

How to make transition simple and efficient?

The goal of transition is as the name implies to have smooth “transition” or overlap from the old board to the new. Without transition, our organisation would be far less professional not to say productive. Without transition a large part of the year would be spent on educating yourself about ELSA and the tasks you have to carry out.

Even though transition is the last thing you will be doing in your term, motivation might be lower than in the start of the year and you might already be preparing you post ELSE life, making sure transition is carried out with the same vigour as when you started you term cannot be underlined enough.

One goal of transition, which should be mentioned separately in this introductory text is to build up confidence in the new board. Being handed over the key of a LG, NG or ELSA International is a terrifying task and making sure the new board are confident about their responsibilities from day one will make their lives easier as well as to make sure no time is wasted in continuing the good work already started.

Below you will find some key points of general and individual transition. Some points are of course relevant for both general and individual transition, but they have been categorised where they fit the best.

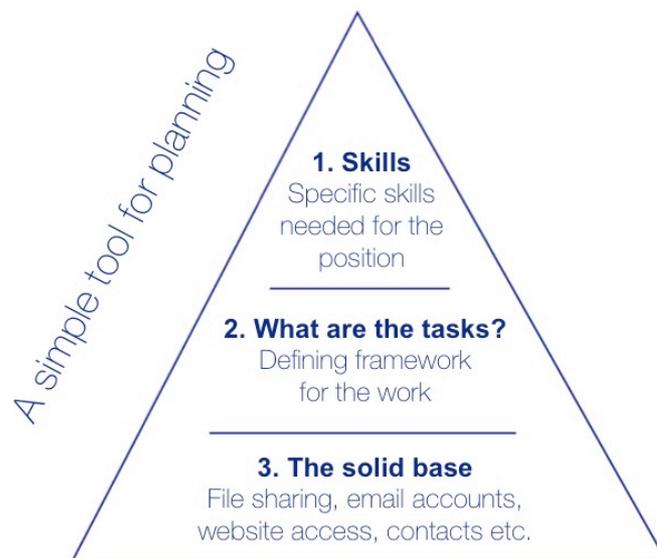
General Transition

- Have a structured schedule for what will be the agenda of the transition and send this out to the new board in advance.
- Show the OYOP of the previous board and make the new board use it as inspiration when creating their own. This helps in creating continuity.
- Include team building trainings in the transition or other trainings you find useful.
- Make sure the international aspect of the association is conveyed to the new board. We are after all an international network.
- Highlight the special characteristics of the Local or National Group, things that sets you apart from other Local or National Groups or specific challenges you face in your group.
- Be honest about what challenges you have faced during the year. All advice the new board can get will help them avoid similar problems to ones you faced in your term.
- Make sure there is trust between the old and the new board. Don't lecture them on how to conduct their business, because then they will despise you and will not respect the transition. Be friendly to them and make them feel comfortable, a part of the inner circle.

- Whenever possible make sure the general transition happens face to face. Not only is this more effective, but also it is a great motivational booster for the new board.
- Every board member should know at least the basics of all the other areas. Preferably they should all know more than the basics. This makes them educated enough to discuss things properly at board meetings and to make educated decisions. This is also important for creating a team feeling. If every board member is invested in all aspects of the association it creates a feeling of accomplishing things as a team, not as individuals.
- The new board should in their first meeting have a round where they express their expectations towards each other. Things will go wrong during the year, projects might not go the way they were intended, people might be late with deadlines, quality of work might not be as high as some expect and conflicts may arise in the board. Therefore it is important to make everybody aware that these things will happen and that they discuss how to deal with them when they arise.
- A good idea is to give the new board time during transition to have their own board meeting. A new board has a lot of motivation and new ideas, and giving them time so early to start discussing them will prepare them even more for when they officially take over responsibility of the board.
- ALL documents should be reviewed and updated before the transition (statutes, standing orders, handbooks, guidelines, externals database, folders and files in the archive etc.)
- When giving transition, don't assume that the new officer knows the content of these documents or knows too much in general. No matter if you know the person or not, make sure to go through everything in detail, this way many questions will arise and it will save you a lot of time later.
- Organising the transition somewhere away from the city, like a cabin or similar might be a good idea to keep focus 100% on ELSA and on the officers present.
- Don't make the transition only serious. Team building also means socialising. So have a social programme in the evening. The simplest is often the best here. Just sit around with beers and wine talking and maybe playing some games goes a long way.
- If you have the transition too early many board members might lose motivation before they assume office. In any case make sure that between the elections and the handover date, that the new board has regular meetings and that they are in constant communication.

Individual Transition

Here is a simple tool and practical inputs for planning, thus you can easily structure your transition schedule. Remember that the subtopics for each title can diverse according to your National Group/Local Group and your tasks as a Marketeer.



1. Skills

- Designing a material: Show them how to access/use the programs such as InDesign, Illustrator and Photoshop – which are used the most in the Network. Suggest tutorials with some practical basic knowledge. Give your successor a task (for ex creating a simple poster) during the session and go through it together.
- Soft skills: Share the knowledge acquired in trainings and try to give them more insight from your experiences during the year.
- Web management: Make sure to focus only on one web management program (like Wordpress) and create a schedule together starting with the basics. If there needs to be an update on the local/national web page, assist him in creating the framework.
- Communication and co-operation:
 - a. Key areas: One of the main role of the Marketeers is to support the Key Areas in their projects and events, therefore you should give them specific information about each area – S&C, AA, MCC, and STEP.
 - b. All the board members: Give your successor a good insight of how to work as a team with positive and negative aspects. Stress the importance of acting as a team but not a single person. Be honest!
 - c. Local officers: Remember that your successor will be a member/leader of the Marketing team (depending on your successor being local or national) and stress the importance of co-operation throughout the year, in order to keep the motivation high.

2. Tasks

- General framework of the area: Tell your successor the responsibilities of a Marketeer and their tasks within the term in office. Moreover, you can focus on fundraising, depending on your structure in the Local/National Board.
- Project calendar – VP diary: Share your own calendar for the year and make a new one with your successor. This will enable him to get an overview of the year before rushing into work.
- Update templates: Make sure that you update the templates in the end of the year if you've had some changes. If there are parts, which need to be changed (regarding some specific info), make sure that your successor knows about this.
- Folder for fundraising (presentations, contacts, etc.): This will enable your successor to proceed with the fundraising easily and the contacts will remain stable for the future years.

3. Base

- File sharing programs (Dropbox, GoogleDrive) and social networks (Facebook, twitter, email accounts): Make sure that you share the passwords and necessary information regarding using the programs.
- Marketing Handbook: A very good tool, which covers most of the parts of the Marketing area, as well as transition.
- Best practice sheet: The best is to start updating this from the start of your own term and then pass it on to your successor during transition.
- Information about the international events: An important role when giving transition on the national level is to update your successor on how the international level works (structure, regulations, handbooks etc.), what they can expect from ICMs, IPMs, KAM, SAM etc. and most importantly update them on what issues are being discussed at the moment and which ones should be discussed.
- Externals contact sheet: Make sure all external contacts are structured in a document and try to meet with all of them with your successor. If you are not able, make sure that your successor gets all the relevant information on the externals and their expectations to ELSA.
- National and international regulations: Make sure your successor is aware of the regulations of the association and especially the parts that concern him or herself.
- Contact details of the printing companies
- Template and logo packages
- Purchased pictures

General remarks

- Learn by doing: When you have an individual transition, make sure that your successor not only gets the theory, but first-hand experience with their work. Sit down and write emails with them. Give them responsibility to talk during meeting with externals etc.
- Make your successor plan the year and then go through it with them: Doing this creates a lot of confidence and is invaluable experience when they no longer have you to support themselves on.
- With your successor make a plan for the first two weeks in office: One of the biggest challenges is getting started, and having a ready plan what needs to be done will make the wheels start spinning.
- Follow up on your successor for the first few weeks: The start is always a bit shaky and having somebody there makes it much easier.
- Personalise the transition: Try to focus on the aspects you think your successor needs more help with. Also ask your successor if there are any areas they would like to focus extra on.
- Be honest: Tell him about the challenges you faced, where you failed and how they can avoid the same mistakes. This is not about showing weakness, but showing confidence that you are still standing after whatever challenges you have had to go through.

There are of course many other aspects of transition that are not mentioned here. This serves only an initial reminder of some important aspects to remember.

- Do not forget to check the Marketing Handbook for further details about the Transition process and in general about Marketing:
<http://files.elsa.org/MKT/MarketingHandbook1314.pdf>
- For a longer explanation of transition read the transition manual here:
http://files.elsa.org/IM/Transition_manual.pdf