



LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

LONG BEACH
CITY COLLEGE

Your year as an officer is coming to an end and new officers are being selected. How do you leave your position gracefully? How do you ensure that the new officers are ready to continue to provide your organization with strong leadership?

Why Transition?

A thorough leadership transition plan has several benefits:

- Provides for transfer of organizational knowledge and history.
- Minimizes the confusion of leadership changeover.
- Gives outgoing leaders a sense of closure.
- Utilizes the valuable contributions of experienced leaders.
- Helps incoming leadership absorb the special expertise of the outgoing leadership.
- Increases the knowledge and confidence of the new leadership.
- Minimizes the loss of momentum and accomplishments for the group.

When Do You Start?

- **Begin early** in the year to identify emerging leaders.
- Encourage these potential leaders through personal contact; help in developing skills, delegating responsibility to them, sharing with them the personal benefits of leadership, clarifying job responsibilities, letting them know that transition will be orderly and thorough, and last, modeling an open, encouraging leadership style.
- When new officers have been elected, orient them together as a group with all of the outgoing officers. This process provides the new leaders with an opportunity to understand each other's roles and to start building their leadership team.
- Be sure to transfer the knowledge and information necessary for them to function well. An organization history and flow-chart might be helpful. Take time to organize any files or so they may quickly access information.
- Have individual meetings with old and new officers from each position. Make sure they know what they're getting into and how to solve some common problems.

What Do You Need To Transfer?

Think back to your first weeks. What could you have used to do your job better? Below are some helpful ideas, procedures and recommendations:

- Acquaintance with physical environment, supplies, equipment and any office procedures
- Introduction to advisors, administrators, and other resources
- Advice from previous leaders on what they would have done differently and how you could improve upon the previous year.
- Documents containing traditions, ideas or completed projects; continuing projects and concerns; or ideas never carried out
- Personal and organizational files
- A complete record of the organization's structure, goals, and accomplishments (through complete and organized files)
- Constitution and by-laws
- Organizational goals and objectives for previous year(s)
- Job descriptions/role clarification's
- Status reports on ongoing projects
- Evaluations of previous projects and programs
- Previous minutes and reports
- Resources/contacts lists with addresses and phone numbers, mailing lists
- Financial books

* Adapted from University of Michigan, Office of Student Activities and Leadership, Leadership Handouts, 2010