

10 Ways to be an Effective Alumni Advisor

1. **Be a role model.** This should go without saying, but it is important to realize that the Alumni Advisor is a living illustration of the fact that fraternity affiliation continues after graduation.
2. **Hold the chapter to high standards.** Help the chapter develop high standards and advise the officers on holding everyone accountable.
3. **Clearly establish your role with the chapter.** The chapter and the officers need to know and agree upon the roles of the Alumni Advisor within the structure of the chapter and the Alumni Advisory Board.
4. **Ask for the chapter's input whenever you present a new idea or opinion.** Presentation, approach, and delivery are important any time something new is discussed with the chapter. When presenting something new at meetings, end with the question, "What do you all think?" You will help free yourself from being accused of being pushy or a know-it-all.
5. **Give the chapter, and individual chapter officers and members the same respect you expect from them.** If the executive officers are given your respect, they will be enthused and want to learn. The average chapter member will also want to learn.
6. **Work most closely with the chapter officers.** Open dialogue between executive officers will enhance your relationship with the chapter and will also result in more business being accomplished.
7. **Be cautious about talking about the chapter, or the university's past.** Chapter members rarely like to hear about "the way it used to be." Glorifying the past or reminiscing about difficulties is usually a quick, sure way to lose your audience.
8. **Allow mistakes to be made.** Easier said than done. But, what distinguishes an adequate advisor from a good advisor is the ability to gauge the impact of the resulting disaster and determine what intervention is not only desirable, but necessary.
9. **Build on an officer's strengths.** An undergraduate's personality is largely developed by the time he reaches college, but what can be developed are manners, behaviors, skills and knowledge. Look at performance, not at promise, and focus on strengths and not weaknesses.
10. **Function as a liaison.** There will be many times when an officer will need assistance in contacting the appropriate school official, another alumnus, or a resource person in the community.