

## Officer Transitions

Leadership transition can be difficult, but if properly managed, organizations can have a seamless year-to-year transition. It's never too early to anticipate change in leadership. Too often, organization leaders dedicate themselves to successfully leading their groups for an academic year and at the end of their terms, leave the positions without making sure the incoming officers will be prepared for their new roles. When that happens, all the information regarding the previous year's lessons learned are not passed on to the incoming officers, thus slowing down their progress. The following tips will help you effectively transition at the appropriate time.

## Documentation

Begin keeping all important things you have learned as well as any business of your organization in a well-organized document as soon as you begin your new position. This not only provides the new officer with a solid baseline to start with but will also help you do a better job by keeping yourself organized. Keeping a history of your student organization will not only help student leaders, but all members know what has worked well in the past, what has already been done in the past, and what traditions or special events should be carried on into the future.

The document should include:

- The mission and goals of the organization
- Specific goals to accomplish during your term with space to review outcomes
- A copy of the most current constitution and bylaws
- Detailed officer descriptions
- Committee descriptions
- A copy of the current MSOE Student Organization Handbook
- Meeting minutes
- Financial Records and Resources
- Program and Event Evaluations
- Traditions and Past Calendars
- Have a list of tips such as:
  - o I wish someone would have told me \_\_\_\_\_ when I started.
  - o Some resources I wish I would have known about sooner are...
  - o What worked well? Why?
  - o What didn't go well? Why?
  - o What challenges did you face?
  - o Ways to overcome or avoid these challenges/things that don't go well.
  - o What are some tips about the culture of the organization and the students who are members?
  - o What are some long-term goals yet to be accomplished?
  - o What problems or areas will require attention within the next year?

**Meetings**

Before the newly elected officers of your organization officially assume their responsibilities, it is wise for the old and new officers to get together for a transition meeting. This will be a good chance for the new officer to ask questions to their peer who can guide the new officer on a path to a positive and successful experience.

**Create a Calendar**

You and your fellow group members may have come up with some good activity ideas and events, but unless the planning process is initiated, they will never happen. The initial calendar does not to be set in stone, as other University and student events may conflict, but it should give a solid baseline of how the quarter goals will be achieved through the year.