Chicago Booth is here to support your success as a volunteer leader. In addition to global leadership meetings, the Alumni Relations team has a number of processes to support your success. Your Alumni Relations contact can provide information and guidance. Here are a few common mistakes, and suggestions for turning them around.

**Assuming, as a leader, you are responsible for everything.**

Sometimes leaders feel they are responsible for guaranteeing success. Your most important leadership role is to ensure a process that helps draw other volunteers into the fold and empowers their success.

- Delegate what you can to other volunteers.
- Look for volunteers who can also play a critical support role, not just deliver a program. For example:
  - Find someone to greet first-time attendees to make sure they are connected.
  - Consider that some alumni may have access to space, but no interest in planning an event.

**Not scheduling leadership meetings. And when you do, keeping it all business.**

Having regular meetings with a leadership group is a great way to facilitate communication and create a unifying vision around a common goal.

- Have an agenda, but make sure there is less formal time as well so that volunteers can get to know each other.
- Consider adding a social element to your meeting, such as pizza and drinks after business.
- Ask everyone to share what they hope to achieve by being involved. This can help ensure that everyone supports each other in achieving that goal.

**Setting unrealistic goals or expectations—for yourself and the group.**

You don’t need every alumnus in your area to turn out in order to achieve success.

- Work with your Alumni Relations contact to better understand realistic benchmarks.
- Consider variety in your programming—balancing intellectual, social, and networking programs.
- Consider events that engage the entire family and can draw a completely different audience.
- Be realistic about your time commitment and read the first point again.

**Relying too much on technology, and not enough on old-fashioned relationships.**

It’s easy to say, “Let’s send another email.” Another email could increase your response, but may not be as effective as peer-to-peer outreach.

- Provide enough lead time (six to eight weeks) to give the Chicago Booth tools time to work.
- Divide and conquer. Ask other leaders to email or call 10 to 25 alumni to encourage participation.
- Challenge attendees to “bring a friend” next time.
- Use events and programs to invite new volunteers into the fold.

**Not looking for your successor soon enough.**

You will likely not want to lead forever, so plan for the day when you pass the baton.

- Be open with others about succession.
- Identify a strong volunteer and cultivate their future leadership; delegate increasing levels of responsibility.
- Create future leadership options by building a strong leadership team. This is a volunteer role, and sometimes life can get in the way of the best-made plans.