



INCREASING PARTICIPATION IN RSO MEETINGS

One of the biggest challenges student organizations face is keeping members engaged during meetings. Members are more likely to participate when meetings feel interactive, welcoming, and relevant to their interests. Consider incorporating some of the following strategies:

- Create opportunities for connection. Begin meetings with a quick icebreaker, member spotlight, or discussion question to help members get to know one another and feel comfortable contributing.
- Make meetings interactive. Rather than having officers talk for the entire meeting, include small group discussions, brainstorming activities, polls, or opportunities for members to share ideas and feedback.
- Celebrate accomplishments. Recognize members who have contributed to events, volunteered their time, achieved personal milestones, or demonstrated leadership within the organization.
- Incorporate friendly competition. Trivia games, team challenges, or event-related competitions can increase participation and make meetings more memorable.
- Use technology to encourage involvement. Tools such as live polls, QR code surveys, or collaborative brainstorming platforms can make it easier for all members to contribute.
- Provide snacks when possible. Food can create a more welcoming atmosphere and encourage members to attend and stay engaged throughout the meeting.
- Connect discussions to members' interests and goals. Students are more likely to participate when they understand how an event, project, or decision impacts their experience within the organization.
- End with clear opportunities for involvement. Members are more engaged when they leave knowing how they can contribute before the next meeting.

Remember that participation looks different for everyone. Some members enjoy speaking in front of a group, while others prefer contributing in small groups or through written feedback. Creating multiple ways to participate helps all members feel included and valued.



KEEPING MEMBERS ENGAGED DURING MEETINGS

Whether you are introducing a new initiative, training members, planning an event, or presenting at a meeting, keeping your audience engaged is essential. College students are more likely to stay focused when presentations are interactive, relevant, and connected to their experiences.

- Break up long presentations. Avoid speaking for extended periods without interaction. Include discussion questions, polls, small group conversations, or opportunities for members to share ideas and feedback.
- Connect the topic to your members. Explain why the information matters and how it impacts upcoming events, leadership opportunities, member experiences, or organizational goals.
- Share stories and examples. Real experiences, lessons learned, and success stories help make information more memorable and relatable.
- Move around the room and engage with your audience. Standing in one place for an entire presentation can make it harder to maintain attention. Purposeful movement and eye contact help create a stronger connection with participants.
- Show enthusiasm. Members are more likely to be interested in a topic when the presenter demonstrates energy, confidence, and excitement.
- Encourage participation. Ask questions, invite feedback, and create opportunities for members to contribute. People are more likely to remember information when they actively engage with it.
- Use visuals effectively. Photos, graphics, short videos, and demonstrations can help reinforce key points and maintain interest. Avoid slides that contain large amounts of text.
- Demonstrate rather than describe. If you are explaining a process, activity, or event, show examples whenever possible. Visual demonstrations are often easier to understand than verbal explanations alone.
- Keep presentations concise. Focus on the information your audience needs most and avoid overwhelming participants with unnecessary details.

Remember that the goal is not simply to share information. The most effective presentations leave members feeling informed, engaged, and excited to take action.

