



Chapter Succession Success

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You've contributed to your chapter as a board member and you've done a great job serving, but as your time on the board draws to a close, have you thought about who will fill your shoes? Hopefully, you've given some thought to this over the past several months and have identified and even approached possible candidates you would like to nominate for your or other chapter board positions.

Members who have attended chapter and/or region events and chapter programs or chapter committee members who are ready to step up are great prospective board members, but don't stop there. Perhaps a current board member wants to take on a new role or might even consider running for president elect and serving as a future chapter president. Serving on a chapter board provides a great opportunity for members to get involved in their chapter's operations, learn or enhance their leadership skills, and grow personally and professionally. It's time to start a conversation with these potential chapter leaders.

Consider how you first got involved. You might have been approached, as I was, by a board member who had served in several board positions and saw the need for new talent on the team. That person saw in me a chapter member who wanted to serve his ARMA chapter and wanted board experience.

As someone who had gained a great deal from chapter membership, I saw serving on the board as an obvious way for me to give back. Ultimately, I decided to consider joining my chapter board after seeing an e-mail blast asking for board members. I learned about the available positions and stepped into a role, filling in primarily with administrative, leadership, facilitation, and education program planning. I learned a great deal in the process and later found myself thinking about succession planning.

Here are a few tips you might consider for making sure your chapter board positions are filled:

1. Start succession planning early; don't wait until your chapter's annual general meeting is underway. Determine who on your chapter board can and wants to remain on the board for the upcoming year. Begin looking for successors on your membership roster and at events as you network. Discuss at your monthly board meetings possible successors who would be a great fit for your leadership team.



Chapter Connection

2. Get the word out in advance of the nomination period that specific board member positions will be available and when nominations will be open. Announce the future position openings at chapter events, send e-mail blasts to your membership list subscribers, use social media such as Twitter and Facebook, and post details on your chapter website.
3. Ask previous board members for candidate suggestions. They may know someone who had indicated an interest in serving on the chapter board but was either not nominated or not elected but would still be a good candidate.
4. Discuss board positions' responsibilities and commitment expectations with members – especially with any strong prospects you've identified.
5. Explain the nomination and election process to prospective board members and assure them that you'll be there to assist them if they run for office and are elected. Also make them aware that their chapter portfolio comes with support from all levels of the organization, including from regional chapter advisors that have served in chapter board roles themselves.
6. Consider offering orientation to new board members to help smooth the transition between those leaving and those assuming their new board responsibilities.
7. Take advantage of the support that's available from ARMA International and the region team.

What better way is there to share what you've experienced than to encourage other members to serve as you've done for the last few years? Spread the word, be enthusiastic, and remember to start recruiting your replacement early.