

M-Wrap and Board Meeting Suggestions

Learn to utilize the M-WRAP meeting framework to engage your board.

Recommended for:

- Chapters that are experiencing disenfranchised members
- Chapters that are having trouble retaining new board members
- Chapters struggling to have board members connecting on a more personal level.
- Chapters that are having dull meetings

M-WRAP Framework

A way for NEWH chapters to have effective meetings, engage the board, and avoid burnout.

Implementation

To be rolled out to chapter presidents, VPs, and secretaries in advance so there are multiple roles that can help facilitate the new meeting structure. The mission statement reflection is shared once, by anyone on the board, at the beginning of the meeting. The WRAP structure is to be implemented by each board member when they share their update on their position.

M – Mission Statement

At the beginning of each meeting, have at least one person share a sentiment or anecdote that relates to the NEWH mission statement. Ideally, this person has already volunteered to do so by the time the agenda is circulated, so that they can have that spot on the agenda. If someone has not volunteered, the president, VP, or secretary can step up to share. Try and combine this agenda item with your Welcome or Roll Call.

NEWH MISSION

NEWH is the international nonprofit community connecting the hospitality industry, providing scholarships, education, leadership development, and recognition of excellence.

Examples:

- *“I have been reflecting on the relationships that I have forged since joining NEWH and getting involved in the board, and I have made so many forever friends. I am grateful for that.”*
- *“I joined this chapter when I made a career change into the hospitality industry, and it was hard to get a foot in the door with potential clients and prospecting. Since joining the board, I was able to make deeper connections with people compared to a cold call and enjoyed a warm welcome to the industry.”*
- *“We awarded a scholarship to a particular student that I got the chance to talk to at our scholarship event. I learned about some of the hardships that they had finishing their education, and how NEWH made that road easier in terms of a financial contribution. It made me feel good about what we are working toward.”*

- *“I attended the HOST show in Milan last month thanks to an opportunity that was extended to me by NEWH and got to visit Italy and connect with some incredible European suppliers.”*

Purpose of the Mission Statement

By connecting your chapter board to the overall mission statement of the organization, you can remind them of the “What’s in it for me” element. It is also a great place to mention how moving up through the chapter level to the IBOD meetings can open more doors and opportunities. Start your meeting from a positive place and take the group back to the real reason you are all there.

W – Wins

Start every update with what has gone well since the last meeting.

Examples:

- *“I managed to secure 3 additional silent auction donations for our fundraiser.”*
- *“I had a great conversation with an educator at a local university that wants to get more on board with promoting NEWH to students.”*
- *“I had a member share with me that they really enjoyed our last event and want to sign up for a membership as a result.”*
- *“We did a great job staying on time last meeting and had great discussions that are reflected in the minutes.”*
- *“Bank balances are healthy, and our last event was profitable.”*

Purpose of Sharing the Wins

Motivation! Everyone should feel good about what they are accomplishing. It is also a great way to ensure people are prepared for the meeting, because no one wants to be in a position where they can’t think of a win on the spot. Trying to think of your wins makes you reflect on the positive aspects of your role.

R – Roadblocks

Follow up those wins with where you might be struggling or forced to slow down.

Examples:

- *“Although we have gotten a lot of silent auction donations, I am concerned we don’t have enough high value items.”*
- *“We have not received many scholarship applications, and the schools don’t seem to be getting very involved to promote the scholarships.”*
- *“Our last event was not very well attended.”*
- *“Our last meeting went really overtime and we seemed to go in circles on some discussion points.”*

Purpose of Sharing the Roadblocks

Sometimes you might be frustrated by a situation, but not address what the issue actually was. By being able to define the roadblock, you can distill down on any large-scale issues and identify the items that need to be directly actioned.

A - Assistance / Asks

After you identify a roadblock, ask for specific help!

Some examples that might relate to the roadblocks above are:

- *“Does anyone have a connection to a purchaser that might be able to help entice suppliers to donate more notable items?”*

- *“Can we work on a social media campaign where we can tag the schools and student unions to help get the word out?”*
- *“I would like a committee to help brainstorm how we can put on more inviting events.”*
- *“I’d like to be able to suggest that we ‘Parking Lot’ items without hurting anyone’s feelings if we go over our allotted time on a subject.”*

Purpose of Asking for Assistance People aren’t mind readers, and they haven’t fleshed out the challenges in your position to the same degree that you have. It might not be obvious to others on the board that they have the resources to help you. This is how we can eliminate board burnout, and by making direct requests, it's easier to keep people accountable.

P – Plan!

This is your opportunity to decide how you will respond to the issues at hand by the next meeting. It is important that these are definitive statements that utilize verbs.

Some of the responses to the issues in the last two examples could be:

- *“I will call you tomorrow for that introduction so we can get the conversation going, and report back at the next meeting.”*
- *“If you can work on the graphics, I will collect all the school and student union handles for you and share by next week. After it posts, can you share the analytics with me so I can present them at the next board meeting? I hope to report that this campaign was a win!”*
- *“Thanks to everyone who volunteered to be on the committee! I will send out a meeting invitation for next week.”*
- *“I will advise in advance if the agenda items are not allotting the appropriate time for certain topics. That way, if our discussions go over our allotted time, we know we might need to turn this into committee work between the monthly meetings.”*

Purpose of Planning

The plan makes it measurable. You can reflect on the minutes and see if you did what you said you were going to do. At the same time, it makes each task specific and manageable. It’s a lot harder to be unsuccessful when you have already whittled the task down. In turn, it is a higher likelihood that your plan one month becomes a win the next month!

Tips

You can build this right into your minutes for easy recording and tracking see the following examples:

For Membership Role:

<u>W</u> [Wins]	“We have 6 New members since last month!”
<u>R</u> [Roadblocks]	“We are not getting responses when following up with the past due list.”
<u>A</u> [Assistance/Asks]	“I will divide the task between Amy, Amanda, and John to even workload. “

<u>P</u> [Plan]	“I will complete the past due list/follow ups and report back to the board”
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You might even have more than one statement per each letter:

For Programming Role:

<u>W</u> [Wins]	“Last month’s event proceeds were positive, and we met our goal!”
<u>R</u> [Roadblocks]	“We are not on track to sell enough tickets to break even on this month’s event.”
<u>A</u> [Assistance/Asks]	“Michelle said she will help with a social media push.” “Melissa will reach out to her company for additional sponsorship. “
<u>P</u> [Plan]	“I will schedule another invitation push with INC and personally reach out to names of last month’s attendees to invite them and report back at the next meeting. “

If a board member is struggling to adhere to the template, it’s up to the rest of the board to encourage them. I.e., they might have a roadblock, but no idea where to start in asking for assistance. Speak up and offer it! Or perhaps they aren’t sure how to identify a win. Talk them through some of the chapter successes and the role they played in making that happen. The purpose of this is to keep everyone feeling important, empowered, successful, and supported!

This also should help keep meetings efficient and on time. When someone prepares their WRAP statements, it should move faster than general updates where we all dance around a subject. Keep a quick pace and keep people’s interest, rather than letting a meeting drag on.

Using M-WRAP to Help Real Issues

Situation: Strong (or Toxic) Personality Conflicts

Example: You are your chapter president. Cynthia is the programming director on your chapter board. She has been doing her role of planning and executing chapter events, but it has been noted by a couple of other board members (scholarship director and marketing director) that she has been difficult to deal with. In a couple of months, they have their chapter’s Top ID event, and although the scholarship director is trying to find ways to include the student community, Cynthia is responding to her with very passive aggressive emails. When the marketing director puts forward ideas for invitations and social media posts, Cynthia is dismissive and complains about the designs.

This behavior is beginning to disenfranchise your scholarship and marketing director, but Cynthia is still effective in her overall role. What are the best steps to handling the behavior?

Solutions:

In advance of the next meeting:

1. Connect with the EC of your chapter. You, the past president, executive advisor, and VPs should be aware of the conflicts. Make sure you are on the same page about the next steps.
2. Clear and Concise communication: Explain to Cynthia that these situations are making other board members feel like their volunteer hours are not valued, and that the main goal of the board is to be supportive of each other and the mission statement of NEWH. Focus on the consequence: this behavior is not making the other board members feel great.
3. It might be a good idea to ask Cynthia to share her **“M” [Mission]** in the next meeting. Hear what being a part of the board means to her. Also suggest that to repair the relationships, she might want to include both scholarship and marketing in her **“W’s” [Wins]** for that meeting.

In the meeting:

1. Have Cynthia share her **“M” [Mission]** and support any positive dialogue! (Make sure your EC offers the same support).
2. Take note of Cynthia’s **“A’s” [Assistance/Asks]** – who is she asking for support?
3. When the scholarship and marketing share their **“W’s” [Win’s]**, make sure the EC of your board is supportive.

Bottom line:

If Cynthia does not react positively to the teachable moments, you have laid out, escalate the issue to INC. Even if someone is effective in their position, a cancerous personality can derail your other positions. As the leader of your board, your main prerogative should be to protect the best interests of your team.

Situation: Board Burnout

Example: You are your chapter president. You have noticed at recent meetings and events that certain board members seem to be in a slump. They do not appear excited or engaged in their positions, and they might have more complaints than usual. Their negativity may be a sign that they are experiencing board burnout, and that can result from not feeling that their input is valued or appreciated.

This behavior is beginning to make other board members negative as well. How do you turn the slump around?

Solutions:

In advance of the next meeting:

1. Connect with the EC of your chapter. Share your findings and see if the feeling is mutual. Maybe your EC is part of the burnout as well.
2. Identify who on the board is exhibiting signs of burnout.
3. If board burnout is rampant, consider being the one to share your “M” in the next meeting. This gives you the ability to present a positive narrative around how you have felt the most energized and supported in your time with NEWH. Or elect someone that you know can be positive.

In the meeting:

1. Be a cheerleader for the **“W’s” [Win’s]**! Positive reinforcement for any positivity shared. **“W’s” [Wins]** are extra effective when they can support another board member in their position.
 - a. *Example: “I had a great brainstorming session about our next event with _____ and came away from it with new ideas, so that was a win!”*
2. Try and turn your **“R’s” [Roadblocks]** into **“P’s” [Plan]**, and utilize those **“A’s” [Assistance/Asks]**

- a. *Example:* Your fundraising director shares that their **“R” [Roadblocks]** is a lack of donations for the silent auction. Their attitude is low, and they might be complaining that their reach out is not being supported by the chapter members.
3. Utilize the **“A” [Assistance/Asks]**:
 - a. *Example:* “That’s really frustrating. Maybe we can share the responsibility of reaching out, and ask that the procurement or design members of the board appeal to their customers?”
4. Turn the **“R” [Roadblocks]** into a **“P” [Plan]**:
 - a. *Example:* “Okay, we have a fresh committee of all these new people. Let’s see what we can all drum up for the next meeting and report back!”

Bottom line:

If you feel like the board is still stuck in a rut, turn to addressing it head on, remembering that everyone is a VOLUNTEER and not an employee.

*Examples: “I can’t help but notice we are all a little disconnected and negative. Is this something that we can flesh out for 15 minutes in our next meeting? If you are feeling burnt out or overwhelmed, please come prepared to share about that so we can collectively work on a solution, or a **“P” [Plan]** that the board can share!*

Situation: Egos and Overstepping

Situation:

You are your chapter president. Two members of your board, Justin, and Amanda, seem to be creating friction over what someone considers “helping,” and another considers “toe-stepping.” The Fundraising director, Justin, has been on vacation and handling a large workload, so he hasn’t been able to put in as many volunteer hours as he expected. As a result, Justin hasn’t gotten around to sending the sponsorship request emails for an upcoming fundraising event. The Programming director, Amanda, sees the Fundraising director’s issue and steps in and sends a few emails out to potential sponsors to help with his workload. Amanda was just trying to help but the fundraising director feels undermined and embarrassed.

Solutions:

In advance of the next meeting:

1. Make sure you are aware of any **“A’s” [Assistance/Asks]** and the outcome. Assess if there was proper communication beforehand.
2. Connect with the EC of your chapter and make them aware of the issue (assuming it is not within the EC, if it is - skip to the next step).
3. Book a private meeting with the parties involved to discuss. Decide whether it is best to have that conversation 1:1, or as a group. What will reduce the amount of negative feelings most?
4. Reflect on what the **“A’s” [Assistance/Asks]** should have been, and how that might be rectified:

Example: “Hey Fundraising, I know you didn’t explicitly ask me to send out those requests. I thought I was being helpful, but I now realize that put you in a tough spot. Is there something I can do to turn the communication back to you?”

**As the president (or incoming or EA), it’s up to you to workshop this with the people involved and try to put yourself in both peoples’ shoes. Explain the consequences.*

In the meeting:

1. Try and have both parties reflect on what happened as a **“W’s” [Wins]**. Turn it into a positive and move forward. If that’s not an option, then focus on the **“A’s” [Assistance/Asks]** - moving forward, what can specific people do to assist you in moving forward with your **“P’s” [Plans]**
2. Foster clearer communication and expectations
3. EC should be on board with supporting any of this structure with positive reinforcement.

Bottom line:

Remember that everyone is a VOLUNTEER. If we are toe stepping, then we aren't doing a great job of supporting the overall mission statement and need to take a step back and understand roles and responsibilities. If there is still a gray area - reach out to INC. You can do an interim board training (a few hours) to catch everyone up on roles and ask questions.

Failing this, look at creating a RACI chart together (attached). If someone is not STILL not doing their role - see solutions to "Strong (or Toxic) Personality Conflicts."

Other Suggestions

Executive Board Bonding

Role of the EC on the board:

We want all VPs to feel prepared and set-up for success, but they may not have been exposed to how the EC works, or the responsibilities prior. The transition from being a director or chair to becoming a VP comes with significant management of board personalities, conflicts, as well as numerous responsibilities - which can be very overwhelming!

Some issues that have been seen on other boards that can fracture an EC:

- Members not trained of the RICA's of their position.
- Disengagement or disenfranchisement
- Incoming positions undermining existing roles.
- Treating board members like it's a job and the board are their employees.
- Strong personalities resulting in excessive drama or conflict.

Let's help change that! Let's rethink the roles of the EC as a way to build up our incoming VP's by:

- Helping the VP role by having the president/past president train them and give them exposure to their future roles.
- Help the VP's guide their directors and train them to be successful in their roles.
- Use clear and concise communication and feedback to help keep the volunteer role clear but supportive.
- Biggest responsibility of the EC is protecting the other volunteers.

The Importance of Executive Board Bonding:

Building a partnership and a strong bond between the EC creates a stronger board. This offers mentorship, leadership building, and the transfer of knowledge. The more visibility all of the VP's have to the inner workings and requirements of the board, the stronger president that they will make.

- **Set up monthly or bi-monthly informal touchpoints** between the EC in a place where everyone feels comfortable and safe to talk and share: (Happy hours at a restaurant, hanging out at someone's house, etc.). The intent is to:
 - Discuss board happenings / status of upcoming events.
 - Talk about conflicts or tensions.
 - *Review any conflicts or issues arising on the board and look for ways to help resolve the conflicts.*
 - Prepare for upcoming meetings.
 - Discuss the EC workloads and find ways to support each other.
 - Look for those on the board who are doing well and succeeding and find ways to praise them.
 - *Discuss ways to support them to hopefully lead them onto the leadership succession track.*

Note: It should be made very clear that your EC is not a clique, and these touchpoints are NOT gossip sessions. Although a touchpoint is not overly formal, it is still a management meeting to ensure the organization is running optimally. All EC members share in this responsibility!

- **Maintain constant lines of open communication** between the EC (Group texts, group emails, or calling), to help keep everyone in the loop.
- Examine the Reasons each EC member is part of NEWH: Some board members are there to make friends and build relationships, others are there to increase their exposure. Reviewing the “M” [Mission] of each EC member will also help to know what their ultimate goals are.

Solving Conflicts:

Not everyone will always get along. Differing leadership styles, or high stress during planning of events, can create friction. The more friction on a board, the less volunteers you may retain.

- At an EC level, it is important to keep track of any conflicts or noticeable friction between board members from affecting the rest of the board. Look for ways to either reduce the conflict or help resolve it.
- Talk about the consequences of actions instead of focusing on the actions themselves.
- Sometimes people will develop a closer bond with one EC member than another and be more open or receptive. Other times there may be conflict between EC members and board members. As an EC, keeping track of these interactions will help build stronger connections.
 - For example: *A board member does not like the leadership style of an EC member but is friends with another. The EC decides it would be best to have someone else communicate with the board member. Even though that board member does not fall under the umbrella of the VP-Dev friend, by the VP-Dev stepping in to communicate, and/or delegate, it reduces the friction and increases how comfortable and happy that board members ultimately are. The Board member would not know this tactic is happening and the EC would maintain it as confidential. Over time, the friction is removed.*

Appreciate the time people give to the board:

People look to volunteer as a way to feel good and give back. When a board member or leader starts to feel like employees then this ends up leading to disenfranchisement and ultimately loss of a board member. No one wants to “Volunteer” for free and not feel good about it.

- **Acknowledge that their time is valued.** Acknowledge often to your board how valued the things they do are. Everyone needs these feel-good moments.
 - *At the beginning or end of board meetings offer a bit of time to give shoutouts to other board members. For example: “Hey Cynthia, congrats on getting one more annual sponsor on board! I really appreciated that!” or “Sandra, thank you for jumping in to help me with that task when I was overwhelmed last week at work!”*
- **Acknowledge that everyone’s time of day for volunteering is different.** Everyone's professional job is a bit different, and we know that volunteer work usually comes after their actual job. Expecting answers by the end of day or within hours of receiving it may not be possible. For most, a board member's free hours to volunteer may be after hours work, or on weekends. Allow volunteers to have flexibility with their time, and knowing these hour restrictions between committees and the EC will help reduce this feeling that they must choose between their job responsibilities and NEWH. ***There can be a balance.***

Constructive Criticism:

Lessons learned are important to the board, but it can be done in a more constructive way.

- **Avoid being overly critical:** We need to remember that the committee volunteered a lot of their time and energy, and we want them to keep continuing to improve and plan more amazing events. Providing only negative feedback without a balance of praise may potentially lead that committee to not want to do as much next time or abandon the event altogether (Even though the event was very successful!). Look for ways to gather any negative feedback in more constructive ways (like surveys, or "postmortem" meetings, etc.) instead of directly in front of the board.