

[Keep in Mind...]

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2. **Do your president's homework.**
3. **Provide written summaries of information and action plans.**
4. **Use real-world examples of success stories.**
5. **Enlist allies on campus.**
6. **Enlist allies off-campus, including other presidents who may be able to "get the ear" of your president.**
7. **Ask your president to take on appropriate tasks.**
8. **Prepare your president to deal with anticipated opposition.**
9. **Explain both the benefits and potential pitfalls of the Environmental Approach.**
10. **Determine the level of interest among trustees or elected officials, and build your campaign to satisfy these constituencies.**
11. **Offer a balance between education and enforcement.**

About The Network

The Network is the national organization that proactively addresses the issues of alcohol, other drugs, and violence in order to promote healthy campus environments through self-regulatory initiatives, information dissemination, and technical assistance. Member institutions encourage and enhance local, state, regional, and national initiatives through a commitment to shared standards for policy development, educational strategies, enforcement, evaluation, and community collaboration.

making a
Difference

THE Network
ADDRESSING COLLEGIATE
ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ISSUES
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The Network Presents...

Getting Your President's Attention

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[What to Do]

College & university presidents and chancellors are frequently managing several different agendas simultaneously. To get—and more importantly hold—a senior administrator’s attention, there are several things to keep in mind:

1. Have clear, measurable goals.

Having a way to measure progress in reducing alcohol & other drug (AOD) use and abuse on your campus will help your president sell your program both on campus and in the community.

2. Do your president’s homework.

Most presidents are aware of the need for alcohol & other drug reduction campaigns, but most don’t know about programs that work to minimize the problem; providing information will build your president’s expertise in these matters—but if you use statistics, try to localize them to your campus.

3. Provide written summaries of information and action plans.

Presidents are busy people, but most of them read voraciously; having a two-page summary of an issue or an action plan will allow your president to digest the essentials and leave details to you and other professionals.

4. Use real-world examples of success stories.

Showing your president how others have achieved success will build his or her comfort level with what may at first appear to be a risky endeavor; presidents don’t like to adopt programs that have no chance of succeeding.

5. Enlist allies on campus.

Unless you work directly for the president, having a vice president or senior staff member speak on your behalf is essential. You should also seek allies among faculty, staff, and students, and enlist the support of the college or university attorney.

6. Enlist allies off-campus, including other presidents who may be able to “get the ear” of your president.

The local community is likely to think that they have no role in solving the college’s problems with AOD use. Building awareness and support among groups such as the local police department, local AOD treatment centers, or other interested community groups will demonstrate to your president that he or she is not alone in dealing with these issues. Other presidents can help yours realize that the rewards of a strong prevention and education program outweigh the risks of doing nothing.

7. Ask your president to take on appropriate tasks.

Presidents should be asked to speak or write on the issue, to establish or endorse a campus-wide plan—not to be directly involved in every meeting of a community coalition or on-campus workshop. If you can get the president to set the right tone, a majority on campus is likely to follow her or his lead.

8. Prepare your president to deal with anticipated opposition.

Students and alumni will not all embrace your ideas willingly; presidents will take the heat when the university begins to crack down on unauthorized use of AOD. Give your president the answers needed to address the concerns of those who oppose your programs.

9. Explain both the benefits and potential pitfalls of the Environmental Approach.

Engaging the community in the college’s efforts to curb AOD use can be risky. Many of the issues that might otherwise be limited to campus reports will leak out—and may appear in the media. Be realistic in presenting plans for activities such as Community Coalitions so your president is ready for the bad news that is likely to precede any good news emerging from your efforts.

10. Determine the level of interest among trustees or elected officials, and build your campaign to satisfy these constituencies.

There is growing awareness among those entrusted with governing or funding colleges and universities that the problems associated with AOD use must be addressed. Make these individuals aware of the problem and your plan for addressing it. Help your president marshal their support—and resources.

11. Offer a balance between education and enforcement.

Although all of us would like to achieve 100% reduction through education alone, it is usually more prudent to suggest appropriate measures that will penalize those who violate campus standards regarding use of AOD. Build a plan that uses these tools in a complementary fashion.

[What to Avoid]

Don’t bring problems without suggested solutions. The president will rely on your expertise for advice in dealing with alcohol & other issues; don’t simply whine about the problem; be prepared to suggest ways the campus community can work collaboratively to deal with the problems you face on your own campus.

Don’t oversell your approach. Presidents tend to be skeptical of zealots. Be realistic in what you propose, and don’t spend time demanding that you be given special treatment. If you have a good plan that will make the campus climate better, you will be given priority

Don’t promise more than you can deliver. No one is going to wipe out AOD abuse overnight. Offer realistic suggestions that will allow the president to point to measurable results in a moderate time frame. Real success will be achieved gradually, over time; anyone who thinks otherwise is simply out of touch with the realities of the culture of today’s youth.

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