Does your service RSO want to find your future volunteer coordinators and group leaders? Think about creating a succession plan that can help you find and train new leaders for your service RSO. This guide will give you helpful pointers for when you are starting to think about your successors.

GETTING STARTED STEPS

1. Start Early – Too often, organizations will wait until it’s too late to begin thinking about the leaders that will replace them. Developing leaders and transferring the values and vision of an organization takes time. Start looking for your replacement at least one or two semesters before you are scheduled to step down.

2. Identify Potential Leaders – As participants attend meetings and events, keep an eye out for potential leaders. Keep an open mind and look at their skills and attributes as a whole. Don’t just focus on the loud person in the group who gets people’s attention. Find members who can do the job. They may need some experience and mentoring to develop their leadership skills.

3. Provide Key Developmental Opportunities – Start by delegating small responsibilities to potential leaders and then delegate more responsibility as you go. Avoid menial tasks and focus on giving them small but meaningful jobs that give them a taste of leadership. Also try to relay to your potential leaders how the organization’s vision and purposes align with what you are doing.

4. Encouragement – Whenever you see members take responsibility or really take ownership of a task, empower them by positively reinforcing the things that they are doing well. It is often surprising how much people pick up on your expectations through reinforcement, and then proceed to repeat the actions that you encouraged.

5. Transition – Now it’s time for new leadership. Invite the potential leaders to take leadership roles in your organization. Prepare and train the new leaders for their new positions and responsibilities.
WHAT KINDS OF RESPONSIBILITIES CAN I DELEGATE TO POTENTIAL LEADERS?

When you first begin, you can delegate small tasks where they will be working alongside you or another leader. Start with opportunities that allow them to see what leadership entails:

- Helping you plan a social event
- Brainstorming or following leads on service project ideas
- Contributing ideas for or helping to edit your monthly newsletter

As time goes on, incrementally increase their responsibilities. Move towards more opportunities that allow them to experience leadership:

- Presenting a segment at your next meeting
- Being the point person for a fundraiser
- Organizing your next social event

HOW MUCH CAN I DELEGATE? I FEEL LIKE I’M NOT DOING ANYTHING ANYMORE.

Be cautious not to over-delegate. Although you are investing in these potential leaders, you are still the leader of your organization. Providing these developmental opportunities does not mean that you dole out all of your responsibilities and sit back to evaluate them.

I DELEGATED RESPONSIBILITIES, NOW WHAT?

After a member completes a task that you delegated, sit down and debrief with them. Ask them what went well, what didn’t, and then give them your objective perspective on things that they did well and things that they can improve on. This will turn their experience into a learning experience, not just a check on the to-do list.

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR ASSISTANCE?

To assist with your service RSO:
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