Outlining Your Retreat or Group Session

Use the following suggestions when considering how you should outline the schedule of activities and discussions at your next retreat or group session.

- What is the goal of this collecting of people?
  - Review purpose – mission, vision, and goals
  - What participants will walk away knowing, being, doing

- Ground Rules and Question Box
  - Establish Ground Rules:
    - “Don’t be a jerk”
    - Step Up; Step Back
    - What else would they add?
  - Question Box: Activity let participants know that there will be an opportunity for them to discuss burning topics and/or questions from each other. Encourage them to submit to the question box.

- Icebreaker and Micro-Lab
  - Break students into groups of 4 to 6, have them sit in a circle facing each other. A series of questions will be posed to the groups – say to 3 to 4 questions. Each group should pick someone to start. Pose the first question. Each person will have 30 to 45 seconds to answer the question (they must fill the time!), then it moves to the next person, and so on until everyone has spoken. Then a new person starts, next question posed.
  - Questions:
    1. What do you hope to take away from this experience?
    2. How do you define leadership?
    3. Who is a leader, mentor, coach, etc that you look up to? Why?
    4. Describe a positive group experience. What did the leader(s) do to make it positive?
    5. Do you consider yourself to be a leader, why or why not?
    6. What is one thing you would change about MIT?
    7. What is one thing you love about MIT?
  - De-Brief:
    1. How was that? Too much time, too little time?
    2. Did you say anything that surprised you? Or did anyone else say something that resonated with you?
  - Make sure to encourage everyone to continue these conversations!

- “Burning Issues” and Topics Roundtable
  - Tell students about this in the morning introductions. Provide strips of paper for students to write questions they have about leadership or issues they run into within leadership positions. Review those questions and provide an opportunity for dialogue based on the questions.

- Looking Forward (at the end of your group session or retreat)
  - What’s next? What have you learned about yourself?
    - Do a go around:
      1. What is one thing you have learned about yourself and/or how has your thinking of leadership changed?
      2. What is one thing that you’re excited to take back to your student organization?
  - What are you taking back to your Student Organization?