12 tips for succeeding with Flocknote

Flocknote · https://missionsupport.archden.org/knowledgebase/12-tips-for-succeeding-with-flocknote/

Preparation for launch

1. Know why you are using Flocknote

What are you trying to accomplish with Flocknote? How does it serve your organization's mission? Be more specific than simply "better communication." (i.e. to improve event attendance, announce last minute changes, answer community questions, mobilize members at a moment's notice, get group feedback, provide helpful resources, tell our story, share successes, reduce paper mail outs, deliver our bulletin, etc.). Knowing why you're doing all this helps keep you focused, measure success and, most importantly, to accomplish tips #2 and #3.

2. Build a strong admin team

Implementing any new idea is an exercise in your leadership. Take care and time to motivate your leadership team (your admins) and earn their support. Show them how Flocknote helps them do their job better. Some of your admins may still be resistant. That's okay. Some of them will need more help and others may just need to see it in action first. Proceed thoughtfully, but proceed none-the-less.

Introducing Flocknote to your members

3. Tell people *why* they should subscribe.

When you are trying to get members to subscribe to your lists, don't just say "sign up for updates from us" or "connect with us" or "so we can send you emails and text messages." That's too ambiguous and won't work well. Tell them why. Sell them on the vision and mission of your organization to the point that they want to be a part of it all! Also, be sure to tell them *what you'll be sending and how often*.

If people don’t subscribe, it’s likely because we’re not offering something they want badly enough or it hasn’t been explained clearly enough.

4. Don’t over-complicate it.

If your explanation of how to get subscribed is longer than a few sentences, it’s unnecessarily complicated and you won’t get many members to respond. Flocknote makes it easy for people to get plugged in to your lists:

- People can text in your keyword (with Flocknote’s free Text-to-join feature).
- You can give them a link (which you put on your website or in your handout): flocknote.com/yournetwork
- You can set up some tablets/laptops at your next gathering and set aside a few minutes to get everyone set up (if the group size is manageable enough).

Example announcement: “Text in JOIN to 84576, and we’ll send you one weekly text message of the most important thing going on this week.” (and then pause for them to do it!)

5. Don’t *wait* for your members to “use Flocknote.”

This is a big mistake and a misunderstanding of some of the best benefits of Flocknote. You don’t have to wait for anyone to sign up. Import whatever email addresses you have already and just start using it. Your members can reply, vote in polls, rsvp to events, etc. without ever *doing* anything else. They are waiting on you, not the other way around.

Also, make it a habit of asking for an email address (or asking them to text your keyword in) anytime you interact.

6. Just start.

Anytime we are starting something new, it’s easy to find reasons to wait or procrastinate. Just start using it. Play around with it. Get a feel for it. Practice. Anything new takes adjustment. And don’t forget, you and your team always have Flocknote’s awesome Help Center and free, 20-minute training videos available at any time.

Going forward

7. Keep messages short and rich in value.

This is a good rule for almost all communication. Make sure every message only contains the best of what you have to say. In other words, for most of us, it means writing what we want to say, and then cutting out the least important 75% of it. It’s hard to do, but worth it. By saying less, you’ll actually end up communicating more.

When every message is only your *best*, most important info, your readers quickly learn that your messages are always worth reading. They won’t want to miss them. This is precisely the dynamic you want.

When writing an email, if you have additional info that needs saying, simply link to its location on your website or attach it as a file to the note going out.

We must remind ourselves that people generally aren’t nearly as excited about hearing everything we have to say as we are to tell them. If you send too often, or send anything but your most important info, people will start to lose interest. They have enough people talking at them every where they turn today. If we are offering second-rate, uninspiring and un-entertaining info, we will quickly be tuned out – no matter how many ways we try to force it in front of their faces.

8. Be consistent.

You can’t just ask one time or send one note and expect to be successful. Do it every week for a couple months (following these tips) and if your members are interested in what you’re doing, they’ll engage. But you’ll likely need to ask them multiple times from multiple places.

And if you’re switching from an old way of communicating, make a clean jump. Make it clear that you are doing things a little differently, explain what to do and then fully make the switch. This is very important from a leadership perspective and will help you succeed.

9. Listen and engage.

More than half of your communication efforts should be about listening (not just talking). Ask questions of your subscribers. Use Flocknote’s poll feature to let them be heard in a simple, easy-to-analyze way. Listen and respond. Cherish every response you get when you send something out.

10. Have fun and be creative.

Don’t forget to have fun with how you use Flocknote. Be entertaining. Be dramatic. Be suspenseful. Keep your readers intrigued and wondering what awesome things your organization is up to next.

11. Be Patient and don’t give up.

It’s important to have the right expectations when starting something new. You may have a very small adoption rate when you first try Flocknote. That’s okay. Sometimes people are slow to adapt. Learn from your successes and your failures and try again. Anything worthwhile takes time and effort. Stick to it!

“It’s not that I’m so smart, it’s just that I stay with problems longer.” – Albert Einstein

12. Share your joy.

If you aren’t excited about what you’re doing, then your members won’t be either. No piece of technology is going to fix that. You must lead with excitement and joy. I’m not suggesting you put multiple exclamation points after everything you say or TYPE IN ALL CAPS. But allow the joy and excitement of what you’re doing to come through. Joy is infectious and it’s the best way to open people up to your community and draw them in.

Follow these great trips from our users and you’ll be off to an amazing start with Flocknote. And don’t forget our awesome Help Center and free, 20-minute training videos, too. Let us know how else we can help!

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