
JUST LOVE.

A Just Love Guide to Succession & Handover

At Just Love we want to be obsessed with developing and releasing the next generation. Sustainability and succession are some of the biggest challenges in a student organisation. Where leadership turnover is so high, you need to be thinking about the next set of leaders from day 1 of your time on committee.

In this document we will give you some basic concepts about how to develop next generation leaders, and then give you a timeline and framework for identifying and handing over to your next committee.

Safety Nets and Tightropes

The basic theory is that people need to step out onto 'tightropes' and have real opportunities to lead, but there need to be safety nets in place to ensure that if and when anything goes wrong, they are supported and able to get up and step out again. At the heart of this model is you. Firstly, believe in and be passionate about releasing the next generation of leaders. Secondly, implement tightropes and safety nets in your own life – make sure that you are stepping out and make sure you are being supported.

Mentoring & Accountability – this builds trust and allows people to be really known. If people have been vulnerable, accountable and honest about their flaws and struggles, and are still being championed to lead, they can step out with real confidence. (It may be that younger leaders are more formally, pastorally mentored by someone at their church – but you can still take on more informal mentoring/role model positions with people).

Culture of Encouragement – when we are encouraged we really fly. People will know that even when things go wrong, people are for them and still believe in them. The leaders of the organisation set this culture. If you become more encouraging, others in Just Love will begin to encourage people more too.

Training – we love putting on national training for Just Love committees a few times a year. If you are starting to give leadership opportunities to others not yet on committee, why not run a few training sessions for them so that they are better equipped to lead?

Real Context – give people real, bold, leadership opportunities. If there are no opportunities for people outside of committee to lead, change the structure of what you're doing. Make sure that there are all sorts of ways for people with different gifts to step up, take ownership, and lead aspects of what you're doing.

Vision Releasing Vision – you need to be very clear where you're going if people are to step out and go with you. If people realise what Just Love is all about and where it's going, they will begin to see what they can bring to the realisation of that vision, and will begin to generate ideas about how they can help Just Love to move forward.

External Engagements – people need to be leading outside of their comfort zone. If people become confident and comfortable leading within Just Love, that's great – but they also need to be able to carry that outside of the Just Love community. Encourage them to be people of influence in other places too.

Choosing the Next Committee

Character, Competence, Chemistry, Commitment. These 4 'Cs' are something to think about as you consider the candidates for your next committee.

Character – scripture is clear that character is a vital leadership quality, and that this must show through in their behaviour (e.g. Titus 1:6-9). Look for people who have integrity, honesty and authenticity, and are firmly rooted in their faith.

Competence – think about the skills required for each role. Roles might require good organisation, good people management skills, casting vision and communicating, building relationships with different organisations. Does the person you are considering have the right skills for the role? Or if they don't have all of them, can they learn them?

Chemistry – how well will the new committee members work together? Is there a good balance of skills and personalities? Are a diverse range of churches and different kinds of people represented? Don't only consider which individual is suited to each position, but think about how they will all work together and complement each other as a team.

Commitment – you want to find people who are committed to Just Love and care deeply about the vision. Someone might tick the other three boxes, but if they are involved in too many other things and can't really commit to Just Love, they might not be the best person to have on the committee.

Whether you have two long semesters and one short exam term, or three terms of equal length, each committee will serve for one year (3 terms). We are aware that this might be slightly different for a founding committee, and that different universities will handover committees at different stages of the year. However, this is the pattern we think committees should aim for as they pick their next committees. In your first year or two this process may be harder before Just Love becomes an established name, and it might take a couple of years before you get into this routine, but it is a good thing to aim for.

Start of term 1 – As soon as you begin on committee, think about ways of **implementing tightropes and safety nets** in your group, and deliberately think about people outside of committee who you want to **invest in and release**.

Start of term 2 - Before you start your second term, start to think about the individuals who might succeed you – try to **draw up a shortlist** of candidates for the committee. (This can be added to through the term, as some people will emerge later, but it's good to start thinking early).

Mid-term 2 – At some point in your second term, you may want to have a week where people can **nominate** themselves or others for roles on the committee. After you have received some nominations, you can weigh this alongside your own thinking, and **shortlist for roles**. It is good to then **approach the**

new president and vice-president, or co-presidents¹, during this second term. Give everyone a chance to air their views on who this should be, and if there isn't consensus you may have to have a vote to decide. Once this is done, it is good to meet with people one-to-one (the person who currently has the role with the person who is being approached for it), be clear with them about what the role involves, and (hopefully) paint a positive picture of the experience and the support and training you receive. Also be sure to encourage them and tell them why you believe they would be great at the role. Give them a few days to decide, and then move on to the next person. (You might not want to approach people simultaneously – if, for example, a potential president says no, you might want to ask the potential VP to be president instead.)

End of term 2 – By the end of your second term, you could aim to **approach people for most/all roles** on committee (using the same process as explained in the previous paragraph). This may seem early, but aiming for this timeline prevents you running out of time in your final term if a few people say no – it also gives the new committee plenty of time to plan for when they take over. You can also have initial **handover meetings with the new president and VP/co-presidents**, setting out some of the things you've learned, and some of what you expect of them next term.

Start of term 3 – By the start of your third and final term, it is good to have **all new roles confirmed**. You can then begin to have **handover meetings for all roles**. We also suggest that the **incoming president and VP/co-presidents begin to sit on the committee**. This will ensure some continuity year-to-year and will help them to feel more settled before they begin to fully lead the committee next term, as they can gradually take over responsibilities in your final term.

Mid-term 3 – By the middle of the term, there should definitely have been **handover meetings for all roles**. You should also have prepared **handover documents** detailing the content of these meetings so the new committee has something to refer to during the year. For later committees, this will be a more straightforward job of editing and updating the handover document you received yourselves. The new committee should then have a **vision day** for the next term, so that they can begin planning ahead. Your committee may wish to sit in on part or all of this to reinforce some of the handover work and ensure that the new committee is learning from your experiences.

The Handover Process

Fundamentally, a handover process should pass on the accumulated wisdom of previous committees by clearly articulating what has been done in the past (good and bad!), as well as giving permission to the new committee to make Just Love their own by innovating and changing in a way that hasn't been done before.

Meetings – some of this will have already been mentioned when you initially approached your successor for the role. This is a good opportunity to reinforce **what the role involves**, as well as share thoughts on **what you think has gone well** and **what could have been improved** during your time in the role. It is also good to ensure that the new committee members are familiar with the Just Love **vision and values**. Also, be sure to **ask them how they are feeling** about taking over – what they excited about, what they are uncertain about, what ideas they have – and **encourage them** wherever possible. In addition to sharing what the role involved and what worked for you, let them know that

¹ Some committees will promote one or two people in other roles currently into the president and VP/co-president roles. This will slightly change the process, please talk to your staff worker about this.

there will be **scope for them to make changes** – they don't just have to follow in your exact footsteps, but can begin to tailor their role to their own strengths and interests (without compromising the vision of what that role, and the committee as a whole, is trying to achieve).

Documents – what would you have loved to know before you started on committee? A basic handover document will need to contain a thorough outline of the **responsibilities of the role**, and some guidance on **how to fulfil those responsibilities**. If you think that there are valuable things that you have learned from doing the role, make sure it is passed on! If there are things that you wish you knew before starting your role, make sure they are passed on!

Relationships – as well as passing on your strategic and organisation knowledge to the next committee, ensure that you **pass on your relationships**. If there are key relationships with church workers, UCCF staff or local charities that you have developed or maintained over the year, make sure that your successor inherits these relationships well. You can include some information on these in your handover document, but it may also be worth **arranging a meeting** before the end of your time on committee with yourself, the key relationship you've developed, and your successor, to introduce them and ensure that they keep working together over the coming year.
