

Leadership Best Practice Guide

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Leadership Toolkit



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Introduction

Congratulations on being selected as a leader on your SIFE team. As a leader your job is to guide, engage and motivate your team. You will have direct influence on the path your team will take as well as making sure the goals of the team are met.

Being a Leader in SIFE

Being a SIFE team leader is a rewarding yet challenging experience. It is your opportunity to be the catalyst who guides and motivates the team throughout the year.

One of the advantages of being a leader of a SIFE team is that you have a group of people behind you to help accomplish the team's goals. In order to be successful you will need to utilize all the members of your team. By getting to know your teammates you will have a better understanding of what motivates them and how to best use their talents. Remember that good leaders ask question and then listen.

The three most important objectives of your role are to guide, to engage and to motivate your teammates. This guide explains each element and provides advice and examples on how to best achieve these objectives.

Your Role: Guide

Leadership is about being able to influence others' actions to ultimately accomplish the goals and objectives the team has set. First you must gain their trust, confidence and respect. Motivating your peers can be difficult at times. They may not always agree with the decisions you make, but it is your job to do what is best for the team, not what is popular.

As the leader of a SIFE team, you will need to encourage your teammates with both words and actions. Good leaders don't just give orders, they communicate clearly and model what they want others to say and do, thereby winning their trust and confidence. Think about leading a project in addition to your normal responsibilities to show the team your commitment and dedication.

Remember to always be honest. For example, never ask someone's opinion in an effort to make them "feel" involved if you really want to use the conversation to tell them what you want them to do. It's best to ask for input when the time is right (i.e. planning stage) and help those involved to understand there is always a need for new ideas,

but as a project develops it becomes more difficult to change the overall course of the project.

Your Role: Engage

If a SIFE team is going to be successful, you must engage all members of the group. Good leaders share the responsibility, trust in others' abilities and hold them accountable.

The structure of your team can help you accomplish your goals and engage more members in the process. There is not a standard structure you must follow, so depending on your team's size, experience, interests, number of projects and any special needs, you should establish a structure that works for you and your team. Positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer can be used to make up an Executive Council. Vice Presidents of special initiatives such as Recruitment, Funding and Media can be used to round out the leadership team. Designate Project Leaders or Co-Leaders for each project to allow others the opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

Below are a few other suggestions to help engage team members:

- Remember all students must be registered at www.sife.org to be considered active SIFE members.
- Get to know your teammates. Consider having each member fill out an interest survey at the beginning of each semester. Include their interests, talents, likes, dislikes, strengths and weaknesses.
- Help members discover what they are good at through asking the right questions.
- Encourage members to work on projects specific to their interests.
- Engage new members as quickly as possible. The sooner you can engage new members the quicker they feel part of the team.
- Encourage members to be project leaders or co-leaders.
- Ask for members input and opinions early and often.
- Encourage the soft spoken or new members to become involved in team decisions.
- Partner veteran team members with new team members in a mentorship role to learn about SIFE.

Your Role: Motivate

Throughout the year it will be your job to keep your team members on task and excited about what they are doing. Members will support projects more if they are involved with creating the projects and planning how it will be accomplished. If members feel a sense of “ownership” in projects they will feel a sense of responsibility to make the project a success. Let them own their projects.

Remember that everyone is motivated by something different. Usually they will tell you what it is if you ask. Find ways to bring out the best in people. You can form your own opinion from discussions you have had with them, but you should also ask them what they want. For some it will be the opportunity to help others, or it may be the personal and professional development they will receive through participating in projects and the SIFE network. Don't be surprised if the first time you ask they say, “It sounded like a good idea.” Help members identify new opportunities that will increase their motivation and commitment to the SIFE team. Encourage members to ask themselves, “What do I want out of my SIFE experience?”

Recognizing members for their hard work and dedication will create a positive atmosphere. A few suggestions for recognizing your members include:

- Always thank members for their ideas, input and effort.
- Notice and comment when you see anyone giving extra effort.
- Let team members express their pride in their accomplishments.
- Create recognition opportunities, for example team member of the week or month.

Every team goes through rough times but it is the role of the leader to encourage the group to keep going. Use challenges, set-backs and problems as a learning experience. Good leaders recognize that their behavior and attitude can greatly affect the dynamics of the team. Maintaining a positive attitude will keep the team's morale up even through the difficult times.

SIFE Leader's Responsibilities

Plan for the Upcoming Year

Setting goals for the upcoming year is one of the first objectives of a SIFE team leader. Planning is critical; if you fail to plan you plan to fail. Remember engaging other members and motivating them

means letting them participate. Seek input and opinions and share the process and the goals with the entire team.

Identify projects that support your goals. Consider the resources, efforts, conflicts, challenges and benefits of each project for planning purposes. Develop a calendar and time line for what you want to accomplish throughout the year. Make sure that each team member has a copy of the calendar for quick reference.

Plan leadership retreats or events to get together and brainstorm for the upcoming year, semester and even mid-year breaks when needed. These events should be fun and different from the day to day activities that you normally do as a SIFE team. Some ideas for team activities are: summer retreats (referenced later in this document under Identify and Train New Leaders), camping trips, dinner, theme parks, tubing, ropes courses/challenge courses, sporting events (either attending or making a team for a recreational league).

For more information on sustainability and leadership planning please refer to the Team Succession Best Practice Guide.

Conducting meetings

An easy way to ensure meetings are productive is to create an agenda prior to the day of the meeting. The quickest way to lose members is to continue to plan all year and never implement a project. Move forward through the year by staying on task and in line with the determined goals. Sample agenda items might include:

- Ice breakers
 - These can be useful in many ways including learning more about your teammates.
 - First meeting – Ask each member to introduce and tell a little about themselves.
 - Second meeting – Ask each member to share what they want from their SIFE experience.
 - Third meeting – Ask what motivates them personally.
- Reading of last week's minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Old business – consider having action steps that hold members responsible when they commit to doing a task. Review each week.
- Project updates by project leaders
- New business

- Break up into committees – this allows for new members to join a committee and get involved quickly.

It is important that you INSPECT what you EXPECT. You must keep an eye on the deadlines you give others to ensure they are being met. If you don't make deadlines meaningful members will not take them seriously and the projects will fall behind.

For a sample of a generic meeting agenda please refer to the Team Succession Best Practice Guide on page 8.

Identify and Train New Leaders

Many teams will try to have the leadership/executive team for the next SIFE year set by the end of the prior SIFE year. There are many ways in which teams will identify leaders for the next year. For some teams, student leaders are appointed by the team advisor based off performance; other teams will hold elections at a general team meeting where students will run for positions. Some teams will have students interview for or submit applications to the team advisor, former executive team members, or Business Advisory Board members to be selected for the positions.

Identifying next year's leaders early in the year is a critical part of sustaining a SIFE team. This planning will give you a chance to help them develop over the year. Give them leadership opportunities by making them project leaders or co-project leaders to gain experience. During the year have the incoming officers shadow the person whom they will be replacing to learn the specific role and responsibilities of that position.

Remember planning is a key part of any team. Organize a one-day retreat at the beginning and end of the year to build team cohesiveness, create your team structure, discuss SIFE, set your team goals and start project planning. Maintaining a transition notebook will help with the planning process and will help guide the new leaders through the next year.

Please refer to the Team Succession Best Practice Guide on pages 2 and 3 for information on these topics: Ideas for Transitioning New Officers, Suggestions for Improving Team Organization and Building Team Cohesiveness, and Yearly Transition Notebooks.

Be a Liaison between the Team and Your Advisor

It will be your responsibility to work closely with your advisor. Your advisor is there to provide guidance

and mentorship to the team. These individuals have a great amount of experience and knowledge so do not hesitate to ask them for help. You should also keep regular communication with them so they are always aware of situations involving the team.

In the unfortunate occurrence that you lose your advisor it will be the team leader's job to find another faculty to become an advisor for the team. The more administration support you have the easier it will be to find a replacement. Included in this guide are several documents to help you in your search.

1. Faculty/Staff Recruitment Flier
2. Faculty/Staff/Administration Letter
3. Advisor Search Checklist

Quick Fact

An advisor becomes a "Sam Walton Fellow" after taking a team to participate in a SIFE competition.

Role of the Advisor

The Responsibilities of a Faculty Advisor are:

- To provide mentorship to SIFE members
- Regularly attend SIFE meetings, fundraising activities, and outreach programs
- Provide guidance to the SIFE team and evaluate competition presentations
- Prepare SIFE students for competitions
- Serve as an advocate for the SIFE organization on and off campus
- Ascertain that the SIFE team has met all requirements
- Serve as the primary representative of the team with SIFE USA

Student Permissions on the SIFE Website

Much of the communication from SIFE USA goes through a SIFE team's advisor, but there is a way for the advisor to give certain permissions to individual students so that they may do tasks on behalf of their SIFE team. The roles/permissions an advisor can assign to a student are: Alumni Employment, Register for Regionals, Apply/Submit Forms/Grants, Manage Student Accounts, Merge/Delete Student Records, Register for Team Events, Service Leadership, Student Internship and Team Data Sheet.

The steps that an advisor must go through to give these permissions are listed below.

1. Log on at www.sife.org
2. After you are logged on, on the left side of the page, click on My Team

3. When the new options open, click on Team and Alumni Roster
4. When the roster opens, click on Show Assigned Roles
5. A second roster opens at the bottom of the page
6. Click on the edit button next to the student's name you would like to give permissions
7. On the roles page, check each box next to a permission you would like to give this student
8. When you have checked all roles you would like to assign, click on the Update button at the bottom of the page to confirm these permissions

Team and Alumni Roster	
Roles Assigned to: [Student Name]	
Roles Currently Assigned to Student	
<input type="checkbox"/> Alumni Employment	<u>Alumni Employment:</u> Modify Alumni
<input type="checkbox"/> Apply for a Topic Competition	<u>Apply for a Topic Competition:</u> Acc
<input type="checkbox"/> Apply for Regionals	<u>Apply for Regionals:</u> Access to App
<input type="checkbox"/> Apply/Submit Forms/Grants	<u>Apply/Submit Forms/Grants:</u> Acces
<input type="checkbox"/> Manage Student Accounts	<u>Manage Student Accounts:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Merge/Delete Student Records	<u>Merge/Delete Student Records:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Register for Team Events	<u>Register for Team Events:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Service Leadership	<u>Service Leadership:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Internship	<u>Student Internship:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Team Data Sheet	<u>Team Data Sheet:</u>

Communicating With Others

Being able to clearly communicate with other team members, your faculty advisor and project partners and participants is key to your success as a leader. People communicate in very different ways. There are a number of skills and guidelines that can be helpful for communicating successfully in cross-culture situations.

Pay Attention

Try to clear your mind of its various preoccupations so you can concentrate on what is being said. Try hard to listen. Remember that there is no point in talking if you cannot pay (or receive) attention. If you are unable to commit yourself to the communication, it is better to postpone the conversation until you are able to concentrate.

Set your assumptions and values aside

Try to hear not just what the other person is saying, but what they mean. You may find that this requires you to ask many questions. There are probably understandable reasons why the other person has ideas and behaves the way they do. It is easier to understand those reasons if you set your ideas aside and try to explore theirs thoroughly.

Be complete and explicit

Be ready to explain your point in more than one way, and explain why you are trying to make a particular point in the first place. Give the background, provide the context and make clear where you are coming from. A lot of meaning is derived from the context, and communication is more successful.

Withhold judgment

Other people do not have to agree with your ideas, and you will be more successful in communicating with others if they know that you are trying to understand, not evaluate them.

Ask for verifications

After you have spoken, gain confirmation that you have been understood. Do this without patronizing the receiver.

Analyze communication behavior

Learn to be aware, not just of what is being said, but also what is happening. Be aware not only of the context of the conversation, but the process as well. If you become aware of the way the communication

process works, you will be able to identify breakdowns and try to remedy them.

Cultural Awareness

If you know the cultural background of your audience prior to communicating, take the time to research communication styles and things that could offend or compliment the intended receiver.

Key Ideas

- Read and understand the SIFE Team Handbook and SIFE USA Competitions, Awards and Scholarships Guide. These publications should guide you through the year.
- Talk face-to-face with your advisor on a regular basis to keep them up-to-date.
- Contact your Program Manager should you have any questions.
- Inform the dean or appropriate administration officials about team activities.
- Create a transition notebook to use as a blueprint for your SIFE team's program. Refer to the Succession Plan Toolkit.
- **Very important:** All students must be registered at www.sife.org to be considered active SIFE members and participate in official SIFE events.

ADVISOR SEARCH CHECKLIST



WHERE TO START:

- Contact outgoing advisor (if possible). Find out why they are leaving and if they are still supportive of your team. If so, ask for their assistance in finding a successor:
 - Contact other colleges/departments
 - Send an email announcement to faculty and staff
 - Conduct an interest session and/or transition meeting
 - Provide viable recommendations
- Send a formal thank you letter to outgoing advisor if timing is appropriate.
- Make appointments with university administrators such as the dean or department chair of the College of Business to inform them that you are looking for a new advisor. Find out if they have any recommendations.
- Obtain a current team roster list from the SIFE USA Programs Department. Contact SIFE USA at sifeteams@sife.org or at 800-235-9585.
- Solicit faculty and/or administrative staff recommendations from fellow team members.
- Send out a letter to all members with recommendations for an advisor. Describe the role of a faculty advisor and the need for an advisor. Include contact information for the team president or student leader.
- Make appointments with interested and recommended faculty advisors. Let them know you are conducting an advisor search and need their help identifying potential candidates (for candidates unfamiliar with SIFE, a brief introduction to SIFE will be necessary).
 - Target Departments:
 - Dean of College of Business
 - Chair of College of Business
 - Other business faculty and staff
- Prepare SIFE information packets that include the SIFE student flier, a general flier about the overall SIFE program, information about your team, what the role of the advisor is, team member contact information, and current team projects.
- Contact SIFE USA for assistance

WHAT TO DO NEXT:

- Touch base with other team leaders, and see if they can accompany you on visits.
- Attend appointments.
 - Thank them for their time.
 - Give a brief overview of SIFE and how your team operates.
 - Clearly explain the duties of a faculty advisor.
 - Be honest about the time commitment.
 - Ask if they have any questions.
 - Ask if they are interested in becoming an advisor for the team.
 - Exchange contact information.
 - Thank them again.
 - Be prepared to hear several “NO” answers.
 - If you are meeting with a referred candidate, make sure to mention that they came highly recommended by the dean or their supervisor.
- Stay in close contact with other officers and the out-going advisor (if possible). Update them and get their feedback about potential candidates.

WHAT TO DO WHEN AN ADVISOR IS FOUND:

- Contact SIFE USA and your SIFE Program Manager to inform them that you have found a new advisor. SIFE USA will brief you on the official process to add a new faculty advisor, which includes a letter from an administrator endorsing the new advisor.
- Thank the new advisor for their willingness to be a part of your team.
- Give the new advisor the contact information for the team and any important dates and deadlines that are coming up.
- Let them know that SIFE USA will be sending them a packet of information that will help get them acquainted with SIFE.
- Send an email to the team to let them know a new advisor has been found and provide his/her contact information.
- Notify other candidates that a new advisor has been found. Thank them for their consideration.

ATTENTION FACULTY AND STAFF



Invites You To:

- **Interact with bright, highly motivated students**
- **Enhance your teaching activities through <School Name> SIFE team activities**
- **Network with hundreds of other faculty, administrators and SIFE National and Global Corporate Sponsors**
- **Make a difference in your community and in the lives of your students**
- **Be part of one of the largest student organizations in the world**

The <School Name> Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) Team is currently looking for motivated administration, faculty or staff members to serve as a team advisor or co-advisor. For more information about the team and how you can become an advisor, please contact:

<President or Team Leaders' Name>
<School Name> SIFE President
<Phone> <Email>



YOUR INSTITUTION
NAME HERE

<Date>, 200_

Dear <Name>:

Amidst the beginning of a new year, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your involvement with the <School Name> Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) Team. As a <School Name> SIFE Team supporter, you play an important part in the success of our team and the international organization.

The <School Name> SIFE Team is currently in the process of selecting a new faculty advisor. We are interested in choosing an advisor who is both enthusiastic and motivated and who will assist the team in reaching its goals. We look forward to talking with interested faculty, staff and administrators who may have an interest in serving as our advisor.

SIFE is a student – run organization, therefore the student leaders are responsible for the day day-to-day activities of the team. However, the success of the team, can be greatly impacted by advisors who take an active interest in the welfare of the organization. For your reference, I have enclosed a document outlining the role and responsibilities of an advisor.

If you would like to find out more about the advisor position for yourself or for someone who may be interested, please contact me at <Phone> or at <Email Address>. Our team officers intend to meet with interested individuals personally to discuss our team and the advisor role during the week of <Date>. You may also contact our SIFE USA representative, <Name of Program Manager>, Program Manager at 800-235-9585 to discuss the role of the SIFE team faculty advisor.

On behalf of the <School Name> SIFE team, I again thank you for your time and assistance. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

<Team President, or Team Leader>
<School Name> SIFE team