

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division *The Affiliate*

Advice to Affiliates: Bar Leader Toolkit

By Keya Koul

As with any organization, affiliates must plan, prepare, and properly train future leaders. In response to this need, the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division has developed the “Bar Leader Toolkit.” The Bar Leader Toolkit is an online resource organized into the following categories: communications, diversity, fundraising, governance, leadership, and strategic planning.

The Bar Leader Toolkit contains materials from the ABA YLD Leadership Academy, which trains state and local YLD leaders. The main purpose of providing these materials in an accessible online format is to facilitate improved leadership and to increase the value of ABA YLD affiliates.

Communications

Under the category of communications, the Bar Leader Toolkit includes a resource on “Closing Out Your Bar Year.” This includes the necessary steps to transition from one leadership group to the next, including communication, proper etiquette, and involvement during and after the transition. The next is “Developing Close Relationships with Other Organizations,” which discusses establishing and developing relationships with local and state organizations. To ensure an affiliate’s success, its young lawyer leaders must understand that the relationship between the affiliate and its senior bar is of utmost importance. This idea is explored in “Managing Your Organization’s Relationship with the Senior Bar.” Finally, the key to successful communications is “Public Relations,” which includes publicity and media relations to disseminate positive and strategic information about the YLD affiliate.

Diversity

Diversity is important in any organization. To support and encourage diversity in affiliates, the ABA YLD has a Diversity homepage as well as a PowerPoint presentation on “Developing a Model Diversity Plan.” A focus on diversity by an affiliate’s leadership sets the tone for the entire membership.

Fundraising

To ensure implementation of programs and policies, adequate fundraising is key to an affiliate’s success. The Bar Leader Toolkit includes “Fundraising A to Z: Getting the Money,” which provides affiliate leaders with a PowerPoint presentation outlining how to plan for the requisite finances, how to generate the funds, and how to use those funds in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

Governance

The Bar Leader Toolkit also offers advice on affiliate governance. Young lawyer affiliate leaders must strategize on the following: “Deciding What Committees to Have,” “Does Your Organization’s Structure Need to be Modified,” “Educating Committee Chairs and Bar Leaders,” “International Guidelines for Creating a Young Lawyer Association,” “Know Your Organization—Past and Present Leaders, Activities, Policies and Procedures,” “Reactivating or Starting a Young Lawyers Organization,” “Selecting Committee Chairs,” and “Staff or No Staff.” These articles offer affiliate leaders a range of information and advice on how to organize the organization’s governance.

Leadership

Leadership resources include basic tools for affiliate leaders, including “How to Motivate Volunteers,” “How to Run a More Effective Meeting,” “The Essential Ingredients for Reactivating/Re-energizing a Young Lawyer Organization,” “More Essential Ingredients for Reactivating/Re-energizing a Young Lawyer Organization,” and “Your Role as Chair of a Young Lawyer Organization.” The strength and success of a young lawyer organization result from the affiliate’s leaders effectively using volunteers, delegating, managing time, strategizing, and communicating. These resources provide guidance to affiliate leaders on how to successfully and efficiently implement programs and run their organizations.

Strategic Planning

Finally, overall strategic planning resources outline how to create and successfully implement short- and long-term plans for an affiliate organization. These resources include “Create in Advance a Working Plan,” “Developing the Long Range Plan,” “Implementing the Long Range Plan,” “Increasing and Retaining Your General Membership,” “It’s a Marathon, Not

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a Sprint—Long Range Bar Planning with Clarity,” “Long Range Planning: Why, How and When,” “Planning, Preparing and Implementing the Budget,” and “Starting the Bar Year Off Right.” Affiliate leaders can use these resources to shape short- and long-term goals and objectives for their organizations. These resources provide affiliate leaders the tools and advice on organization and strategy to successfully implement short- and long-term programs.

The Bar Leader Toolkit provides young bar leaders with the basic framework of their offices’ important functions, as well as specific tools and advice on implementing specific programs. It is a comprehensive resource that should be used from day one of your leadership term to ensure a successful bar year.

The Bar Leader Toolkit is available at www.abanet.org/yld/yblresources/home.html.

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