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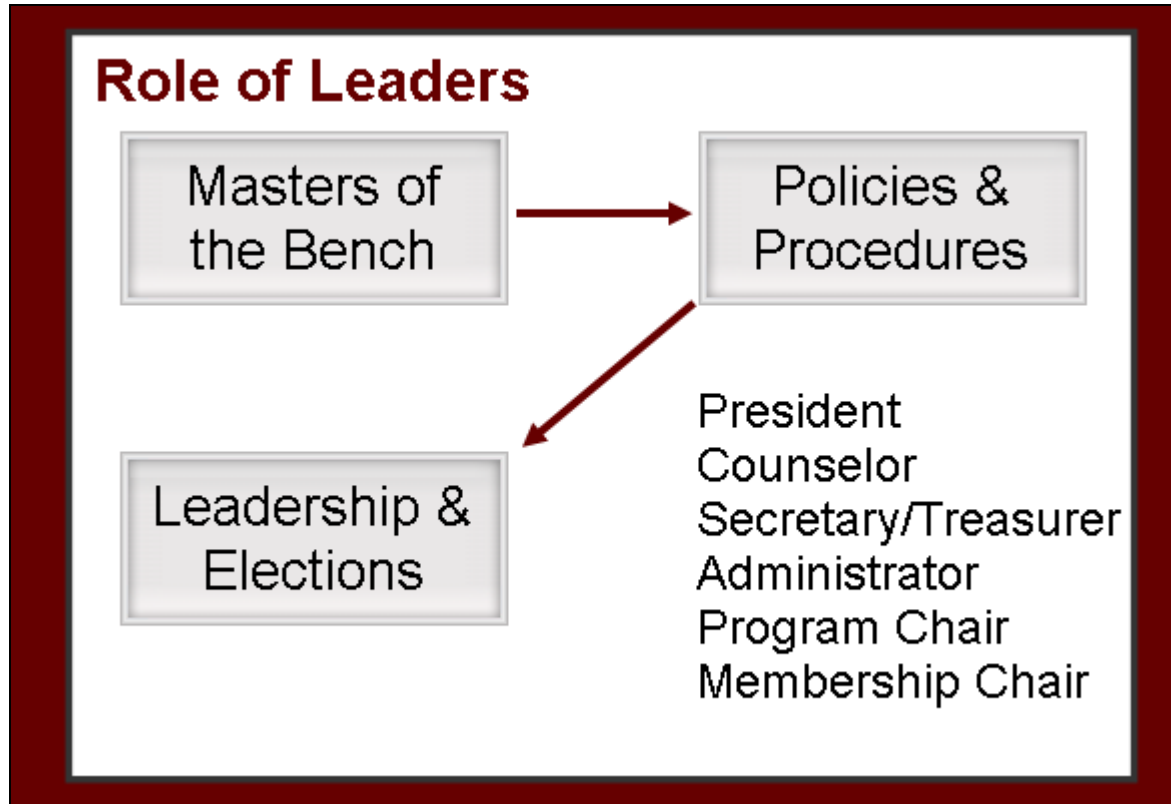


Effective Inn Leadership

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As a leader of your inn, it is important to understand the two important components of running your inn, leadership and management. In this module, we will discuss the leadership roles and responsibilities associated with your inn. For information about the management of your Inn, please view the Inn Administration and Management module.

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In keeping with the tradition established by the English Inns of Court, the ultimate authority in each American Inn of Court rests with the Masters of the Bench. The Masters of the Bench, or Benchers as they are sometimes called, determine the policies of the Inn in order to accomplish its purposes as set forth in the Inn's charter. The officers and/or Inn leadership exercise the authority of the Benchers between Masters of the Bench meetings.

The Masters of the Bench should adopt bylaws to document procedures to be followed by the Inn. One such procedure is the determination of leadership positions and election process whereby the officers are selected for the executive committee. Although the Masters of the Bench are responsible for establishing the procedure for electing leaders, they may choose to delegate this authority to the Inn to vote on some or all of the officer positions.

The enthusiasm and commitment of the leaders of the Inn provide an important role model for the other members. The health and vitality of the Inn depend directly on the vigor and vision that the executive committee brings to the running of the Inn.

Following are brief descriptions of the various officers that an Inn may have, including: President, Counselor, Secretary/Treasurer, Administrator, Program Committee Chair, and Membership Committee Chair. A written job description should be created and provided to each officer. Samples of these job descriptions are found under related resources for this module.

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President

- Provides general leadership/guidance
- Presides at all Inn functions
- Ensures others perform their duties
- Serves as point of contact
- Accountable for Inn policy compliance
- Leads Inn self-evaluation

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The president provides general leadership and guidance to the officers and membership of the Inn. An important aspect of this leadership is the annual self-evaluation, facilitated by the Inn Annual Report-Part 2, which is listed as a related resource for this module. In addition, the president performs the following duties:

- Preside at all Inn functions
- Ensure that the officers and the executive committee perform their duties
- Maintain contact with the national office and national board of trustees
- See that the Inn adheres to the policies of its charter and other policies promulgated by the national board of trustees
- Lead the executive committee in an Inn self-evaluation annually

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Counselor

- Assists President in his/her duties
- Acting President in his/her absence
- Liaison with local federal/state courts
- Oversees pupillage team operations

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The counselor, or vice-president as some Inns prefer, assists the president in all of his or her duties. Experience has shown that it is beneficial that either the president or counselor be a judge. The counselor also performs the following duties:

- Execute the functions of the president in his or her absence
- Establish and maintain liaison with the local federal and state courts
- Oversee, in conjunction with the program committee, the operation of the pupillage teams

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Secretary/Treasurer

- Accounts for all money collected/spent
- Maintain all financial accounts
- Collect dues and pay bills
- Meetings: send notices, record and circulate minutes
- Maintain records of attendance
- Update and maintain membership and leadership records

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The secretary/treasurer, whose duties may also be divided between a secretary and a treasurer, regularly accounts to the executive committee, and if requested, to the Masters of the Bench, for all monies collected and spent. In addition, he or she may perform the following duties unless specifically assigned to the administrator by the Masters of the Bench:

- Maintain all financial accounts
- Collect dues
- Pay all bills
- Send notice of each meeting of the Inn, of the Masters of the Bench, and of the executive committee
- Record and circulate minutes
- Maintain records of attendance
- Update, maintain and submit annual membership rosters and leadership information

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Administrator

- Performs many/all of the administrative duties of the Secretary/Treasurer on a permanent basis
- Arrange food and beverage services
- Provide staff support to committees
- Serve as administrative point of contact

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Ideally, each Inn should have an administrator who performs some or all of the administrative duties of the secretary/treasurer on a permanent basis. When the administrative duties of the secretary/treasurer pass yearly from person to person, records can be lost and succeeding officers may not easily be able to follow previous procedures. For this reason, a permanent administrator has been found to be of great value.

The administrator need not be an attorney or a member of the Inn. In some cases, the local Inn pays the person. The position requires six to eight hours per month, depending on what duties have been assigned to the administrator. Some of those duties may be:

- Perform many or all of the administrative responsibilities of the secretary/treasurer
- Arrange for refreshments and food at meetings of the Inn and annual banquet
- Furnish staff support to the committees of the Inn
- Serve as an important contact point for the national office, assuring that the leadership information and the membership roster are submitted in a timely manner.

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Program Chair

- Leads the Program Committee
- Develops structure of year's programs
- Selects program topics and assigns
- Provides support to pupillage teams
- Submits programs to the national office
- Conducts and reviews program evaluations

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The program committee chair leads the program committee, which is composed primarily of members who are not officers. The program committee directs the educational component of the Inn. The program committee with the leadership of the chair has the following duties:

- Devise a general framework for the year's programs in advance of the first Inn meeting with the approval of the executive committee
- Select program topics and assign them to the pupillage teams
- Supervise and consult with the pupillage teams as necessary while they develop the details of their programs
- Submit programs with a completed Program Report Form to the national office
- Conduct and review program evaluations for each program

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Membership Chair

- Leads Membership Committee
- Builds a pool of potential members
- Coordinates recruiting efforts at local/state bar events
- Screens applicants and makes recommendations

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The membership committee chair leads the membership committee. While the Masters of the Bench or the executive committee make the actual selection of new members, a small membership committee can serve the valuable function of building a file of potential members for future consideration. The membership committee with the leadership of the chair has the following responsibilities:

- Coordinate presentations at local or state bar meetings and presentations at section bar meetings for recruitment of new members
- Screen applicants and make recommendations

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Other Officers

- President-Elect
- Reporter
- Web Administrator
- Mentoring Chair
- Law School Liaison
- Court Liaison
- Social Chair

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Additionally, many Inns have a president-elect to ensure a smooth transition in leadership from year to year or term to term. Inns may also appoint a reporter to regularly submit news and photographs of the Inn's activities for publication in *The Bench*.

A fairly new position that Inns are filling is the Web Administrator. Each Inn has a free, hosted Web site connected to the American Inns of Court Web site. The Web Administrator is responsible for maintaining and updating the information published on your Inn's site.

The president or the executive committee may appoint other members to committees such as mentoring, law school liaison, court liaison, and social. Certain tasks need to be accomplished, and if they are not delegated to another member or a committee of the Inn, the responsibility for them will fall solely upon the president.

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Effective Leadership Strategies

- Rotation of Leadership
- Spring elections promote planning
- Delegate tasks and responsibilities
- Inn policy for term limits
- Don't forget to reward!

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There are many strategies that an Inn can put into place to maintain effective leadership. Rotation of leadership has proven to be a critical feature of a strong Inn and must be incorporated into the Inn's operations. The Masters of the Bench establish the term of office for the officers, but a typical term of office is two years. An Inn that does not regularly rotate its leaders is likely to experience various problems such as lagging attendance, lifeless programs or ineffective meetings as the leadership begins to suffer from "burnout". To keep the Inn functioning effectively, it is crucial to recruit and develop future leaders and to regularly incorporate those new leaders into the Inn's structure.

Officers should be elected and committee chairs and members appointed in the spring before the Inn adjourns for the summer. This allows the new leadership to use the summer months to plan for the coming year, fill membership vacancies, and learn about their responsibilities as officers.

Delegate and enlist as many people as possible to perform the tasks and responsibilities of running an Inn. In addition to the required officers of president, counselor, and a secretary-treasurer, many Inns select a president-elect, administrator, membership committee chair, and a program committee chair. Delegation has three benefits: 1) individuals avoid having to carry a heavy burden; 2) other members can continue the operations if someone is unable to fulfill his or her responsibilities; and 3) the Inn cultivates new leadership.

Some Inns may believe mistakenly that only Masters of the Bench can be officers or hold other leadership positions. Many Barristers and Associates, even Pupils, are more than willing to lend a hand in the operations of the Inn. Don't overlook this source of energy and enthusiasm.

Make an Inn policy that officers and committee chairs may hold office for only a specified period of time, such as a two- or three-year term. This will encourage the development of new leadership as well as give the Inn a way of removing ineffective leaders. The Administrator, however, should be exempt from any specified term limits.

Holding an office or providing other leadership for an Inn requires work and personal sacrifice and should be rewarded. Members who have assumed these responsibilities deserve recognition. The year-end dinner or final meeting is a good time to acknowledge their service to the Inn. A plaque or special gift is a nice way to say "thank you."

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Information & Support

- Northeast Region (includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th federal circuits): Lisa Chapin
- Southeast Region (includes 4th, 11th and DC federal circuits): Pam Wittmann
- Midwest Region (includes 5th, 7th and 8th federal circuits): Phyllis Doak
- Western Region (includes 9th and 10th federal circuits): Caryn Worcester

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Again, we have discussed the leadership roles and responsibilities associated with your Inn and some strategies to help maintain an effective leadership. But understand that you are not alone in your service and efforts.

Any member of the national office staff will happily assist you with any question you may have; however, there are staff positions dedicated to supporting local Inns and their members.

The Director of Chapter Relations serves as the primary liaison between Inns and the national office, specifically targeting Inns that are organizing or that may need a little extra support. Contact the Director of Chapter Relations for your geographic region if you have questions about how to improve your Inn's performance or if you need more information about the services or programs of the Foundation.