

HOW TO CREATE A PHONE TREE

A phone tree is an easy and efficient method to quickly disseminate information to your group. Select someone in your group to be the coordinator. Then create a flow chart with the coordinator at the top and group members below. The size of your organization will determine how many people each person calls. But, for example, the coordinator might be responsible for phoning three people. Those three people will be responsible for phoning three more people, who in turn might each phone three more people, etc., until everyone in your organization is contacted.

The coordinator should be responsible for initiating the phone tree, so anyone who wants to put a message out to the group should phone the coordinator with the message. S/he will be in charge of initiating the tree.

Important points to remember:

- Write the message down on a piece of paper. Make sure each person you phone also writes down the message. Have them read it back to you to ensure they heard it correctly.
- If someone is not home, leave a message on their machine, but continue calling the next person on the list until you actually get someone on the line. Do not assume a message left on an answering machine will be passed on to others.
- Make sure everyone in the group has a complete phone list of all members, in case someone is not home. The person making the calls will continue down the list until they reach three people personally.
- Remind group members not to speculate in their phone tree calls - they should just pass on essential information.
- Make sure the last people in the tree phone the coordinator to repeat back the message. This will ensure that everyone has received it properly.

