Goal Setting: Building Clubs that Matter

GOAL SETTING

Consider the impact your Student Club can have if you commit to the establishment of clear effective goals. The more concrete your direction, the more support you can generate.

THERE ARE THREE LEVELS OF DEFINING YOUR ORGANIZATION'S PRIORITIES:

1. **PURPOSE**: A broad, general statement that tells why your organization exists; usually doesn't change from year to year, and is often the first statement in your constitution.

2. **GOALS**: Statements describing what you organization wishes to accomplish stemming from your purpose. Goals are the ends toward which your efforts will be directed, and often change from term to term or year to year, depending on the nature of the group.

3. **OBJECTIVES**: A descriptions of exactly what is to be done derived from the goals. Clear specific statements of measurable tasks that will be accomplished as steps toward reaching your goals. They are short term, have deadlines, and can be measured.

WHY SET GOALS?
- Goals help define your organization
- Goals give direction and help avoid chaos
- Goals can help motivate members by clarifying and communicating what the organization is striving for
- Goals are time savers by helping member and leaders become aware of problems in time to develop solutions
- Goals are a basis of recognizing accomplishments and realizing your successes; they are a basis for recognition and celebration

SETTING GOALS TOGETHER
- **SET YOUR GOALS AS A GROUP.** This creates many positive results because people will support and be responsible for what they help create. You can expect greater commitment and motivation among officers and members to achieving goals.
- **HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOALS** and the rationale for selecting them.
- **SET BETTER GOALS, BECAUSE WITH EVERYONE'S IDEAS AND OPINIONS CONSIDERED**, your goals will represent a group consensus rather than one person's opinion.

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STEPS FOR SETTING GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

1. **Brainstorm** potential goals as a group.
2. **Choose** from the brain storm list those you want to work on.
3. **Prioritize** as a group.
4. **Determine objectives** for each goal and plans of action for each objective (Remember there can be several objectives for each goal).
5. **Move into action**, follow through (Many groups fail to do this step and their goals never are achieved).
6. **Evaluate your progress** on a regular basis. Remember, circumstances change so be flexible and allow your objectives to change with them.

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

- What is to be done (your objective)?
- How will it be accomplished?
- What are your resources in terms of people, money, materials?
- Who is responsible for completing each task?
- When will each be accomplished?
- What is the deadline?
- How will you know when it is accomplished?
- How will you measure the results?

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EXAMPLE OF AN ACTION PLAN:

GOAL: To improve membership recruitment, retention and involvement.

OBJECTIVE: To develop a committee structure whose purpose is to increase member involvement to at least 40% by next semester.

HOW (strategy): Brainstorm ideas to increase member involvement. Go over this list and weed out all those ideas that are impractical or impossible to do. Discuss this edited list with the executive board/leadership. Determine which will be done and delegate the final process of setting up this system to one or two executive officers.

RESOURCES: Members, advisors, executive officers, Student Activities staff, handouts on recruitment, motivation, and delegation**.**

DEADLINES:

- Who: Executive board and consultants
- When: By next term (try to set a specific date if possible)

RESULTS:

- Acceptable--membership involvement increases by 40-70%
- Unacceptable-- membership involvement increases by less than 40%
- Better than Expected-- membership involvement increases by more than 70%

Adapted from the Student Organizational Development Center, University of Michigan.

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BRAINSTORMING

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

Brainstorming may be just the technique to rejuvenate your organization and get everyone excited and involved. The purpose of this method 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 deceptively simple-be sure the group understands them and someone has the job of making sure they're followed.

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FIRST: SET THE STAGE...

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, break into two or more groups and brainstorm simultaneously.

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

4. Record <u>all</u> responses on a blackboard 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.

SECOND: EXPLAIN (*AND POSSIBLY 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 O.K.
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's O.K. to be outrageous, even silly

THIRD: MAKE GOOD USE OF YOUR MEMBER'S CREATIVITY...

1. If several groups brain stormed the same idea, put the 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; can be done by group putting pluses and minuses by items.

4. Rank order the most promising.

5. Select those with greatest potential and high-ranking priority for either implementation or refinement by committee.

6. Be <u>sure</u> to utilize the ideas generated. It's extremely demoralizing for a group to invest its time, energy and creativity and have its ideas disappear. Seeing your idea come to fruition, however, is extremely rewarding.

REFERENCES

Pfeiffer and Jones; 1972 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators
Schindler-Rainmann E. Lippitt, R.; Taking Your Meetings Out of the Doldrums
Adapted from the Student Organization Development Center, University of Michigan