

Leadersheet

Getting Started As a Leader

Congratulations! You've just been elected as a student leader; you're feeling great! And, at times, a bit scared, right? You've finally received the position that you've wanted for so long and perhaps you're experiencing a little bit of doubt. You want to give it your all, be the BEST officer your organization ever elected. You want everything perfect the first time - with no mistakes from anybody. Nice intentions, but as we all know, highly unrealistic. People are fallible; mistakes will inevitably be made. Here is some information that will start your thinking so you can avoid some of the common pitfalls and get a smooth start in your new position. So, relax, get comfortable and read on!

Fundamentals

IF you are registered with the Student Activities and Leadership office

THEN you may be eligible for or have access to:

- Shared office space in the Sours Student Leadership Center
- An email address or login for your group (your_group@sou.edu)
- Web space to publicize your group (http://www.sou.edu/su/your_group)
- Mail box in the Sours Student Leadership Center
- Inter-Club Council funding
- Free use of tables in the SU foyer
- Free rooms in the SU for your meetings or events

IF you want to learn more about effective leadership, leadership classes for credit, the leadership conferences, institutes and other programs and services.

THEN check out SAL (Student Activities and Leadership office)

IF your organization has a treasurer

THEN has he/she updated your financial books?

IF your organization has a secretary

THEN does he/she have everything he/she needs from the previous secretary (meeting minutes, etc.)?

IF you would like to have a smooth running organization

THEN do the officers have written descriptions of their responsibilities from the 'old' officers? Are the descriptions completely understood?

IF you want to advertise on campus

THEN contact the Siskiyou newspaper for print media; the Student Publicity center for large signs or posters; or the SAL office for regulations for other signage requests.

Deciding On a Style of Leadership

The style of leadership that you choose will have a tremendous impact on your organization. You want to develop a style that you feel comfortable with and that will motivate the members of your organization to achieve the group's goals. What might prove helpful is to examine the styles of the previous officers. Write down what you like and dislike about the method in which goals were or were not achieved, and why. By doing so, you can discover what you believe is important to the organization. For instance:

Are you people-oriented? Or are you task-oriented? (Focusing on what your members are doing)

Do you place fellowship (camaraderie) high in your priorities? Or is it more important to get the job done?

Should all the other members decide? Or should just the Officer's decide together the organization's goals?

Will you achieve goals by setting up? Or will you achieve goals by different committees (e.g., social committee, rush committee, blood drive committee)?

What would you suggest the group goals to be?

Ultimately, which style (i.e., "tell and have done," participative, etc.) - in your judgment - would help the organization accomplish its goals most effectively in each situation?

Be Prepared!

Hopefully this handout has helped you to feel more prepared for your upcoming responsibilities. You can face your position as a student leader with anticipation and confidence! Remember that others elected you because they believed you possessed the ability to do well. Knowing that, should make believing in yourself easier. Emerson once said,

"Self-trust is the first secret of success."

And he is right. So, relax, be yourself, believe in yourself and enjoy the challenge!