



PART 1

# Ultimate Organizations

## Organizational Structures



# Organizational Structures

*The following chapter provides suggested guidelines and other helpful information for developing a capable and stable organizational structure for a local Ultimate organization. In this chapter, “organizational structure” means the named positions in an organization and the authority and responsibilities that each position has.*

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## Organizational structures are important

Here are a few reasons why it is worth spending time and energy defining and improving the structure of a local Ultimate organization:

**Preventing volunteer burnout** Local Ultimate organizations are fueled largely—if not entirely—by volunteer effort. Keeping volunteers feeling good about their efforts and not feeling overworked helps keep current volunteers involved...and a good organizational structure can help with this.

**Long-term stability** In all local Ultimate organizations, the people who keep the organization going will eventually move on, so the key to keeping things going is to develop the organization so that it is not too dependent on any one person. Creating a solid organizational structure is one of the best ways to do this.

**Greater effectiveness** Whatever the priorities of a local Ultimate organization—whether increasing the number of players in the local area, teaching the sport to new players or to youth, or increasing the variety or quality of playing options available—these priorities will be better accomplished with a good organizational structure.

## Basic organizational structures

This chapter divides the types of positions in an Ultimate organization into four groups:

**The board of directors** The person or group at the top of the organization, in charge of overseeing all that the organization does;

**League and tournament-specific positions** Volunteers<sup>1</sup> whose jobs are directed at a specific event, such as a league or tournament;

**Year-round administrative positions** Volunteers whose jobs exist across multiple leagues or tournaments;

**Paid staff** Individuals who fill some of the roles of one or more of the above categories working for pay as an employee or contractor.

Ultimate organizations of any size need a single structure in charge of overseeing the organization as a whole—a person or a group responsible for everything the organization does. In most non-profit organizations and many for-profit organizations, this job belongs to a board of directors. This chapter explains

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<sup>1</sup> Positions are assumed to be filled by “volunteers” unless otherwise stated. In this chapter, “volunteer” includes those given some incentive or reward for their effort when the reward is small compared to “reasonable” wages for the job. For example, free league fees or a gift certificate. For most local Ultimate organizations, the majority of labor is provided on a volunteer basis; paid staff is the exception. There can be some gray area between volunteer and paid positions, such as those for which a nominal stipend is provided. Stipends are discussed in this chapter under the section on paid staff.

the benefits of a board (of directors) and then assumes that a local organization has a board or some equivalent group at the top of the organizational structure.

An organization's first volunteers after its board will usually be volunteers devoted to running a particular league or tournament. In a small organization—one with fewer than, say, 200 members—the board of directors can handle most of the administrative tasks that exist across multiple events, tasks like managing finances or buying insurance, leaving only event-specific duties for other volunteers. These positions can be filled either by individuals or by teams (committees).

Once an organization is large enough that the board can no longer handle administrative tasks while also managing all of its events (leagues, tournaments, etc.) and looking toward the future, it should create year-round administrative positions. These volunteers handle specific administrative tasks in order to reduce the board's workload and allow the board to focus on overseeing its events and planning for the future.

Finally, both event-specific and year-round positions can be filled by paid staff people rather than volunteers. Most local Ultimate organizations do not have the budget to support full-time staff, but those organizations that have employed a full-time staff person report very positive results. If a full-time employee is not feasible, there are a few less expensive alternatives that are discussed below. As an organization grows, employing paid staff becomes more and more important for managing the organization's affairs without burning out volunteers.

## The Board of Directors

An organization must have some person or group in charge of the organization as a whole. (Otherwise, it is not really a single organization.) This body supervises the efforts of all the other volunteers and staff in the organization. In most non-profit organizations and many for-profit organizations, this job belongs to a board of directors. In a legally incorporated non-profit organization, the board of directors has fiduciary duty to the organization; they are legally responsible for overseeing the affairs of the organization, devoting their efforts to help the organization accomplish its mission. In organizations that are not legally incorporated, the board of directors can still serve as a very beneficial model.

While an organization could be headed by a single individual, there are several advantages that favor a group like a board of directors:

**Continuity and stability** A board helps the organization have continuity and stability whenever a volunteer moves on. Volunteers always move on eventually, and the local organization is much better equipped to handle these transitions if there are others at the helm to pick up where one person leaves off.

**Greater resources** No matter how dedicated an individual is, a group of people will almost always be capable of accomplishing more at a lower stress level.

**Volunteer recruitment** A group of people will tend to have more resources for recruiting new volunteers than an individual will.

**Improved odds of finding the highly-motivated** Volunteer organizations—even those headed by a well run board—tend to rely heavily on the efforts of especially dedicated people, and finding these people tends to happen more if there are more people to look for them.

**Democratic representation** A community of players will have diverse opinions, and a group will tend to represent those opinions more faithfully than an individual.

## Officers and Authority

An organization run mostly, or entirely, by volunteers is one where no one, even its board of directors, will have much power. But a well-run board of directors can be highly respected by the organization's members, and this is an important goal for the board to work toward.

The board should choose officers—at a minimum, three key roles must be filled by a certain person:

**1. Chairperson or president** One person given the job of facilitating the board's work, its discussions, deliberations, and votes; the chairperson doesn't have any authority over other board members, but does have some authority to start, stop, or direct discussion.

**2. Secretary** One person responsible for recording important decisions and work done by the board, at least minutes of meetings and especially a record of votes taken.

**3. Treasurer** One person in charge of tracking and managing the organization's finances.

Each of these people may—and should—have a backup. For example, a vice president is often elected so that someone is identified ahead of time if a replacement for the president/chairperson is needed.

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It may also make sense for an organization to create other officer positions on the board; some discussion of this appears below.

Each member of the board has an equal vote on all matters the board decides on. (Officers hold no extra authority.) This can be important for maintaining an inclusive and “democratic” atmosphere on the board and in the organization.

## Guidelines for Board Meetings and Discussion

Boards of Directors usually follow some portion of Robert’s Rules of Order, the nearly-universal procedures for deliberative bodies, ranging from local clubs to the United States Congress. Robert’s Rules, in their entirety, are probably a bit too cumbersome for a local Ultimate organization’s board of directors, since they provide a very specific framework for managing the debates of very large groups. The local organization should decide for itself what policies or guidelines make sense to keep board meetings moving along efficiently. At a minimum, the board should take formal votes on any matters that impact policies or procedures moving forward. It is important for the board to have a record of decisions that were made at prior board meetings, rather than rely on the memory of current board members.

While the board’s decisions will normally follow a simple majority (>50%) or sometimes a super majority (usually either 60% or 2/3)<sup>2</sup>, it is a good idea to work toward consensus. A board of 7 or 9 members can usually find some common ground, and decisions that are unanimous or nearly unanimous are more likely to be widely accepted and supported. Such decisions are also more likely to stand for a long period of time, whereas more controversial decisions are more likely to be overturned before long, making the organization’s policies less stable. A little extra patience and time invested in getting closer to consensus can be a big help for the smooth running of the board and the organization.

## Priorities for Board Agendas

Before each board meeting, a member of the board of directors must create an agenda for the meeting. The agenda should reflect the priorities the board feels are most important for it to discuss at this particular meeting. One thought that can be good to keep in mind in creating meeting agendas and in facilitating meetings is that the board of directors is the body in

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<sup>2</sup> The organization must document in its by-laws what types of votes require a simple majority and what types require a super majority; by-laws are discussed later.

the organization most centrally responsible for the organization’s long-term well-being. The board will invariably be pulled toward more urgent, shorter-term issues, but the board will be more effective and more responsive to the organization’s “mission”<sup>3</sup> the more it insists on thinking about long-term considerations even though other things are more urgent. (Other things will *always* be more urgent.)

Here are two strategies that can be a big help in allowing the board to focus on longer term issues. First, plan all events and activities at least six months ahead; for everything the organization does, have the board address as many issues as possible as far in advance as possible so that it can consistently devote some meeting time to long-term issues. Second, delegate enough responsibility so that members of the board are not heavily-loaded doing the organization’s day-to-day work; creating new positions and working to fill them with committed volunteers can be a big help.

## League- and Tournament-Specific Positions

Once the organization runs more than one or two events—leagues or tournaments—or has more than a hundred or so people, the board alone will not be able to do all of the organization’s work. As soon as possible, the board should appoint volunteers to perform important jobs that can be done outside the board. The first such jobs will usually be event-specific positions, such as a director of a certain league or tournament.

The organization’s board should appoint at least one or preferably two people to be responsible for a given event. It is important that these volunteers communicate well with the board, so the board should choose volunteers who are not only capable and committed, but who also are easy to communicate and deal with. It is also important that these volunteers get plenty of support—particularly being told how things have been done in the past along with suggestions, assistance, contact information, and so on.

For larger events, one or two people will not be able to run the entire event on their own without being overworked. For these events especially, and for generally all events, it is helpful to create a team of volunteers who work together to make the event happen and spread the work to enough people that no one

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<sup>3</sup> If the organization is incorporated, it will have to create an official mission statement. While this can be nothing more than a legal hoop to jump through, the organization is best served by creating a mission statement (whether legally incorporating or not) by thinking hard about the purpose the organization is meant to serve. More on this appears below.

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becomes burned out. The team can be a combination of the event leaders, year-round administrative volunteers, board members, and others. It is helpful to make it clear what the structure of authority is for the team, but there is no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ way to structure such a team, other than to make sure that one or two ‘head’ people are identified who are responsible for making sure everything is done in a timely fashion.

## Year-round Administrative Positions

In addition to event-specific positions, an organization can benefit from volunteers who hold year-round administrative positions. Certain tasks must be repeated for each league or tournament that is held—for example, reserving fields, purchasing merchandise like shirts and discs, creating a schedule, and so on. Such tasks can be done efficiently by someone who has done them before, so it makes sense to put someone in charge of doing or helping with a specific task when it comes up for each event.

Exactly what positions should be created in this category may depend on the organization, its size, how many events it holds, but here are a few positions that are likely to be helpful:

**Field reservations officer** Maintains a list of fields that have been used and contact information for the fields’ owners, and does the work required to reserve fields when necessary,

**Field maintenance director and staff** Works to maintain fields the organization plays on,

**Tech person or team** Maintains organization’s website and email lists, helps with publishing schedules and rosters, helps with gathering scores (hopefully using online score-reporting),

**Volunteer recruiter/coordinator** Talks to potential volunteers, persuades them to volunteer, and matches volunteers to tasks/responsibilities as positions become open,

**Volunteer manager** Supervises the work of the other administrative volunteers and possibly the event-specific volunteers, makes sure the necessary support is provided, coordinates the work of various volunteers, and serves as a liaison between the board and the administrative volunteers.

Having a set of volunteers who take care of tasks that have to be repeated for each league or tournament can make the event-specific volunteers’ jobs a lot easier, which can make it easier to recruit volunteers and also make it more likely that volunteers will be willing to return and serve in the same role the next year.

In order to determine what positions should be created in this category, one approach is simply to make a list of all the major tasks that have to be done for each league or tournament that is held. Next, determine which tasks are repeated in largely the same way for multiple events in the same year. Then create a position for each major task. Each position should involve a manageable but significant amount of work; if there is too little work involved in the job then it should be grouped with some other position, and if there is too much work then the position should be split into two or more positions. “Too little” or “too much” is determined by the workload a “normal” volunteer can handle without feeling excessively burdened—assuming they find the work itself fairly enjoyable, the workload should be light enough that they will consider continuing in their role year after year.

## Committees

Any role in the organization could, in principle, be filled by either an individual or a group/committee. Each option has advantages and disadvantages. As discussed above, it is helpful for the organization’s top authority to be a group. Many other volunteer positions are better filled by individuals. Generally, an individual can perform a task more efficiently than a committee. That is, an individual can usually complete a task in fewer total hours, and volunteer time is probably the most important but scarce resource the organization has. Committees, however, can be a useful way to address important or difficult questions that can benefit from discussion and varying points of view. Committees can also provide a way to delegate a task that is too large for a single volunteer to handle without being overloaded.

Also, some very large events—a major tournament or large and complicated league—require a sizable group of volunteers and naming a group of people to take charge of it can be beneficial both because it allows each person to have a less demanding role and because it helps build a larger volunteer base. In these cases, it is important to identify a chairperson for the committee who is responsible for coordinating the committee’s efforts and insuring tasks are completed in a timely manner.

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## Compensation and Paid Staff

Volunteer effort is the cornerstone of virtually all Ultimate organizations. As organizations grow, however, it becomes difficult to manage them and sustain their growth without having at least one person who is able to devote more time on a consistent daily basis than a volunteer can give. Furthermore, some jobs are difficult or time-consuming enough that it is hard to recruit for them without offering some significant incentive. This section offers brief remarks about two concepts for compensating individuals—paid staff people, and stipends for specific tasks/jobs.

### Paid Staff

When an organization becomes large enough, it reaches a point where employing a part-time or full-time staff person becomes a virtual necessity...for a larger organization, the work can be too much for an all-volunteer workforce to keep day-to-day work under control while also focusing on longer-term issues. Having an employee to help manage volunteers can be a huge help toward making things more manageable.

One potential danger with having an employee is that the employee—by replacing volunteers—can become more familiar with all of the organization's affairs than anyone else, so if she/he leaves it can create a big hole in the organization's ability to get things done. One way to avoid this problem is to task the employee primarily with recruiting and coordinating volunteers, and insure that the employee is constantly training and delegating tasks to volunteers.

Organizations that have hired a part-time or full-time employee have reported very positive results from doing so. It can seem like a big step to hire an employee, and a difficult expense to afford. It is certainly important to have a clear financial plan for affording an employee's salary. But if it the organization can afford it, a paid staff person can be a huge help in allowing the organization to reach its goals.

### Stipends

Before an organization grows to the point where paid staff becomes feasible, it may still find that recruiting for certain large jobs is difficult enough that a financial incentive can be a big help. In these cases, a solution could be to offer a stipend for the job. The amount offered will usually not represent a competitive "hourly wage" for the job, but should be enough that a person feels somewhat better about giving up a substantial amount of free time to perform the job.

This amount will naturally vary by the task, and the organization will have to "feel out" what amount seems appropriate.

Offering stipends may produce multiple volunteers for the same job. It is probably a good idea to be prepared for this and to have some criteria and process for selecting among applicants. The organization's members will appreciate being able to see that the process is open and fair.

## Command Process

This section offers remarks about "command" process, the way that authority is exercised. The leaders of the organization manage responsibilities and jobs partly through the organizational structure—who has what job—but largely through "managing" peer volunteers. This can be extremely challenging—while volunteers typically have a genuine concern for things working out well, they are usually very short on time and a leader has only a limited amount of authority over them (since the volunteer can easily quit). Here are a few things a leader can do to help the command process work more effectively.

## Delegation

For the board of directors and other leaders in the organization, it is essential to delegate as much work and responsibility as possible. There is generally far more to do than the board or a manager alone can do, and the more that can be delegated, the more time will be available to work toward longer-term goals. Delegating work to volunteers can be difficult, however, since there may not appear to be anyone prepared to take up a given task. It often seems easier just to do the work oneself rather than take time to find someone to whom it can be delegated.

In order to overcome this sort of obstacle, the first point is to work hard to stay ahead of schedule. Delegating is easier if there is time to look around for a willing volunteer. The second point is to be willing to ask friends or acquaintances to help; do it gently, so that it is as easy as possible for them to say "no," and be prepared for some people to decline. Third, write down the job that needs to be done—be as specific as possible and make sure the volunteer understands the task well. (This is a case where email can be a big help.)

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## Managing Volunteers

As mentioned above, managing volunteers can be difficult because “authority” over them is always very limited. But a few basic, perhaps common-sense, people-skills can be a huge help. First, remember that a volunteer always has to be asked to do something. Avoid phrases like “I want you to...” or “your job will be to...” Instead, use phrases like, “Would you be willing to...?” or “I need someone to... Do you think you could help with that?” Second, be patient and understanding; volunteers are donating their free time, and while the board member or manager doing the delegating might also be a volunteer, not everyone will be able to make the same level of commitment.

That said, be willing to gently encourage volunteers to get things done—keep track of their progress, and make sure they don’t forget about deadlines or commitments that they previously accepted. Forgetting or losing track of time is one of the more likely reasons a volunteer might not get something done on time. Again, asking for a progress report will work better than high-pressure remarks like “don’t forget that your deadline is coming up.” It is important to make volunteers’ experiences as positive as possible, so that they will be more likely to volunteer in the future.

Finally, do not be afraid to ask a volunteer to step aside; once all reasonable efforts have been made to help someone get a job done, if it simply is not working, politely “ask” the volunteer to pass the role on to a new appointee. Firing volunteers is something that must be done rarely and carefully, or it becomes more difficult to recruit new volunteers.

## Communication

A large portion of the organization’s communication is likely to be done via email. To the extent possible, email should be avoided in favor of face-to-face or telephone conversations. Sometimes, written communication is helpful because it creates a record of exactly what is discussed or agreed to. But, as a rule, speaking with a person allows more details to be communicated more quickly and misunderstandings are often more easily avoided. A discussion can often go into greater detail and more effectively deal with difficult or controversial subjects. There are obviously cases where email can be helpful; face-to-face and phone discussions are highlighted here because the natural tendency will be to gravitate towards email.

Whether communication is written or oral, keep in mind the points above regarding delegation and managing volunteers.

## Incorporation

One step that can provide a number of advantages for an organization is to incorporate as a non-profit, or tax-exempt, organization. This can be done at any time—the organization need not have reached any particular size. It does take a significant amount of work, but offers several advantages:

**Tax-exempt status** Incorporating as a non-profit offers exemption from federal and other taxes, which can be a significant financial advantage,

**Legal protection** Incorporation offers legal advantages, including some degree of liability protection, to the organization’s officers and members,

**Legitimacy** Incorporated organizations often receive greater respect, including greater access to fields or possible approval for grants,

**Focus** The process of incorporating, which requires developing official mission statement and a set of by-laws, formally identifies the organization’s purpose and over time this can keep the organization from ignoring important reasons that it exists.

The downside for incorporating is that it takes quite a bit of work and its benefits will not always be immediate or obvious.

## Status Options

This section refers to the United States tax code. Organizations outside the United States should consult a local expert on non-profit or tax-exempt organizations.

There are two primary tax-exempt “non-profit” status options under which the local Ultimate organization may choose to incorporate. They are referred to as “501(c)3” and “501(c)4,” both named according to the section of the IRS tax code under which they appear. The former, 501(c)3, is the designation of a “charitable organization,” which allows the organization to accept tax-deductible donations. The latter, 501(c)4, is the designation for civic leagues or organizations, including those for recreational purposes.

Naturally, 501(c)3 is a more difficult designation to be approved for. “Providing adult recreational leagues”



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is not a purpose for which the IRS has expressed a willingness to grant 501(c)3 status. Ultimate organizations that have received 501(c)3 status have identified their mission as including either “education” or “fostering national and international athletic competition” (or both), purposes which the IRS has identified as appropriate for 501(c)3 organizations.

A lawyer can be a big help with the incorporation process. There is a good chance that one of the members of a local Ultimate organization is a lawyer who would be willing to help, so consider asking around to see if someone can volunteer and provide professional guidance with this.

## By-laws

When an organization incorporates, one thing it will need to supply is a set of by-laws. The by-laws are essentially a constitution for the organization, a brief document that provides the basic guidelines for how the organization is set up, how top-level decisions are made, how the organization’s leadership is selected, and what basic restrictions are placed on financial decisions.

Since countless organizations have adopted by-laws before, it is probably best to look at those used by other organizations and adapt those from another organization to fit local needs. USA Ultimate and the Philadelphia Area Disc Alliance (PADA), among other Ultimate organizations, have by-laws that can serve as an example. Go to [www.usultimate.org](http://www.usultimate.org) or [www.pada.org](http://www.pada.org) for contact information.

## Organizational Challenges

The board’s job can be very complicated, particularly as the organization grows larger, and it is impossible to discuss all of the types of issues the board will face in just a few pages. This section attempts to point out a few broad categories of issues that are likely to arise and make a few suggestions for dealing with these issues.

### Overwhelmed Volunteers and Burnout

Local Ultimate organizations will tend to grow over time if they are run well, which is a good thing for the sport both locally and globally. As the organi-

zation grows, the work involved in running everything grows too, and this tends to put an increasing load on volunteers. This need for more workers tends to make it even harder to find volunteers.

The solutions are simple, but not easy. First, make it a top organizational priority to constantly recruit and retain volunteers. Recruiting volunteers is usually most successful when done one-on-one, where a current volunteer asks a friend or teammate if they are willing to help with something, rather than by mass-mailing a list asking for volunteers.

Retaining volunteers is easier if volunteers feel supported and feel their job is manageable. So, second, spread the workload among more people by creating more positions and committing to fill them—rather than allow today’s most motivated volunteers to do everything.

## Strategic Focus

The board must spend enough time thinking about the organization’s “big picture” and its future; this is the board’s most important job and it belongs almost exclusively to the board. If the board is finding it difficult to escape from administrative details, more work needs to be delegated to volunteers outside the board. Start by identifying jobs that the board is doing that could be done by a non-board member. Write down the tasks involved with this job, the key people to talk to in order to accomplish the job, and then recruit someone to do it.

At the same time, prioritize “big picture” and long-range thinking above administrative details, particularly at board meetings. Do this at least enough of the time that the organization has a set of goals for the 2-5 year time frame. The administrative details will have enough urgency that they will not be ignored, assuming there is a committed group of volunteers in the organization, but it is easy—yet very harmful—to ignore long-term issues.

## Difficult or Unsuccessful Volunteers

Under most circumstances, the organization should welcome the willingness of any member to volunteer her or his time to help out. Occasionally, however, there may be volunteers who either perform poorly, tend to create conflict, or otherwise obstruct the smooth operation of the organization. It is not easy to

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know how to deal with these situations, but a couple things should be kept in mind. First, make every effort to resolve any problems—if there is a way to avoid “firing” a volunteer while still keeping things running well, that is usually the best course of action, even if it requires a huge commitment of patience and understanding where it does not seem to be warranted. Second, be willing to ask a volunteer to step aside; if a situation reaches the point where it is clear that removing a volunteer is the right course of action, do not hesitate. It may seem like a drastic step at the time, but if it is the conclusion of a careful thought process, it will work out for the best. Third, make any decision like this a carefully considered decision of the board of directors, and publicize it as little as possible—do not try to “cover it up,” but avoid giving the impression that the board is excited about firing volunteers or it could become more difficult to recruit volunteers.

## Discipline and Arbitration

Dealing with conflict between players and players’ behavioral problems is one of the most frustrating aspects of leading an Ultimate organization. The easiest thing to do with problems of players fighting or otherwise breaking rules is to ignore the problem altogether, or issue a brief, courteous, and firm note indicating the expectations for members of the organization. Nevertheless, from time to time, a board will have to deal with a player whose behavior cannot be ignored. In these cases, it helps to have a written policy already in place that guides the process of dealing with the matter. The most important goal for the board is to resolve the issue to an acceptable level of fairness while spending no more time on the issue than is absolutely necessary. Consider asking a single board member or other respected member of the organization to investigate the situation and make any recommendations she/he feels is in order. Then make a decision that is brief, clearly explained and fair. Unless there is a reason to think a situation reflects an ongoing, long-term problem, be sure to avoid allowing issues like this to eat up a lot of time—the organization always has more important things to consider.

## Other Ideas

**Talk to volunteers in other Ultimate organizations** The USA Ultimate website has a directory, or visit the websites of groups about the same size as yours, and email or call some of the contacts listed. Ultimate volunteers are usually excited to talk about their group and the things they are doing, and their issues are very likely to be the same as yours.

**Look to other small non-profit organizations** While local Ultimate organizations face certain issues that are unique to Ultimate, most issues are probably common among small non-profit organizations. Local volunteers can learn a lot by talking to people involved in other organizations in your area. Some groups to look for: small recreational athletic organizations (soccer clubs, cricket clubs), disc golf groups, social clubs, environmental groups, garden clubs. Generally, volunteers involved with non-profit organizations are friendly and very happy to talk about their organization. Depending on the organization, it can be a good idea to speak with a group’s board members, since these are often the most dedicated volunteers and the ones most familiar with the most aspects of the group.

## Summary

A local Ultimate organization can be difficult to run, though perhaps no more difficult than other small volunteer clubs or groups. This chapter has described several simple steps that an organization can take to better accomplish its goals and remain stable over the long term. To summarize, the following four points are key recommendations for local Ultimate organizations:

- Create a clear, simple organizational structure with a group like a board of directors at the top.
- Create enough other positions so that the workload on any one person is light enough that burnout is rare.
- Constantly work to recruit volunteers to fill these roles.
- Identify, focus on, and work toward long-term goals.

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# DiscNW

## A Great Example of Everything an Ultimate Organization Can Be [www.DiscNW.org](http://www.DiscNW.org)

As written on its website, [www.discnw.org](http://www.discnw.org), *DiscNW is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established in 1995 to promote and support the sport of Ultimate. DiscNW was incorporated with the mission to “serve as a regional resource, promoting growth in the sport of Ultimate and instilling the spirit of sportsmanship at all levels of play.”*

**DiscNW as an organization is a clearing house for ways Ultimate players in and around the Seattle area can promote and play Ultimate.**

### **Opportunities to Play**

DiscNW provides information about leagues, tournaments, pick-up games and local teams as well as information about issues unique to youth Ultimate include coaching resources and fund-raising information

### **Field information and improvement**

DiscNW provides maps to and a description of all the possible playing fields, including surface area and dimensions, in the area. It also advocates for new and/or improved playing fields. For example, DiscNW was instrumental in getting the Magnuson Park upgrade approved. In addition, DiscNW found a park in the suburb of Shoreline that is already a lit sand sports field. Though the parks department there is interested in upgrading to field turf they are short of money for the project. DiscNW is trying to persuade them to go ahead, and promises to help close the funding gap. The organization is pursuing a paid membership structure, donations, and grants, more or less simultaneously, to fund capital projects like this.

### **Hosting on-line discussions**

DiscNW provides a forum to discuss issues concerning the Ultimate community and even has a bulletin board for items left behind and then found on or near the playing fields.

### **Photo sharing**

DiscNW provides avid Ultimate photographers a way to share photos and videos

### **Linking to other sites**

DiscNW links to all sorts of other Ultimate related information.