

Introduction

Welcome to the Tightrope Risk Management Program and this companion course on **Hazing Prevention**. The peer-to-peer session outlined here is meant to be completed after finishing the Tightrope online module. Using the knowledge gained from the online module, complete this session with your new member class to begin building brotherhood in a safe, productive way that doesn't include hazing.

Session Overview

Shared experiences and challenges can strengthen the bond between brothers, but it's important that these opportunities be inclusive of all members, equally, and that they are healthy, safe, and productive ways of building brotherhood. Hazing activities are dysfunctional, unproductive ways of bringing people together based on fear and power dynamics. Although these activities may feel like bonding experiences at the time, coercion, force, and fear tactics are never recommended for building true friendships. This session will help you open up about hazing as a member class and prompt you to come up with your own way of building brotherhood relationships without it.

Session Outline

Total Duration: 60 min.

- I. Review the online module (15 min.)
- II. Step Back Activity (20 min.)
- III. Plan a chapter brotherhood activity (25 min.)

Goals of the Session

- Review the online module
- Recognize hazing behaviors
- Identify hazing behaviors as wrong
- Design a brotherhood activity that meets the following guidelines:
 - Helps you learn about your brothers
 - Does not separate the fraternity by member class
 - Does not include alcohol or hazing

Materials Needed

- This companion guide
- Scrap paper or notecards
- Paper/plastic bag or a bowl
- Step Back Activity prompt **See the Resources section at the end of this document.*

Room Setup

- Use a large, open room with plenty of space for a seated group discussion (could be seated on the floor), as well as room to form one long line. Members will be stepping away from the line, so there should be room to take 2-3 steps back from where you form the line.

Detailed Breakdown & Instructions

Read through the instructions and session details at least a day in advance of your session. This will give you time to obtain materials, rearrange rooms, if needed, and complete any additional preparation.

Duration: 15 min.
<p>Introduction & Review of Online Module</p> <p><i>[With everyone in a large group, introduce what you'll be discussing today. Use the text below as an example.]</i></p> <p>Today we're going to brainstorm a brotherhood event that doesn't include hazing. Before we do that, we need to make sure everyone is on the same page about what hazing is, so we'll review the online module first.</p> <p><i>[After you've introduced the session, lead a quick activity to review the online module.]</i></p> <p>Step 1: <i>Pass out scrap paper or notecards to each person, and tell them that they'll be using these to help review the online module. You'll ask them a couple of questions, and they should answer each question on a different piece of paper.</i></p> <p>Step 2: <i>Ask them to answer the following question on a piece of scrap paper, and then place it in the bag or bowl.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What was one thing you learned from the module that you didn't know before?</i> <p><i>When everyone has submitted their answer, draw anonymously from the bag or bowl and read some of the answers in front of the group. (You could also allow members to take turns drawing slips of paper.)</i></p> <p><i>After you've read a few answers, empty the bowl, and ask the second question. Repeat the process.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is a point, suggestion, or advice from the module that resonated with you?</i> <p><i>After you've read a few answers, empty the bowl again, and ask the third question. Repeat the process.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What experiences have you heard about from friends (or had yourself) that you recognize now as hazing?</i> <p><i>Read a few answers anonymously from the bowl. Then, move on to the next activity.]</i></p>
Duration: 20 min.
<p>Step Back Activity</p> <p><i>[Talking about hazing can be difficult because it is often a subject that may affect people in a deeply personal or vulnerable way. It could be that members don't want to talk about it at all, or they may get defensive of their opinions. Let your members know that for the purpose of the next activity everyone should listen respectfully. Although hazing is never acceptable, it's important to create a space where brothers can talk about it openly, regardless of their stance. Use the text below as an example of what to say:</i></p>

In the next activity we're going to analyze a story that might have some questionable behavior. We're going to form a line, and if we think that any parts of the story border on hazing, we should step back from the line and share why we stepped back. People may have different opinions, so this is our opportunity to talk about them.

In this activity you'll have everyone stand in a line while you read a hypothetical story. As you read the story, members should step back, away from the line, if they feel like the actions have gone too far and turned into hazing. You'll ask members to share why they stepped back, and then continue reading until the story is over. Use the Step Back Activity prompt in the Resources section.]

Duration: 25 min.

Plan a Chapter Brotherhood Activity

[After you've identified what hazing can potentially look like during events, plan your own brotherhood event that is the opposite. Break into pairs or groups of four, follow the guidelines below, and create something new.

- 1. Activity that helps you learn about your brothers*
- 2. Does not separate the fraternity by member class*
- 3. Does not involve alcohol*
- 4. Does not include hazing*

When each group has created their event, present it to everyone. Hold a vote to determine which event wins. Once the winning event has been chosen, thank your members for participating, and end the session.]

Session Resources

Step Back Activity Prompt

*Tightrope Risk Management Program
Hazing Prevention*

Use the following story to help your members identify where they stand on situations that could border on hazing. Remember, this is meant to prompt open discussion between brothers, so everyone should voice their opinions respectfully and show the same courtesy to others.

Directions:

Read the statement below out loud to your members before beginning, then read them the following story. When you see members step back from the line, stop reading, and ask them to share what made them step back. Then continue on with the script. There may be multiple points at which members step back (potential hazing moments are underlined). Allow them to describe their decision at each point in the situation. Continue reading the story until all members have stepped back or until the story ends.

“In this activity I’m going to read a hypothetical story to you. Imagine yourself in the situation and consider what you would do. If at any point you think the actions in the story have become examples of hazing, take a step back from the line. Once you’ve stepped back, stay in place.”

It was the week after recruitment, and our pledges were starting their new member education. On Wednesday night we had a fraternity history lesson scheduled, where an alumni would teach important facts, dates, and founders. When the pledges got there, the alumni weren’t there, and an older member said that he was going to give the history lesson, instead. He started to quiz the pledges, asking them more than one question in a row. When a pledge didn’t know the answer, he yelled at them and started a tally to count who got the most answers wrong. At the end of the night he told the four losing pledges to stay after. He told them that they needed to up their game if they were going to prove that their bids weren’t a mistake.

On Thursday a house meeting was planned to go over rules and cleaning schedules. The pledges didn’t live-in, but, while they were pledging, it was their responsibility to keep the house clean to show respect for their future home. The pledges with the worst history quiz tally from the night before were told to go pick up pizza for the meeting. On the way to get it, their car got a flat tire. By the time they got back the meeting was over and the pizza was cold. Some active brothers were mad that they didn’t get dinner, so the pledge educator told the four pledges that they were on trash duty for the rest of the night to make up for it. The four waited around for the remaining actives to finish the pizza and then cleaned it up. Then, they stayed until 2 in the morning to pick up after individual brothers who had trash that needed to be picked up.

On Friday we hosted a party to celebrate our new pledges. Some actives who lived out heard about the pizza incident and told the four pledges that they must be idiots and were on thin ice. Since they had messed up twice, they were put on driving duty for the night and weren’t allowed to be part of the big brother tradition. The rest of the pledges were given a handle with a name taped upside-down to the bottom. Each pledge had to finish the handle so they could read the name through the glass of the empty bottle and find out who their big brother was. Pledges who drank too slowly would get one hit from an active’s paddle for every minute he fell behind the leader—otherwise they’d be there all night.