

FOCUS

A Herff Jones IMPACT Resource For Advisers

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MAY FOCUS

Teambuilding Fundamentals

As an adviser and leader, having the respect and cooperation of the students is critical if you want their help to get things done. Students must also respect and cooperate with one another to be effective and have a strong organization.

When setting up teams or committees consider the following:

1. **Consider the group's mission.** Choose people who are best suited to the task and do not choose them based on existing relationships.
2. **Put together a diverse team.** Limiting the team to people with similar interests and skills will limit the final result. Recruit people who represent different viewpoints and perceptions.
3. **Identify the strengths of the team members.** Ask the members what tasks make them the most comfortable. In that way, the tasks can be assigned to the team members who are most eager to perform them.
4. **Be clear about each person's responsibility.** All team members need to understand what is expected of them and what role they are expected to play. Each
5. **Focus, focus, focus.** You need to communicate the team's vision every day. Discuss what is being done and why.
6. **Make all members accountable for the results of the team.** When the team is successful everyone shares the glory. When the team is less than successful, they must share the consequences, learn from their mistakes and move forward.
7. **Make every team members believe that they are part of a successful group.** Be certain that team members know that their team is made up of winners, and that they would not be a member if they were not winners too. Stress team accomplishments.
8. **Earn the respect of the team members.** People follow a leader that they trust and respect. Do what you promise. If you say that you will do something, be sure to follow through with it.
9. **Get feedback on how to approve the team's performance.** New members can often see things

more clearly than insiders. Ask for their ideas. Even if you disagree with their suggestions let the team know that you were glad to hear their ideas.



FIVE WAYS TO BE A BETTER ADVISER

Being a good adviser takes commitment, hard work and the desire to motivate your students. It requires long hours, little or no pay, and you do it because you enjoy it.

Here are characteristics shared by all good advisers:

1. Treat students with respect and dignity and provide personal recognition for them
2. Involve students and empower them

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3. Clearly communicate your expectations
4. Listen, listen, listen
5. Recognize that your job is solving “people problems.”

STRESS, STRESS, AND MORE STRESS

As a student activity adviser you certainly know about stress. There just are not enough hours in the day to accomplish everything.



Here are a few more ideas for the self-management of stress.

1. Look around and see if there is really something that you can do about a stressful situation instead of just worrying about it
2. Do not overwhelm yourself by worrying about your entire workload. Take each project as it comes and keep telling yourself that you can handle it
3. Fight the assumption that you have to be perfect
4. Change the way that you react to troublesome things. Do not overreact.
5. Try to reduce the number of events going on in your life. Carefully consider what must be done right now.
6. Change the way that you see things. Learn to recognize stress for what it is
7. Do not let small things upset you. Develop thick skin

8. Avoid extreme reactions. Why ‘hate’ when a little ‘dislike’ will do? Why be depressed when you can just be sad?
9. Set realistic goals for yourself. Learn how to do nothing
10. Do not sweat the small stuff!!!!
11. If you cannot fight what is bothering you and you cannot run away from it, then just flow with it
12. Work off stress with physical activity
13. Get enough sleep. Lack of rest just adds to your stress
14. Do something for others to help get your mind off of yourself
15. Balance work and recreation
16. Remove yourself from a stressful situation if only for a few moments a day. Give yourself a break, you deserve it
17. Make a point of learning how to best relax yourself.

Sometimes the best way to beat stress and burnout is to do something each day that is frivolous and silly. Here are some suggestions:

1. If you do not own a dog to take for a walk, borrow one. Your neighbors will love you for it and it will do *you* more good than the dog
2. Park at least a half mile from school and walk the rest of the way
3. Turn on the radio to some fast music and dance
4. Do some “dirty hands” activities, such as dig up the garden or scrub the floor

5. Walk in the rain or snow without worrying about getting your shoes wet
6. Laugh
7. Smile and speak to every faculty member you see in the hall. What are their reactions?
8. Look for things to praise in yourself and others
9. Reward yourself for all of the good work that you do. Buy something.

“There are two ways of exerting one’s strength: one is pushing down, the other is pulling up.”

~ Booker T. Washington

Herff Jones, Inc.
4625 W. 62nd St. Indianapolis,
IN 46268



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