

## **WHAT DO I DO NOW THAT I AM PRESIDENT?!? (10 simple steps)**

- 1) **Above all else, decide to have fun in this job.** Be playful with your board and members. If you are having a good time, everyone else will too. They will want to support you and stay with you. View this as a wonderful opportunity to develop new skills, broaden your horizons and have the power to create change.
  
- 2) **Choose a theme for the year that you can be passionate about. Make it personal.** The first question that came at me when I accepted the office was “What Is Your Theme for the Year?” I was totally unprepared with an answer. I was still adjusting to the idea that I had jumped in to help a friend and had not given any further thought about what it meant. However, I became very excited by the idea of having a specific focus and planning programs around it. It became a very personal statement as I believe so strongly in giving back to the community. That first year I went chose the theme of “Continuing to Make a Difference”. I soon found ways to encourage my members to become more involved as volunteers with other organizations which were aligned with the goals of AAUW, such as our school mentoring program. My second year I focused on “Building for the Future” by connecting with the local partner college and attracting women students to join as college affiliates
  
- 3) **Do not try to do it all yourself!** Your first major action step will be to DELEGATE. Do not be shy about asking for help from others. Stay in close touch with your membership team for advice on new members who could be encouraged to become active on a committee or project. This is also a great way to maintain and enrich your branch. New members who do not get involved often drop out after a year or two. One caveat that I would stress: **Delegate, but follow up!** Don't micromanage, but trust with verification.
  
- 4) **Communicate regularly and often with your board members,** offering encouragement, compliments and advice as needed. Make sure that each member on your board has a clear definition of their job and the resources to do it. I highly recommend that each position have a binder or file full of helpful information and timelines (including the President) that

can help each one feel confident in the tasks they have been asked to do.

- 5) **Involve new members and continue to educate the older members** by inviting the new members to a board meeting and using some of the online tools to re-educate the others.
- 6) **Make liberal use of Thank You notes.** . The members who serve on your board and work on your committees can never be appreciated enough. The only 'pay' they receive is your acknowledgement of a job well done. Recognition can be in many forms: Made in person, in a specific note, at events, in your newsletters, and on your website or through your social media.
- 7) **Connect with the President's of other branches.** Ask them to share their newsletters and get together for coffee or lunch. They can be a great support system and a source of new and exciting ideas.
- 8) **Read over the minutes for past board meetings** to give you a sense of how a year or past years have evolved.
- 9) **"To Do" lists and Timelines will be your new best friends.** This is a very administrative job. You are the overseer of everything that happens in your branch. I found this one of the most challenging parts of the job; in figuring out what I was supposed to know about and what the deadlines were that we had to meet. There was no timeline or set of bullet points to guide me. Therefore, I have included in the material on the IBC site, a typical timeline for a branch president. Some details may not pertain to you, others may need to be added. But I urge you to use this as a starting point for getting organized. A prepared president is a happy and confident one!
- 10) **Summer is not a time to relax, but to plan.** Rest comes later.