

QUICK TIPS

RETREAT PLANNING CALENDAR

It is important to give yourself sufficient time to plan a retreat. The following calendar will give you an idea of when and what to do so you will not be rushed at the last minute.

Two months before:

- Decide on purpose of retreat
- Decide on date (notify members involved)
- Reserve site
- Appoint committee heads in charge of various areas

One month before:

- Determine format
- Contact outside resources

Two weeks before:

- Send letters to members including important information - costs, travel arrangements, what to bring, purpose of retreat, etc.
- Reserve equipment
- Make food arrangements

One week before:

- Duplicate maps, agendas, handouts, etc.
- Confirm site arrangements
- Make checklist of who is to bring what
- Gather equipment and visual aids

Day before:

- Deal with last minute problems
- Rest

During Retreat:

- Have a GREAT TIME!
- Share information about yourself to allow others to get to know you
- Listen to others and learn about them
- Participate fully in the activities
- Evaluate the experience

Adapted from a University of Michigan Student Organization Development Center handout.

**LEADER
BITS** are available on the following topics:

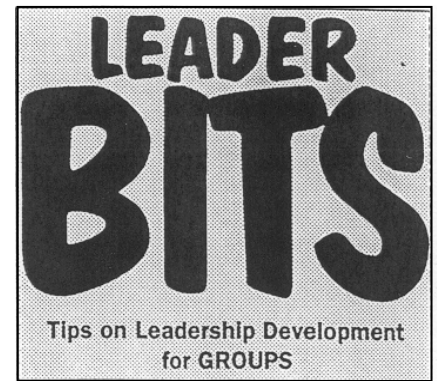
- Advising Groups
- Agendas
- Assertiveness
- Brainstorming
- Co-Sponsorship with Other Groups
- Communication
- Community Service
- Conflict Resolution
- Constitution/Bylaws
- Delegation
- Difficult Members
- Elections
- Ethics
- Evaluation Series
 - Group Performance*
 - Individual Performance*
 - Meeting Evaluation*
 - Program/Event Evaluation*
- Financial Series
 - Budgeting Organization Money*
 - Corporate Sponsorship*
 - Fundraising*
- Getting Involved
- Goal Setting
- Group Dynamics
- Icebreakers
- Marketing Your Leadership Skills
- Meetings
- Minutes from Meetings
- Motivation
- Newsletters
- Officer Transition
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Program Planning
- Public Speaking
- Publicizing Events
- Recognition
- Recruiting Volunteers
- Retreats
- Starting an Organization
- Stress Management
- Team Building
- Time Management
- University Events

**LEADER
BITS**

is a publication of the Student Involvement & Leadership Center (SILC). Copies are available in SILC, 400 Kansas Union, 864-4861.

SILC staff offers programs and consultation in these and other areas of personal and organizational leadership.

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PLANNING A RETREAT

GOALS

Write out goals and purpose of retreat. Be specific. 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.

EXPECTATIONS

Allow members to share their expectations of the retreat and discuss what is expected of them during the retreat (undivided attention, participation, disclosure about themselves, cooperation, planning, fun vs. serious time, etc.)

LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

TIMING (season/climate, events taking place on campus, how busy members are at this time of year)

LENGTH (one day, overnight, entire weekend)

ANTICIPATED COSTS (site, transportation, meals, handouts, presenter fees, etc.)

BUDGET (amount of money allocated, financial cost to members)

ACTUAL SITE (distance from home, adequate space for activities and number of people, lighting, climate-control, possible distractions, equipment available, sleeping arrangements - beds/sleeping bags, recreational equipment)

TRANSPORTATION (car pools, directions)

MEALS (catered or prepared by group - who will buy food/cook etc., time allotted for meals and clean-up, access to restaurants, menu)

AGENDA (plan time carefully and have a little flexibility; give participants a copy of entire schedule)

INTERACTION CONSIDERATIONS

EXCESS BAGGAGE (concerns or problems participants will be bringing with them to the retreat);

ATTITUDE (receptiveness of participants; mandatory/coercion issues)

GROUP DYNAMICS (stage of development group is in, supportiveness of group, involvement of members in planning retreat, team building exercises planned, level of sharing the members will feel comfortable doing)

ACTIVITY AND PRESENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

FACILITATORS/PRESENTERS (use campus resources to determine availability of speakers on topics, utilize your adviser as a resource)

FORMAT (large group or triads/dyads, lecture vs. working on activity)

TIME (schedule adequate time to cover material, ask questions, participate in activities, and process information - will processing be after each exercise or at the end of the day - schedule free time and breaks approximately every 45-60 minutes)

COMPATIBILITY (plan activities with participants frame of reference in mind, vary format of presentations/activities, watch out for information overload)

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS (always bring extra supplies, make expectations clear, rotate individuals working together to avoid cliques)

SCHEDULE CONSIDERATIONS

OPENING (introduction discussing goals/purpose/expectations; negotiate group norms/expectations; cover rules and responsibilities pertaining to the retreat site; do an icebreaker/energizer to get the group motivated and help them get to know one another)

PRIORITIES (identify the most important concerns which need to be addressed, determine how they will be addressed)

TEAM BUILDING (schedule activities in between major presentations to break up the monotony; bring extra ideas to fill in gaps in schedule; make sure risk levels of activities match group)

MEALS/SNACKS (three meals plus snacks; give healthy energizing snacks like juice and fruit instead of coffee and donuts/cookies, include some free time with meals, schedule light activities after meals)

OUTSIDE PRESENTERS (introduce them to group; allow some time for members to talk one-on-one with presenters)

HANDOUTS (provide members with an accurate record of what took place at the retreat, make handouts so that it reduces the amount of time needed to take notes; make handouts readable and functional)

CLOSING (allow time to close the retreat and discuss the learning process that took place; a closing exercise should review the goals and objectives and determine what was accomplished)

EVALUATION (each session/part of the retreat should be evaluated by the participants before they leave the retreat; give copies of evaluations to presenters; evaluation should be relatively short and simple in order to get honest feedback)

CLEAN-UP (make sure site is left clean and orderly, everyone should help with this)

Advantages of a retreat

- enhances experiences
- eliminates daily distractions
- fosters communication among members
- creates shared experiences
- maximizes participation/minimizes distractions

Assistance with retreat planning

SILC has the following resources for groups planning retreats

- books/manuals on team building activities
- consultation on retreat planning, goal setting for retreats, presentation formats and possible presenters, etc.
- facilitation of activities at retreats (depending on availability of staff)

Stop by SILC, 400 Kansas Union, for more information on the resources listed above.

For more information on Retreats, check out the LeaderBits on Closure, Communication, Conflict Resolution, Goal Setting, Group Dynamics, Icebreakers, Officer Transition, and Team Building.

Portions adapted from a University of Michigan Student Organization Development Center handout.