

Planning a Successful Retreat

It may be that you want get to know each other better. Maybe you're a new leadership team that needs some time to plan. Or, it may be mid-year and you are seeking a way to refocus and re-energize the group. Retreats can happen anytime and anywhere, and can be as short or as long as you need. With a little effort and some planning, you can provide your group with a rewarding, productive experience.

Before you get started...stop to think about what the purpose and goals of the retreat are?

Why do you need to retreat as a group? What is the purpose?

How much time can you allocate to the retreat – half-day, overnight, two days, etc.?

Where are possible locations for the retreat?

Who needs to be invited to the retreat?

Now...match your group's needs and desires with your identified retreat purpose...

What three things would you most like participants to get out of this retreat?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How can you best accomplish this, while keeping their needs and desires in mind?

What are some activities you have enjoyed on other retreats that you can incorporate into this one?

Who needs to be a part of the facilitation team?

Four Reasons to Retreat

- Regroup
- Review
- Reflect
- Resume



...that re-treating off campus has many benefits. It minimizes distractions, separates participants

from other priorities on campus, and ensures that the group will remain together throughout the retreat experience. *Where can you go?*

Location, Location, Location

Retreats can take place anywhere! What you are seeking is a quiet, reflective space with little to no distractions. So the office or traditional meeting room should be avoided. However, there are many options on and off campus to consider: outside space, a nearby campus, an advisor's home, the Alumni House, a local place of worship, and a hotel conference room, among others.

Some Things to Keep in Mind When Planning a Retreat...

- Are there any campus events happening on the day or evening you picked for the retreat?
- Is the location adequate for your needs (does it have enough beds and comfortable meeting space)?
- How can you keep food costs down? Can you ask each participant to bring a snack? Can you work with your campus food service to do pack-outs?
- What activities do the participants usually engage in on the weekend? Can you adjust the departure and return times accordingly?
- Are participants generally morning or evening folks? Plan your most educational activities for the time when they will be most engaged.
- What kinds of things can you do to get participants excited about the retreat (teasers, add some mystery, theme a meeting prior to the retreat, involve them in the planning, etc.)?