How Do I Make Change in My Service Organization?

Do you feel that your service organization has become outdated or irrelevant? Do you want to take another look at your vision and goals for the future of the organization? This guide will help you think about where your service organization stands and assist you in making a lasting change.

Getting Started Steps

1. Get Good Data – Making change is a strategic process. Therefore, in order for it to be effective, some research needs to be done. Solicit feedback through a survey or another method from members or partners to gain insight into how your service organization is perceived by outsiders and by your members.

2. Identify Areas for Change – Use the survey results and other feedback to answer questions. What are your members’ needs and desires? What are your strengths and weaknesses as an organization? What is your vision and does it align with what you are currently doing?

3. Problem Solve – Once you identify the areas in which your service organization needs to grow and change, sit down with your leadership team and discuss ways to implement change you would like to see as an organization.

4. Planning – Create a plan to implement the solutions that you came up with and get your new ideas out there. The more specifically you plan, the more likely it is to actually happen.

5. Publicize – There are many ways to start making people aware of your revamped service organization: host a promotional event, rent out a table space in front of the Union, have a giveaway, or attend Quad day. Find what works to communicate your new brand/ideas.
WHAT ELSE SHOULD BE THOUGHT ABOUT?

HOW DO I ORGANIZE THE CHANGE THAT I WANT TO SEE?

Your goals for change should meet the SMART standards:

Specific – be able to answer the “who”, “what”, “where”, “when”, “why” questions

Measurable - establish criteria to be able to quantitatively measure the progress you’ve made

Attainable – your goals should stretch you slightly so you feel challenged, but defined well enough so that you can achieve them

Realistic – your goals can be high, but make sure that you are both willing and able to work towards it

Timely – set your goals to be accomplished within a certain time frame; with no time frame attached to your goal, there is no sense of urgency

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO ENSURE SUCCESS?

The most important thing is to get your service organization, and particularly your organization leaders, behind the change that you want to see. Be sure to communicate clearly why change is necessary and how the planned change is going to better your organization. A desire for change starts at the top, but needs to permeate those who will be impacted before it will actually be able to take effect. Resistance or lack of motivation is the easiest way to kill an exciting initiative.

WHAT DO I DO IF THE CHANGE ISN’T SUCCESSFUL?

Not all ideas will work. You may need to go back to the drawing board to see how the change was implemented. If failure occurs, reconvene with the leadership team to discuss the results and why the change failed. Then decide on the next course of action and come up with a new plan if the idea will be reintroduced to the group.

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR ASSISTANCE?

To assist with your service RSO:
Office of Volunteer Programs
ovp@illinois.edu