



Ten Ways to Retain Board Members (Plus a Bonus) by Toni Cacace-Beshears

10. Retention starts with Recruitment

Be honest about the commitment. Use the recruitment process as a way to get to know the potential board members and for them to get to know you and the organization.

9. Welcome the new member.

Introduce the new board member to the current members and explain each person's job responsibilities.

8. Do a thorough orientation.

Explain the ground rules, the way the organization functions, and how to obtain needed information (forms, applications, etc.).

7. Assign a human resource.

Assign a mentor to answer questions, explain processes, and help guide the new board member.

6. Communicate

Share information about meetings, dates, times, committees, goals, directions and strategies.

5. Discover the reason.

Appeal to the member's altruistic or opportunistic motives for serving on a board. Applaud each person's expertise, skills and abilities.

4. Put members in a position to be allowed to thrive.

Encourage the potential growth for the organization and the potential for personal growth for the individual.

3. Have meaningful meetings.

Organize agendas, support materials, goals and action plans. Busy people do not want to waste time – they want to be engaged. Include professional development. Learning is never ending.

2. Encourage periodic feedback.

Ask your board to evaluate their success –their strengths, successes, weaknesses, areas for improvement.

1. Acknowledge for their service.

SAY THANK YOU in subtle ways, quiet ways, or in a large fanfare – over and over again.

BONUS POINTS

MAKE IT FUN. Even a busy productive board enjoys fun and social times!

Inside this issue:

Retaining Board Members	1
Keys to Guiding Successful Student Groups	2
Taking Aim On Leadership	3
Good to Great	3
Board Cafe	3
Keys to Guiding Successful Student Groups	4
SECA	4

Leadership Commission Members

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Keys to Guiding Successful Student Groups

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and

Chairman of Student Louisiana Early Childhood Association (SLAECA)

After working with student groups for a few years, I asked myself why some years are great with wonderful member involvement and some years are poor or difficult with no member involvement? Below is a list of the items I have found to be useful in helping student groups be successful and focused. When put into practice, I have found these ideas help students become active, involved members who go on to become active involved members and leaders at the state level.

Help students see the benefits for themselves and for the organization

Hold an orientation session each year that serves as an information session for new and possible members and a refresher session for current members. At the session answer questions such as: What is the mission for the organization? Why does the organization do the things it does each year? Who may belong? How can a person join? When does the organization meet? What are some of the activities and projects of the organization?

This orientation session is important. Each year a student group can lose between 25 to 50 percent of the membership depending on whether you are in community college or a university; therefore, an orientation session is needed each year.

Have an active executive committee

Make sure officers are talking to each other, to you, and to members. Use this group to set goals and plan meetings for the year. The general members will vote on and work toward achieving the selected goals and activities.

Planning and holding meetings

An important rule of thumb for meetings is that for an involved, successful meeting, the group should spend as much time planning the meeting as holding the meeting. Spend the planning time thinking about different aspects of the meeting. Consider these items: Is the location of the room convenient? Is the room big enough? Is it set up for discussion? Are there flip charts for brainstorming? Do you have a sign-in contact sheet? Are all the necessary materials available? Are refreshments provided for socializing? Do you have a set and generally agreed upon agenda? Is the meeting planned to work on one or more of the established goals for the organization?

Building leaders

Begin training new officers and group members from the beginning. The rule is everyone needs to be involved in some way. Through mentoring teach the skills of planning and carrying through with a project. Promote the most active and eager team members into team leader positions and help them train the group, slowly allowing them to teach more and more of the material. As skills and confidence grow, continue to support and help enhance students' abilities. From the beginning of the year delegate part of your responsibilities to the officers and active members until multiple people have taken over various aspects of organization. These active members are next year's student leaders and the state organization's future leaders. (continued on page 4)

Board Cafe

Looking for interesting articles and web sites for non-profit organizations? The following articles are currently posted on the “Blue Avocado” website at: www.blueavocado.org.

1. *Facebook Fundraising*
2. *Boards Should only Have Three Committees*
3. *What are the Board’s Responsibilities for Volunteers?*
4. *What’s the Point of a Non-Profit Board?*

5. *A Non-profit Dash and Signal Light for Boards*
6. *Loans from Non-profit Board Members*
7. *A Board Members Guide to Non-profit Insurance*
8. *How to take a Public Policy Stand With Sample Criteria*



Good to Great, by Jim Collins

A Book Review

For years, author Jim Collins pondered on the idea of why some companies seem to defy gravity and convert from a company of long term mediocrity to one of long term superiority. After years of research he discovered some universal characteristics that cause this type of transformation.

Over a period of years, he and his team compared a selected set of twenty eight companies who surpassed the general stock market by an average of seven times in fifteen years, which represents better than twice the results delivered by some of the world’s greatest companies including, Coca-Cola, Intel, and General Electric.

The findings of the Good to Great study surprised many

leaders and shed light on every area of current management strategy and practice.

His findings include:

- **Level 5 Leaders:** The research team discovered that level five leaders possess paradoxical traits: modesty and willfulness, humility and fearlessness.
- **The Hedgehog Concept (Simplicity Within the Three Circles):** To go from good to great requires a transformation of thinking.
- **A Culture of Discipline:** When you combine a culture of discipline with an ethic of entrepreneurship, you get great results.
- **Technology Accelerators:** Good to Great companies

think differently about the role of technology.

- **The Flywheel and the Doom Loop:** Those who launch radical change programs and attempt to restructure will almost certainly fail to make the leap.

This book helps Early Childhood Professionals think beyond their traditional pathways and can help a center, an agency or organization look at its current strategies and practice through different lenses.

Jim Collins’ carefully researched and well written book helps one to look at the current practice and, through simple conclusions, move from mediocrity to competence—from Good to Great!

Southern Early Childhood Association

SECA

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Promoting Quality Care and Education
for Young Children and Their Families

The Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA) is a regional organization committed to promoting quality care and education for young children and their families. SECA is committed to providing leadership and support to individuals and groups by:

- *Enhancing the quality of young children's lives through early childhood care and education.*
- *Supporting families in their roles of caring for their children.*

Fostering the professional growth and status of individuals working with young children and their families

www.southernearlychildhood.org

Keys to Guiding Successful Student Groups Continued

Communicate, communicate, communicate

Twittering, using email messages, text messaging, Facebook messaging, and phone calling are some important tools to use to get student officers involved and members informed. In the age of instant messaging, don't forget that the old fashion use of an attractive poster strategically placed in the hall still works to advertise future meetings.

Take a few minutes after the meetings wrap up to talk casually with the people who were in the meetings and ask what worked and didn't work well. Use these pros and cons to decide what to change for the

next meeting. If tasks and activities were delegated to group members, check in a short while after the meeting: Thank people for volunteering and make sure delegated tasks are happening. This is essential to keep things moving outside the meeting.

Summary statement

Student groups are some of the most challenging, yet some of the most rewarding work an individual can set out to do. A good working group can be a great benefit to all involved both today and in the future. They help students get jobs and provide competent leaders for the future.

After working with student groups in Texas and Louisiana for 30+ years, I still find delight in seeing young professionals who are involved in professional organizations. They can provide refreshing ideas and wonderful creative approaches to organizational problems and activities. When members move up through affiliate/student organizations to the state and/or national organization, the organization is strengthened.