The Development of a College Engineering Organization and the Inevitable Transition of Power

1. The Signifiers to Start
   1. What are your reasons for starting an organization?
      1. Want experience?
      2. Want to feed your passion?
   2. Is there a gap in the community for what you want to create?
      1. Is the timing right?
      2. Will the people come?
   3. Do you see yourself as someone who can lead?
      1. The attributes of a leader?
      2. The energy/want?
   4. What are the roadblocks to understand?
      1. The people to know
         1. The Maze of Power
      2. The Drive with no Rewards
2. Identifying a Growable Team
   1. Not all starting members are long-term members
      1. Focus on the potential high impactor people
   2. Why do people want this organization?
      1. What are you offering? Does it align with what you initially thought? It won’t.
   3. What people/groups can help you at this stage?
      1. Parent organizations, nearby similar organizations
3. Building around a Project
   1. Must work on something that excites most members
      1. Don’t try too hard to make sure everyone is for it
   2. Build a project, people will come
      1. Trying to build a team with just general meetings doesn’t work
   3. Roadblocks happen, but must have the grit to push through
      1. Initially starting something takes a certain grit, can be challenging to keep motivated
4. Motivating Engineering Students
   1. Why do people want to work? What motivates humans. Why do people do what they do
   2. Getting engineering students to work on engineering projects
      1. Leading students with deadlines based on the individual, not the team dynamic
      2. Create a structure and means of communication between disciplines and engineering groups
      3. An overarching goal of each year and group of years
   3. Getting engineering students to work on non-engineering projects
      1. The inevitable struggle of motivating ‘busy’ students on ‘non’-resume building work
      2. The big picture strategy and clearly outlined duties to enable better output of various non engineering work
      3. Incentives and programs to help get people amped to help out, outline the benefits, what they can learn from it
5. Changing the Scope and Direction
   1. Was your first project successful, and if it wasn’t, where can you go now?
      1. Clubs change with people, it is important to reevaluate constantly
   2. What is the purpose of the club, and does it match the direction you are going
      1. Engineering can be fun, but the end goal is a job, even a rewarding career
   3. Growing the club to foster more non-engineering events
      1. The importance of general meetings
      2. Even engineers want to do fun stuff outside of the engineering
         1. Can be difficult to make people understand the importance of connections
         2. Commit to more time at meetings that can sometimes be dry/unrewarding for certain people
      3. The importance of social events that take time that even boost productivity in the long run
6. Growing the Culture
   1. To be a successful college team, you must respect each other
      1. Not everyone is going to get along, but it important to support the culture in respecting each other for our contributions and strengths
   2. The importance of your appearance
      1. Student engineering groups are one of the main sell points for a school… be the most presentable one, and the members and the school will be proud
   3. The importance of a home
      1. People underestimate this even though we value it so much for our family
7. Sustaining the Structure
   1. As the club grows, it is important to really pay attention to how people need to do things
      1. Easily forgotten or thrown away as unimportant
   2. Adapt to a growing community with better and more organized systems and known/clear responsibility of what members must do
8. Transitioning of Power
   1. The graduation of the initial founders and founding members is the largest pain point
      1. What special things should be done during this unique transition in general
   2. Organization
      1. There is a lot of grit and responsibility in leadership positions
         1. Future leaders must have the institutional knowledge
         2. Future leaders must have the passion and experience
      2. A strong informed member base to help support as most experience members leave
   3. Engineering
      1. The projects for past and current must be shared between all years
      2. Communication culture between disciplines very important

# Literature

1. Motivating the Middle – Fighting Apathy in College Student Organizations
   1. 64 Pages, T.J. Sullivan
2. Why Doers Do – Managing Human Performance to Optimize the Return on Your People Investment
   1. 400 Pages, David E. Wile
3. Project Management for the Unofficial Project Manager
   1. 200 Pages, Kory Kogan
4. Smart Tribes – How Teams Become Brilliant Together
   1. 200 Pages, Christine Comaford

Motivating the Middle – Fighting Apathy in College Student Organizations

* Top-third members do most of the work. They are the visible, busy leaders. If their hands are not actively doing something for the group, their minds are likely thinking about the next event, meeting, project. They run for office. They step up when there is a need.
* A top-third member wishes everyone would take the organization more seriously and give 100 percent.
* When you graduate, you want your efforts to be remembered. Many of your best memories of college will be of times spent with your fellow members. You will always care about your group, and you hope it achieves great things when you’re gone.
* Bottom-third members make top-third members crazy. While you consistently go above and beyond, making enormous personal investments of time and energy to build your organization up, the bottom-third members miss no opportunity to rip it down and make it weaker.
* You spend a lot of your time worrying about bottom-third member – dealing with their drama, mitigating the problems they cause, and trying to understand why they feel and act the way they do.
* A middle-third member is happy to contribute to the success of the organization, but is much more likely to be a supporting player than the MVP
* A middle-third member likes certain aspects of your organization more than other.”
* If your meeting is supposed to last for an hour, and instead goes for two, the middle-third member gets annoyed.
* Middle-third members get excited about successes, and they worry about the failures and shortcomings. They look at the top-third members to set things right, then they follow that lead.
* But if involvement in your organization starts feeling negative, then the middle-third member might show up less, help out less, resign that leadership position, or spend more with people he enjoys more.
* You can spend your time wishing everyone would join you in the top-third, or you can start strategically dealing with people where they are.
* The single biggest mistake that student organization leaders (top-third members) make when it comes to motivation and fighting apathy is thinking that all of their members will respond to the same things that motivate them.
* By beginning and ending on time, you earn trust of middle-third members, and you support their need to juggle priorities.
* You assume that the top third is generally with you and the bottom third is generally against you, and you work to romance the middle.
* A bottom-third sister with a 1.2 GPA is unlikely to pull a 3.0 next semester. However, that middle-third sister with a 2.76 might achieve that 3.0 if given encouragement, incentive and assistance.
* You deal with the bottom third by setting minimum standards for your organization and then holding all members to those minimum standards.
* Your top-third members might get very annoyed by the disparity in expectations. They will say its not fair.
* The idea that every member of an organization will be equally committed and engaged is a fantasy, and they are wasting their time whining about it.
* You choose to be a top-third member, because that’s the choice that brings you the greatest happiness and sense of purpose.
* We have to be committed to excellence even when others around us inexplicitly are not. Inspire them to give their best and to create the student leadership experience that fulfills them.
* Take a list of your current members and divide it into thirds. Who are the top-third members who always show up and do a ton of work? Who are the bottom-third who either cause problems or have a very weak commitment to the group? Who falls in the middle? (Its OK if its not perfect thirds)
* What are some lower-pressure, supporting roles your organization could create that would appeal to middle members with more limited time to devote?

Smart Tribes Quotes

* When leaders call me, they want three things from their teams (and often themselves): increased performance, increased innovation, and increased emotional engagement.
* But there’s only so much top talent out there, and your energy should not be – and cannot be – spent solely on replacing or recruiting talent. At the end of the day, you’ve got to maximize the talent that you have.
* The world is full of “living dead” companies that reached an inflection point and couldn’t grow to the next one. You’re either moving forward or moving back. Stasis is not sustainable.
* Some of your team members may need to develop profound new skill sets, behaviors, capabilities, beliefs, or identities.
* You see, people are essentially unmanageable. Most attempts to control and manipulate people will ultimately fail.
* However, when driven by fear, human beings generally go to one of three places: they get stuck, they solve problems that don’t exist, and they focus on the wrong problem, which is low leverage and doesn’t deliver the result they want.
* True leadership inspires people with vision. Vision pulls people not only to take action but also to care about the outcome, to take personal ownership of it, and to bring their “A game” every day.
* As the leader grows in focus, team members feel the leader is increasingly more aware and cares about them more. As clarity is cultivated, team members feel more motivated and safe since expectations are no explicit.
* As the leader’s influence grows, the team members feel the leader is more capable and collaborative. Over time as results are sustained, team members feel safer and more loyal.
* Fear pushed people to take action. Vision pulls people not only to take action but also to care about the outcome.
* Do you have the right people in the right roles doing the right things?
* Are you retaining your superstar employees?
* Have you identified your next generation of leaders? If so, are you following a specific, proven process to cultivate them?
* “If we want to reignite innovation and passion, we have to rehumanize the work. When shame becomes a management style, engagement dies. When failure is not an option we can forget about learning, innovation, and creativity.
* The Critter State will always trump the Smart State. Survival will always be coded as paramount. The trick is to increase safety, belonging, and mattering. When we do that, when we even make it safe for our team to recognize when they are triggered and to step back from it, we increase choice, allow change, and promote innovation.
* The imagining of a new, better future where there are compelling rewards pulls, attracts, and draws people forward, and emotionally engages them.
* We recommend that if you are aiming to change something, you enlist the support of a trusted advisor, because its almost impossible to see what’s going on from inside.
* The first dimension of focus is to be present with people here and now. This means that if you are at a meeting, you are listening to what people are saying and not thinking about the past or the future. The second dimension of focus is to be real about where you are, to make a clear distinction between envisioning an outcome and wishful thinking. The third dimension of focus is to prioritize high-value (strategic or “top down”) activities and manage low value (distracting or “bottom up”) time wasters.
* Being present means being here, focusing on now, and nowhere else. Not in the past, not in the future. Just here. Being present means looking at your world, your situation, your team, your concerns or fears, your intentions, your beliefs, and your commitments. Being present is essential to lead, to feel emotionally engaged, and to help your team feel you are aware of the key issues.
* What would happen if we inquired instead, if we asked them how they would do it?
* You’ll likely do three inquiry session with someone before they start to expect you to ask questions versus give orders. Next they’ll come to you with ideas (since they know you’ll inquire anyway) and they’ll seek feedback and validation. After a few of these feedback/validation sessions, they’ll then come to you saying they have a plan: here it is, speak now if you aren’t okay with it. Then next – voila – they won’t come to you since they’ll have taken ownership of the area.
* One of the best ways to get and stay present is to focus on how you are increasing safety, belonging, mattering with your team.
* Inquiry builds leaders – advocacy builds order takers. Five inquiries per advocacy.
* Safety+belonging+mattering = trust
* Do you know your company vision? Do your team members know it? Do they feel emotional about it?
* Being clear is essential to leading. When we’re clear we feel aligned and energized, and our team feel motivated because they have explicitly stated expectations. So why is being clear sometimes hard?
  + Clarity of our words
  + Clarity of our vision and plan
  + Clarity of our intentions and energy
* Why are we in business? Why are we doing what we do here? Why does this organization exist?
* A vision is a picture of what you want, as far out on the horizon as you can see, as an organization or as an individual.
* There are five types of communication:
  + Information sharing
  + Requests
  + Promises
  + Sharing of oneself
  + Debating, decision making, or point proving
* Yet only two drive results: requests and promises.
* The number one place where problematic or unclear communication appears is in meetings. This is where a leader will often send people into their Critter State (by causing fear or confusion) due to lack of clarity. Why do we have meetings? Because we want to reach a conclusion of some sort. Yet typical and ineffective communication in meetings generally look like this:
  + Lots of information sharing
  + Lots of sharing oneself
  + Some debating, decision making and point proving
  + Regrettably few requests and promises.
* The key is to focus on only enough information sharing in order to solicit requests from parties who need something and promises from parties who will fill the need.
* We send team members into their Critter State and squash productivity, innovation, safety, belonging, and mattering if we don’t use clear, direct communication.
* Being truly clear means we need to take the time to discover what we need, to articulate it clearly, and to be sure the other part understood our communication.
* A well-orchestrated team depends on everyone doing their job, at the time they are supposed to do it, yielding the results they are supposed to yield.
* As a leader, you need to ensure that your team actually is accountable.
* Assigner’s clear expectation + owner’s agreement + personal rewards and consequences = self-ownership and high accountability.
* In low accountability cultures, we see that the trouble begins at the top. The team is simply modeling the low accountability that the executive team is displaying.
* It all comes down to accountability.
* If you want to know what a person is truly committed to, look at their calendar, their credit card statement, and their behavior. These will reveal their priorities and what they value most.
* When accountability structures are used across a company, you’ll find people that perform at much higher levels. If a bar isn’t set, people don’t know how high they can jump.
* Trust is broken in three levels: capability, commitment, character. The ego is triggered by questioning someone’s significance, competence, lovability.
* Real influence is about empowering others.
* Here’s the thing about influence: it’s not about how many people you can tell what to do. It’s about how many people you can understand, empower, and motivate.
* If you know how to step into other people’s maps, you’ll be able to improve their abilities, performance, and outcomes, and increase their feelings of safety, belonging, trust, and connection within your team.
* The more passionate I become, the better I am at leading myself and others, and helping them get in their Smart States.
* If you’re in a meeting with a person who is leaning back and has his arms crossed, you adopt this posture too.
* There are three influencing phrases:
  + What if
  + I need your help
  + Would it be helpful if
* The more influential you become, the more you are putting yourself at the service of your team. Real influence is about empowering others.
* Use the words growth, progress and evolution as opposed to change. Change can hurl us into our critter brain, whereas growth messaging puts is in our prefrontal cortex, where we want to solve puzzles, have visions, and be creative.
* Think of the seemingly boundless energy of a teenager. Why are they this way? It is because they often see endless opportunity and possibility.
* What happens when you work only at the symptom level? You’ll have to deal with the next symptom, and the next symptom, forever – because it’s the system that causes all the symptoms.
* Core applies to individuals – its who you are, what you stand for, what will last if everything else is stripped away. Culture refers to organizations – its what the company believes about its executives, its rituals, the behaviors that are rewarded or punished, the function and dysfunction.
* Not everyone in your organization is going to embrace and celebrate change. Every leader knows that the biggest challenge with change is resistance. But what most miss is that resistance is simply the first stop on the quest for the holy grail: a new standard.
* When team members feel their leaders doesn’t care about them they experience social rejection, which lights up the pain network.
* When an organization or individual feels their leader deeply cares for them, they trust their leader to help them navigate change.
* As leaders, we are constantly looking at what we are doing. It’s time to start looking at who you are being. What is it you are not yet doing and are not yet being?
* We find some people may not be able to become profoundly aligned with other people, but they can and will become profoundly aligned with a potent mission, vision, and values.
* First of all, if an organization is to be truly effective, it must at heart be a learning organization.
* Systems thinking: an understanding that all parts affect the whole and change in any one part will likewise affect the whole.
* A shared vision motivates the staff to learn, as it creates a common identity that creates focus and energy for learning.
* Teams that share their learning processes openly see the problem-solving capacity of the organization improve greatly.
* When we’re clear on the people, tools, and tasks we have available, and who “owns” what aspect of the business, we experience true empowerment and trust due to clear expectations and accountability.
* Having a solid culture and compelling cultural rituals fosters safety, belonging, mattering, staff retention, and high performance.
* A focused and present leader creates a focuses and present culture.
* Companies can grow only as fast as their systems allow them to.
* Clear communication in the leadership ranks drives clear communication at all level of the company.
* A “right person” is talented and needs to be put in the right role. A “wrong person” doesn’t match or honor the organization’s values or does but doesn’t uphold the leadership code of conduct.
* Chaos is an indication that you need to go back to basics. Start by reestablishing your mission, vision, and values, then line up your systems.