



## President

### The President's Challenge

The president's challenge is a delicate balance between leading and encouraging other officers, members, and interested students to take on leadership responsibilities. There is also the practical side of being president that requires energy, careful time management, and a good relationship with the council and student body. The president's responsibilities extend beyond the students within the student council. An important responsibility of a president is to serve as a spokesperson for the student body at large, since representing the students is the primary goal of the entire student council organization.

To be successful, the student council president must know how to handle many types of situations. The individual must be mature, organized, have sound judgment, and have the ability to work with many different kinds of people and personalities. A president who lacks these leadership abilities to direct council affairs may face an unmanageable student body or council.

- Preside over all student council meeting in a manner that ensures they run smoothly. There are many systems for meeting management— from formal parliamentary procedure for large groups to informal discussion of small groups.
- Plan and conduct meetings with other officers.
- Delegate authority. You can't do it all. One of the first lessons of leadership is to learn how to enlist the help of others by delegating responsibility. Give assistance, guidance, and praise when appropriate.
- Act as a facilitator of group discussion by summarizing, clarifying, etc.
- Maintain frequent contact with faculty and administrators.
- Work closely with the student council adviser on all planning.
- Keep the principal informed of student council activities.
- Be a spokesperson for the student council to school, community, and civic organization meetings.
- Participate in student council-sponsored activities.
- Impartially select responsible individuals to serve on essential committees to achieve council goals.
- Select energetic, self-starting, cooperative, responsible chairs to guide the committees.
- Prepare evaluations of council activities, meetings, and goals.
- Meet deadlines and achieve goals.
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### Promoting Democratic Meetings

One of the most important tasks of the president is to preside over meetings with a democratic group atmosphere. Council meetings should be a place where:

- Ideas are reviewed by their merit rather than on the status of the person who proposed the idea.
  - Decisions are made by the whole group with each member participating.
  - Both quantity and quality of work are expected.
  - Spontaneous ideas are exchanged.
  - The leader is objective rather than subjective in praise and criticism.
  - The leader functions as a regular group member, sharing work with the group.
  - Genuine interest in work produces high motivation.
  - Creative thinking continues with or without the leader present.
  - Effective leadership stimulates awareness of those outside the group and the needs of the student body at large.
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