

Adviser Job Description

The requirements for student activity advisers—FCCLA advisers, class and club advisers, and so forth—will vary from district to district, and job descriptions often involve little more than a list of activities for which the person is responsible. Check with your school administration to determine if a general written description exists for an activity adviser or specifically for a chapter adviser. If not, it's a good idea to draft one so that everyone involved knows what is expected when taking on the responsibility of working with a student organization.

The following checklist of essential skills for an adviser, excerpted from *A Handbook for the Student Activity Adviser* by Ron Joekel (NASSP, 1989) can help a new adviser understand what is required in the role of activity adviser.

The Adviser's Checklist of Essential Skills

An effective student activity adviser...

- Is well educated about the organization and understands its purposes.
- Is familiar with the school philosophy and policies for activities.
- Is committed to the concept of student activities and student participation.
- Knows and understands the constitution and bylaws.
- Knows the role and responsibilities of an adviser and has a written job description.
- Understands the importance of committees and assists in setting up a functioning committee system.
- Can instruct officers in the effective performance of their duties.
- Knows how to help students establish goals and objectives and plan for their effective implementation.
- Communicates regularly with the administration and faculty.
- Can work with the students in an orderly process of problem-solving and decision-making.
- Is familiar with the skills necessary to conduct meetings and is able to teach the skills to the members of the organization.
- Is knowledgeable about principles of organizational structure and management.
- Understands the importance of public relations and communication skills and demonstrates them effectively.
- Knows the functions of projects/activities and their relationship to the success and image of the organization.
- Remains objective and works with the students to continually evaluate and obtain feedback on the organization and its activities.
- Is resourceful and knows where to go for help and assistance.
- Participates in activities to continually increase knowledge and skills as an adviser.
- Exhibits good human relations skills in working with others.
- Has an understanding of the teaching-learning process and the necessity of working with the student and not telling them what to do.
- Gives credit where credit is due and constantly encourages the students.
- Is willing to devote the time required, both in and out of school.
- Sets personal goals and evaluates performance in meeting them.