

## Keep your members in mind!

Often, organizations will conduct an officer transition program with outgoing and incoming officers but will forget about the rest of their general membership. It is important that every member is considered when officers are changing, especially since the entire membership is responsible for each officer's success. It is important to articulate the following to your general membership:



- \* Officers have the same needs and feelings as every other member.
- \* Officers are not the only members responsible for making sure an organization is thriving. Every member has a responsibility.
- \* Communication is essential in an effective organization. Officers must be responsive and open to suggestions, ideas, and questions and every member should feel comfortable providing their thoughts to them.

## Officer Transition Resources

For more information about officer transition check out the following books in the Involvement Office

Leaders The Strategies for Taking Charge  
By Bennis & Nanus

Leading Change  
By James O'Toole

The Leadership Challenge  
By Kouzes & Posner

### Check out these websites:

Department of Student Activities-  
[www.studentactivities.uconn.edu](http://www.studentactivities.uconn.edu)

Alpha Phi Omega-  
<http://apo89.org/program/ld/officertransition.html>

Arizona State University  
[www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/mu//bestpractices/transition.htm](http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/mu//bestpractices/transition.htm)

University of New Mexico  
[www.unm.edu/~sac/ot.html](http://www.unm.edu/~sac/ot.html)

Visit the Involvement Office for information on more topics such as:

Time Management  
Motivating Members  
Delegating  
Problem Solving

## Leadership Programs

Department of Student Activities  
Division of Student Affairs  
University of Connecticut  
Student Union Room 302  
486-6588



University of Connecticut

Department of Student Activities

## Involvement Office

## Officer Transition



How can your organization have an effective transition?

## **Officer Transition**

A transition of leadership is very important for your organization's success. While things may be going well within your organization a change in officers can often mean a change in your group's momentum. Far too often, elections take place and the incoming officers are left to lead an organization without having ever gone through training and without any of the information they need. By implementing an organized officer transition program you can rest assured that new officers have received the information they need to be successful in their new positions and that your organization will continue to thrive.

## **Officer Transition**

- > To give outgoing officers a sense of closure
- > To prepare incoming officers for their new positions
- > To exchange important information and tips about the positions
- > To provide a sense of comfort and pride to the new officers
- > To review all pending projects
- > To explain all policies and procedures
- > To identify key individuals with whom each officer interacts
- > To introduce incoming officers to advisors

## **Suggestions For An Effective Transition**

- Arrange a training session or retreat with the outgoing and incoming officers. Include your advisor (s).
- Discuss the status of your organization including accomplishments, current issues, finances, and membership.
- Review your organization's constitution, by-laws, policies, and procedures.
- Review officers job descriptions
- Create permanent informational resource binders for every leadership position and have outgoing officers go over it with incoming officers.
- Establish goals for each officer
- Create semester calendar of meetings and events
- Introduce incoming officers to advisors and other contact people around campus
- Allow time for questions

## **What Information Can Outgoing Officers Provide To New Officers?**

- > The duties of their position
- > Their biggest frustration with the position and how it can be avoided in the future
- > Their most valuable contribution
- > Their goals while they were in office
- > How general members perceive their office
- > Their suggestions for the position
- > Budgeting of Money

## **Sample Officer Transition Retreat Agenda**

Many organizations find that a retreat can be a great way to transition officers. A retreat can be designed to fit the needs and goals of your group. Some prefer to host an all day retreat while others find a half day useful. Here are a few suggestions for an agenda:

- 1 Icebreakers/get acquainted exercises
- 2 Review of constitution, bylaws, and policies
- 3 Break into groups by incoming and outgoing officers
- 4 Officer exchanges including binders
- 5 Outgoing officers provide tips and suggestions for incoming officers

*(Outgoing officers depart)*

- 6 Teambuilding activities
- 7 Expectations for each position
- 8 Goals for the semester/year
- 9 Calendar of events
- 10 Meet with Advisor (s)
- 11 Closing

A positive officer transition provides a helpful starting point for new officers. It gives them an opportunity to ask questions, exchange ideas, and plan for their term. It also helps them to feel like they are prepared and organized.