

Quick Tips on *Group Membership*

RECRUITING *new members:*

People join organizations for many reasons. They want to get involved, meet people and make new friends, explore interests, develop skills, and have fun. Each new group member brings new ideas and talents, in addition to replacing old members. It is vital that an organization have a well-conceived and executed recruitment and retention plan. Here are some steps to creating that plan:

- First, it is important that both the leadership and membership know and understand your organization.
- 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?
- Get everyone involved. Have your current members identify people they know who might want to get involved and personally invite them to attend a meeting. Word-of-mouth is the best and least expensive type of publicity you can use.
- Recruitment campaigns need to have a visual element as well. Have those members with "artistic talents" work on your posters, flyers, banners and bulletin boards, etc. Be creative. Your publicity can be effective only if it's noticed.
- Many groups find it beneficial to have a special welcoming meeting or ceremony for their new members. It is important to orient them to your group's goals, objectives, organizational structure, rules and norms.
- Finally, allow your new members time to get involved and feel comfortable with the group.
- **Above all have fun together.** Make 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?

ORIENTING *new members:*

By taking the time to orient new members to the privileges and responsibilities of membership you create a more educated membership - people who can and will make significant contributions to the organization.

When planning your orientation program keep this word in mind - **AIM**

Acquaint- The purpose of any new member orientation program is to acquaint your recruits to the organization and to each other. Knowing the ins and outs of the group is only one part of being in an organization. It is important to note that people join groups for many reasons: they want to get involved, learn new skills, make friends and have a good time. For this reason it is important to structure time for the members to get to know each other and to develop personal relationships and commitments.

Inform- This section of the orientation process should cover the organization's history, purpose and structure. If there are written records, give everyone a copy. Be sure to include organizational charts, officer job descriptions, and a membership list. Have the new members included on this list.

Motivate- Get your members, returning and newly recruited, excited about the group. Provide time for them to meet each other to share ideas and expectations.

Taken from The Center for Service
and Leadership

<http://www.gmu.edu/student/csl>

leadership transition...

A thorough leadership transition plan has several benefits. It provides for transfer of significant organizational knowledge, minimizes the confusion of leadership changeover, gives outgoing leaders a sense of closure, helps incoming leadership absorb the special expertise of the outgoing leadership, and increases the knowledge and confidence of the new leadership.

When new officers have been elected, orient them together as a group with all of the outgoing leaders. The 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 organization history and flow-chart might be helpful. Acquaint new officers with physical environment, supplies and equipment. Introduce related personnel (advisors, contacts, etc.). Share anything else that is important to know

TEAMBUILDING ACTIVITIES

Step 1: Getting acquainted Interviews -- Group members pair up and interview one another for 5 minutes each. Partners introduce each other to the group, including everything he/she can remember about the partner.

Step 2: Sharing expectations "I Expect" Exercise -- Leader passes out 3 x 5 cards where members list expectations of leader, officers, group members, and advisor. Cards are passed in an expectations are listed on the chalkboard, discussed, and accepted or rejected as realistic.

Step 3: Clarifying goals Group Goal Setting -- Members participate in reviewing previous goals and setting the group's goals and objectives for the coming year.

Step 4: Developing Working Relationships Rap Session -- Discuss questions like: "How will decisions be made?" "What will be our working style?" "How will we assure everyone the chance to speak?" "How will we resolve differences?" "How will we insure completion of our work?"

Sources: Leader Bits brochure / University of Kansas and SODC handout / University of Michigan

WELCOMING BACK *members:*

As you return this spring to your many club meetings - remember that it's important to welcome folks back and get reconnected. Why not do a quick icebreaker at the beginning of your first meeting?

Have folks pair off / or get into small groups (3 or 4 people) and share:

1. What's the best gift you got over the holidays?
2. What did you love about going home over the break?
3. What drove you crazy about going home?
4. Why are you glad to be back at State?
5. What's one goal you have for yourself this semester?
6. What is one thing you'd like to accomplish within our group?

Have members take notes on the following questions and then share in small groups:

- An important leader in my personal life is (living person):
- My best leadership skills are:
- I hope to improve the following leadership skill:
- My role model is: