Volunteer Leadership Succession:

1. **Search for your successor right away**
   It takes longer than you might think to find a suitable replacement. Begin planning and identifying potential candidates as soon as you take over the group's leadership. Use all of your resources, including past and current board members. They may even be willing to help with recruitment of potential leaders.

2. **Consider a structured "order of succession"**
   For most groups, structured succession (e.g., with a "president-elect" or a vice president who always succeeds the president) can stabilize this process. Having a past president stay on adds valuable continuity.

3. **Create clear and finite roles**
   Simple job descriptions can make volunteers feel like their roles are manageable. Ending dates, or task-based finish lines will reinforce this feeling. Consider co-leaders for appropriate roles.

4. **Document information** that would be helpful to your successor; this can be in writing, on a webpage or “wiki” and can include information on important contacts, (including your SAA regional manager) past events and any other information that could be helpful to the group in the future.

5. **Be willing to stay during a transition**
   Volunteers are often so relieved (and sometimes, burnt out) that when they step down they can disappear completely for a while. A volunteer leader should offer to be accessible to a successor, so that the new leader has a source of information, history, advice and – perhaps most importantly – encouragement.

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6. **Don't overstay your own welcome**
   If you love the job, you may want to stay in your leadership role as long as possible. Doing so, however, may create the impression that a leader has to serve for years, which can scare away likely successors.
Succession Planning

A volunteer leader’s most important job is to find and train his or her replacement.

Recruiting volunteers
Constant, year-round recruitment efforts

- Offer volunteer opportunities at events
- Target diverse talent
- Target specific needs
- Follow up on referrals
- Check references of volunteers when possible
- Be clear about expectations/responsibilities and time frame of the role

Retaining volunteers:

- Adhere to expectations/responsibilities of the role
- Proactively move strong volunteers through key positions
- Celebrate successes as a team, cultivate camaraderie throughout the board
- Shuffle volunteers through different positions if they’re stagnating

Rewarding volunteers:

- Publicly thank volunteers for their efforts
- Acknowledge retiring volunteers
- Move strong volunteers into prestigious roles
- As applicable, send volunteers to CLAW (Club Leader Annual Workshop)

Retiring volunteers:

- Follow term limits
- Cultivate a culture of movement where positions are shuffled (not sure about this word here or under retaining volunteers)
- Utilize “emeriti” volunteers as a knowledge base and resource
- Have them train their successor