



Alternatives to Hazing

Original work by Dr. Elizabeth Allan in 1997

Sometimes organizations that haze new members are confused about how to change these practices. Other times, those who believe in the supposed “benefits” of hazing might resist the change. There are many creative ways to change from a hazing to a non-hazing organization and those who believe in the “benefits” of hazing may be more likely to change their opinion if they can envision and participate in some alternatives to hazing. The following are some specific examples of ways to eliminate hazing while continuing to build group unity, as presented in the infographic above. These suggestions are developed with fraternal groups in mind but can be adapted for other types of organizations.

1. Foster Unity

- Have the members of your group/organization work together on a community service project.
- Visit a ropes course to work on group cohesiveness, communication and leadership skills.
- Work together with another group to plan a social or athletic event.

2. Develop Problem-Solving Abilities

- Have new members discuss weaknesses/challenges that the group has, such as poor recruitment, apathy, and poor scholarship, and develop solutions to solve those problems with current group members.

3. Develop Leadership Skills

- Encourage participation in school/campus activities outside of the organization.
- Encourage new members to get involved in organizational committees and/or leadership roles.
- Develop a peer mentor program within your group for leadership roles.
- Invite school/community/business leaders into the organization to share their experiences.

4. Instill a Sense of Membership

- Plan special events or get-togethers for all members to attend a movie, play, or church service.
- Plan a “membership circle” when actives and new members participate in a candlelight service in which each person has a chance to express what membership means to them.



5. Promote Scholarship

- Take advantage of your school/college/university academic and tutoring services.
- Designate study hours for members of your organization.
- Invite college/university or community experts to discuss test-taking skills, study methods, time management etc.

6. Build Awareness of History

- Invite an older member to talk about the organization's early days, its founding, special traditions, and prominent former members.

7. Aid Career Goals

- Use college resources for seminars on resume writing, job interview skills; various careers.

Hopefully these examples will help you think other ways you can eliminate hazing in your organization. Strategies to eliminate hazing work best when they are developed by the group and are related to the unique culture and personality of the organization. For each activity your organization engages, make sure you know how that activity relates to the mission and values of the organization and how the activity meets the objective of membership development.