

## **How to Organize Your Group:** **Student Leadership and Delegation**

### **Step 1**

Every group should have these four positions:

- *President:*
  - The president provides vision and direction for the organization. All projects should be guided and directed by the president to make sure that all projects cohere into a strategy in line with the vision for the organization. The president identifies which projects should be undertaken by which committees, and will veto or encourage projects as necessary, according to the circumstances. He is also the public face of the group, and can speak for the group when interviewed by the media. All interview requests should be directed to the president or vice-president.
- *Vice-President:*
  - The vice-president ensures that the projects that have been delegated to their respective committees are moving. He contacts the committee chairs to ensure that they are setting appropriate short-term goals and meeting them. The VP should be making sure that each committee is taking care of every detail the project requires, and should be reminding them when they miss a step. Like the president, the VP is concerned with the big picture and assists the president by making sure the details are taken care of.
- *Secretary:*
  - The secretary takes meeting notes, sends out newsletters, keeps up with correspondence and questions in the group's email account (and forwarding them on to the president if necessary). He could also be in charge of reserving a room when meetings are called. He maintains the mailing lists to ensure that the appropriate emails are responded to in a timely manner.
- *Treasurer:*
  - The treasurer handles all the issues regarding the group's finances. If the group is applying for university funding, the treasurer makes the request through the appropriate channels. If any members use their own funds for the group's purposes, the treasurer reimburses them. He also handles the paperwork for speaker honorariums, and will alert the president or committee chairs if a proposed project will be too expensive for the group's current financial situation. The treasurer will be intimately familiar with whatever information is related to the group's financial situation.



## **Step 2**

In the beginning while the group is still small, duties may be shared. However, the president and vice-president will be most effective the more they delegate tasks to others and oversee projects rather than running projects themselves. By remaining in this management position, they can keep the big picture in mind and avoid spreading themselves too thin.

## **Step 3**

To be most effective, assign tasks to small groups. Consider organizing specific committees to spearhead your various efforts.

## **Step 4**

To increase your effectiveness, create a specific duty for members or committees to be in charge of. These responsible members will know that the success of the project rests with them, and they will take more personal pride in accomplishing it.

## **Step 5**

Keep the various members accountable for the tasks they are in charge of. Idle members lose interest, and are less likely to be available and passionate about being a part of the group. It is important to give each member the impression that they are invaluable and irreplaceable. It is better to have too much work for them to do, than not enough.

## **Step 6**

Each member of the group will have different talents and interests – try to appeal to these and maximize the strengths of the group when assigning different members to committees or projects. If members are assigned tasks that maximize their natural talents, they will feel capable and more dedicated; the results will be higher quality and more effectiveness.

## **Step 7**

Cater your projects and initiatives around what you have available to you. If you have a group that is loaded with brilliant writers and passionate speakers, consider writing more op-eds and taking on more activist projects. If your group has members with strengths in event planning and social coordination, consider hosting multiple speakers or student debates. This will be rewarded with more effective and higher quality results.

## **Step 8**

Some members will be able to dedicate more time than others to the group. Be flexible in assigning members to committees and projects, keeping in mind their time schedule. By doing this, you will have a much more efficient organization.

Special thanks to Jonathan Hwang for his contributions.



## **Step 9**

Be sure to hold people accountable for the projects they're working on. While most of the members of the group will become friends, and it may seem as if you are always communicating, it is best to have meetings with these members to only discuss the group's projects. Follow up with them regularly with check-ups, coffee meetings, or brief e-mails so that there is steady communication between everyone about the group's projects.

## **Step 10**

It is easy to get side-tracked during all the classes and activities of college. Set deadlines to increase productivity. Don't be overly anxious or come across as untrusting. Student members need to feel valued, respected, and trusted.

## **Step 11**

Maintain a positive, confident attitude to set the tone for the organization. Positive motivation goes a long way to keeping students' spirits up, and their efforts going. Remember who you are and what you stand for. Constantly remind yourself that the vision and mission of your work is valuable and necessary for the good of society. Do not allow yourself to be defined by how others may talk about you. Be confident!! Know that your work is making a difference, or they would not be lashing out!

## **Step 12**

Try to keep an eye out for students who show promise to get more involved in the group. If a particular student has a lot of incredible qualities and passion, consider giving them a heavier role, if they are willing. The future of the organization depends upon having strong leaders to continue the mission after you graduate. Begin training and including younger students early, so that they will be ready to fill your shoes when you leave. The mark of a true leader is how well he trained those beneath him.

## **Step 13**

As a student leader, listen to what the members of your group have to offer. Consider their suggestions, ideas, and feedback. Your group is joined together as a unit to promote the principles. Be ready to implement a great suggestion, even if it is new. Be ready to think outside the box, if it will be potentially successful. Stay in touch with the tone of the school, and what students are saying about your organization. Be ready to reply to criticism, defend the integrity of your group, or instruct a student who has misconceptions about the positions you are taking.

## **Step 14**

Have your materials -- project proposals, meeting notes, treasurer's budget, past successes and failures, op-eds, event fliers, copies of e-mails, receipts from big

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purchases -- all included in a Master Binder, so that your group's information is all together. The secretary and treasurer should have their own binders, also, to keep track of the meetings and budgeting.

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