Leadership Analysis: Vietnamese Student Association

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WPI

VSA

Abstract

Because of VSA's strong presence and positive reputation at WPI, we chose to research VSA-WPI to see what leadership practices make them so successful. After interviewing members of VSA's executive board, we identified VSA's 4 best leadership practices and provided 2 recommendations for leadership improvement.

Background

Established in 2003, the Vietnamese Student Association (VSA) is a collection of students from various backgrounds that share a common interest in and wish to promote Vietnamese and Vietnamese-American culture.

2017-2018 VSA Executive Board

Recommendations

Mentor

Problem

Informal Succession ➡ Poor Leadership

Solution

Alumni Advisor
- Foster core values
- Coach and advise leadership
- Keep club traditions

Effects
- Guarantee consistent club culture
- Poor leadership can become trained
- Increased morale

Review

Problem

Decrease in Morale due to Event Failure

Solution

Event Recap Meetings
- Adaptive leadership
- Constructive environment
- Praise good decisions
- Avoid bad decisions
- Team > Individual
- Write every idea down
- Document conclusions

Effects
- Gain insight on how to improve events
- Encouraged rather than discouraged

Best Leadership Practices

Teamwork

VSA's consultative, participative leadership style and family oriented culture unites its executive board and members to spread Vietnamese culture and develop a thriving community at WPI

"We always do our best to hang out with each member and find things that they are interested in or help them with or through anything that they struggle with."
– **Chau Tran** *President of VSA*

"The officers are also willing to bear each other's workloads, meaning that we tend to cross-over a lot in terms of what we do."
–**Trung Trang Trong** *VP of VSA*

"VSA is like a family. We take care and support each other. Chau, the president, is like our mom. We come to her a lot for our problems and advice."
– **Lily Tuong** *VSA Member*

Vietnamese Student Association General Body

Motives

The appreciation and passion for the Vietnamese culture drives the executive board and general body to grow VSA and volunteer at events

Executives and members share a similar reason for joining VSA: love for the Vietnamese culture and people and a feeling of responsibility to spread the Vietnamese culture

VSA involves members in various events throughout the year to help encourage the original goal: to spread Vietnamese culture at WPI

"The team shares the same goals for VSA, and we have a diverse set of skills to work towards these goals."
– **Trung Tran Trong** *VP of VSA*

"How I deal with this is to make sure that my team does not lose morale and I get them to refocus on our goal so that we can plan more things accordingly."
– **Chau Tran** *President of VSA*

VSA Lunar New Year Festival

Influence

VSA collaborates with many of the other cultural clubs at WPI demonstrating their level of power and influence on campus

Popular collaboration events such as the International Student Council's Vietnamese Midnight Breakfast and VSA/SASE Destress Night demonstrate VSA's power to influence all of WPI through networking and collaboration

"We brainstorm, plan and implement ideas that expose VSA to WPI and also build bridges with other clubs such as SASE, KSA, CSA and JCC"
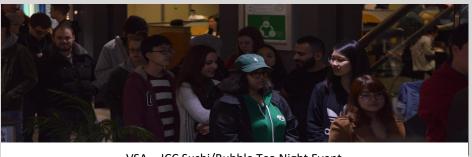– **Chau Tran** *President of VSA*

I taught my exec board how to initiate collaboration ideas and events, and now we are one of the clubs that have the most collaborations each term!
– **Chau Tran** *President of VSA*

VSA – JCC Sushi/Bubble Tea Night Event

ISC Vietnamese Midnight Breakfast

VSA – JCC Sushi/Bubble Tea Night Event

Ethics

The social responsibility of celebrating traditional Vietnamese culture and serving one's own local community is strongly exhibited in VSA's cultural and service events

The preservation of cultural celebrations such as TET is a social responsibility for the Vietnamese people. By celebrating these events, the club gives a true traditional experience of the Vietnamese culture to those who attend

"We are very true to our culture, and we try to stick to tradition as much as possible, such as TET, or Lunar New Year."
- **Chau Tran** *President of VSA*

"Philanthropy and helping our country is something that we really care about, and it's something that each member is genuinely passionate about. We create many fundraisers to advocate for our current philanthropy, *Youth Effect International*, who uses 100% of donations to help provide students with the tools they need to have a better education."
- **Chau Tran** *President of VSA*

VSA – Southeast Asian Coalition Collaboration

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