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“8 Off-the-Wall Fundraising Ideas”

Christopher S. Jachimowicz, ASGA Online

Selling Services

1. **Acme Movers** • Sell boxes and packing materials to residence students in late April or early March. You might also contract with a local company (Mailboxes, Etc.) to do the same thing, keeping a portion of their profits for your organization. Consider renting "moving crews" to assist residence hall students in moving out.
2. **Birthday Service** • Many departments and student organizations would like to recognize members on their birthdays. Assist them by offering a birthday tracking service. With the help of a database program, you could alert departments and organizations to impending birthdays. You could also offer to send a card, flowers or a cake for an additional fee.
3. **Computerized Mailing Labels** • If you have access to computer technology, use it to your club's advantage. Sell a label service to other organizations. Collect the names of members of other organizations and store them in a database. Print out mailing labels on request for a small fee.
4. **Wake-up Calls** • If your club has a lot of early risers, consider selling a wake-up service to other students. Contract with students to give them wake-up calls during exam week or throughout the school year. Again, a computer database could be useful in providing this service.
5. **Display Boards** • Many student organizations choose to be represented at University Open Houses and Activities Fairs. If your organization is particularly artistic, offer to assist other organizations with designing eye-catching displays for these programs.
6. **Home and Garden Tours** • If your university is fortunate enough to be in an historic district of town, or if there are homes with magnificent gardens, consider working with community members to sponsor home and garden tours in the neighborhood. While few students might be interested in this opportunity, many town or city folk would enjoy this opportunity.
7. **Teach a Craft or Skill** • Everyone has a hidden skill or talent. Consider using the hidden talents of your membership to offer workshops to teach these skills to others. Some ideas for workshops are: cooking, cake decorating, flower arranging, juggling, billiards, web page design, etc.

Selling Goods

8. **Selling food and snacks** • Not very creative in itself, but if you look to sell pre-packaged items where and when they are not usually available, you could have a hit on your hands. If your University shows movies without popcorn, inquire about a popcorn concession. Are there academic buildings without vending machines? Could you sell refreshments on move-in day?
9. **Residence Hall Room Decorations** • Residence hall students and apartment dwellers are on the lookout for items to decorate their rooms, especially at the beginning of the school year. Consider setting up a decoration sale by inviting vendors to sell posters, plants and other "residence-approved" decorations.
10. **College Discount Card** • Local merchants thrive on student business. Many will pay a fair fee to be listed on a discount card. The card entitles the student to a discount at a local business when the card and a College ID are presented. Your only guarantee to the merchants is that a card will be placed in every student mailbox.

11. **Exam Survival Kits** • Let's face it: Parents have the money. The survival kit addresses the parents' need to show support for a son or daughter. Letters are sent to parents asking them to purchase a box of "goodies" for their son or daughter during exam week. Orders are filled and the exam kits are delivered at the beginning of exam week.
12. **Celebrity Shoe Auction** • As bizarre as it sounds, many individuals would pay good money to own an article of clothing once owned by their favorite star. Take the chance of writing to celebrities, outline the purpose of your group, and ask them if they would send an autographed piece of footwear to you. Hold an auction for these items. Remember: Take a chance on getting slapped, you may get kissed.
13. **Taste of the University** • Cookbooks are currently big business. Consider asking popular faculty and staff for a family recipe to be included in a University cookbook. Sell the book to alumni through the alumni organization. You could collect orders first and then print the required number of books. You might also consider gathering recipes from
14. **Sell Buttons/Pins** • Students and staff like to show their support for an effort by wearing pins with slogans on them. Design a support button for a big athletic event or for sale to parents at graduation. Contract with a specialty imprint company to manufacturer the button. Volume reduces the per unit cost, but beware! Don't order more than you can sell.
15. **'No-Bake' Bake Sale** • Members compute cost of making items for a bake sale and then just donate the money to the club. The Bake Sale doesn't really take place.

Selling Chances

16. **Mystery Photo** • Collect a donation to allow a student to guess the location of an obscure place on campus. Prize offered to winner.
17. **Penny Wars** • Competition can open wallets. Select (with permission) departments, organizations and/or individuals to compete in somewhat of a popularity poll. "Voters" cast their ballots with pennies. One penny counts as one vote. However, any other denomination of coin (or bill) reduces the number of votes accordingly. Voters can therefore increase their candidate's votes by placing other coins in other candidate's "ballot boxes."
18. **Game Shows** • Students will always turn out to watch other students perform. Consider taking a board game or game show and turning it into a campus game show. There are companies out there selling this idea to college campuses for big dollars. With a little ingenuity and planning, you could run a similar program and keep the profits for yourself.

Resource Books

Guide to Student Fundraising by Carolyn Malford, Future Homemakers of America, 1920 Association Dir., Reston, VA 22091; 1984.

"Buck Boosters"

Quirky ideas to get the cash flowing

By Hilary Masell Oswald

Let's face it: Fund raising isn't for the faint of heart, especially on college campuses, where student organizations abound and "disposable income" sounds like the name of a foreign country. But before you succumb to the urge to crawl under the table at your next budget meeting, check out the following ideas. Who knows? They might even put the "fun" back in fund raising.

Time for a Good Cause

Members of the Tufts Christian Fellowship at **Tufts University** in Massachusetts decided to donate their most valuable possession, time, for a silent auction in the spring of 2003. Members took inventory of their skills and resources, and they created several prizes that would appeal to college students: free transportation to the airport at the end of the semester; a team of movers and a vehicle to lug the contents of a dorm room to a storage area for the summer; a photo shoot with a talented student photographer; an authentic West African dinner for two, prepared by a student who had lived in Liberia; and, the best prize of all, the opportunity to dress up a prominent member of the organization for an entire day. When you're wearing a pink tutu, snorkel mask, and fireman's hat, just remember that your efforts are going to a good cause, and you'll be fine.

Saving Lives

Students at **Davidson College** in North Carolina take great pride in their involvement in Project Life, a campus organization that supports the National Bone Marrow Registry. Project Life began more than a decade ago, when David Lindsay, a student at Davidson, underwent a bone marrow transplant that cured him of acute leukemia. Determined to spread the word about the registry, David founded Project Life, which sponsors annual blood-typing drives. Students, faculty, and staff members can give a small amount of blood and add their bone marrow type to the national registry.

Each blood typing costs \$75, but student leaders are determined not to let money prevent someone from participating. Their determination means that they organize several sizeable fundraisers during the school year. Every fall, Project Life hosts a spaghetti dinner. Local restaurants donate the cooked spaghetti and sauce in exchange for free marketing to hungry college students. Other campus organizations provide bread, salad, and dessert. Project Life sells tickets at a relatively low price, \$7 for adults, \$3 for children, and last year, the group raised about \$2,800.

In the spring, the students tackle another large fund-raiser: tulip sales. After a rainy, cold winter, Davidson students can bring a little spring into their dorm rooms. Project Life supporters take pre-orders from students, faculty members, and parents (via e-mail or snail mail) early in the semester. The group works with a local florist, who sells the tulips to the organization at a reduced price, and the students deliver bouquets to the lucky recipients. The bouquets cost \$17 a piece, and last year, tulip sales raised several thousand dollars for Project Life.

Raising money for a worthy cause can greatly increase the support your organization gets from the community, says Mark Murray, co-coordinator for Project Life. Spread the word not only about the event, but also about why your group is raising money. Many people will skip their regular Friday night pizza to break bread for a good cause.

The Great Pumpkin

Each fall, members of the women's volleyball team at **Benedictine University** in Illinois take a break from the rigor of their sport to raise money to cover the costs of competing. Karen Kunka, the team's coach, sends postcards to all undergraduates' families, announcing their annual pumpkin sales. For \$15, a proud parent can purchase a pumpkin goodie bag for his or her student, filled with Halloween candy and late-night study snacks. Kunka accepts pre-orders and spends a few hours one afternoon shopping for plastic pumpkin pales and candy (in bulk, of course). The women spend one afternoon assembling the pumpkins, which they deliver to students' dorm rooms on Halloween.

"It's a simple fund-raiser, but we make a great profit, and the team loves it," Kunka says. "This past year, I e-mailed information to faculty and staff members, and we got a great response from them, too." Give your entire college community a chance to support your organization. Often, you'll find abundant resources in unlikely places.

Is That a See-saw?

Yes, Virginia, that is a see-saw. The brothers of Kappa Sigma fraternity at **Elon University** in North Carolina use their annual See-Saw-A-Thon to raise money for the American Cancer Society.

Timing is everything, President David Weber says. The brothers pull out their trusty see-saw every fall during Parents' Weekend and set it up near the football stadium hours before the Saturday afternoon football game. They then assign 15-minute shifts to pairs of brothers throughout the marathon. Those who aren't aboard the see-saw during a given shift hold up signs and solicit donations from curious passers-by, who inevitably ask, "Why are they on that see-saw?"

Last fall, the Lambda Lambda chapter of Kappa Sigma raised almost \$300 in about four hours. Weber recommends that you visit your local home improvement store, and perhaps the engineering department at your university, for help with see-saw construction.

Feeding Frenzy

The women of Alpha Xi Delta at the **University of Nebraska at Lincoln** know that college students like to eat, so they designed a fund-raiser around one simple element: nachos. Dubbed "Fiesta Feed," the annual fund-raiser is a twist on the old late-night snack. Students pay a minimal amount, \$3 beforehand, \$4 at the door, for tickets to the event, which the women host at their sorority house. Hungry guests grab plates and make themselves nachos from a buffet of chips, ground beef, cheese, salsa, lettuce, sour cream, and anything else local businesses donate.

The Fiesta Feed raises more than \$2,000 a year for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, and the concept is so popular that several other campus organizations have hosted similar events: the pancake feed and the spaghetti feed.

Jamie Powers, former Fiesta Feed chair, offers a smart marketing tool for organizations that need press coverage but cannot afford to buy radio ad time. Ask a local radio station if a member of your organization can call into the station at the beginning of the event to give listeners information about it. Many radio stations will agree to one phone call per hour, and you can reach a hungry undergrad or a generous business owner without spending a penny.

And for the Grand Finale-

Every year, several Greek organizations at UNL participate in Anchor Splash(tm), a week-long event hosted by the women of the Delta Gamma sorority. The highlight of Anchor Splash(tm) is the annual synchronized swimming event, where teams of male students choreograph and perform synchronized swimming routines. Each team pays an entrance fee, and curious spectators shell out a few dollars to enjoy the performances. The money goes to support Service for Sight, which works to prevent vision-related problems and blindness.

So, eat your heart out, get on a see-saw, or don your swimming trunks, and invite your fellow collegians to do the same. These organizations prove that a little silliness and a lot of passion are a great combination.

From Concept to Cash: Planning and Executing a Successful Fund-raiser

By Gretchen Symons, Dickinson College (PA)

Ninety-eight, 99, 100. How can we have only \$100? We raised \$300 and our expenses were...oh! You're kidding, we did all that work for only \$100? What happened?"

Okay, programmers and advisors, it's confession time: How many of you have had a million-dollar dream turn into a \$100 nightmare by the time the last brownie was sold or muddy SUV washed? Were you up to your elbows in batter or sneezing your way through another flower sale when you realized the event wasn't going to bring in the bucks. Unfortunately, it's happened to the best of us at one time or another—me included.

Fund-raisers, by and large, are excellent ways to add extra income to your programming budget. And goodness knows, we can all use a little additional cash in the coffers. Most often the problem with fund-raisers lies in their planning and execution—not in the ideas themselves. Sound familiar? It should, as the same concept applies to our programming efforts. Just like our other events, with a lot of forethought, good organization and excellent execution, fund-raisers can take you from concept to cash with great results.

So let's examine the basic principles that will help you complete a successful fund-raiser and boost your budget. As with any project you need to ask yourself a few questions right in the beginning.

What Do We Want to Accomplish with this Fund-raiser?

This should be the very first question from everyone on your program board. Yes, this is an event designed to raise money for your organization. However, how will this money be used? When you're planning a fund-raiser, you have to keep two things in mind. First, how you will raise the money, and second, what you are going to use it for. So be prepared to deal with these questions and the environment you create as you raise money for your program board.

Many groups might wonder why you have to raise funds and where the money will go afterward. Especially if you've never done this before, you could be seen as competition by other clubs and organizations on campus. As a board, discuss these matters together so that everyone is prepared to address them effectively and sensitively.

Who Is the Audience for this Fund-raiser?

Will your board be targeting mainly students along with faculty and staff, or will you reach out into the community with this effort? Establishing your target audience will give you a clearer vision for your event, especially when it comes to promoting it. As a group, you should identify your target audience and when it is available. If you want to conduct a fund-raiser involving alumni as well as the campus community, you should consider the times when alumni are on campus, i.e. Homecoming or Alumni Weekend.

Perhaps you want to hold a carnival or fair for the campus and the community. Take it from someone who knows—be sure to double check the community calendar and make sure there isn't a big community event going on at the same time. Both groups could be competing for the same crowd and would ultimately have a negative impact on each other's attendance.

What Is Your Financial Goal for this Fund-raiser?

Definitely keep in mind the numbers you want to see after you've completed your fund-raiser. Will you raise enough money with one event or will you need to do another?

Also, take into consideration your initial expenses. The money you need to cover these is called start-up expenses or seed money. It's important to know how much money you may have to invest up front before you see a return. For example, if you're going to sell candy bars as a fund-raiser, does the company require you to pay for them first? If so, where's that money going to come from? Are you certain you can sell enough to recoup your initial costs?

Knowing how much money is needed up front defeats a lot of fund-raisers. Many people get excited about the cash they may make but forget about the money they have to lay out initially. Look at your profit margin. If you're making \$100 in the end, is it worth it? Your program board will have to decide what is reasonable to invest in order to see a significant return based on your budget and needs.

How Much Time and Energy Can You Devote to this Fund-raiser?

Next, your group should consider the time and energy involved in developing, organizing and conducting a fund-raiser. At some point, we all fall prey to the get-rich-quick schemes of life. But as any good financial planner will tell you, raising funds takes time and energy. Is your organization setting realistic goals when it comes to this project? Do you have enough peoplepower to sell all the candy bars? Is there a reasonable amount of time designated for selling the candy? Make sure you're not trying to sell it during spring break or when another organization is doing the same fund-raiser. You don't want to waste your time and energy, not to mention experience a drop in group morale.

What Are Your Institution's Policies on Fund-raising?

Finally, you need to understand the institution's policies about fund-raising on campus. Having worked at both private and public institutions, I discovered that each had very specific requirements.

At the public university, there were very strict guidelines for raising money on campus. University funds could not be used to raise money so our program board had to come up with creative solutions for initial seed money. They also had certain policies about using public buildings or land for fund-raising efforts.

Conversely, one of the private institutions provided an enterprise fund for organizations to borrow a pre-determined amount to cover initial start-up costs. This was in the form of a loan from the student council and had to be repaid within a year. Also, they had no restrictions on using campus buildings for fund-raising. So double-check and make sure you know your institution's rules before you begin.

Are You Ready to Begin?

Once you've answered these questions, you're ready to get started. As a group, your program board should brainstorm different fund-raising ideas (see display at left, "Hot Ideas for Cool Fund-raisers"). This should be a free exchange of ideas—no idea is too big or too small. (Keep in mind your expectations for this event and the amount of money you want to raise.) Encourage your members to research other ideas, as well.

However, be careful. Often, what works at an urban, commuter institution may not work at a traditional liberal arts college. So be sure to tailor your event to your campus. Just because another college had success with a particular fund-raiser doesn't mean you will. However, your group might be clever enough to think of ways to adapt it to your institution. Be as creative as possible.

Determine Fund-raiser Categories

Fund-raisers generally tend to fall into two categories—ongoing or event specific. Examples of ongoing fund-raisers include candy sales, weekly bake sales, poster sales, etc. These events raise funds over a period of time and are often sales oriented. An event-specific fund-raiser is a

single event that occurs only once and can incorporate services like a car wash or entertainment such as a dance.

Ongoing events can sometimes wear on groups because they require an extensive time commitment. However, an effective way to combat fund-raising fatigue is to post the daily or weekly results where everyone can see them.

Event-specific fund-raisers require just as much energy, especially during the planning phase. To keep everyone excited and interested, if you're planning an event such as a silent auction, let members see donated items as they come in. This will help generate anticipation and enthusiasm among the group, and it's great for morale.

Establish Fund-raising Goals

After you've determined what kind of fund-raiser is likely to work for your program board, meet with your advisor and treasurer to establish financial goals. This is extremely important—your organization needs to assemble a budget in order to develop a realistic picture of the income and output required to conduct your fund-raiser.

Your college's development office can be a valuable resource at this stage. It has much experience in organizing and executing fund-raisers. Not only will you make new friends on campus, you'll also promote a better image of your program board by being responsible and taking advantage of your institution's resources. Also, development professionals will have knowledge that may save you heartache and trouble later on. Together with your advisor, they can help you establish a productive fund-raiser.

Working with your development officers is especially important if you plan to seek corporate sponsorship. Many colleges and universities have policies in place regarding corporate funding for college functions and programs. As an example, I offer an experience I had at a previous institution. One of the student organizations was considering asking the local office of a global corporation for sponsorship concerning a cultural show. When we checked with the development office, we learned it was already negotiating with the corporation for a sizable donation to the university as a whole.

Instead of asking for small donations here and there, the university had a different plan. If we had not checked with our development office, we might have interfered with the university's plans to create scholarship opportunities and programs on a larger scale. The corporation may have been content to give a much smaller donation to our event, and the institution could have missed out on a larger opportunity. However, since we had established a good relationship with the development office, they helped us find different sponsorship while still retaining their own donation from the corporation, thereby creating a win/win situation for everyone.

This is also a good example of a creative way to get seed money, especially if you're at an institution where start-up capital is not readily available. Other ideas include seeking sponsorship from departments or other organizations on campus and soliciting in-kind donations like food, gift certificates or other items. Always communicate clearly with sponsors to make sure they understand their donations are going to assist with a fund-raiser for your program board. It's important to keep them informed of how their donations are being used. Also, follow up with a thank-you note, telling them the fund-raiser's outcome. That will go a long way in maintaining your relationship with them and, more importantly, it shows good taste and manners.

Create a Checklist

After you've established goals and begun seeking seed money, the next step is to design a fund-raising checklist similar to one you would use for other campus events. This important list should include everything from pre-event deadlines, advertising and paperwork to decorations, donations and reservations. A checklist ensures that your program board is on track as it organizes the

fund-raiser. It will especially help separate the fund-raiser from the other normal events you might also be planning.

Put the checklist in a public place and distribute copies so everyone is on the same page. Organization is the key to a good fund-raiser. It will save your board members a lot of time and aggravation if everyone understands what is happening. Remember, you'll probably be running this fund-raiser along with your regular events. It is an additional responsibility for your program board, and you should adjust your events and schedule everything accordingly.

Although you will have many details to pursue, be sure to plan for your advertising and publicity needs. After all, you definitely want students, faculty, staff and the community to participate if you've gone to all the effort your fund-raiser requires. Be clever with promotion and remind participants that the proceeds from the event benefit the institution, letting them know how funds will be used. Whether it's to buy new sound equipment, bring in better movies or host a concert, everyone likes to know what they are supporting. This allows your participants to buy into the fund-raiser and know they are supporting a meaningful cause. It will increase your proceeds and give you great word-of-mouth promotion. Also, be sure to publicize results. For example, if your fund-raiser is a penny war or similar event, everyone will want to know who won.

Evaluate Your Fund-raiser

Once your fund-raiser has been completed, your team should evaluate the event and its proceeds. Assess its overall value and determine whether it was worthwhile. Review the questions you asked yourself as you began to plan the fund-raiser to see if you met or exceeded your goals in each area.

Carefully consider everything, not just whether or not you met your financial goals. If the fund-raiser proved to be a huge drain on everyone, caused an inordinate amount of stress or had other difficulties, discuss those factors as well. Look at all aspects of the process from concept and planning to the advertising and more. It will help you fine-tune your strategy the next time you undertake such an event.

Also, be sure to follow up with all participants. Send them thank-you cards and ask for their feedback, as well. This will make your evaluation more complete, offering valuable information for future consideration.

An Ounce of Planning, a Pound of Cash

I'd like to offer a twist to the old saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," changing it to, "An ounce of planning is worth a pound of cash." Fund-raisers, like all events, can be subject to unforeseen circumstances. However, just like everything else in life, if you take the time to consider what you want to accomplish and plan accordingly, your trip from concept to cash will likely be a successful journey.

Meeting Management

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Brian A. Morgan Armstrong

Leadership Education And Development – 2001

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Regular Motions

· **Main Motion:** What are you asking the board to approve or consider? Most orders of business are presented to the board in the form of a motion, for example, to allocate funds for an event or purchase. Main motions require a second, and are debatable. *Phrasing, "I move that..." or, "..., I so move."*

· **Move to Amend:** During debate upon a main motion, components or technicalities might need to be fixed or adjusted. During debate upon a main motion, an amendment may be presented to make necessary changes. An amendment can not alter the intent of the main motion. Amendments require a second and are debatable. *Phrasing, "I move to amend the motion to state/read..."*

· **Offer a Friendly Amendment:** Although this motion is not part of formal parliamentary procedure, it is common practice that an amendment that augments or clarifies a motion, and is presented before debate begins, can be presented. Friendly amendments do not require seconds and are not debatable; friendly amendments must be accepted by the maker of the motion and the second. *Phrasing, "I move to friendly amend that the motion states/reads..."* Note: Friendly amendments can interrupt the process because they must be presented prior to the beginning of general debate.

· **Call the Question:** If debate seems to be at an end, or nothing new is being added, any voting member may call the question. This motion ends debate and moves the process directly into a vote. No second is required, but any voting member may object to the call. An objection counters the call, and debate continues as normal. *Phrasing, "I call the question."*

· **Move the Previous Question/Motion:** This motion swerves to end debate in more formal manner than calling the question. Moving the previous question (moving the previous motion) ends debate, requires a second, is itself debatable, and dependant upon the acceptance of this motion by two-thirds approval, the board must move directly into a vote upon the current main motion or return to normal debate. This process calls for debate and vote to end debate upon another main motion. *Phrasing, "I move the previous question."* Note: A voting member may not interrupt call to make this motion, but must enter it according to the normal speaker process, once they have been recognized by the chair.

· **Move to Limit Debate:** Either before or during debate, the length of time allocated for discussion can be limited. Normally debate is unlimited to ensure minority opinion and dissention. This is not debatable, nor does it require a second; it may be amended and can only be approved by a two-thirds majority vote. *Phrasing, "I move to limit debate/discussion to ...(time limit)." Phrasing of amendment, "I move to amend the limit to be set at..."*

· **Move to Refer to Committee:** This motion removes an issue from the table and places it with either a standing committee or an ad hoc committee. The committee is charged with researching the issue and presenting a course of action and/or decision for the board at an agreed upon future meeting. This motion requires a second and is debatable. *Phrasing, "I move that this issue be referred to a committee that will report back to us at (time/date) and propose a course of action/decision for consideration."*

· **Move to Suspend the Rules:** An unusual motion, and often requested by the chair when the parliamentary procedure has gotten out of control. A voting member must present it, it requires a second, is not debatable or amendable, and needs a two-thirds majority vote to pass. *Phrasing, "I move to suspend the rules."*

· **Move to Withdraw:** The maker of a motion can chose to pull a main motion from the table for any reason, although normally new information or justification may be requested by the chair for

reasons of explanation. It does not require a second, but does require a majority affirmative vote. *Phrasing, "I move to withdraw the motion."*

· **Move to Appeal the Decision of the Chair:** If it seems as if the chair has made a mistake, or if a particular member perceives that they are being ignored or their motions not being recognized, a voting member can move to appeal the chair's decision. This move is debatable, but not amendable. A two-thirds *negative* vote indicates that the board agrees the chair made a mistake.
Special Motions

· **Point of Personal Privilege:** This excuses an individual member from the board, and does not count against quorum. The chair holds authority to grant or not grant this special motion. *Phrasing, "Point of personal privilege."*

· **Point of Order:** If parliamentary procedure is not being followed, any member of the board may interrupt a speaker or the process and present a correct course of action according to parliamentary procedure.

· **Point of Clarification:** To clarify the process or add clarity to a motion, a member may interrupt a speaker to address the issues of confusion. *Phrasing, "Point of clarification, ... (clarifying comments)."*

· **Point of Parliamentary Inquiry:** Similar to Point of Order, except that the member is unsure of the correct course of action. This is an appeal to the chair or the parliamentarian to ensure that parliamentary procedure is being properly followed. *Phrasing, "Point of parliamentary inquiry, are we following parliamentary procedure?"*

HELPFUL HINTS FOR NON-PARLIAMENTARIANS

1. Remember an important fundamental principle of parliamentary procedure that allows for, "free and full discussion," of issues, motions, and courses of action.

· Avoid calling the question too early

· Allow for some flexibility by the chair, such as allowing for motions to be withdrawn

· Share new thoughts or information during debate, do not continually restate the same comments

2. When the "previous question" is called, the chair should ask for a second and repeat the motion to enable all members to be clear as to the issue being voted upon, and the process of *moving the previous question*.

3. Be friendly when you disagree on an issue. You are debating an issue, not personalities. Cordial debate allows for more efficient addressing of issues and maintains personal and professional relationships.

4. Avoid complex motions. Amendments often become confusing; limit non-main motions where possible to enhance clarity and expedite decision making. Keep debate, motions, and amendments germane to the issue at hand.

5. Wait to be recognized by the chair before you speak. To simply speak up and join debate, or throw a question to the table is rude. Parliamentary procedure is designed to ensure each person and each point of view is heard and considered. Only specific motions should be used to interrupt the chair or the flow of the procedure; these special motions should be used sparingly.

6. The maker of a motion has the first right to speak on the motion. Pay strict attention; in formal parliamentary procedure, a motion is made and then debate is joined. The first speaker usually presents information and shapes the nature of the debate.

7. Keep agendas short. Attempt to keep new business items minimized after the first few general meetings. Three to five items are a recommended limit to new business items.

8. Follow the order of business; avoid tangential conversations, detracting sidebars, and unnecessary disruptions to the normal flow of business.

9. Officers and reporting members should have reports prepared before the meeting, and certain reports such as minutes and budgets should be copied for each member as necessary.

10. Start and end meetings on time; be respectful of time limits during the course of business.

11. The chair must remain neutral to ensure adherence to proper parliamentary procedure. The chair may elect to pass the gavel and take a stand on an issue, however the gavel may only be passed to an executive or member who has not stated a position on the issue. Once the gavel is passed, the chair may not re-assume the gavel until the issue is voted upon and settled.

The Role Of The Facilitator

Running a successful meeting will help your group operate efficiently, and provide a worthy experience for all members. As facilitator, you are the key to ensuring that success. Here are some tips:

- One of your most important roles is to create a warm and friendly atmosphere so members feel free to express themselves.
- Be interested and enthusiastic--enthusiasm can be contagious. Have a positive attitude!
- Your job as facilitator will take all your attention. You are not a participant as much as you are the "conductor" of the meeting--directing the flow and energy of that meeting. You will be looking at participants' body language, listening carefully to what they say, drawing out those members who are not speaking, and gently moving the meeting along when a member monopolizes conversations. You will not have time to take minutes (and we know how minutes are essential in recording meeting developments, and also in reminding you and group members of follow-up actions that are needed). So, be sure to appoint another person to take minutes.
- Set out ground rules for the meeting, including, for example, the expectation that everyone participate, no judgement statements during brainstorming sessions, and that there will be an ending time, and state that time.
- Keep the discussion on track. The agenda will drive these discussions.
- Pace the meeting and observe specified time limits for agenda items--this will allow everyone a chance to speak and helps insure that all issues on the agenda are covered. However, be sensitive to the need for discussion. Allow the group to talk things through. If they want more time to discuss an issue, adjust the agenda. Recognize when there is consensus and move on. Be gentle but firm with people who speak too long or get off the subject--a simple "let's move on" or "thanks, now let's hear from someone else" can be very effective.
- Call group members by name. This personalizes the discussion and also assists the recorder in accurately noting who shared their opinions.
- Avoid stating that a person is wrong for any idea or opinion that is expressed; rather ask for other comments and ideas on the subject. Remain open-minded and democratic. Allowing the free flow of expression allows for creative thinking.
- Ask open-ended questions--why and how--to stimulate discussion. Ex. *How to do you think that will impact the project?* vs. *Do you think that will impact the project?*--which dead ends with a "no" or "yes" response.
- Listen carefully to each person. Make sure you understand what the speaker is saying. If you're unsure, try restating it or ask the person to clarify.
- Be certain that the entire group is involved in the discussion. Encourage everyone to speak by simply asking those who haven't spoken for their opinion on the issue at hand.

- Be aware of people who look confused or lost, and restate questions or ideas. Summarize key points when necessary.
- If problems arise, remain neutral and calm. Call on members for assistance and resolution--it shouldn't all be on your shoulders.
- Use appropriate humor--it can release tension and get people talking.
- Summarize conclusions or decisions at the end of the meeting.
- Leave time for questions. Otherwise, your meetings will seem like one-sided dialogues.
- Recognize achievements, big and small. We all want to feel valued.

As the meeting winds down to the end:

- Tie up loose ends. Avoid hasty decisions simply because time has expired.
- Table unresolved issues until the next meeting.
- Plan the next meeting. Set the date, select the place, and develop a preliminary agenda, which should include any unresolved issues from this meeting.
- End the meeting on a positive note. This will also encourage members to follow-up on any actions they've agreed to do.
- An important note: After the meeting ends, review the minutes of the meeting. You are responsible to see that all follow-up plans are put into action--another reason why complete and reliable minutes are so vital.

Running Effective Meetings

Do you dread attending meetings because they are dull, unproductive, disorganized and too long? With proper planning and preparation, any meeting can be effective and enjoyable. Meetings have several functions. They give members a chance to discuss and evaluate goals and objectives, keep updated on current events, provide a chance to communicate and keep the group cohesive.

But most of all, meetings allow groups to pull resources together for decision making. If the facilitator starts with a careful plan and finishes with a thorough follow-up, the meeting will "run smooth". The following are some tips to help you make your next meeting successful, productive and even fun.

Before The Meeting

1. Define the purpose of the meeting.
2. Develop an agenda with the officers and advisor. Below is a sample agenda:

* Call to Order

- * Approval of Agenda
- * Correction and Approval of Minutes
- * Announcements
- * Treasurer's Report
- * Committee Reports
- * Unfinished Business
- * New Business
- * Special Issues
- * Adjournment

3. Distribute the agenda and circulate background material, lengthy documents or articles prior to the meeting so members will be prepared and feel involved and up-to-date.

4. Choose an appropriate meeting time. Set a time limit and stick to it, if possible. Remember, members have other commitments. They will be more likely to attend meetings if you make them productive, predictable and as short as possible.

5. If possible, arrange the room so that members face each other, i.e., a circle or semi-circle. For large groups, try U-shaped rows.

6. Choose a location suitable to your group's size. Small rooms with too many people get stuffy and create tension. A larger room is more comfortable and encourages individual expression.

7. Use visual aids for interest (e.g., posters, diagrams, etc.). Post a large agenda up front to which members can refer.

8. Vary meeting places if possible to accommodate different members. Be sure everyone knows where and when the next meeting will be held.

During The Meeting

1. Greet members and make them feel welcome, even late members when appropriate.
2. If possible, serve light refreshments; they are good icebreakers and make your members feel special and comfortable.
3. Start on time. End on time.
4. Review the agenda and set priorities for the meeting.
5. Stick to the agenda.

6. Encourage group discussion to get all points of view and ideas. You will have better quality decisions as well as highly motivated members; they will feel that attending meetings is worth their while.
7. Encourage feedback. Ideas, activities and commitment to the organization improve when members see their impact on the decision making process.
8. Keep conversation focused on the topic. Feel free to ask for only constructive and non-repetitive comments. Tactfully end discussions when they are getting nowhere or becoming destructive or unproductive.
9. Keep minutes of the meeting for future reference in case a question or problem arises.
10. As a leader, be a role model by listening, showing interest, appreciation and confidence in members. Admit mistakes.
11. Summarize agreements reached and end the meeting on a unifying or positive note. For example, have members volunteer thoughts of things they feel have been good or successful or reiterate the organization's mission.
12. Set a date, time and place for the next meeting.

After The Meeting

1. Write up and distribute minutes within 3 or 4 days. Quick action reinforces importance of meeting and reduces errors of memory.
2. Discuss any problems during the meeting with other officers; come up with ways improvements can be made.
3. Follow-up on delegation decisions. See that all members understand and carry-out their responsibilities.
4. Give recognition and appreciation to excellent and timely progress.
5. Put unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting.
6. Conduct a periodic evaluation of the meetings. Note any areas that can be analyzed and improved for more productive meetings. A sample meeting evaluation checklist is attached.

Meeting Evaluation Checklist

The meeting was well planned if:

1. Members were notified in advance.
2. There was a pre-arranged agenda.
3. Officers and committees were ready to report.
4. The meeting room was pre-arranged. The meeting was well organized.

5. The meeting started on time.
6. Guests were introduced and welcomed.
7. Agendas were available for all members.
8. The purposes for the meeting were made clear.
9. There was a transition from the last meeting.
10. One topic was discussed at a time.
11. One person has the floor at a time.
12. Discussion was relevant.
13. The chairperson summarized the main points of the discussion.
14. The meeting moved along at a workable pace.
15. Committee assignments were complete and clear.
16. Plans for the next meeting were announced.
17. All that was planned for the meeting was covered. Participation in the meeting.
18. Members participated in discussion and voting.
19. The chairperson made good use of questions.
20. The pros and cons of all issues were considered.
21. Members gave suggestions to committees.
22. Responsibilities were evenly distributed.
23. Members participated in planning the agenda for the next meeting. The value of the meeting.
24. Progress was made toward goals.
25. Something was learned.
26. Attendance was good.
27. Everyone present was on time.
28. Members knew one another.
29. There was a "warm up" period before the meeting.

30. There was some humor during the meeting.
31. Members and officers helped one another when needed.
32. There was an atmosphere of free expression.
33. Attitude of the Meeting.