

Alumni Club Officer/Volunteer Management Tips

- **Provide each leadership team member with a clearly defined role** and/or responsibilities.
- **Have a transparent conversation with each officer/volunteer up front about their alumni club position's expectations.** If the officer can identify any areas that might be an obstacle or challenge for them, brainstorm together ways to overcome them. (For example, if your new VP/Director of Events isn't Alumni Club Portal-savvy, pair them with the club's web-savvy Secretary to post upcoming events on the portal).
 - This conversation can also be referenced later if the officer fails to meet originally-discussed expectations.
- **Encourage officers to “own” specific tasks**, no matter how small. Depending on the time of year, small tasks may be all that some individuals have the availability to accomplish. (And encourage officers to communicate with you if they will be too busy to take something on at a particular time.)
 - This approach can also work on a larger scale; at least one Michigan Ross club has been successful in assigning each leadership team member one event per year to individually plan, execute and “own” (with the support of the larger club board).
- **Provide officers with deadlines** for completing said tasks.
- **Follow up with officers/volunteers and hold them accountable** as the deadline approaches or once it has passed. Volunteers lead busy lives and often need gentle reminders!
- As often as possible, **include volunteers in the planning process for events or discussions around the club's overall direction/engagement.** This can encourage them to feel a greater sense of personal accountability around club tasks, which may ultimately decrease the frequency that you need to remind them to do things.
 - Regular board meetings -- in person, via phone, or both -- are avenues to accomplish this.
- **Make it fun!** Thank, encourage and recognize officers often for their volunteer work and club-related accomplishments.
 - If you would like/need more Michigan Ross note cards to write small thank you notes, please let the Office of Alumni Relations know.
- When recruiting new alumni club leadership, **make sure the leadership team members' personal strengths complement each other.**
- **Recruit alums who have already actively attended several regional activities** -- dedication and reliability are incredibly valuable traits within the sphere of volunteer management.

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- **Recruit alumni of different ages, graduation years, and professional interests.** Older alums can often lend contacts, experience and status, while younger/new alums bring energy and enthusiasm. This approach can broaden the network of alumni that the club reaches and enrich the breadth of experiences that officers bring to the table.
- **Have a succession planning process in place.** This removes some pressure from you if leadership turnover is required due to impending term limits or volunteer underperformance.
 - From a different perspective, if an officer is struggling to meet volunteer expectations, knowing that there are already clear steps in place to identify a successor can also help them to feel more comfortable letting go of their position if they are holding onto it out of a sense of obligation.
- **If a volunteer/officer is underperforming, don't ignore it.** Check in with them to see what's going on, and if/how you can help them to meet their commitment to the club.
 - **If it is a short-term situation** (i.e. due to a consulting project with a clear end date, they are experiencing an extremely busy two months), how can the rest of the team temporarily provide support? When do they expect their volunteer availability to be open again?
 - **If it is a long-term issue** (i.e. their enthusiasm for their club role is fading; they've assumed a recent personal or professional obligation that is significantly affecting their time), have a conversation about them regarding whether they will be able to meet the club's needs for their role in the coming year.
 - If no, discuss the possibility of a short transition period in which the individual would mentor their successor after one has been identified, or whether a clean break would be best for their newly limited schedule. Be sure to thank and recognize them for their service to the club.