

Effective Leadership Transitions

1. What is an Effective Leadership Transition?

An Effective Leadership Transition is the process in which past and future student leaders in an organization work together to review and learn from previous events and programs while preparing the new leader to take on the officer role.

2. What are the benefits of an Effective Leadership Transition?

An Effective Leadership Transition helps the organization create a solid foundation to succeed in the upcoming year. During this transition, incoming officers will learn new skills that will assist them in leading the organization. This transition also allows old officers to reflect on their accomplishments, and advise new officers on the improvements they can apply in their future projects and goals.

This manual will outline important steps departing officers will need to implement in order to smoothly transition the leadership of the RSO in the upcoming year. Departing officers will reflect on their accomplishments and goals they have completed throughout their term, and provide a starting point for the incoming officers. Incoming officers will familiarize themselves with responsibilities of the position and the skills needed to be successful in that role within the RSO.

Part 1: What to Consider Before Taking on a Leadership Position

How much time do I have to run the student organization?

On average it takes leaders 10 hours per week to run their RSO. Keep in mind that this is simply an average; some organizations may require less, whereas other organizations require more. Try to meet with executive board members of your organization to get a gauge on the time commitment required to successfully run your RSO before running for an officer position.

Do I have ideas for the future of the organization?

Leading an organization is a fantastic opportunity to make a difference on campus. With that being said, you should lead an organization only if you have a passion and vision for the betterment of the organization. It is essential to be innovative and creative with the future of the organization and make decisions that bring the organization closer to success.

Do I know how the organization operates (procedures, meetings etc.)?

If you would like to lead an organization, it is important to understand the way it operates. Learn the operational procedures and the other “behind the scenes” work that it takes to run your student organization meetings and events. Often, RSO leaders do a lot of work for their organizations that isn’t seen or recognized by all the members. Ask your current RSO leadership what a typical week looks like for them in your organization. Perhaps you can shadow them for a while to learn the ins and outs of the position.

Know your “Why?”

Before taking on a student leadership position, ask yourself “Why do I want this position?” Maybe it’s for your resume, maybe it’s because you are extremely passionate about the organization, or maybe it’s because a student leader encouraged you to take on the position. All in all, taking on a student leadership position should align with your future goals and aspirations. You should have a legitimate reason why you are pursuing a position in your RSO. Leaders who have been pressured into their role often lack passion for their position and the responsibilities it entails.

Part 2: Tips Recommended to have a Smooth Officer Transition

Below are some tips we recommend you take to ensure a smooth officer transition:

1. Review the organization's leadership roles
 - a. It is important that the incoming officers know and understand what your organization's constitution states regarding each role.
2. Review the organization's Mission and Values
 - a. These two concepts, Mission and Values, are essential to implement in an organization. It is the responsibility of the Executive Board to implement these two concepts in the organization. We recommend sitting down and going through the constitution emphasizing the importance of the organization's Mission and Values as well as how the past officers implemented them into the organization
3. Create a map of the organization's journey
 - a. When looking towards the future, it is important to reflect on the past. For new leaders, it is essential to have a strong sense of what has occurred before so they can effectively plan on future events.
4. Take time to learn leadership requirements
 - a. All leaders are required to take training through SOLID. It is important that incoming officers are aware of these training workshops as well as any other training your organization may require.
5. Ensure the incoming officer(s) familiarize themselves with the other members of your executive board and the advisor
 - a. Relationships are crucial to your organization's success. It benefits the members and the advisor to establish everyone's roles and expectations early in the transition process.
6. Plan an officer transition meeting with old and new executive board members.
 - a. It is important that old and new leaders come together and discuss all of the topics listed above. A good way to organize yourself (both incoming and outgoing officers) is to utilize our Officer Transition Checklist.



Officer Transition Checklist

Review the Group's Goals From This Previous Year

- What did we hope to accomplish this year
- What did we accomplish this year
- What goals should you continue this year in the organization
- What goals should be altered this year
- Conflicts our group ran into this year and how we overcame it

Review Membership

- What did we do for recruitment for this year? Was it effective?
- Recommendations for recruitment this year
- Are members actively engaged in the operation of the club (includes decision making, planning, implementing, and evaluating)
- What did members enjoy this year based on feedback?
- What changes, if any, did members of the organization recommend for the upcoming year?

Review Organization Requirements

- What does it mean to have an ACTIVE status through SOLID
- How to maintain an active status
- How to operate UConntact
- When is the constitution due? How could they access the constitution?
- What are SOLID workshops? Which ones do you have to take?
- Who to contact if there are any questions about organization requirements
 - Solid.uconn.edu
 - Email: solid@uconn.edu

Incoming Officer- First Meeting Checklist

Incoming officers should use this checklist in their first meeting with members as a guide on what to discuss in the first meeting

Introductions

- Introduce yourself and your role in the organization
- Ensure everyone knows who is who in the executive board
- Provide clear descriptions of each role in the executive board and what each executive board member does
- Get to know your membership (icebreaker?)

Reflection of Past Year:

- What did members enjoy last year?
- What changes do members want to see this year?
- What difficulties and/or challenges did the membership have last year?
- What events or fundraisers did the membership enjoy doing?

Review the Group's Goals From This Year

- What did the organization accomplish last year
- What do we want to accomplish this year
- What goals do other members want this organization to accomplish this year
- Are there any ideas members have this upcoming year for the organization?