Leadership Resources

HOW TO RUN A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

What is a meeting?
A meeting is a time in which the general membership of your organization gets together with the Executive Board to discuss upcoming events and what your members want to get out of their experience. This is your time to build community amongst your members.

Before the Meeting

- Define purpose of the meeting
- Submit a Meeting Request on SaderLink at least a week in advance
  - Consider layout (number of chairs, room set-up: theater, hollow square, U-shaped, round table).
  - Example of layouts can be viewed in the OSI Office or RSO Service Center.
  - Consider technical needs (projector, flipchart paper, whiteboard, pens)
  - Confirm that the meeting is at a time that all members can attend
- Identify the participants
  - Every attendee should have a role
  - Identify a secretary to take minutes
- Send meeting reminder email to all participants
- Prepare an agenda in advance of the meeting (See Sample Agenda Format as well as the “Bell Shaped Agenda” format)
  - Request agenda items from all participants
  - Make enough copies for all participants
- Assign responsibilities for agenda items and communicate to those responsible
  - No one likes to attend a meeting where one person is speaking the whole time

During the Meeting

- Arrive Early
  - Arrange the room if necessary
  - Distribute handouts
- Begin on time
- Introduce members if not familiar; introduce visitors
- Control interruptions: ask that cell phones be turned off
- Make sure that all participants understand their responsibilities and meeting expectations
- Explain purpose and importance of meeting
- Set time limits. For example: “We will discuss this item for 2 minutes”
- Take minutes
- End on time
- Thank participants for their input and reinforce the importance of outcomes on the organization

After the Meeting

- Publish the minutes promptly via email or SaderLink and assess the meeting.

HOW TO MOTIVATE AND RETAIN MEMBERS

As a leader of an RSO, your job is to motivate your membership and keep them coming back! Below are tips that will help you to build positive relationships with your members.

Be Motivational, Be a Role Model

- Act the way you expect members to act
- Keep in mind the reasons why you joined the organization
- Be motivated and enthusiastic
- Be a good listener, considerate, consistent, and organized
- When you are wrong or make a mistake, admit it
- Be careful of what you say and how you say it
- Do not be upset by little hassles
- Treat all members with respect

**To Motivate Individual Members**
- Provide constructive feedback
- Give constructive criticism in private
- Praise in public
- Play up the positive
- Take genuine interest in the members of the organization, rather than just the tasks they do
- Give weight to the fact that people work harder to carry out their own best ideas
- Use every opportunity to build a member’s sense of importance in his/her work
- Give honest credit where credit is due
- Increase responsibilities whenever possible
- Avoid domination or forcefulness
- Let members know where they stand and why
- Make personal contact before and after meetings to encourage participation
- Encourage shy members to participate and speak up

**To Motivate the Group**
- Make the members want to do things-inspiration, incentive, and recognition
- Understand and utilize a variety of ways to reward outstanding efforts
- Achieve “buy-in,” allow your members to have a stake in the organization's success
- Make your members feel valued and appreciated
- Achieve clarity in your organization's mission, vision, and goals
- Study members and determine what makes each of them tick
- Plan bonding activities to encourage friendships between members
- Show interest in and appreciation for others
- Recognize good efforts as well as accomplishments
- Let members know your plan at the early stages
- Delegate responsibilities to members
- When you make a request or suggestion, be sure to explain your reasons for it
- Show members you have confidence in them and expect them to do their best
- Ask members for their counsel and help
- If an idea is adopted or rejected, tell the originator why
- Share your goals, sense of direction, and provide something to strive for and achieve
- Keep members informed on matters affecting them
- Utilize small groups and place members on committees that interest them
- Avoid assigning unnecessary tasks
- Encourage sharing without criticism or judgment
- Brainstorm new goals, programs, and projects

**DELEGATION**

Delegation is an ethical responsibility you owe to yourself, to those with whom you work, and to your organization. One leader cannot do everything for an organization. There are only so many hours in a day and so many tasks one person can do. Besides, an uninvolved member soon becomes an apathetic, unmotivated member who will most likely leave the group. A good leader learns to use the skill of delegation to help his/her organization develop to its fullest potential.

**When to Delegate**
- When there is a lot of work to do.
- When you feel someone else has particular qualifications which would suit the task
- When someone expresses interest in the task
- When you think a particular person(s) might benefit from the responsibility
Steps to Successful Delegation

1. Specify exactly what you want accomplished
2. Select the individual or team. Be intentional about who you chose to delegate to. Consider each person’s interests, skills, strengths and weaknesses when you make assignments. Keep time management skills in mind.
3. Assess ability and training needs of individual(s). Arrange for training or extra support if necessary.
4. Clearly explain task, purpose, required results, possible strategies, and available resources. To avoid misunderstandings, strive for clarity. Arrange and present your ideas in manageable steps, and ask for questions.
5. Agree on deadlines and how often you want to check-in. Keep a record!
6. Support and Communicate
7. Give feedback on results. It is essential to let the person/team know how they are doing and whether they have achieved their aims.

When Not to Delegate

- When it is specifically YOUR responsibility, except in emergencies
- When you yourself would not be willing to do the task (the menial work)
- When the group member does not possess the capabilities necessary to do the task.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

As a leader of an organization, you will have to handle some conflicts. Whether it is between members of your RSO, your RSO and another RSO, or you and your members, the following suggestions will help you settle the conflict and keep the peace.

Steps to Positive Conflict Resolution

1. Have everyone involved state the problem. Using “I” statements each person should state their problem. Each person may be upset for different reasons. This is the time to clearly define for everyone what the conflict is. It’s hard to fix something before everyone agrees on what is broken.

2. Understand All Points of View. It is important at this point to get a common understanding amongst all involved including yourself. Taking the time to understand the problem can make all involved feel acknowledged and willing to work through the conflict. Sum up the points that others have made in words that the other parties can accept. When the parties involved feel like someone understands their issue, they are going to be more willing to listen.

3. Brainstorm Solutions. Get all involved to think of as many solutions to the conflict as possible. Do not evaluate them yet. Just think of as many as possible.

4. Evaluate the Solutions. Think about what will not work and discard them. Continue looking at options. This time in mediation will require a lot of patience and honesty. Look at final options and evaluate the difficulty of implementation into resolution. This may lead to an entirely different solution.

5. Choose the Solution. Choose the solution that is going to work best for everyone. All parties will need to be honest to find a solution that will work.

6. Implement. Plan out solutions by assigning parts to each involved. Make sure that all parties are aware of roles. At this point you might want to have students sign a Solution Contract to put in writing their understanding and commitment to the resolution.

7. Re-Evaluate. Follow up with parties a couple days after conflict. See how the solution is working for all involved. If it works, conflict solved! If it has not, then go back to step three and try to find a new solution.
When Resolving a Conflict, Remember to...

**Be Empathetic.** Try to understand the positions of all sides involved; put yourself in their shoes. Looking at the issue from another angle just might change your stance and alleviate the conflict.

**Check your Facts.** Before engaging in a discussion about the conflict, be sure you know the facts. It's easy to get swept up in one aspect of an issue, without really understanding the whole situation. Be sure you know the whole story.

**Remain Calm.** Productive resolution cannot occur if you are yelling or overtly angry. Be respectful and polite. The other party is more likely to listen to you if you show them respect.

**Seek Mediation.** If discussion among the parties hasn’t worked, bring in a third party to help. An unbiased opinion can help all parties see the other sides of the issue, as well as bring resolution or compromise.