

Program Proposal Process: Tips and Hints

Never underestimate the power of the “Selection” stage of the UPB Programming Model. The longer you spend on this stage, the easier the rest of the stages will be. Do your research! Make sure the entire proposal is well thought out. Unfortunately, really great program proposals may be overlooked if they do not appear fully composed. Include as much as possible in your proposal. Some things, like a major show artist or movies for a Double Feature Friday, may not be able to be determined until later. Really ask yourself, though, if other things are being omitted because they *have* to be, or if it is just more convenient? If two Committees are presenting a program together, their proposal should be together! Committees should not write separate proposals for the separate components of the same program!

Use empirical evidence (i.e. surveys) to back up your proposals. The best way to determine if a program will be well-received by students is to *ask the students directly!* Use tact and respect the fact that programs you are asking students about may not pass, but by framing your surveys correctly you can gain valuable information without falsely promising programs.

Consider specific target audiences. By targeting your program to a specific group, you are in a better position to market to them. It may be better to market a lot to a little bit of people than to market a little to a lot of people.

Develop stronger goals. “To provide an inexpensive program for general students at ISU” is not a strong program goal. If you cannot think of three strong goals, it is okay to use only two, but they should be reasonably deep.

Understand the difference between a “Promotional Item” and a “Giveaway Item.” A promotional item is a tool used to recruit people to a program, or recruit the UPB as a whole. A giveaway item is a tool used to improve the quality of a program and is passed out during the actual event.

Once you understand that difference, question whether the item is truly necessary. This tip can also include food. It would be awesome if we could have food and giveaway items at every event, but the reality is we cannot. Is your program really one of the select number of UPB programs that *needs* to include these items?

At the retreat, *sell your programs!* Your presentation does need to be informational, and should not be entirely persuasive, but sometimes General Board members need a reminder of not only the logistics of your events, but also why the event is important at ISU.

Quick tips for cutting down the length of the retreat:

- ✓ Do not extend time unless it is really necessary.
- ✓ Do not echo what other members have said, and do not beat a dead horse repeating what you’ve already said.
- ✓ Discussion can include opinions, not just questions, so the presenting Chairperson does not need to respond to every statement.
- ✓ Call to question if discussion is going nowhere.