

# **Affiliate Leaders -- Have You Considered...?**

## **A: Clearing Your Vision, Finding Your Voice**

1. Am I familiar with all written documents about our own organization? Could I describe our mission and goals, as written, to somebody? Am I familiar with the ways our program is consonant with those written goals, and with the ways in which it is not? Do I have carefully considered opinions about whether the divergences indicate needed changes in the goals, or in the program as it exists, or both?
2. Am I a member of NCTM? My state Affiliate? A regional Affiliate? Other organizations with similar goals?
3. Am I receiving a good flow of professional literature? Do I set aside time for reading? Do I think about what I read, pondering ways that my school relates to what I am reading?
4. Am I going to at least one professional meeting a year? Am I meeting new people? Do I have people that I can call on the phone when I have an idea or a question? Do I have somebody with whom I can have long talks about what I'm doing? Am I involved with some professional activity that is outside my school or district? Am I overcommitted?
5. Do I take time, now and then, to see what is going on in somebody else's organization besides my own?
6. Do I put in a little extra time talking to others at school and at meetings and conferences?
7. Am I keeping a list of core issues, core wishes, or core dreams that I fool around with from time to time? Am I trying to get to the bottom of what matters most? Can I discuss my thinking with other people, presenting my thoughts in a coherent manner? If someone gave my organization one million dollars, would I know what to do with it?

## **B: Your Organization**

1. Am I comfortable with the other members of my organization as individuals? Am I supportive? Am I crowding any of them? Do I accept them as they are?
2. Have I done specific and well-chosen things to stimulate each of my colleagues' professional growth?
3. Have I found a person with whom I can discuss our situation with complete candor and honesty? Is it someone who can offer help with the difficulties we face? Do I feel a part of a supportive network?
4. Do the members of my organization make the same overall comments when describing our organization? To what degree do our evaluations agree? When we have differences of opinion, do we keep our arguments firmly grounded?
5. Does our organization carry out activities beyond the teaching of mathematics? Do we collaborate on projects of any sort?
6. Does our organization "talk up" mathematics? Do we show enthusiasm as an organization for students and their progress?
7. Does our organization have a shared vision of what our organization could be? Do we agree as to how to work toward this vision?
8. Are organizational meetings regular, well-attended, efficient, and productive?
9. Is our organization a mutually supportive group?
10. Does our organization maintain a high level of expectations for itself and its members?

### **C: Member/Board Support**

1. Am I putting creative energy into maintaining good relations with members and the Board? Have we identified the areas in which we disagree? Do we each feel comfortable about our areas of disagreement?
2. Do I support the Board? Do I avoid surprises? Do I avoid confrontations? Do I make sure that what I say is true? Do I make myself available to help?
3. Do I maintain supportive relationships with the Board/membership? Am I actively educating them so that they can support our organization in ways that make long-range sense and that avoid short-term pressures?

### **D: Publicizing and Communicating**

1. Is something about our organization appearing at regular intervals in the media?
2. Does our community view the organization as an active one?
3. Does our organization do something noticeable and worthwhile to parents?
4. Does our organization provide extra services for students? Does the community know about these?

### **E: The Job Description of the Organization Leader**

1. Is my job description clear? Is it clear to my Board/membership? Do we agree on what I am to do?
2. Does my organization agree on what I should be doing? Is my job description, as officially described, in harmony with the way I want to relate to organization's members?
3. Would it be useful for me to compare my job description with those in similar positions in other organizations?

### **F: Pondering Your Mission**

1. Is my organization in control of its program?
2. Does the mission have the assent of the membership?
3. Do we spend time "off stage" discussing what we are trying to accomplish?
4. Am I satisfied with the program we are using?
5. Am I trying to develop our program without enough time to do it well? Are we setting aside time for the task?
6. Are we keeping in touch with our membership about our programs?
7. Am I looking where I should be looking for the key to my problems?

### **G: Finding Extra Funds**

1. Do I sit around saying "if only..." without daring to make a plan that could make something happen?
2. Do I know anything about the local service clubs in town (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.) who might fund projects?
3. Have I tried to obtain a grant?
4. Do I hear about grant money that's available?

## **H: Nuts and Bolts—Techniques**

1. Have I stopped to evaluate the efficiency with which our organization runs? Have we had a meeting about this?
2. Do we have a good mechanism for evaluating our organization? Have we used it? Do we know what we think of what we are doing?
3. Is the organization growing professionally?
4. Am I sensitive to the needs of any burned-out teachers in our organization? Am I protecting the interests of the members?
5. Are we using our computers as effectively as we might in running organizational business? Do we have a computer that is reserved for organizational use?
6. Do we make decisions in an efficient and well-thought fashion? Is it easy to evaluate prospective decisions in terms of our mission?
7. Do we observe each others' organizations? Do we do this in a formal way, so as to maximize our learning?
8. Do I take steps to promote organizational unity and cohesiveness?

## **I: Damaged Goods: Setbacks, Support Systems, and Morale**

1. Do I have a support system myself for times when things are not going well? Am I too reluctant to talk about my troubles?
2. Do I have a fairly realistic overview of how things are going, against which I can measure my daily perception?

## **Overall Queries (Based on conditions necessary for substantial program growth)**

1. Does my community value mathematics achievement? Are these values effectively communicated? Do our students want to learn? Do our teachers want to teach?
2. Do we pay attention to the amount and quality of opportunities we provide, the feedback we collect on it, and the connection to the practicing we do in the classroom?
3. Is our program structured, and understood by membership, so that members can and do maximize success?
4. Does the organization have the assent of the membership? Is there a sense of ownership of it on the part of the membership?
5. Are high expectations for organizational success consistently and effectively communicated?
6. Is there a consistently supportive environment for the organization that accommodates risk-taking?
7. Is the Board dedicated? Does it function as a cohesive, sharing, and mutually supportive unit?
8. Does our organization have the leadership that produces a well-run, well-organized group?
9. Does the leadership of our organization make it possible for teachers to feel and act as professionals, and does that leadership stimulate questioning, sharing, and taking part in ongoing professional interactions?