

## **Motivation**

Let's make it clear from the beginning that there is not one thing you can do to motivate everyone, or even to motivate the same person every time. In fact, there is little you can do which will motivate others at all. You can only motivate yourself, but you can create an environment, which will allow others to motivate themselves. The task of a leader is not "motivating others" but rather helping their team members to unleash and harness their own motivation.

The secret to motivation is actually quite simple. To the extent that you give others what they want, they will give you what you want. The following are some of the most common "wants" of team members, and some suggestions on how to fulfill them:

### **Positive Attitude:**

A positive attitude is contagious. As a leader you need to constantly demonstrate enthusiasm for the organization. After all, if you don't, why should your team members? Rather than pointing out negatives, concentrate on the positives; what is going well, the strengths of your organization. Don't let negative attitudes of members sidetrack you. A positive attitude will help to trigger humor and creativity. Above all, keep the organization fun. As students, your members already have plenty of work to do. Never waste their time with inefficient or poorly planned meetings. Balance business with pleasure. Be sure to plan events that are enjoyable to keep members excited about your group.

### **Praise and Rewards:**

When things go well, point it out publicly and thank those who contributed. Often this small recognition will go a long way in assuring that those members will help again in the future. Award the group when things go well by planning a social. Give small rewards at the end of a semester or after a large project is completed. Let the members see how they gain personally from their participation. Invite Career Services to explain how their participation can translate to career opportunities.

### **Respect:**

People want to feel important. They need to feel that they have some credibility. One of the simplest, yet most valuable methods to make your team members feel important is to use a person's name often, and to treat them with courtesy. Ask individuals for their help on important projects. Give your team members responsibilities that challenge them and acknowledge their contribution to the group. This delegation increases their motivation and decreases your workload. Give them a position or title, which shows their status. Demonstrate how group success translates to personal gain. As a rule, people want to belong to a winner. Let them see how your organization is or can be a winner with their support. Give members a chance to show off their talents.

## **Campus Activities & Involvement Center**

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### **Communication:**

As a leader you must keep your group informed and involved in the decision-making process. Seek group input and ideas regularly, and give audience to all suggestions. Solicit input from quieter members. Ask for advice. Allow the group to determine well-defined goals with which they can all agree. Then clearly define, as a group, the responsibilities of each group member in achieving those goals. Your members are more likely to go along with your ideas if they think they thought of the idea first. Allow time at each meeting for members to communicate progress toward those goals, and use newsletters or e-mail news groups when meetings are not possible. Point out progress as it occurs. Most importantly, as a leader, listen to those around you. Listen to their needs, concerns, and problems. Don't automatically try to solve everything for them. Most of the time, just listening is enough.

### **Security:**

Some of the main reasons students join an organization are to be a part of a group, meet and interact with others, and to have a sense of contribution. Support these needs by allowing plenty of time and opportunities for social interaction. Create a team identity. Ensure that group members are taught the skills that will be required to effectively contribute. Allow future leaders to develop their abilities by assigning them key responsibilities and assisting them in the completion of these tasks. Never stop teaching your team new and better skills. Explain how each individual is vital to the success of the organization. Get people motivated by getting them involved. Not everyone can be a star player, but they can all contribute. Everyone is enthusiastic when they see their ideas and contributions as part of the whole. Always praise in public, but criticize in private. As a leader, members will look to you for reinforcement and support. They must know that you like them, respect them, and accept their strengths and weaknesses. Be honest with them and let members know where they stand. Team members will feel secure with a leader who remains calm during difficult times, can be decisive when necessary, and who takes the initiative to handle problems as they arise. In bad times, encourage team members to stick together for moral support.