The task is something no one wants to do.
* Someone is under- or over-qualified for the task.
* The work is your own specified responsibility.
* The area is an issue that deals with the personal feelings of another or is something that should be kept confidential.

**There are Many Ways to Delegate, such as:**

* Ask for volunteers by a show of hands or passing around a sign‐up sheet.
* Appoint or suggest someone. Sometimes a member lacks self‐confidence and will not volunteer; appointing him/her demonstrates your confidence in him/her.
* Assign the task to a committee. This takes the pressure off an individual and reinforces organizational structure.
* Trying to find the best fit of a person with the task is most effective. Try to spread the enjoyable and responsible tasks around, making your members feel more valuable.

# Guidelines for Effective Delegation

1. Choose the appropriate people by interviewing prospects for each job and then placing your members carefully. Consider his/her availability, interests, experience, and capabilities.
2. Explain why he or she was selected for a particular task.
3. Discuss the task at hand. Discuss ideas and mutually set goals and objectives.
4. Whenever possible, give those who will be responsible for carrying out a program a voice in the decision-making process.
5. Clearly define responsibilities delegated to each person. Explain what is to be expected of the person assigned to the task at the beginning of your delegation. Be sure an agreement is reached on areas where the person may function freely and where he or she should conform to specific guidelines. Everyone accomplishes tasks differently, so allow for individuals to get things done in their own way as long as the job is done in a timely manner.
6. Implement a communication plan so you will know when your members need help. Make sure your members understand that you are willing to assist, but must first be told when and how you can help. Give accurate and honest feedback. People want and deserve to know how they are doing—this is both an opportunity for allowing satisfaction and encouraging growth. Allow for risk-taking and mistakes.
7. Support your officers and committee chairs by sharing information, knowledge and plans with them. It is incredible how many errors are made simply due to a lack of information and a steady flow of communication between leaders and group members. Share failures as well as successes.
8. Step back. Most responsible people do not appreciate someone looking over their shoulder or taking back parts of their assignment before they receive a chance to finish it. As a leader, it can be hard for you to “let go;” most likely, you like being the person that gets the work done, but let them do the job!
9. Follow up. Check periodically to see if people have questions regarding how a project is supposed to be completed. This will allow you to observe how the individual is progressing on the task. There is a fine line between following‐up and controlling.
10. Evaluation. You must not overlook the need to evaluate to the extent to which actions conformed to plans, if the plans went well or if the original plans were appropriate and worthwhile. Use appropriate feedback techniques. One of your most important roles as a leader is to help your members to learn and grow through both their successes and their failures. Your members are your greatest resource, let them create and turn their creativity into action!

# Working with Student Committees/Volunteers

Many times students volunteer to help with programs or special committees. These students are unique in that they are volunteering their time for the benefits of others, and they should be treated accordingly. Listed below are some important tips for working with volunteers.

* Give each individual a specific responsibility.
* Encourage ideas from members and utilize them or parts of them.
* Ask opinions of various students and if needed, shape their ideas but don't force yours.
* Explain aspects of a specific program so all will be clear on what groundwork has taken/is taking place.
* Ask for evaluations of each program and use the criticism to improve the next program. If possible, mention who the suggestion came from.
* Delegate certain tasks according to individual interests. If a member has a "thing", give him/her tasks related to that specific area.
* Utilize special gifts of each member. Using their talents will make them feel more appreciated and important.
* Utilize the contacts of each individual member.
* Be enthusiastic about each program. Enthusiasm is contageous! Chances are, if you look like you're enjoying an aspect of programming, others will want to get in on the action.
* Look for people who habitually sit around and look lonely and ask them to do small things. Find ways to stimulate their interest. If feasible, have them bring friends along to help on projects.
* Congratulate members when they successfully complete a major task. Positive feedback is vital to student involvement.
* Allow them full responsibility -- the praise for a job well done, and an opportunity to fail.
* Don't overwork the same students just because they are willing.
* Encourage creativity!
* Channel enthusiasm in positive directions.
* Don't only ask your friends to help; not only will you lose friends, you’ll create the idea that those are the only people you are willing to involve.
* Give each person a task he/she can complete but is still challenged by.

Remember, these students are not obligated to help you. Treat them with respect and appreciation. Let them know their efforts are necessary and how they benefit the group or program!

# Successful Techniques for Group Negotiations

A negotiation is a discussion intended to produce an agreement. Negotiating is a crucial

step in your organization’s decision‐making process and is a great way to solve problems. A conflict resolved through negotiation keeps your members happy and helps your organization run more efficiently. Here are some tips for successful negotiation:

**Listen**

First, listen to those with whom you are negotiating. Hear their point of view and try not to immediately consider their ideas to be wrong. Try to keep an open mind; your ideas are not the only great ideas! Take turns with others in your organization voicing your opinions and remember to let them finish expressing their ideas fully. As you listen, make sure the speaker knows you are paying attention. Making small gestures, such as nodding and maintaining eye contact are some ways to show others that you are interested in what they are saying. Occasionally sum up what you are hearing to make sure you clearly understand the speaker.

**Clearly Define Goals**

Express your views plainly and clearly so that others may understand what you are trying to say. Some ways to help get your point across are visuals. Handouts are a great way to reiterate your points and it helps them make a decision on what is best for your

organization.

**Understand the Problem**

Being a leader requires you to be knowledgeable in many things related to your organization. Be aware of what problem you are trying to resolve, and be open to the many possible solutions. By being on top of problems in your organization, you will be able to run it more efficiently. By resolving problems in a timely manner, you help prevent future problems while keeping those in your organization happy.

**Ask Questions**

If you find yourself in a situation where you do not understand another’s argument, do not be afraid to ask questions. It is important to understand thoroughly all points being made. It is also important to understand the reasoning behind them. When people are not being concise, it is your responsibility to recognize this and address the matter. Questioning will not only help you to better understand the issue, but it will also help other members of your organization understand as well.

**Consider Alternatives**

Be conscious of the fact that there are several ways to solve a situation, and that they all are viable options. Listen to those in your organization and keep an open mind. If your group finds itself in a situation where it seems impossible to find a viable solution to a problem, brainstorm alternatives. A brainstorming activity is a perfect way to get great ideas fast.

**Solutions**

When trying to reach an agreement on an issue, it is best if the group comes to a consensus. It is important to have the full support of the members of your organization. If not, then the problem is not resolved and alternative solutions should be addressed. Everyone should give their appropriate input and influence the final decision. With successful negotiating, problems in your organization will be resolved and it will run more effectively.

# When Delegation Fails

On a regular basis, student leaders come to the Student Activities Office to discuss the problems they are having with their members. What they haven’t asked themselves is this – why are they having so much trouble with getting their members to follow through? Why won’t they do what they were assigned to do? The bottom-line is simple! There was a breakdown in the way this task was delegated. Take some time to reflect on your specific situation and see if any of the concepts below are pertinent to your group.

**Why Members Will Not Accept Delegation**

Members do not accept delegation because:

* They find it is easier to ask the chairperson, officer, etc., than to make a decision by themselves.
* They do not understand their own authority level; therefore, they are indecisive.
* They fear criticism for mistakes.
* They lack the resources and necessary information to do a job.
* They lack self-confidence.
* They feel the incentives (results) are inadequate to motivate them.

**Why Delegation Fails**

Delegation fails for one of three main reasons. Each reason seems obvious, but individuals should examine their own process of delegation and evaluate its effectiveness. If it seems not to be working, maybe one of the causes below is the reason:

1. The process is incomplete. Responsibilities for results have been distributed without granting sufficient authority or creating a relationship of accountability.
2. The chairperson, officer, etc., refuses - deliberately or unconsciously - to delegate. The obstacles to delegation are never overcome.
3. Delegation is blocked by incomplete or ineffective communications. Many times the chairperson, officer, etc. goes through the process and the activities associated with delegation without the member realizing there was any attempt to delegate. Thus, the chairperson, etc., acts and proceeds as if delegation has occurred, with the member finding out when deadlines come near. This is the most difficult reason to identify and can be eliminated by the job clarification process.

Effective Meetings Checklist

Do you find yourself wondering how well meetings went? You can review these points with the other officers and members to evaluate how effective your meetings are.

**The meeting was well planned if:**

* Members received advanced notification and a prepared agenda.
* Officers and committees made pertinent reports.
* The meeting room was set up and ready.

**The meeting was well organized** **if:**

* The meeting began on time.
* Guests were introduced and welcomed.
* Agendas were available for all members and the purpose for meeting was clear.
* There was a transition from the last meeting.
* The group discussed one topic at a time and one person spoke at a time.
* Discussion remained relevant to the topic at hand.
* The chairperson summarized the main points of the discussion.
* The meeting moved along at an efficient and workable pace.
* The chairperson made committee assignments complete and clear.
* Plans for the next meeting were announced.
* The meeting remained in‐tune with the schedule/minutes.

**Participation remained effective if members:**

* Participated in discussions and/or voting and asked informative questions.
* Considered the pros and cons of all issues.
* Made suggestions to committees and evenly distributed responsibilities.
* Participated in planning the agenda for the next meeting.

**Your group had a valuable meeting if:**

* Your group made significant progress towards the group’s desired goals.
* Members effectively received dispersed information.

**Your group had a positive meeting if:**

* The meeting had high attendance and attendees arrived on time.
* The group achieved degree of humor and level of comfort throughout the meeting.
* Members and officers assisted one another when needed.
* There remained an atmosphere of free expression.

Minutes and Record-Keeping

The position of Secretary of your organization is not a job to take lightly. Reflect on the following criteria when considering who will best fulfill this role:

* Is the person reliable; does he or she keep appointments?
* Is the person well‐organized; does he or she complete tasks in a timely manner?
* Is the person a good listener; is he or she able to be objective and hear both sides of an issue?
* Is this person on top of what is going on? Is he or she able to approximately weed out the trivial information and record only the important facts for record?

As you can see, the role of a Secretary is more than just taking minutes. The Secretary is, in effect, also the historian. What he or she records will be referred to by members of the organization as a reminder of finished and unfinished business, what needs follow‐up, and what actions were taken. It will also be kept for future members to read in order to gain an understanding of where the organization has been. Many organizations make it the Secretary’s responsibility to notify the membership about upcoming meetings: time, date, location, as well as any important items to be discussed.

The Secretary should be present at all meetings. If he or she is unable to attend, a substitute, preferably with the characteristics defined earlier, needs to be appointed. It is helpful for the Secretary to prepare him or herself before each meeting. A Secretary should be sure to read over the minutes of previous meetings, review the agenda and any attached documents. The organization can agree upon a standard format for minutes and can fill in important points of discussion, etc. as they occur.

If your organization has a structure that includes committees, whether ad hoc or standing, there should always be a Secretary present to record accurately what transpired during committee meetings. It is not necessary to transcribe absolutely everything word for word. However, it is necessary to take complete notes. Motions and resolutions do need to be taken verbatim and should be read back during the meeting to make sure they have been accurately recorded.

There are several ways to take meeting minutes and each organization needs to choose the most appropriate method for them. One option is to record a summary of debates, agreements and disagreements with a succinct explanation of the character of each. Another method is to take action minutes when decisions are reached and responsibilities are assigned. In either of these cases, make note of the following:

* The names of the people proposing any action or stating an opinion of a motion.
* Motions, resolutions, amendments, decisions and/or conclusions.
* The name of the person that seconded the motion.
* Whether a motion was withdrawn and what assignments were made (all of these should be written verbatim).

It is often both helpful for taking minutes and important for those attending the meeting if the chair or the Secretary summarizes decisions that are reached. This person should be careful in clarifying the points of the greatest controversy. It is the Secretary’s responsibility to gain the attention of the president or chairperson and to ask questions if unsure about the subject being discussed. A Secretary should not wait until the meeting has been adjourned to get a clarification; individuals can lose their perspective, issues can become less important and one’s memory can alter what actually occurred. Also, immediately after the meeting, the Secretary should go over his or her notes while everything is still fresh, checking for the following information:

* Type of meeting (executive, standing committee, etc.).
* Date, time and place.
* List of all attendees and absentees.
* Time of call to order.
* Approval of and/or amendments to previous meeting minutes.
* Record of reports from standing and special committees.
* General matters.
* Record of proposals, resolutions, motions, seconds, final disposition and a summary of the discussion and records of votes.
* Time of Adjournment.
* Nomination of submission and transcriber’s name.

Once the minutes have been transcribed into a draft form, they should be submitted to the Chair for review and/or correction. When they are returned, they should be prepared in a formal form for final approval at the next meeting. These minutes should be sent out to all members within 3 or 4 days of the meeting, which will allow members time to read the minutes for accuracy before the next meeting and while the previous meeting is still fresh in their minds.

Make sure you keep a copy of all minutes and any other records for your Transition Notebook.

Time Management

As a college student it is often difficult to balance your everyday activities. From school work to extracurricular activities to social life, managing your time wisely and effectively is arduous. As a leader, you must manage your time as well as advise other members of your organization on effective time management skills. With effective time management, you will feel less stressed and more organized. Time management is a crucial element of an effective leader. Great leaders have employed several different techniques to use their time in order to become more efficient with their work. The following represents some of the most important.

**Make a “To Do” List**

A key factor in managing your time is remembering your appointments and what needs to be done. Planners, calendars, lists, and notes are just a few examples of helpful instruments that will aid you in creating your personal organizational style. Make sure your list is reasonable, and the completion of all tasks is obtainable

**Set Priorities**

Now that you know what needs to be done, decide which work is important and what is less important. While making your list, put tasks down in order and “knock out” what is most important to you first. You may want to rank each item:

* A for “HIGHEST Priority” – items that must be done today.
* B for “High Priority” – items that must be done in the next 2-3 days.
* C for “Lower Priority” or ongoing projects – items that are important but not pressing.

Cross items off as you go along. The satisfaction you will receive from viewing your accomplishments will motivate you to continue in the same manner.

**Use Your Time Wisely**

If you decide to use lists to help with organization, be mindful of your scheduling. Make sure event times do not overlap. Be punctual when attending an event or completing your work. If you find that you are unable to complete all your tasks, ask yourself, “Can I do this on another day?” If time permits, rescheduling appointments and tasks may help create space in your day. Also, omitting unimportant events is a great way to reduce your work load and eliminate some stress. Do, however, notify people involved if you are not going to be able to attend an appointment or scheduled event.

**Don’t Feel Like it?**

You may possibly find yourself in a situation where you are unmotivated to get your work done. Here are some helpful tips to get yourself back on track:

* Break down tasks into smaller tasks. Not only will it help the obstacle become manageable, but it will also give you a sense of accomplishment.
* Reward yourself for reaching goals. Even something small like a quick walk or a short rest period are good ways to get yourself motivated.

**You Are Not a Super Human**

Remember, keep your schedule reasonable and only do what you can handle. It is fine to postpone tasks that you feel you are unable to handle at this time. If you feel overwhelmed, ask others to help you. Delegate! Through cooperation, your tasks will be completed and your organization will run more efficiently. Time management will enable you to be a more organized leader ready to handle almost any situation and lead your group.

Effective Leadership Transition

Your year as an officer is coming to an end and new officers are being selected. How do you leave your position gracefully? How do you ensure that the new officers are ready to continue to provide your organization with strong leadership?

**A thorough leadership transition plan has several benefits:**

* Providing for transfer of significant organizational knowledge.
* Minimizing the confusion of leadership changeover.
* Giving outgoing leaders a sense of closure.
* Utilizing the valuable contributions of experienced leaders.
* Helping the incoming leaders absorb the special expertise of the outgoing leadership.
* Increasing the knowledge and confidence of the new leadership.
* Minimizing the loss of momentum and accomplishments for the group during this period.

**When Do You Start? Early!**

Begin to identify emerging leaders early in the year. Encourage these potential leaders through personal contact; help them to develop skills by delegating responsibility, sharing the personal benefits of leadership, clarifying job responsibilities, letting them know that transition will be orderly and thorough, and last, modeling an open, encouraging leadership style.

When new officers have been elected, orient them together as a group with all of the outgoing officers. This process provides the new leaders with an opportunity to understand each other’s roles and to start building their leadership team. Be sure to transfer the knowledge and information necessary for them to function well. An organizational history and flow‐chart might be helpful. Take time to organize any files or notebooks so they may quickly access information.

**What Do You Need To Transfer?**

Think back to your first weeks. What could you have used to do your job better? Some suggestions include:

* Awareness of challenges, helpful ideas, procedures and recommendations.
* Written documents containing:
  + Traditions.
  + Records about completed projects.
  + Continuing projects and concerns.
  + Ideas for future projects and activities.
* Personal and organizational files.
* Instructions for use of equipment, facilities, or suppliers, and any office procedures.
* Introduction to personnel (advisors, administrators, contacts, etc.).
* A complete record of the organization’s structure, goals and accomplishments:
  + Constitution and by‐laws.
  + Organizational goals and objectives for the previous year(s).
  + Job descriptions/role clarifications.
  + Status reports on ongoing projects.
  + Evaluations of previous projects and programs.
  + Previous minutes and reports.
  + Resources/contacts lists with addresses and phone numbers.
  + Student Activities and Leadership handouts.
  + Organizational Handbook.
  + Finance Committee Requests/Budget.
  + Mailing/E‐mail Lists.

An effective leader knows his/her job is not done until the future of the organization is secure and arranges for a smooth turn-over of responsibility to new leadership.

# Using a Transition Notebook

Think back to your first few days working on your project or in your position. You probably had many questions and no one to turn to. Take the responsibility now by preparing a transition notebook to make sure this does not happen to the person who takes your place next year.

A transition notebook can be shared during meetings with your successor. It should cover all aspects of your responsibilities and how those tasks fit into the organization’s big picture. Recommend that your successor file historical documents in the notebook, such as meeting minutes. This way, the notebook can be used as a working tool rather than something to be completed at the end of the year (usually during finals!). Each organization is very different so feel free to add and delete topics. Your successor will thank you throughout the year!

**A good transition notebook includes several elements:**

*Introduction*

* Table of contents
* Contact sheet with listing of the new leadership and returning membership
* Letter from advisor

*Welcome the new leaders*

* Role and responsibilities of the group leaders
* How to contact him or her

*Historical documents*

* Constitution
* Mission Statement
* Goals and objectives
* History of organization and committees and programs
* Job description for each leader
* Organizational flowchart
* Information on officer selection and timeline for the process
* Information on officer recruitment and timeline

*Evaluation*

* Completed evaluation with detailed recommendations
* Two blank evaluations which can be written during the term

*Progress Reports*

* Completed progress reports
* Blank progress reports (to be completed throughout the year) with guidelines.
* A progress report provides the “working draft” for most of the transition notebook. It should provide the leader with an opportunity to write down what is new or different about the organization, what has been improved on throughout the year, what changes are in progress, group accomplishments, etc.

*General Organizational Information*

* Demographics from current year (number of men versus women, number of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors, etc.)
* Letter from the former coordinator to the new coordinator. This should include advice, what was experienced during his or her term, what was improved upon

this year, things to know when getting started in this position, a prioritization of

the tasks for the office, etc.

* A blank “Bright Ideas” sheet to be used throughout the year. “Bright Ideas” are

ideas that can help move the organization forward.

* Current goals
* Blank goals sheet
* Detailed timeline
* A copy of the budget requests submitted to the Finance Committee
* A copy of all financial records listing expenditures as well as the revenue generated throughout the year
* Any other information pertinent to the position

*Training Information*

* Agendas and handouts from past training retreats or meetings
* Information on the “how to’s” of the organization: such as publicity, financial matters, etc.

*Organizational Information*

* Calendar of events
* Meeting agendas and minutes
* Resources
* Instructions on how to sign on to your organization’s electronic mail/voice mail, web pages, etc.

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Hopefully this section has helped you to feel more prepared for your upcoming responsibilities.

You can face your position as a student leader with ease and confidence! Remember that others elected you because they believed you possessed the ability to do well. Knowing that should make believing in yourself easier. Emerson once said, “Self‐trust is the first secret of success.” So, relax, be yourself, believe in yourself and enjoy the challenges!

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