



# Prepare for a Change in Leadership

One of the biggest challenges that neighborhood organizations have is what to do when the president or other integral member leaves. Organizations that are not prepared for a leadership shift run the risk of falling apart. It is important to get prepared beforehand, by preparing your organization for whatever happens in the future.

## **1. Note potential leadership within your organization**

Get to know your organization members, and keep them involved. If members are given responsibility (managing events, keeping contact lists, etc.) you may notice potential leadership skills in them. They may also be more willing to step into a larger position in the future.

## **2. Continuously recruit new members**

An organization works best when it has a mix of old and new members working together. An organization that recruits new members and gives them a voice has a better chance of finding new leaders than one that closes itself off from new people or opinions.

## **3. Stay Organized**

Make sure that you have clear documentation of finances, events, and contacts, to make sure nothing important slips through the cracks during a leadership change. Being organized will make it easier for a new leader to continue work that was administered by their predecessor.

## **4. Address underlying conflicts**

Oftentimes conflicts can erupt amidst a leadership change, which puts the organization at risk. Make sure you address conflicts among members when they first come up, instead of letting them simmer under the surface. Be sure that all sides of an argument are being heard.

## **5. Define a role**

If you know a member will be leaving the organization in the near future, make sure they leave clear guidelines for the next person to follow. This could be a summary of their role, instructions for accessing a bank account or files, or even a number to reach if they have any questions.