Risk Mentor Tool

Overview

BEFORE YOU START

This tool is most effective when used as part of your organization's FailSafe plan. If you and your leader team haven't completed both the **Member Alcohol Profile** and the **Leader Awareness and Planning Tool**, please do so **before** using this tool.

It is helpful to watch FailSafe Module 3 "How Do You Like Me Now?" before starting this tool.

WHO IS THIS TOOL FOR?

This tool should be used by you (the leader of your student organization), the members of your leader team, and your general membership.

WHAT DOES THE TOOL HELP YOU DO?

The tool is designed to help your organization's members share their learnings about how to be successful at risk taking. The tool prepares you to lead some group activities during an hour-long group meeting. The goal of the activities is to create a culture of informal mentoring among the members of your group, especially between older members who have been around for a while and younger members who are newer to the organization. The activity is fun; you may want to use it with your group to explore other topics like study habits, dating/relationships, and internships. In this tool, the focus is on things that lead to risk success when using alcohol.

WHY DO YOU NEED THIS TOOL?

If your group is like most student organizations, you have plenty of members who have learned a few things along the way about how to enjoy using alcohol while achieving their academic goals and avoiding significant physical, personal, or legal harm. How do we know? Because those members are still here! Something they're doing is working well enough to keep them alive and on the path to finishing their degree. And their wisdom is just the thing that other members of your organization need to succeed.

We tend to be good at telling stories of wild adventures with alcohol, but not so good at telling each other how we survive or avoid harm. It's likely that most of the members of your organization who successfully manage the risks of alcohol use have never shared what they've learned with their peers, or used this knowledge to help a younger member of the group figure out how to survive and thrive in the college social scene.

Part of why we don't share what we know is that no one wants to appear a know-it-all, or pretend that they have it all figured out. We also don't want to tell people what to do. But you and others **do** know things that would be very helpful for others who **really** are trying to figure it out!

The key is to **not** have members tell other members "You should do this" but to have everyone share the wisdom they've acquired—their secrets to success.

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*You may have a few longer-term members who are barely hanging on whose use of alcohol causes a lot of problems. These are probably not the students you want to have mentor other group members. But they may be great candidates for "The Next Day" conversation in Module 6.

The funny thing is that we often don't get to hear the wisdom of our group's most respected members unless what we're doing boosts or diminishes their respect for us. Everyone wants to be respected by the other members of the group. This tool enables student organizations to have frank discussions where members—especially new ones—learn how they can gain the respect of the rest of the group.

HOW DOES THE TOOL WORK?

This tool has five sections. The first section (Pre-Meeting Leader Team Email) helps the leader team prepare to facilitate the hour-long group activity. The other parts, as indicated below, are the four segments of the group activity:

- Introducing the Session
- Secrets to Success: a discussion to identify ways to avoid risk failure
- Earning Respect: how newer group members can earn the respect of older group members in social situations involving alcohol
- Closing: a call-to-action for group members

WHAT DO YOU NEED BEFORE YOU GET STARTED?

- Determine how you will record ideas and share them with the group. You can do this by using a whiteboard or flip chart with markers or a laptop connected to an LCD projector and a blank wall.
- Designate a note-taker to record ideas as they are mentioned by group members.
- Decide whether your leader team wants to adapt the sample scripts included in each section of the tool or create your own scripts.
- Insert the group meeting date and location and your name in the "Pre-Meeting Leader Team Email" and send the email to your leader team a few days before the group meeting. This will encourage your group's leaders to think of strategies to share with the whole group. Or you can simply talk about the points raised in the email during a leader team meeting.
- If you decide to do the "Risk-Management Kit" activity in Secrets to Success, have the members of your leader team bring to the group meeting items that represent their strategies for successfully managing risk.
- If you decide to do the "On a Scale of . . . " activity in Secrets to Success, prepare the pictures or symbols you will use for the scale.

HOW DO YOU START?

Schedule a one-hour meeting for your entire organization. This may be a regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting that you add to the calendar.