

# Success in 3D: Design the SVO

Jamie E. Simek  
SVO Project Manager, MFRI

SVA Leadership Institute

#SVALeads  
@MFRIPurdue



# Success in 3D



## Design

The identity and structure of the SVO is established during this phase. Activities include forming a steering committee and crafting a mission, objectives, and value proposition; identifying intended members; and developing governing documents.

## Develop

Once the basic structure of the SVO is established, it is time to delve into the details. Activities include identifying events, activities, and projects, creating a budget, planning communication and marketing strategies, and establishing a records management system.

## Deliver

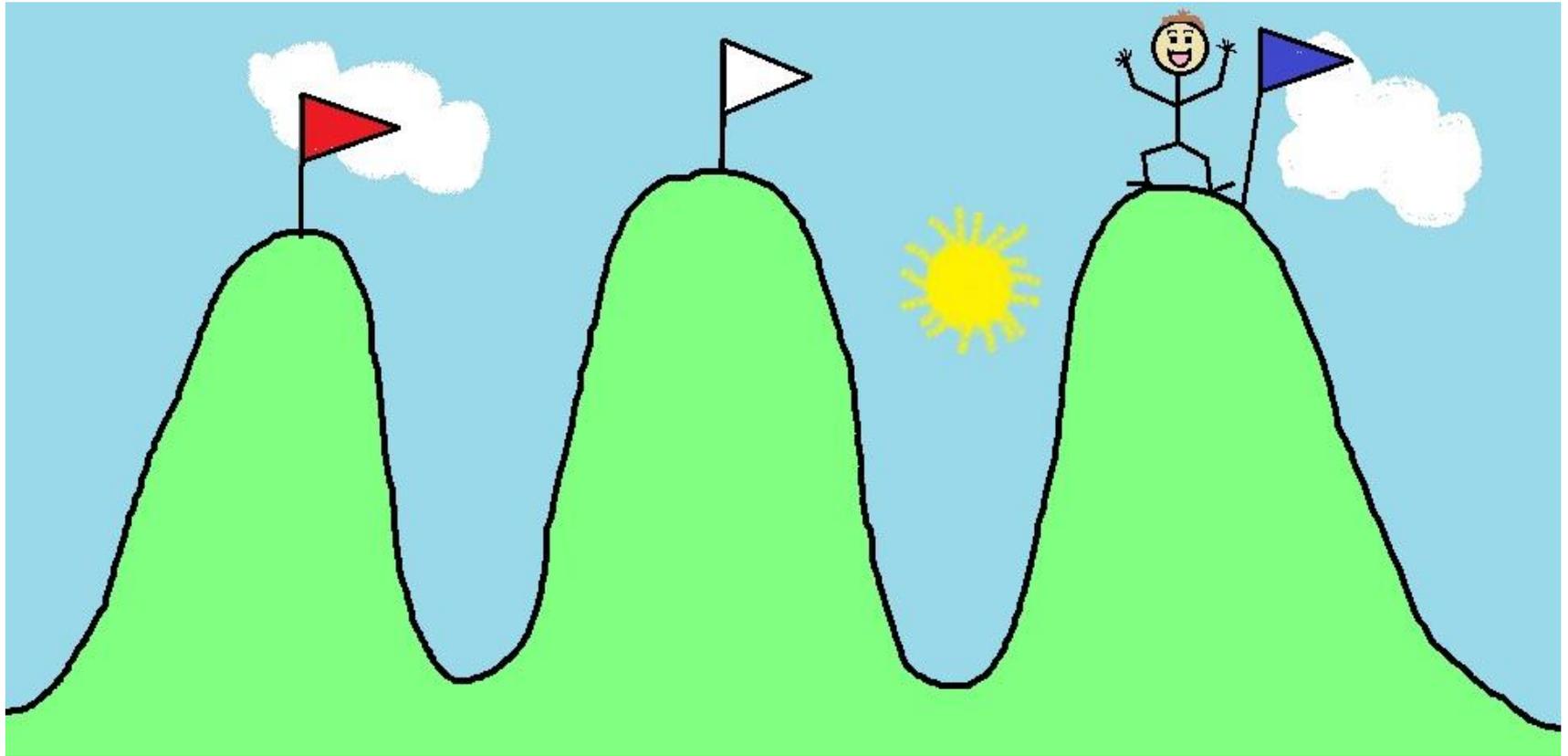
Now that the details have been defined, the SVO can be “delivered” to members through meetings, events, activities and projects. Building relationships, working toward sustainability, evaluating progress and demonstrating success are also key elements of this step.

# Design the SVO

- Campus culture
- Steering committees
- Mission, goals and value proposition
- Formalize the SVO
  - Members, leaders, and advisors
  - Governing docs and campus recognition

**Have you ever wanted to  
(create, enliven, revive, resuscitate)  
an SVO?**

# Hills and valleys



# Consider Campus Culture

Start with an  
awareness of YOUR  
campus culture.



# What is campus culture?

- A compilation of different, ever-changing factors that make your campus unique.
- Real and perceived
- Influenced by many factors



# What influences campus culture?

- Size of student population
- Geography
- Degrees offered
- 4-year vs. 2-year vs. technical
- Public vs. private
- Residential vs. commuter
- Age of institution
- Others?

# Form a Steering Committee

A steering committee can help guide the course of the evolving SVO.



# What is a steering committee?

- A group that researches, plans and completes preliminary tasks to get a group up and running
- Generates and captures ideas
- “Big picture” planning
- Does not elect leadership or set policy

# Who might serve?

- Student service members and veterans
- Military families/dependents
- Campus veteran service providers
- Student life representatives
- Faculty and staff who are veterans or supporters
- Local VSO or community reps

# Committee considerations

- Logistics
  - What steps are necessary to get the SVO up and running?
- Purpose
  - Who should the SVO represent?
  - What should the SVO represent?

# Develop a Mission Statement, Goals and Value Proposition



# Mission statement

- A mission statement defines an organization's purpose.
- It is short, concise and to the point.
- It is a “what” statement that explains the SVO's ultimate achievement—its reason for existing.

# Mission example

- “It is the mission of the (SVO) to address the challenges associated with transition from military service to being actively engaged in the college experience.”

# Goals

- Results we work to achieve
- The end towards which actions are directed
- Guide decisions and define priorities
- Practical steps that support the organization's mission

# Goal examples

- Connect members with on-campus resources needed for college success.
- Generate awareness of veterans on campus.
- Create and promote camaraderie.
- Serve as a voice for student service members and veterans on campus.

# Value proposition

- Statement that clearly defines the benefits the org creates for others through work it does.
- Communicates why the mission of the SVO is important.
- Considers needs and expectations.

# Elevator pitch



- Simple, clear description communicated in the time it takes to get from one floor to the next in an elevator.

# Building an elevator pitch

- What is your organization?
- What does your organization do?
- For whom does your organization do it?
- Why should I care?  
What's in it for me?
- *We are a student veterans' organization on the campus of State University.*
- *We provide information, support and camaraderie*
- *For military-affiliated students*
- *To help them successfully complete their college degrees.*

# Formalize the SVO

- Governing documents
- Leaders
- Members
- Advisors and advocates
- Official recognition



# Governing documents

- Purpose
- Membership
- Leadership
- Committees
- Elections
- Meetings



# Leaders

- Leadership positions should be identified in governing documents.
- Some leaders will emerge during the “design” phase, other will need to be recruited.
- Much of the “heavy lifting” will fall on the SVO leaders.

# Members

Define your target audience

- Who will your SVO serve?
- What is your maximum potential audience?
- What is a realistic membership goal for the next 6-12 months?

# Advisors and advocates

- Acts as your liaison to campus administration
- Assists SVO in navigating the campus system
- Helps provide continuity
- Who?



# Official recognition

- May allow access to campus student organization benefits such as:
  - Student activity funding
  - Use of campus facilities and office space
  - Officer and/or advisor training
  - Use of school technology
- Official recognition is also required for SVA membership and MFRI competitions.

# Tips for Success

- ✓ Learn about other SVOs.
- ✓ Learn from other student groups.
- ✓ Use your student life staff.



## Learn about other SVOs

- Network and reach out to other SVOs.
- Contact fellow chapter leaders via SVA's website and social media for leaders.
- Ask about lessons other SVOs have learned and ideas you can adapt.
- Discuss opportunities to collaborate.
- Attend SVA NatCon and engage in other SVA activities.

# Learn from other student groups

- Become familiar with other student groups on your campus.
- Identify what your SVO might learn from these groups, particularly those with similar characteristics.
- Reach out to established student groups to gain campus partners.

# Learn from student support staff

- Take advantage of their experience assisting student organizations on your campus.
- Ask them to clarify requirements and help you avoid mistakes and red tape.
- Request resource materials that can make your job easier.



“Do or do not.  
There is no try.”  
--Master Yoda

Jamie Simek  
[jsimek@purdue.edu](mailto:jsimek@purdue.edu)  
@JamieSimek

# Group activity

- Create two slides based on your fictional SVO.
  - Slide 1: Mission
  - Slide 2: Goals (at least 3)
- Note your group's reasoning/discussion for the mission and each goal.
- Email slides to [EducateEmploy@gmail.com](mailto:EducateEmploy@gmail.com)
- Present your mission, goals and justification (3 minutes or less).