



Want Ads: A Tool for Transitioning Leadership

Overview: This workshop is designed to be part of a leadership transition process. The want ads will give the outgoing leaders a good idea of the information they need to pass on to the new leaders to ensure that the new leaders' needs are met and that the leadership transition is smooth. The want ads should be used before elections, so that people running for office know what type of people the organization is looking for in each of the leadership positions.

Category: Project planning and management; transitional leadership; reflection skills

Level: Intermediate; this workshop is for outgoing leaders in campus organizations and should be completed before an incoming leader is named. It can also be paired with "Planning a Leadership Transition," also found in the C.O.O.L.-Idealist Civic Engagement Curriculum.

Type: Structured activity suitable for workshop (e.g. retreat or training) or for use during a regular meeting nearing but preceding the transition of leadership in the organization.

Focus or Goals of this Guide:

- Provide an avenue for discussion between outgoing and incoming leaders.
- Identify key leadership traits needed to be successful in the organization
- Make a leadership transition more fun and less stressful for those involved by providing a creative activity for leaders to express their needs, wants, fears, etc.

Materials:

- Markers
- Flip charts or construction paper (2 pieces of construction paper per person or one flip chart sheet per person)

How to Prepare:

First, review the trainer guide and become familiar with all information and activities. This training will guide you through a want-ads activity where leaders will create ads for leadership traits and information necessary for a successful leadership transition. Tension may arise between incoming and outgoing leaders. This tension is in part due to the anxiety both groups

are experiencing about the upcoming transition. This exercise is designed to facilitate necessary communication between the two groups and ensure that the organization and the community's well-being are foremost in the leaders' minds. It will also hopefully relieve some of that anxiety by giving voice to many of those unstated wants of both leaders.

How to Do/Brief Outline:

The suggested time for this training is 90 minutes, although it can be modified depending on your audience. The training consists of two main steps. The first is an individual process for each student to generate an appropriate want ad. The second is the discussion of those ads with the former and the new leader, and with the large group.

The outline has the following parts:

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| 1) Icebreaker | 10 minutes |
| 2) Want Ads production | 20 minutes |
| 3) Discussion with Partners | 25 minutes |
| 4) Discussion with Group | 25 minutes |
| 5) Closing | 10 minutes |

1 Icebreaker

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Any icebreaker, particularly a name game, is useful for participants at the beginning. You can do one of your favorite icebreakers, or you can find many ideas in "Games and Icebreakers," also in the C.O.O.L.-Idealist Civic Engagement Curriculum.

2 Want Ads Production

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Have all participants get two pieces of construction paper, or one flip chart and divide it into two halves and distribute markers.

Have the new leaders write two want ads. The first ad should describe the qualities a leader should possess and demonstrate to make the organization a success. The second ad should describe what information they want from the outgoing leaders in order to assume the position.

Have the outgoing leaders write two want ads. The first ad should describe the qualities they feel the new leader should possess to effectively run the organization. The second ad should describe what the outgoing leaders want the new leaders to ask so they know the new leaders are prepared for the job.

Both groups should write the first ad about leadership qualifications in the style of a newspaper classified. They should include the name of the organization and the leadership position available (this would be their current position if outgoing, or the position incoming leaders will be

assuming). The ad should be very specific about qualifications for the position, not indicating generalities like: “Wanted: smart, funny person to fill position as organizational leader.”

Here are two examples of want ads: (read these aloud or write up on chart)

Wanted:	Desperately Seeking:
<p>The UCLA Habitat for Humanity chapter is looking for a new Student Director of Projects. Applicants should be upperclassmen with minimum of one-year experience with Habitat, as well as a working knowledge of public service infrastructure. Applicants should have knowledge of construction basics, be proficient in PC computing, have a GPA of 3.25 or better. Experience in other leadership position is a plus—particularly large group leadership. Driver’s license with good driving record.</p> <p>Expectations of Student Director of Projects: will be responsible for the planning of alternative spring break habitat trips. Will lead team of students in locating sites, contacting necessary suppliers and community groups, getting professional volunteers for construction efforts, and all logistics surrounding the travel, stay, security, etc. of the volunteers.</p>	<p>Applicants for Dating GURU, head matchmaker in a recently organized student online dating service. Dating GURU responsible for arranging dates for all those suffering college students who haven’t had the chance to develop their social lives. Applicants should have history of despair as single members in the college community, but should be successful in dating at present. Little black book with contact information for all previous partners essential. Applicants should be proficient in writing, statistics, web-design and graphic design.</p> <p>Will be responsible for creating student survey based on relationship needs for distribution to despondent members of student body. Surveys will be used accordingly to identify compatible partners for these helpless individuals. Also responsible for development of web-based “social” chat programs.</p>

The second ad should be equally specific in its description; however, its focus is on information and not personal qualifications essential for the leader.

Here are some samples of the type of information that should be indicated:

- Outgoing leaders might want new leaders to ask for certain things: “A new leader should ask for vendor information for the tutoring program, because we get our after-school supplies at a discount rate from Allison’s School Stop.”
- A new leader might indicate in the second ad they want the old leader to explain to them the process of reserving rooms because they have never been through that procedure before.

Lastly, ask participants to indicate the three most important ideas on each ad. This is important to the discussion part of this training.

Give the participants about twenty minutes to complete these ads. Tell them to be as creative as they wish. If they want to draw a picture for their ad or write it up as a classified for a newspaper, they should. They will be sharing these ads with other students, so creativity is encouraged.

3 Discussion With Partners

Suggested time: 25 minutes

In the first part of the discussion and sharing of these want ads, students should be partnered up. Ideally, if this training is used for outgoing leaders and their respective replacements, the incoming (new) leader should be paired with their outgoing (old) leader. If these exact matches aren't available however, it is most important that a new leader is paired with an old leader.

Have the pairs find a spot in the room where they can share their respective want ads, highlighting what those three most important ideas are from each. Give each student five minutes to present their "leadership qualities" and "information wanted" ads. Then have the partners discuss the following questions (it might be good to have these written up on a chart or chalkboard)

Where do our want ads overlap and where are our differences?

Why do the ads differ?

Are the priorities the same, if not why?

What steps can we make to ensure that we follow-up on our want ads?

Partners should also make notes on their ads about these questions for future use and knowledge. Give the partners 10-15 minutes of discussion time for these questions.

4 Discussion with Group

Suggested time: 25 minutes

Gather the participants into a circle. Ask a volunteer pair to share their ads with the group, and share the insights they might have gained (through answering the questions in section three). Then have the entire group discuss the questions and their findings.

In particular, have the groups focus on their follow-up steps. Specifically, how are the new leaders going to ensure their want ads are met, and how are the outgoing leaders going to ensure they honor their commitment to leadership and leave the new leaders with a legacy rather than an office filled with files? Make sure both parties take notes on what they are going to do, and set specific guidelines and timetables for when they should finish their assignments.

5 Closing

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Reinforce to the group that leadership transitions are very important and are often crucial in determining an organization's continuing success and effectiveness. It is imperative that the organization's leadership is all on the same page and fit well with the organization's established culture, regarding meetings, events, planning, fundraising, etc. As part of the closing of this workshop, participants should reach consensus on guidelines and timetables and should develop some next steps, as appropriate.