



Establishing Committees Within Your Group (Revision date 1-12-2013)

Few of us are fond of admitting that we can't do everything – and all at the same time. I know that I tend to think that I have 36 hours in my day and the energy of a 20 year old. It doesn't take me long to realize that my days are no longer than anyone else's and I am a grandmother of seven. I can't do what I could when I was in my 30's, yet the demands are more. So what do I do?

You will be faced with the same realization that I did as you grow your group. It's a wonderful discovery to find that those members in your group need to feel that they are contributing. A very effective way to ensure that those who want to do part of the work get that need met and, at the same time, multiply your groups' efforts, is to form committees.

Before you launch your committees decide what committees you feel will be useful and what their purpose will be. When deciding which committees you will have, keep the number manageable and relevant. Having a committee just to have a committee will be a waste of time and human resources. You want your committees to succeed.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Be sure that they adhere to your core values. Someone in our group wanted to start a “self-preservation – survival” committee. While a noble thought, we would be funneling human resource energy that was directed inward rather than outward. We do provide names of community organizations that already provide that type of information and encourage those who are interested to attend those meetings.
- Who will be your committee leaders? Be sure that they are solid in their understanding of your groups' vision and purpose. Also, he/she must be able to lead.
 - While some may “want” to lead, they may not have the skills.
 - You will need to decide if you can invest some time with them to help them succeed.
 - You could have “team” leadership where one will compliment the other.
 - I tend to be a task oriented leader. That can be good and bad.
 - I have learned that I need a “softer” leader by my side to tone me down a bit.
 - My abilities will help that individual to be a bit stronger and their strengths help me be more sensitive. It's a win-win.



- How many committees will you have?
 - What will they be called?
 - What is their purpose?
 - It's important to pick committees that have meaning and impact.

For instance, we have four:

Legislative Committee:

- Assigns individuals to certain legislators to monitor how they vote.
- Others volunteer to attend the School Board, City Council, County Board of Supervisors and other city or county Meetings.
- A committee like this can provide “report cards” before elections as a voter aid.

Media Watchdog Committee:

- Responsible to not only monitor the media and make them report truth and hold them accountability.
- They also send out press releases when we have an event.
- They build a raptor with our local media as well.

Science and Politics Committee:

- Devotes their time to the study and research CARB issues in California.
- Does research regarding man made Global Warming and false environmental reports that increase regulatory control.

Education Committee:

- Responsible to provide resources for our members and the community at large.
 - Involvement with community events:



- Parades
- Fairs
- Community work days
- They are active with schools and often go to campuses to speak about our Constitution.
- Create a reading list on our web-site.
- When will they meet?
 - Will it be the same night as your general session?
- Where will they meet?
 - Will it be in the same facility where your general sessions are held.

I will reveal some of the frustration we went through while trying to launch committees that were unsuccessful. We tried several things and after visiting another neighboring Tea Party group that had been successful with committees, we finally fell into a zone where we are now effective.

Plan A was beginning with having just three committees. I found three solid leaders and then had a special meeting where we invited those who thought they'd like to serve on a committee. I had nice little notebooks with a description of each committee, its purpose and the "how to's" to get the job done. Hey, I was organized and ready to have a great successful group of committees ready to ride off saying..."High Ho Silver!" Well, what happened next resembled more like a firework that didn't get more than two feet off the ground and fizzling out.

Our problem was that we never anticipated the problem of having a meeting on a separate night from our general sessions. The leader had to have it in their home or the home of one of the members, which did not set well with everyone. Not to mention that we were adding two more nights a month where they would be attending a meeting.

Plan B was to have the leaders meet before our general session at the facility where the meeting was currently held. They'd grab a corner somewhere and try to hold the attention of those who were faithfully attending his/her meeting. Unfortunately, that didn't work either as many of our members like to arrive early for refreshments and chatting with others before we get into the business of our group and our guest speaker.



Plan C was to try to have the committees meet in corners of the large room following the general session. Again, that didn't work because we always have lingerers who enjoy talking to one another and the guest speaker. It was an effort that "futile" is too tame of a word to describe.

Plan D came when we finally changed locations. We now have a facility that has a large meeting room and classrooms for breakouts after the general session. Our new format only increased the time of each meeting by 30 minutes but participation more than doubled.

We open with our pledge and business, bring in our guest speaker and when he/she is done, we go to our break out committees and meet. During that time, all new people stay in the main auditorium for orientation. We explain how Tea Party got started, who we are, what our core values are, our mission and then we open it up for questions and answers.

When a committee has information that they want to present to the entire group, they get the microphone during the general session, prior to the guest speaker. We also will post their findings on our web-site. We often print their research and keep it at the registration desk for members to take and review. Sometimes, we include their information in our e-mail blasts. No matter how you use the information, it's vital for the health of your committees' success that their research is appreciated and dispersed among your group.

It's also a good idea to combine some of these committees with other Tea Party groups in your area that can help with your research. For instance, if there is more than one group in your county, have each group report back on their local school boards and city councils. They can also share the load of monitoring the legislators. There is power in numbers. Don't be afraid to join forces with other groups. You need each other.