

Chapter Skill-Building Webinar: Chapter Basics



Welcome from National NOW Action Center



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Agenda

- Chapter Structure
- Officers
- Elections
- Bylaws
- Meetings
- Fundraising

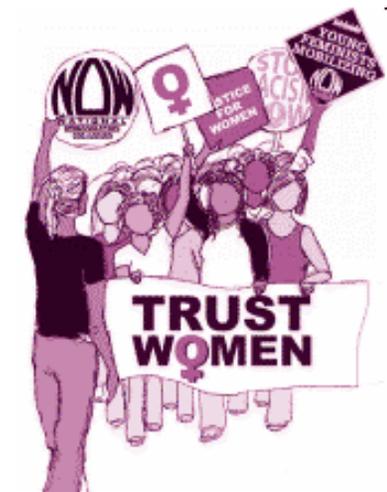
Running A Chapter

- Running a chapter takes work, but having basic procedures in place makes it easier to make a difference at the community level.
- To run a strong chapter, you need members with different strengths.
- Everyone has a role to play in ensuring your success.



Benefits: A More Efficient Chapter

- Better organized meetings
- More effective fundraising
- Bringing in new members
- Actions that reach a greater audience
- Bringing in more ideas
- Greater involvement in the community



Case Study: Connecticut NOW

- Relatively new state chapter; really grown over the past 4 yrs
- 10 board members, mostly young, working women
- **Fundraising:**
- Be consistent every year with fundraising efforts--
-chapter always has the Love Your Body (5K) race which generates huge gross revenue and constant buzz for the chapter
- Know your community and what will work to get people involved and eager to donate---
Connecticut is a state that has a lot of walk-a-thons and race is held in a popular location for membership and potential sponsors
- Prepare carefully for fundraising events to maximize the potential income---always reach out to potential sponsors, promote online, reach to other local women's groups to see if they want to join in; the chapter even has a committee for the event which meets from July to October
- Utilize sending out online appeals—chapter always sends out appeals around Mother's Day and an end of the year appeal (which both raise \$3,000)



Case Study: Connecticut NOW Con't.

- **Chapter Structure:**
- The chapter meets once a month, with subcommittees meeting more often.
- The executive board is in constant via email with one another.
- The chapter has 5 sub-committees to divide up the tasks of chapter:
 1. Finance/Fundraising---work on the chapter's budget
 2. Community Outreach---work on the website, blog (chapter blogs 5 times a week), plan events
 3. Nominating---work on recruiting new board members (to prevent burn-out and deal with turnover)
 4. Public Policy---work on legislative priorities and track bills
 5. Love Your Body 5K---work on getting sponsors, planning the event, recruiting volunteers



STRUCTURE OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN

Italics indicate National Bylaws wording

NOW Members

Chapter Members and At-Large Members

State Organizations

State officers are elected by state members at an undelegated state conference (where at-large delegates to the National Conference are also elected). The State Council is made up of state officers and chapter delegates, per each state's bylaws. States convene chapters. The State Presidents make up an informal committee – the State Presidents' Caucus – that facilitates strategy building and idea sharing.

Regional

NOW is divided into nine geographic regions. Each Regional Council is made up of National Board Members and State Presidents/Coordinators from that region, and coordinates regional conferences and activities in accordance with the region's bylaws. Regional conferences are held every two years for the election of National Board Members from each region.

National Board

National Officers and Board Members from each region, elected by members at undelegated Regional Conferences every two years, comprise the National Board. The National Board meets at least four times a year and makes national policy between National Conferences. The Board manages the affairs and controls the property of the organization.

National Officers

Four officers are elected as a team at National Conferences every four years. Officers are members of the National Board and three serve on the NOW PAC. Officers speak for the national organization and make policy between board meetings. The President is the CEO and CFO of NOW and the four officers serve as the management team for the National Action Center.

NOW Foundation

The tax-deductible foundation engages in litigation, policy development and education. The foundation shares NOW's staff, officers and Board of Directors

NOW Political Action Committee

NOW PAC carries out electoral campaign work in furtherance of NOW's goals. The PAC Board consists of three officers, three Board Members and three members at large appointed by the President with approval of the National Board

Campus Action Network*

Nationwide network of young feminists interested in staying up-to-date on NOW news and campus actions.

Campus Affiliate*

A recognized group of young feminists on a campus who organize actions to fight for the rights of women and girls.

*Don't necessarily participate in the governing process

National NOW Action Center

Professional staff provides NOW program support including: membership processing, chapter development, field organizing, political development, lobbying, communications, publications, fundraising, Web site, and accounting.

Your Chapter Structure

- There is no one right way.
- Develop a chapter structure that works for your chapter.
- Be flexible. Sometimes, your chapter will need a bylaws committee or a committee that plans a certain event, or focuses on a certain issue.
- Try to prevent activist burnout by making sure to delegate tasks to various board members and active members.



Officers

- Two officers required officers (for rebates): President (or coordinator) and Treasurer.
- According to NOW policy, chapters may set their own specific duties for officers. There is neither a mandatory number of officers for a chapter, nor mandatory roles for officers of a chapter.
- There are a list of suggested duties available in the Chapter Organizing Manual. (online at www.now.org/chapters)
- Be creative. You may choose to add a tech person, public relations chair, and/or vice presidents of action and membership.
- What you feel best for your chapter's needs is the most important thing.



Elections

- It is important to keep the leadership of your chapter fresh to generate new ideas and give the chance for everyone in your chapter to be a leader.
- Make sure your chapter follows the necessary procedures of your chapter's bylaws, especially as far as candidate eligibility, voting eligibility, and notification requirements.
- Benefits to holding regular elections include recruiting, power-sharing and transparency in leadership.



Raise Your Hand

- Has your chapter held elections in the past year?

Discussion Questions

- Does your chapter have a unique position on your board that has helped you function better?
- What does chapter do to encourage newer members to run in upcoming elections?
- Does your board have a mix of experienced individuals and newcomers?

Bylaws

- Review the sample bylaws on the chapters-only site.
- Make sure to keep bylaws simple and broad, so your chapter does not have to constantly keep updating them.
- Consider also using operating rules (optional) for more flexibility.
- Make sure to send updated copies of your chapter's bylaws to the National Action Center.



Meetings Can Be Fun

- One of the most key elements to any chapter is having meetings that run smoothly.
- Meetings don't have to be boring, inefficient or carry on forever (in fact, they should be fun, effective and to the point).
- Always plan ahead when it comes to your meetings. Consider adding time slots to the agenda items.
- Make an agenda and send it out to your chapter list ahead of time. Ask for suggestions and encourage people to come with ideas.
- Advertise your meeting on your website, blog, Facebook page, and Twitter.
- Always make sure that newcomers feel welcome and are brought into the action planning process. If they have an assignment, then they will be invested and come back.



Raise Your Hand

- Does your chapter hold meetings on a regular basis?

Discussion Questions

- What does your chapter do to make meetings fun?
- What does your chapter do to engage newcomers that come to meetings?
- How does your chapter divide time between current issues/activities and ongoing chapter maintenance?

Fundraising Tips

- Don't be shy to ask for money. Your chapter needs money in order to accomplish a variety of goals.
- Donations can come in all different forms, including someone agreeing to cater a chapter event, or other in-kind donations.
- No donation is too small.
- Never reject donations coming from a good source and always be sure to thank the person who donated.
- Make sure to research a new donor before accepting a donation; you don't want your chapter get used by an organization trying to get good publicity, because they are through a sex discrimination lawsuit.
- Know your demographic. For example, your friends at your gym may be a smaller ask than the members of a local business committee.
- Always explain why your chapter needs money and what their donation could mean for your chapter and your community.



Raise Your Hand

- Has your chapter fundraised in the past year?

Discussion Questions

- What creative things has your chapter done to earn some extra cash?
- Does your chapter maintain a budget?
- Does your use events/actions as opportunities to fundraise?

Resources Available from National NOW

- We are here to:
- Help you start a new chapter;
- Help you plan an action;
- Help you with your chapter information;
- Help you with getting your rebates;
- Help you start a CAN (Campus Action Network) on your local campus;
- Provide support with any chapter issues;
- Help you get chapter materials;
- And so much more!!!!



Key Contacts

- For information about memberships, please contact Elissa Heller, NOW Membership Specialist at member@now.org
- For information about rebates, please contact, Sparkle Barrett, NOW Accounting Assistant at accounting.assistant@now.org
- To update officer records or send an updated copy of your chapter's bylaws, please contact Anita Lederer, NOW Field Organizer at fieldorg@now.org

Next Chapter Skill-Building Session

- How to Work with the Media
- Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at 8 p.m. EST
- Contact Anita Lederer at fieldorg@now.org for any questions or feedback you would like to share
- Share your feedback:
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/D38CRWF>