



# Minnesota Women of Today

## Leadership Toolbox – Succession Planning for Chapters

**Our Mission is Leadership.** Leadership is highlighted twice in our organization's mission. While not everyone joins the organization to become a leader, all members should be offered the opportunity and encouraged to develop those skills. One way we do this is through succession planning. When you take the time to look at your members and realize everyone is capable of growth and leadership opportunities and you work with them to help support their growth path, we all benefit.



### **The Mission Statement of the Minnesota Women of Today is:**

The mission of the Minnesota Women of Today is to help women improve their own lives and the lives of the people in the communities around them. This organization shall be a place in which young women are actively encouraged to become involved and hold positions of **leadership**. The organization shall provide opportunities for all members:

1. To contribute to their communities by raising funds for worthy causes and by providing services or education to benefit community members.
2. To develop and to foster skills and talents related to becoming successful individuals, interacting well with other people, and becoming capable **leaders**.
3. To develop friendships and to find personal support within the organization.

### **Why Succession Planning?**

Succession planning eliminates most of the stress in filling positions. It allows you to better train and support members in feeling self-confident and empowered within a new position. It encourages growth and mentoring, while eliminating members becoming too comfortable doing the same position year after year. The longer a member stays in a specific position, the more difficult the position will be to fill in the future. It prevents growth opportunities for the member in the position and limits opportunities for other chapter members. Succession planning allows your chapter the freedom to focus on growth and community vs. focusing on just filling a position.

Ask yourself "How well would your chapter function if your two most active members stopped participating and taking on positions?" If this question raises red flags, it's time for succession planning.

## What is Succession Planning?

Succession Planning is a process for identifying and developing people with the potential to fill key leadership positions in an organization. This document outlines a process and provides some tools for succession planning within Women of Today.

The objectives of succession planning are:

- Identify individuals with the potential to assume greater responsibility in the organization.
- Provide development experiences to those individuals.
- Support the development of the next leaders of the organization.

These development opportunities may also:

- Improve member retention and involvement.
- Help individuals develop skills to move ahead in their career.

This training outlines a process and provides tools for succession planning of your chapter board. If your chapter utilizes these tools, you should always be building your current and future leaders.

## Leadership Growth Opportunities

As you determine what growth opportunities will benefit your chapter members, you can review the following chart to spur ideas. There are many existing tools and resources within Women of Today that will help members grow and develop.

So you need to...	May we recommend...
Grow your speaking skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give more reports at meetings.</li> <li>• Participate in Effective Speaking or Impromptu Contest.</li> <li>• Offer to speak about Women of Today with another organization.</li> </ul>
Grow your written communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write articles for the chapter NEWSLET.</li> <li>• Write press releases for your chapter.</li> <li>• Submit project of the trimester nominations.</li> <li>• Review the MNWT Positive Communication Skills training.</li> </ul>
Grow your time management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the Time Management PEP Course</li> <li>• Chair projects and take leadership positions such as a local program manager or board position.</li> </ul>
Grow your training skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend the MNWT Leadership LOTS Training.</li> </ul>
Grow your leadership skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the Leadership PEP Course.</li> </ul>

## Understanding Your Members Passions and Skills

Members join Women of Today for a variety of reasons. Understanding what your members are interested in helps plan not only events, but leaders. If your chapter does not already ask members about what they want to get out of their membership, you may want to consider asking. Consider a yearly membership focus survey. Include questions about what they want out of their membership, past experiences, and skill sets, and what inspires/intimidates them and why. You can use the information gathered along with the Chapter Leadership Planning Guide to develop personal skills, avoid burnout, and better support a sustainable chapter.

### Succession Planning Tool

You can utilize a simple spreadsheet to capture your succession plan. Set aside time in your board meetings at least once per trimester to discuss the members in your chapter and consider their future leadership opportunities. As you start your succession planning, you may only discuss the next year's board positions. As you get used to the process more, you could discuss the next three years for the chapter board to ensure you have time to develop members through growth opportunities. Here is a sample template you can utilize for your chapter succession plan:

Chapter Leadership Planning Guide				
Year	Position	Name	Mentor	Notes
2024-25	President	Abby A	Gail G	Looking for organization support.
2025-26	President	Beth B		Not comfortable with computers.
2026-27	President	Cindy C		Needs 1 year on Board. Confidence with public speaking.
2024-25	State Delegate	Dawn D		
2025-26	State Delegate	Cindy C		Recommends attendance at district meeting(s)/event(s)
2026-27	State Delegate			Possibilities
2024-25	Treasurer	Elli E	Jenny J	
2025-26	Treasurer	Elli E		
2026-27	Treasurer		Elli E	Check with Fawn F, possible treasurer 26/27 & 27/28
2024-25	Secretary	Fawn F	Kelly K	1st Board Position
2025-26	Secretary			Look at/mentor new members
2026-27	Secretary			Look at/mentor new members
2024-25	PVP	Gail G		Senior Member - Mentor
2025-26	PVP	Heather H		Chair a few projects / LMP Possion 24/25
2026-27	PVP			
2024-25	MVP	Izzie I	Laura L	Not comfortable talking to strangers
2025-26	MVP			
2026-27	MVP			

In this example, you can see they are okay for some roles on the next board, some potential people to develop, and a concern about PVP and MVP. Knowing your members and potential leaders can help direct your future recruitment.

