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# Implementing the Model Program Development Process

**Slide notes**

In this module, we will discuss how to implement a new model for program development in your Inn. To learn about the details of a model program development process, please see the module entitled "Model Program Development Process".

Knowing a good structure for program development is one thing, but implementing such a structure in your Inn can have its challenges. Next we will talk about how to take effective program development from theory to reality and implement the model in your own Inn.

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## Implementing the Model Program Development Process

- Understanding Inn's culture
- Identifying obstacles
- Implementing program development process
- Benefits

### Slide notes

First, we will talk about the importance of understanding the culture of your Inn.

Next, we will talk about some of the common obstacles to effective program development and how to identify those obstacles in your Inn.

We'll also talk about specific ideas for implementing the program development model discussed earlier.

And last, we'll discuss the benefits that your Inn and members will experience.

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## Understanding the Inn's Culture

- Who are the Inn's leaders
- Traditional approach to program development
- Prior successes and failures
- Member expectations

### Slide notes

Understanding the Inn's culture means understanding how the Inn's unique makeup, history and interpersonal dynamics affect the Inn's overall functions. This is just an assessment process, not a judgment process. This is just to take "the lay of the land" without finding fault, assigning blame or making excuses.

First, you have to understand who the Inn's leaders are. They may be the Inn's officers, or they may not be. The Inn's leaders may include any founders who are still involved. It may also include any particularly popular judges or senior attorneys, the dean of the law school, or others who may exert any influence over the Inn's operations.

Second, you have to understand how program development is done currently and how it has been done in the past. Essentially, you need to know which styles of program development have been tried to know how they are different from the process you are trying to implement.

Third, you have to know what has been successful in the past, and what has failed, including both overall approaches and specific programs. Do members still talk about that one great program? Are members going to be particularly sensitive about one particular style of program or process?

And finally, it's important to know what your current members expect. Do they expect to just show up at meetings and "watch" a program? Do they expect someone else to do all the work? Or do they have any expectations?

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## Identifying Obstacles

- Strong, dominant personalities
- Keeping with status quo
- Weak or ineffective leadership
- Lack of commitment from members
- Access to resources
- Enlisting others' support
- Just do it!

### Slide notes

Once you have a clear view of the landscape of your Inn, you have to find the obstacles to implementing a strong program development process. Following are some of the more common obstacles that an Inn may have.

**Strong, dominant personalities:** There may be one or more individuals in an Inn who want to run the show and be the star. These people want to control the program development process and rarely allow anyone else to share the work or the spotlight.

There may be a fear of change and an irrational attachment to the status quo, even if the status quo is ineffective. Making substantial changes to a core function of the Inn, such as program development, requires strong leadership. If an Inn's leadership is weak, uncommitted or otherwise ineffective, it may be difficult to make such a significant change.

Likewise, such a change will require the active support and involvement of all members. If the members are not truly committed to the success of the Inn, it will be hard to affect such a change.

Large Inns in large cities will have access to more and different resources than smaller Inns in smaller towns. This may have an effect on the types of programs the Inn can present, and may require more work from the members.

One person cannot make such a change within the Inn without the active support from other members. But enlisting such support may be difficult.

If an Inn has one or more of these or other obstacles, it may seem too difficult, if not impossible, to make any kind of change. Sometimes, someone has to "just do it!" before any improvement can be made.

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## Implementing the Program Development Process

- Get buy-in from leadership
- Convey expectations to members
- Have "model" team start year
- Evaluate each program

### Slide notes

Armed with the knowledge of the Inn's culture and where any potential obstacles lie, it is now time to begin implementing the new process of program development. Here are some ideas for how to accomplish this.

You need to get buy-in from the Inn's leadership.

You need to convey your expectations to the members.

You should have a "model" team start off the year.

You need to plan to have each program evaluated.

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### Get buy-in from Leadership

- Inn officers
- Senior members
- Inn "founders"
- Team leaders

#### Slide notes

Getting buy-in from the Inn's leadership is an essential first step to implementing a new program development process. In your earlier assessment of the Inn's culture, you know that the "leadership" includes more than just the Inn's officers.

Certainly, the Inn's current officers and executive committee members are where to start to "sell" the new process that you want to implement. Plan to present the new process to the executive committee prior to the end of the Inn year.

If there are other senior members of the Inn who are not on the executive committee, talk to them about your hopes to improve and enhance the educational offerings of the Inn and how you want to do that.

If there are any of the Inn's "founders" still involved with the Inn, include them in your discussions. Those founders usually have a vested interest in seeing their efforts to start an Inn succeed for the long-term. Show them how implementing such a process will make the Inn stronger and more viable.

Once you begin to get buy-in from the leadership, talk to the incoming pupillage team leaders about how the process will change and what their roles will be. In some cases, the new process will mean less work for the team leaders because the new process involves more work sharing. While the leader may have new responsibilities, too, the overall burden may be less.

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### **Convey Expectations to Members**

- Describe process for team assignments
- Have discussion at first Inn meeting
- Stress importance of evaluations
- Expect membership shake-up

#### **Slide notes**

Once the Inn's leadership is on board with the new program development process, any changes in the expectations of the members must be conveyed to them.

First, when pupillage team assignments are sent to each member, a complete written description of the process should be sent to them. The description should include an estimate of the time commitment that will be required. A sample description is in the related resources area.

This new process should be fully described to new members at the new member orientation. Provide the new members with the written description there, if not already sent to them.

At the first full Inn meeting of the year, plan to have a discussion of the new process. Give members the opportunity to ask questions and to express concerns. At this meeting, stress the importance of the program evaluations, and how critical it is to have each member complete an evaluation of each program, and how those evaluations will be used.

Changing such a core function of the Inn may result in some members dropping out of the Inn, especially if the members were not expected to work on program development previously. If members only had to show up to the monthly meetings and watch the show, then this will be a significant additional commitment that some members may not want to make.

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## Have "Model" Team Start the Year

- "Hand pick" team for first presentation
- Include discussion of process at presentation

### Slide notes

The first program of the new year needs to be a good one. The team that prepares and presents this program needs to model the effective practices the Inn wishes to implement. It is important that the team entrusted with this first program be fully supportive of the new process and follow it completely.

The Program Committee may want to think carefully about who should be assigned to this first pupillage team. In that sense, the team should be "hand picked" to ensure a positive outcome.

Following the actual first program presentation, some time should be reserved to discuss the process that the team followed. The team should talk about the number and frequency of meetings, the way work was divided, and the approximate amount of time required for each task. Each team member should have an opportunity to discuss his or her thoughts on the process.



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### Evaluate each Program

- Share results with team, committee and Inn
- Be prepared to make changes mid-year
- Use results in overall Inn evaluation
- Use results in planning for next year

#### Slide notes

It is important to allow members to evaluate each program. Evaluations are the clearest, most objective way to know which topics are well-received, which program formats work well, whether discussions are adequate, and, most important, whether the educational content is meeting the members' needs. A sample evaluation form is available in the related resources area.

Results of the evaluations should be shared with the team that presented the program. The Program Committee should also review each of the program evaluations, primarily so that it can make changes and provide advice to the teams for the next year. And, at least for the first year, a summary of the program evaluations should be made available to the entire Inn. Teams that are still developing their programs may benefit from knowing whether something another team has done worked.

Be prepared to make changes during the Inn year. If program evaluations are soundly negative, encourage upcoming teams to take that information into consideration as they plan their programs. Also, the Program Committee should meet frequently during the first year of the new process. Team leaders should be prepared to report any problems they are experiencing, and the committee should be prepared to step in to correct such problems.

It is especially important for the Inn to conduct a self-evaluation following the first year of the new program development process. The program evaluations will be a key component of that overall evaluation.

It is also important to take into account the information learned through the course of the first year when planning for the next year. If any changes are made to the overall process, be sure to communicate those to your members when team assignments are made, and to the new members at the new member orientation.

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### **Benefits**

- Involves entire Inn
- Encourages more interesting programs
- Improves attendance
- Provides mentoring opportunities

#### **Slide notes**

Undertaking such an endeavor may seem daunting, and before doing so, you may want to be clear on the benefits to the Inn, and be able to communicate those benefits to the members of your Inn.

First, the process involves the entire Inn. Every member has a part to play, and every member is equally responsible for the success of the Inn.

Second, this process encourages more imagination, creativity and more interesting programs. By involving more people and more brain power, and by constantly evaluating and improving the process, the quality of the programs will improve.

Better programs means better attendance. And because each member will understand the amount of work involved in creating a quality program, each member will want to be more supportive of the other members by attending meetings and participating in the discussions.

A more structured team system provides more opportunities for informal mentoring and networking. Through the work of the team, a junior member may, and, in fact, should, get teamed up with a more senior member of the Inn to, for example, work on a script. Through such close working relationships, mentoring can and does occur.