

## **Chapter Leader Educational Series Roundtable - Energizing your Board and Year**

What does Re-Energize mean? to give fresh vitality, and enthusiasm to a situation. We are going to give tips and tricks of how you can reenergize your board in 2022.

As you start out 2022, you may want to ask a question at the beginning of each meeting.

What makes you care so deeply about our chapter that you are here serving on the board?

Why is our board work important to you?

What do you want/not want as a board member?

Is there any training that you need to be better at your role on the board?

Is there anything we could be doing to be an even better board than we are currently?

Is there a vision for our chapter that you have that should be incorporated into our strategic plan?

As you ask these questions and any question during the year to the board, it is important to be open minded on all new ideas and suggestions.

For all ideas and suggestions that are made during your meetings, make it a goal to say to yourself,

“I will never say we have done that before and it didn’t work”, or shoot down an idea at first glance.

Your thought patters should be “tell me more”, “that’s a great idea, let’s get others thoughts on how we can make this work”.

Sometimes it takes having a small idea and the group coming together in discussion to form it into something that will improve the chapter.

Ideas sometimes need to be molded and reshaped through discussion to be the best they can be

If after discussion it doesn’t look like it’s going to work at this point in time, that’s ok.

It’s important to remember to be open to new ideas and be willing to have challenging conversations.

That is how we grow personally. Remember that the people that are making the suggestions are putting themselves out there – be sure to value their thoughts.

This will give the board the opportunity to grow and accomplish new and great things.

**Questions:** Do you have any questions that you have been asked on the board that you thought were really good and improved the board?

When you were new on the board, what made you feel comfortable enough to put a new idea on the table and how can you recreate that security for your new board members?

## **Organization**

1. You want to be sure that you are organized so you run efficient meetings. People want to attend meetings that they feel has purpose and efficiently accomplishes goals.

Develop clear roles and establish accountability for the members of the board.

Be sure to have a planned onboarding process for new members and continuing members of the board. In addition, you may want to have a follow up for any questions they may have. When people know what they should be doing, they are much more confident and willing to take on the task at hand.

Be sure to find a time (maybe lunch time or at the end of the day) that you can respond to any board emails or phone calls. Being responsive shows that your board members are important to you.

Make sure the date and time of your meetings are good for all board members. Once you find that date and time, put it on the calendar for the whole year so people don't schedule something else in there. You want to be inclusive and make sure all are able to attend. It shows that they are an important part of the board and you not only need them there each month, you want them there each month for the success of the board. Also, give options for any board member that cannot be there physically has the capability to participate virtually or by calling into the meeting.

Be sure to have an agenda. If you are new to the process of running meetings, put time slots next to the agenda items so you know if you are running over on a topic and need to move on. You can table the discussion for another meeting, you can set up a task force to look at the topic offline and come back to the next meeting with suggestions.

Be sure to send out your agenda ahead of time to the other board members so that they know if they need to present on a topic and can be prepared. Make sure that they are aware which agenda items are theirs with their name attached to it. It gives them ownership as well as action items to be focused on.

Be sure to start and end your board meetings on time. Each person's time is valuable, and it also demonstrates that you respect their time.

**QUESTION:** WHAT ARE SOME IDEAS/THINGS THAT SOME OF YOU ARE DOING TO BE MORE ORGANIZED AT YOUR BOARD MEETINGS? HAVE YOU HEARD OF AN IDEA THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

### **Enthusiastic Engagement:**

Rose's points on organization are very well taken. It is also important to get to know your board members on a personal level.

Make sure that people have time to socialize a bit. Give them the space to share their personal stories as they feel comfortable.

A very important way to [energize board members](#) is to purposefully engage with them. Regular check ins, updates, and meetings are essential for keeping the board informed of the day-to-day topics of your chapter.

During your meetings, if one of your board members doesn't mention a happy occasion or an accomplishment in their life, ask them about it. If someone has an issue at work, they may want to bounce an idea off of a few people to see if someone else has already experienced the same situation.

It can be asking a question which is work related such as "have any of you had to deal with XXXXX, and what did you do to solve the problem?" That will give the board members the opportunity to get another benefit of being a board member. They can deal with issues within their firm in a safe space getting to know their chapter members on a deeper level. This builds trust within the chapter and the board as well.

It can also be remembering that one of your board members mentioned an upcoming occasion in their life. Write it down in your calendar. Remember to ask that person how the event is coming or how it was. It shows you care about your board members. It's something very important in their life and they will appreciate you remembering it.

If you have a board meeting that doesn't have as much on the agenda, think about bringing in some hors d'oeuvres and something to drink to catch up with each other. People are much more willing to sign up for a board position when they have become friends with the people on the board.

Another thing to keep in mind to keep people enthusiastically engaged is to empower them. Let them know that it's their baby and don't micro-manage it. Remember that if you start at number 1 and want to end with number 5 there can be many different ways to do steps 2, 3 and 4. As long as you are reaching the same end goal, let them choose how to do steps 2, 3 and 4. It gives them a sense of ownership and pride for a job well done.

**What things have you done at your board meetings to get to know each other personally? Do you do ice breakers? Do you give them 10 minutes at the beginning to catch up with each other?**

### **Commitment to the goals of the Chapter:**

Restate your goals and priorities:

Don't be afraid to keep the goals for the year with you at each meeting along with the President's Award of Excellence. The President's Award of Excellence is a great way to stay on track at a very high level. Your chapter goals are a great way to stay on track on the ground level.

It's also a great way to keep people on track. If they know that they are accountable each month to report back with their accomplishments, they will be sure to work on it. People enjoy serving on Boards where they know their work has purpose and is going for the greater good. It is also a good way to keep your Chapter on track to meet the requirements for the President's Award of Excellence.

Questions: What are methods that some of you are putting in the place to keep your Chapter on track to meet your Chapter Goals and to ensure that you meet the criteria for the President's Award of Excellence?

### **Be sure to be transparent**

There is no reason to hide what people are working on, where they are in the process or even where the money is being spent.

When things are hidden people have no choice but to fill in the holes with what they imagine is the truth. That's how misinformation and mistrust is formed.

Let your team know that you want to be fully transparent.

If they have a question, let them know they can feel free to ask. If they aren't comfortable asking in front of the whole group, ask offline.

You all work as a team and you want them to feel they have the information they need to do the best job possible on the board.

**Questions: Have you seen ways that people have done a great job in being transparent? What did they do?**

**What do you do to be transparent with your board?**

**Get Feedback from your people.**

Let your people know that you are there for them. Remember that we are all busy and it's easy to put a task aside if you become stuck. If they are assigned a holiday party and they think all the good venues are taken, they may put the project aside because they don't know what to do next. Be sure that they call you to brainstorm ideas of what you could do instead. This way the project will continue, and they won't put it aside.

It's a great way to end a meeting by asking "What do you need to be successful on the things that you are working on?" It's important for the President, in a leadership role, to give your Board Members what they need to be successful. If they are stuck, it is their opportunity to brainstorm any ideas to move them to the next level and keep success going.

Connecting one-on-one with colleagues is an important element in making people feel valued, heard, and understood. Check in with individual board members after important meetings to gauge their feelings about it. You can also ask each board member how their personal goals are aligning with the direction of the board and chapter. Finally, sending handwritten cards on a board member's birthday is a small way of showing him or her that they are a valued part of the organization.

**Questions: What methods do you have in place to get feedback from your Board members and as well as members? How are some of you making sure that your Board Members have the tools and information necessary to be successful in their roles on the Board? What are some of the ways that you are showing your Board members that they are a valued part of your team?**

### **Public Recognition**

Seek out various ways to publicly recognize your board members and introduce them to your chapter.

Make sure your chapter knows all your board members because you have recognized them in positive ways.

Whether it's at a chapter meeting, through social media posts, or in your email newsletter, acknowledging your board members and showing your appreciation for their hard work.

This will motivate the board to continue their support.

**Questions: Have you thought about all the ways you communicate with your chapter and putting a recognition for board members or even chapters members when there is a job well done that you want to acknowledge?**

### **Foster new leadership on the board and in the organization.**

Recruiting new members for the board should not be a once-a-year project. You should be recruiting and looking at potential new leadership all the time. Ask a potential board member from the chapter to come to a board meeting to see what it looks like. Be honest on the amount

of time they will need to put into the position “you think they would be perfect to fill”. Set aside a block a time during the meeting for the prospective new board member to ask questions.

**Questions: Do you have any ongoing programs in place to recruit new people all year? Do you have all your board members looking for new board members? What have you found to be successful?**

**Appreciation: Host Thank You Events or Retreats**

Everyone needs the chance to step back from work and focus on self-care. Consider [hosting a board retreat](#) or another thank you event where your board members can relax and unwind. When your board returns from their retreat, the boost in morale will motivate your entire organization.

**Questions: What has your chapter done to thank board members for their service?**

**What have you heard of other boards doing to thank their board members?**

**Closing and time for questions:**

Investing your time with board members and cultivating authentic working relationships will ultimately create a lasting impact on your board and will run down to your chapter. Use these suggestions and continue to find additional opportunities to uplift and encourage your board. Continue to foster a positive working environment where your board can remain focused on your collective goals and mission.

Final comment: Don't forget to have fun and enjoy your year as President. It goes very fast!

Are there other comments, questions, suggestions that we can talk about?