Leadersources

**Baker University
Office of Student Life**

Goal Setting

Goals are important, they show what your organization wants to achieve over the course of the year. Goals should be revisited and evaluated from y ear to year or whenever the organization thinks it is a good idea to go back to them. Goals should not just be made by the organization leadership, but all members should be able to voice their opinions when it comes to goal setting. This will help all members feel welcome and like they have a place and say in what happens in the organization.

Characteristics of well thought out goals –

- Specific – If a goal is vague (e.g., "do the best you can"), people interpret it in many different ways, depending on their own personal experience, ability, and ambition. When confusion over the desired result is eliminated, the likelihood of a goal being achieved is increased.
- Measurable – Goals are only meaningful for those who will implement them when they are specific enough to be verified and measured.
- Aligned – Goals should contribute to the mission, vision, and strategic plan of the organization.
- Reachable – Goals that are set unrealistically high create frustration and are likely to be abandoned. On the other hand, goals should not be so easily achieved that they offer no challenge.
- Time Bound – Open-ended goals with no specified ending point are likely to be neglected because no sense of urgency is associated with them. Goals should include a specific time for accomplishment.

Why should an organization have goals?

- To improve the self-image of a group by making members aware of strengths and weaknesses
- To give the organization orderly direction
- To set priorities
- To make the organization responsible for its own activity
- To sharpen decision making

Steps for setting goals –

- Brainstorm goals as a group
- Evaluate past group successes and failures
- Address new things the group wishes to accomplish
- Choose from the list above the goals to focus on for the coming year
    - Prioritize your group's chosen goals
    - Break each goal into the steps necessary to reach it
    - Move into action and begin working on goals
- Set timelines and deadlines for each step of the goal
    - What is to be done?
    - How will it be accomplished?
    - What are the resources available (people, money, material)?
    - Who will carry it through?
    - When will it be accomplished?
    - What results are expected and how will they be measured?
    - Continually evaluate your progress
- Make sure your goals are visible!
    - Post them in your work area
    - Give a copy to every member
    - Discuss them at meetings
    - Put them on the agenda