

President

Objectives:

- **Obtain and communicate a vision of Dance Marathon**
 - **Select a dependable and energetic council and delegate effectively to them**
 - **Be the leader and public speaker for Dance Marathon**
 - **Run all council meetings and direct the council through challenges and obstacles to a successful event**
 - **Set an example for the program**
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- This position is called by many names at different schools
 - Whether your title is overall chair, executive director, director, president or Archduke of all that is Grand, you are the person on whom the success or failure of Dance Marathon rests. This is not said to overwhelm you, rather to help you understand this is a very important position. Your leadership style will reflect in the trust given to you by the rest of the council. Once you develop trust and confidence with your council, do not take it lightly.

 - Obtain and communicate a vision of Dance Marathon
 - Your first task is to understand clearly what Dance Marathon is. What is Dance Marathon to you? What can Dance Marathon do for the kids treated at Riley Hospital? What can it do for your campus and fellow students? These are important questions you will want answers to so that you can “sell” Dance Marathon to other students, administration and faculty.
 - Call and introduce yourself to the Dance Marathon Coordinator at the Riley Children’s Foundation. You will be working closely in the coming months. Your campus advisor is someone you will also need to become acquainted with early in the planning process. Find out what his or her leadership style is. What does this person see as their role in Dance Marathon? What can you expect from them?
 - If you do not have an advisor established, contact the Student Activities Director, set up a meeting with them and show them this binder. They can help you get started.

 - Council Creation
 - In your first year, or maybe it is custom with your organization to do yearly, recruit individuals to assemble a council. Before you start, make a list of qualities you are looking for in a council member. Then begin talking to different organizations on campus to determine who might be interested in your vision. Look through the committee breakdown section and determine what groups you would like to have and then begin talking with individuals about filling those spots.

- Directors are not required to walk on water, but their responsibilities are difficult. The majority of former Dance Marathon council members say the most important task they accomplished was selecting a strong council. After you relay the marathon vision, the council members should carry this vision to reality.
- When faced with a great task, many of us find the urge to turn to those who have stood by us through breakups, broken down cars and the whole range of life's challenges. If you feel that urge when it comes to selecting your Dance Marathon council, resist it. The council should be a diverse group that has the drive and determination to make Dance Marathon a hit. Use objectivity in your selection process. If two of the three finalists for the fundraising Director have accounting experience and the third is a great friend without any experience, consider finding a place on another committee where your friend is a better fit. Just because someone is a friend doesn't mean they are a good selection.
- Encourage freshmen and sophomores to apply.

➤ Board of Managers (BOM)

- This might all seem overwhelming; therefore another suggestion is to create a Board of Managers or Vice Presidents. These individuals will be a huge asset to you as they will be able to help you set up a council and distribute your ever-growing task list.
- At Indiana University, the President and the Vice Presidents make up the Board of Managers (BOM). They are the final decision making body. Their main responsibility is to make sure the directors are doing the work that needs to get done. Each week they have focus group meetings where they discuss what they need to prioritize and what help is needed. (A description and job assignments are included at the end of the section.)

➤ Leader and Public Speaker for Dance Marathon

- The president is the individual who is ultimately responsible for every area of Dance Marathon. As the leader of DM, you must possess amazing vision and incredible follow through. Your role involves forecasting challenges and obstacles, and directing council through the entire DM process.
- It is important that you become a resource on everything related to Dance Marathon. You will consult committee members, student organizations, campus administrators and businesses. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the duties and responsibilities of every committee.
- The responsibilities of the president are endless and limitless- you must learn to delegate. Many committees will work together to accomplish their responsibilities. Make sure your council set-up is comprehensive and that one chair/ director is ultimately responsible for each task.

- Involve as many people as possible. But assemble a council that is dependable and energetic. Search to find individuals that are hard working and able to commit a large amount of time for fundraising for the kids!
- Hold your chairs/ directors accountable. Give them tasks and timelines for completion.
- Make sure that you understand all rules/ guidelines set up by your school, the hospital, and even your community. These will guide you and your members need to understand the importance of following these guidelines.
- You are a very fortunate person; a person that will be remembered as the beginning of an incredible tradition. The DM legacy will keep giving and inspiring for years to come. Feel the excitement of this unique opportunity every day as you work to make Dance Marathon a legend on your campus!

➤ Document the History of your Marathon

- Do not wait to put this together! Write a one to two page document with why you started the marathon, the goals you set, and include your accomplishments. Years from now dancers/sponsors/etc. will be thinking about joining the Dance Marathon family and will be reading about the legacy you started. Be sure to include a list of the committees and the chairs/directors.

➤ Run Council Meetings

- Once council is selected, it is time to bring everyone together. If you haven't distributed sections of this manual to corresponding directors, do so at this meeting. You might also want to include information on supportive organizations on your campus and the section in this manual on Riley Hospital.
- Make the first meeting fun. Conduct some ice breakers and team building games. These activities can immediately make you aware of council members' personalities and how best to work with them throughout the process. Make the meetings motivational with council members leaving feeling empowered to help the kids at Riley.
- Teach the directors everything about Dance Marathon. Every council member must know all marathon information inside and out.
- Be the critical eye and ear for everyone involved in DM. Often committees have great ideas, but they also have the tendency to get carried away. It is your responsibility to provide all council members with a reality check and help them design back-up plans.
- Keep the students on track. Everyone has great stories to tell about the weekend, etc, but you are there for a purpose. Plus the students will appreciate your meeting not lasting all evening.

- Hold one-on-one meetings with each director to set goals for their committees. These one-on-one meetings may be a tool you use once a month or maybe just two times in the marathon process.
- Have an agenda for every meeting. This will help with keeping you on track.
- Be positive and appreciative – it is easy to get caught up with the chaos, be sure to keep your message upbeat, thank them for all their hard work and remind them they are doing it for the kids!

➤ Direct council through challenges and obstacles

It is a given that there will be choppy water that you will need to steer Dance Marathon through. It might come in the form of administrative road blocks, city ordinances against canning or even lazy or disillusioned members.

- Some of this can be avoided by having a strong vision of Dance Marathon on your campus and effectively communicating it to your council, committees, and others.
- When a challenge appears, deal with it quickly. If the Public Relations Director doesn't follow through with getting the Press Kit together, find out why. Is the reason a legitimate excuse or does it show a lack of motivation? The automatic answer is not always to replace the Dance Marathon member, although you might feel like it at first. This is meant to be a learning experience for everyone.
- Your campus advisor is a professional in the student affairs arena and is a great place to turn to when faced with a challenging personality. Talk with them about suggestions for dealing with council and committee members who don't follow through with assignments.
- If a member of DM repeatedly harms the unity of the group and gets in the way of reaching your goals, that person may need to be removed from the committee. If a dismissal is necessary do so quickly and as professionally as possible. State the reasons for the dismissal on paper and give them a warning. Do not become emotionally involved in the decision. Allow the person to rebut, however this is a serious decision and should not be taken lightly. When you make the decision to remove a member, stick to the decision. There are many books on management you can turn to for suggestions.

➤ Set the Example for the Program

- You serve as the resource on anything and everything related to DM. Therefore, you should thoroughly understand the relationship between the Children's Miracle Network, Riley Hospital for Children, the Riley Children's Foundation and the Dance Marathon Program. Know the history of Dance Marathon. Know how the funds raised benefit the children at Riley Hospital.

- You need to teach others on council everything about Dance Marathon. Every council member must know all marathon information inside and outside. They in turn, are responsible for teaching their committees about Dance Marathon.
- Act as the DM role model. You represent DM whether you are meeting with a potential sponsor, briefing campus administrators, or sitting in a class. Encourage all committee members to remember they are too role models; everything they do reflects on DM. Have fun but remember to never jeopardize the perception of your organization.

➤ Presenting Dance Marathon

- Your administration is always trying to find ways to get more for and from your institution; more funding, more quality applicants, more positive publicity, more results that show their students are being truly educated, and more to hang their hat on. Dance Marathon is one of those tools that will help the administration in many ways. If you can convince them that supporting Dance Marathon is worth their time, it will help you in the community, on campus and with Dance Marathon's overall reputation.
- Discuss with your advisor different ways to channel information about Dance Marathon through the university administration. Is it possible to make a presentation to the Faculty Senate or the President's Advisory Board? Many schools have the university president attend the Dance Marathon and encourage the dancers. Mary Sue Coleman, president of the University of Iowa has said Dance Marathon is one of the best things that ever happened at the university. The president of the University of Florida is a big supporter of their event. His wife chairs the advisory board. Getting the administration on your side is a very good thing. In order to do so you must be very prepared and informed.
- In conjunction with Promotions, make as many presentations to clubs, student groups, university officials, and businesses groups and individuals as possible. The easiest way to do this is to outline a standard Dance Marathon speech or public address. The suggested length of a standard presentation is 15 to 20 minutes. If you write and practice your standard speaking points, this responsibility will be less overwhelming. Include your Dance Marathon Coordinator in this process. Not only are they educated on Dance Marathon, but also on Riley Hospital for Children and Children's Miracle Network.

➤ Keeping Council motivated

Interest in Dance Marathon can ebb and flow just like interest in anything. Sometimes you feel like you can conquer the world and other times you think there might be a better way to get involved on campus. There is a need to keep all members of council unified and committed through the whole planning process. Here are some ideas to accomplish this:

- As soon as your committee is assembled, and you can arrange everyone's schedules, take a tour of Riley hospital. There is nothing quite like seeing the amazing things they do there and knowing you are helping talented doctors and nurses save children's lives. If needed, go more than once. This is something Family Relations organizes with the Dance Marathon Coordinator. We suggest having Family Relations schedule hospital visits for campus student organizations also.
- Keep the executive board realistic by showing them the big picture. What will Dance Marathon accomplish? What are your goals and the reasons for those goals?
- Throughout the planning process schedule stress- relieving activities. We suggest doing something once a month with the entire committee that has nothing to do with Dance Marathon. This could be watching your school's football, basketball, soccer or other sports teams in action, having a barbeque or movie night at someone's apartment or going out to dinner.
- Run efficient meetings. If there is an issue that needs to be discussed by a few individuals, don't waste the rest of council's time by talking about it during the meeting. Efficient meetings will also help lower stress.

➤ Other suggestions

- Develop a solicitation plan early in the planning process with the Marketing chair, your advisor and the Dance Marathon Coordinator.
- Meet with the Finance/ Fundraising director and your advisor early in the planning process to develop an overall Dance Marathon budget.
- Keep in touch with other Dance Marathon universities. They have been through this before, some only a year earlier and some for several years. They can offer some great suggestions.
- Select a theme for Dance Marathon. Dedicate one committee meeting if needed to brainstorm theme. Some schools have found it is helpful to keep this theme for multiple years. It helps brand your organization and it is less stressful each year to come up with a new theme.
- Maintain frequent contact with the Dance Marathon Coordinator. Inform them of updates and changes.

➤ Offer to help when needed

- If you have not been through Dance Marathon before, your position can sometimes feel like the blind leading the blind. Often a director will need someone with your campus experience to bounce ideas off or brainstorm solutions to their challenges. Establishing a trusting relationship early on will help directors turn to you. Keep tabs on all directors and committees. Recognize when they need assistance to complete a task and when they just need some moral support. Be an available, reliable resource for them.
- One week before Dance Marathon hold a dress rehearsal with your

committee. Block a complete afternoon and evening for this meeting. Run through every aspect of Dance Marathon to find out if the logistics are realistic.

➤ After the Marathon

- Hold wrap-up, seek suggestions for improvement.
- Start looking for your successor. Is there someone on council or a Marathon team that has done an outstanding job? Always be on the lookout. Be careful not to favor anyone, but don't be afraid to recognize talent and hard work.
- Some schools have found selecting a new president before the Marathon can be an added hassle. If you have time after the Marathon to choose your succeeding committee, save it until then. If Dance Marathon is held near the end of school, start the selection process before your Marathon is over. Remember you need time to acclimate this individual.

Helpful Hints:

- Have weekly/ bi-weekly one-on-one or small group meetings to check on the progress of your directors. Don't let anyone fall behind!

*** Remember:

- Always have a back-up plan!
- Delegate! Do not allow yourself to become overwhelmed.
- You are there for guidance, not to do their jobs.

Do it for the kids!

Board of Managers

Indiana University structure:

VP Finance- Fundraising, Accounting

External VP- Special Events, Recruitment, Event Coordination, Dancer Relations

Internal VP- Morale, Entertainment, Operations, Catering, Riley Development

VP Communications- Public Relations, Corporate Relations, Alumni Relations,
Technology

- At Indiana University, the President and the Vice Presidents make up the Board of Managers (BOM). They are the final decision making body. Their main responsibility is to discuss with the directors what they need to prioritize and to determine what help is needed to make sure that tasks are accomplished. Each week they meet just prior to the entire council meeting to discuss the developments in each area over the past week. BOM also handles the decision making for issues that involve the marathon as a whole—or things that the directors shouldn't have to worry about personally (due to their already enormous responsibilities)

➤ VP Finance

Job Responsibilities:

- Management of cash flow (paying bills, depositing donations, etc.)
- Development of budget immediately after taking the position with revisions made as necessary
- Advising and assisting Finance focus group directors

Special Projects

- Circle of Hope—a special reward program for those dancers that raise over \$500, they receive a special t-shirt at the Marathon
- Founder's Club/ Marathon club- programs for DM alumni to agree to a 3 year donation commitment (\$108/ \$36 respectively for 3 years) – interest letters and reminders sent in May

A must for DM success:

- Timely payment of all bills.
- Cover operational expenses promptly, even if that means compromising the total donations (a reputation must be established that conveys the marathon as responsible and business-like).
- Remain patient but optimistic when dealing with donation totals
- When the marathon is only three months away, it is crucial to focus on the short-term future. A VP of Finance must cover expenses and determine an effective budget. The most important thing is to remain flexible.
- Never lose the vision of why and for whom we are doing this!

➤ External Vice President

Job Responsibilities:

- Assisting with rules and regulations for dancers and entering all dancers into the database
- Development of action plans to help all objectives and activities run smoothly
- Advising and assisting External focus group directors

Special Projects

- Assisting with Hope Award and Spirit Awards

A must for DM success:

- Begin working early on dancer sign-ups. You need to promote Dance Marathon everywhere to ensure that you will have a large number of dancers. Be sure to keep them informed every step of the way with Dancer Call-out Meetings, Dancer Guidebooks and update emails.
- Never lose the vision of why and for whom we are doing this!

➤ Internal Vice President

Job Responsibilities:

- Management of all things inside of the marathon
- Development and management of the layout and schedule of the marathon
- Advising and assisting Internal focus group directors

A must for DM success:

- Immediately picking the location of the marathon and working on a layout.
- Work on a general timeline and filling in the blanks.
- Because most of your directors' responsibilities happen just before the marathon, each director must have good time management skills and be able to accomplish multiple goals in a small amount of time.
- Never lose the vision of why and for whom we are doing this!

➤ VP of Communications

Job Responsibilities:

- Keep alumni involved! They have many of the resources that you need to be successful. Ask them for help and they may cover your need.
- Make sure that your website is functioning and that it is up to date.
- Management of all projects (promotional t-shirts, press kits, marketing packet, etc.)- Double check and triple check!
- Assist Marketing in the solicitation of sponsors. Work together to present Dance Marathon information in a professional and inspirational manner.
- Advising and assisting Communications focus group directors

A must for DM success:

- Have DM Coordinator approve all items with the Riley logo prior to sending to print.
- Submit all projects to printers early!
- Keep it simple- doing too many special events can exhaust your team and your community. Try to do a couple of things well instead of lots of things average.
- Encourage all committees to promote DM!
- Make sure students are going to their office hours!
- Work with DM coordinator on sponsor presentations.
- Never lose the vision of why and for whom we are doing this!