

# Planning a Successful Succession

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## What is Succession Planning?

Succession planning is a process for identifying and developing new leaders who can replace old leaders when they leave. In business, it entails developing internal people with the potential to fill key business leadership positions in the company. - *Wikipedia*

## Habits of Strong Leaders

- Continuously recruit new volunteers and recognize existing volunteers.
- Develop volunteers as leaders so that you can create a leadership pipeline.
- Post leadership opportunities online and keep the information current.
- Provide leadership training.
- Develop a community identity through communications, branding, and events.
- Cast a vision for your community.
- Be open to change so that your community meets today's needs and interests.
- Hold an annual leadership transition meeting.
- Create and regularly update standard operating procedures.
- Provide easy access to all community resources to new leaders.

## Succession Planning Tips

- Recruit and retain members of all ages. Just understand that they may have different expectations of your community.
- Younger generations are used to quicker communications, easily accessible information, and getting their voices heard when they have something to say. They also want mentored leadership experiences.
- Deliberately plan changes to your community to keep energy high. Provide templates for activities to reduce frustration but resist "the way it's always been done," particularly when engaging new volunteers.
- Free leadership training is an effective way to recruit and develop new leaders. Many prospective volunteers are motivated by the opportunity to lead. Seek to create a culture of servant leaders who are also doers.

## Discussion Questions

1. Do you describe leadership roles and responsibilities on your website?
2. What are some ways to actively seek new leaders?
3. What are the ways you seek to increase volunteer engagement?
4. What methods have been most effective for you to recruit new volunteers?
5. Do you host a special event that you repeat every year?
6. Do you offer annual leadership training?
7. Do you provide opportunities for your volunteers to progressively develop their leadership skills?
8. What is a typical leadership progression in your community (for example, competition judge -> competition committee member -> competition manager -> vice president -> president)?
9. Do you have a leadership pipeline?
10. Do you have a leadership succession plan for new leaders to replace existing leaders?
11. Do you have an annual leadership succession meeting?
12. Have you created any standard operating procedures for common community tasks? If so, which tasks?