

TIMELY TIPS

Staff Management

Ladder Building & Coverage Planning

OBJECTIVE

Students will understand the purpose of the yearbook ladder as the roadmap for coverage, deadlines and staff responsibilities.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Whiteboard/projector
- **Copies of blank ladder templates**
- Markers/sticky notes

PART 1

INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

As a class, brainstorm all the major content areas/events that must be covered. Use sticky notes to write one event or topic per note. On a large wall ladder chart (or shared Google Sheet), begin assigning pages:

- Place sticky notes into page slots to build out the ladder.
- Mark each with staff member(s) responsible and the expected deadline.
- Color-code by section (Student Life, Sports, Academics, Clubs, etc.).

PART 2

COVERAGE GAP ANALYSIS (15-20 MINUTES)

Discuss gaps in coverage. Ask:

- Do all grade levels have fair coverage?
- Are clubs and smaller activities included?
- Where do we need "flex" pages for unexpected stories?

By the end of class, the staff should have a rough draft ladder with at least half of the book mapped.

PART 3

WRAP UP AND REFLECTION (10 MINUTES)

Discuss as a class:

What was the hardest part of deciding coverage? What strategies will help us avoid missing important events?

Encourage students to take photos of the wall ladder or bookmark the digital version. Remind them that this ladder is a living document, but after the first major deadline, changes should be minimal.