Building a BYU Alumni Chapter Board

Have a Clear Vision

“Our thoughts create our reality - where we put our focus is the direction we tend to go.”
~Peter McWilliams

Ask yourself these questions:
- What kinds of activities do you want to have?
- What positions are you required to fill?
  (These positions can be found on pages 11 through 14 of the Chapter handbook).
- What additional positions would you like to have on your board?
  (i.e. PR specialist, sports specialists, performing arts specialists, speakers, etc).

When considering who should fill these positions:
- Identify the skill sets and passions of people you know; what are their interests?
  (i.e. careers, mentoring, event planning, relationship building, service, fundraising,
  sports, music, etc.)
- When asking someone to serve on your board, try to match their interests with your needs.
- People are much more likely to excel in their service when they are passionate about their assignment.

Be Diverse and Inventive

“Strength lies in differences, not in similarities.”
~Stephen R. Covey

Why diversity?
- With greater diversity comes a broader range of ideas, perspectives, and energy.
- The more age, gender, situational, occupational, and background diversity you have on your board, the more inventive and interesting your group will be.

On your board, include:
- People from different generations
- Single people
- Married couples
- People with different occupations
- Recent graduates
- Retirees
- People from different stakes
Be Willing to Ask For Help

“Those who get the most out of life… are those who make the choice to act.”
~Stephen R. Covey

Why you need to ask:
- In general, people who want to be involved won’t offer to help until they are asked.
- Don’t assume someone will turn down the position; more people are willing and ready to help than you would expect.
- You may think some people are too busy to be involved; however, oftentimes busy people are the ones who are best at getting things done and are most willing to help.

Who you should ask:
- Anyone who you think would enjoy being involved!
- Ward members; consider making an announcement in your ward bulletin.
- Ask current members to invite new people; this is how I grew my board to 14 members in just a few months.
- It does not matter whether they attended BYU or not; anyone can be a part of the BYU Alumni Association.

Tips for recruiting members:
- Some people will be hesitant to join at first, that’s okay!
- Invite them to a board meeting so they can see what you are all about.
- As you discuss your upcoming events and activities at your meeting, they will be able to experience your excitement and enthusiasm first hand, thus becoming more likely to join you.
- Another strategy is to ask them to help with a specific activity; as they participate in this event and enjoy their experience, they are likely to stay involved.

Be Flexible

“Be infinitely flexible and constantly amazed.”
~Jason Kravits

- Give people options in regards to their assignments.
- Allow people to be involved as much or as little as their time and comfort level allow.
- Some prefer to take charge, be innovative, and lead big events.
- Others prefer to have very specific tasks to complete.
- Including many specialists on your team is a great way to involve a variety of different people.
Be Specific

“It’s a lack of clarity that creates chaos and frustration. Those emotions are poison to any living goal.”

~Steve Maraboli

Every board member should be given:
- A specific job title.
- A job description; this should include a layout of what is expected of them.
- Details about the time commitment.
- Adequate training in regards to their specific tasks.
- Ample appreciation for everything they are willing to do.

Be Willing to Delegate

“The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it.”

~Theodore Roosevelt

- Make assignments, delegate responsibilities, and give them decision-making authority.
- As long as members have a clear understanding of your vision and their responsibilities, you can give them the ball and let them run with it.
- Get people involved as soon as possible, this will help them feel like a contributing member.
- If you have staffed your board with responsible people, they will do a great job!

Be Accommodating

“I must follow the people. Am I not their leader?”

~Benjamin Disraeli

- Be accommodating in regards to the frequency and time of your board meetings.
- What may be an ideal meeting time for you may be an inconvenient time for your board members; try to accommodate their needs and work around their schedules.

Be Consistent

“Trust is built with consistency.”

~Lincoln Chafee

- Hold board meetings at the same time each month.
- Always have the next meeting on the schedule before the end of a current meeting.
- Try not to cancel board meetings; this kind of inconsistency will cause interest to wane.
- Begin and end meetings on time; people are more willing to participate when you are respectful of their time; socializing should occur after the meeting.
- Have an agenda and clear focus for your meetings; this will facilitate efficiency.
Keep Board Members Informed
- The Secretary should take notes at each meeting to be sent to all board members.
- These notes should include all assignments that were made during the meeting as well as the dates the assignments need to be accomplished by.
- At the next board meeting, review the previous month’s assignments and have each board member report on what they have accomplished.
- The expectation to report will encourage board members to accomplish their assignments and attend board meetings.

Be Appreciative

“Appreciation is a wonderful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.”
~Voltaire

Ideas of how to show appreciation:
- Summer BBQ
- Christmas party
- Provide refreshments at meetings
- You can never say “Thank you!” too much.