Quick Tips

Retreat Planning Calendar

Two months before:
Determine the purpose of the retreat. Reserve site. Contact outside resources (speakers, facilitators, etc.) Determine date and location. Appoint members to help.

One month before:
Determine format. Send letters to members including important information (costs, travel, what to bring, purpose of retreat, etc.) Reserve equipment.

Two weeks before:
Make food arrangements. Duplicate maps, handouts, etc. Confirm site arrangements. Confirm speaker(s). Make checklist of who is to bring what.

One week before:
Gather equipment and visual aids.

Day before:
Deal with last minute problems. Rest!

During the retreat:
Relax and participate.

After the retreat:
Evaluate and put information together to help the next retreat planner. Send thank you’s, follow-up activities. Implement action plans from retreat.

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Leader Hints:

are available on the following topics

- Agendas
- Advising Groups
- Budgeting
- Co-Sponsorship
- Community Service
- Conflict Resolution
- Constitution and Bylaws
- Delegation
- Difficult Members
- Elections
- Event and Program Planning
- Fundraising
- Goal Setting
- Group Performance Evaluation
- Icebreakers
- Individual Evaluation
- Meetings and Minutes
- Motivation
- Newsletters
- Officer Transition
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Publicizing Events
- Recruiting New Members
- Retreats
- Starting a New Organization
- Stress Management
- Team Building
- Time Management

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Leader Hints is a publication of the University of New Mexico Student Activities Center. Copies are available at the Student Activities Center, SUB Room 1018. For more information, call 277-4706.

Some of the information in this brochure was compiled from leadership materials from the University of Texas at San Antonio and the University of Kansas.
How to get from “What if...?” to “That was Terrific!”

Step 1: Goals
Write out the goals and purpose of the retreat. List skills and behaviors you want each participant to experience. Possible goals include team building/unity awareness, training, communication, problem solving, socializing, learning, orienting, and building a sense of community.

Step 2: Expectations
Allow members to share their expectations of the retreat and discuss what is expected of them during the retreat (undivided attention, participation, cooperation, planning, etc.).

Step 3: Logistics
Timing: season/climate, campus and academic events
Length
Budget
Site: distance, space, facilities, equipment
Transportation
Meals: who will buy food, cook, clean up?
Agenda: plan time carefully, but allow for flexibility; give participants a copy.

For more information, check out the Leader Hints on Icebreakers, Team Building, Goal Setting, and Delegation.

Interaction Considerations
Pre-Existing Concerns: issues or problems participants will bring with them
Attitudes: receptiveness of participants
Group Dynamics: stage of development of the group

Activities Presentations Considerations
Facilitators: be sure to tell them the history of the group and any special concerns
Format: mix large and small-group activities, plan free time
Time: allow time for processing each activity, hourly breaks
Compatibility: plan events with people’s schedules in mind (easy activities early in the morning, etc.)
Activities/Projects: bring extra supplies, rotate groups to avoid cliques

Advantages of a Retreat:
- Enhances members’ experiences
- Eliminates daily distractions
- Fosters healthy communication
- Creates a shared experience
- Maximizes participation

Schedule Considerations
Opening: Introductions, discuss goals/expectations, rules and responsibilities, conduct icebreakers/energizers to start
Priorities: Identify the most important concerns which need to be addressed, determine how they will be addressed
Team Building: Schedule activities between major presentations to break up monotony, bring extra ideas to fill in gaps in schedule, make sure risk levels match the group
Meals/Snacks: Three meals plus snacks, have healthy energizing snacks, schedule light activities after meals
Outside Presenters: Introduce them to the group, allow some time for members to talk with them one-on-one
Handouts: Give members handouts to minimize time used to take notes, also give them a record of the retreat
Closing: Exercises should include reviewing goals set
Evaluation: Each session of the retreat should be evaluated, evaluations should be short and simple, results should be given to speakers and planners
Clean-Up: Everyone should help