When this topic came up, both of us looked back to our nearly two year history of working together and thought it would be interesting to see a partnership article from the perspectives of a current headquarters staff member (Tyler) and a former campus-based advisor turned consultant (Dan). We threw around some concepts, and even wrote an entire article before opting to scrap it two days before deadline because it didn’t “feel authentic” to us. So we bounced a few more ideas around and came back to the concept of our philosophy of working together, which has yielded great results and partnership opportunities over the course of our time working together.

For quite some time, Zeta Psi Fraternity has been a great kept secret, keeping to themselves as an international organization, and maintaining the status quo within its organization. Recognizing the shift occurring in higher education, and wanting to be a premier opportunity for male development, Zeta Psi decided the best place to look was to higher education partners and colleagues. Zeta Psi knows partnering with campuses is paramount to continued success, and continues to seek out places where we can thrive while advancing our fraternal movement. The fraternity decided to partner with CAMPUSPEAK and LaunchPoint on two new chapter development and recruitment endeavors. But just like we tell our students to build relationships and not focus on events, that’s exactly what needed to happen for us to move forward. We needed to build a partnership.

Too many times policies are put in place without much thought to why they exist in the first place. Enter philosophy as a waypoint to navigate those waters. Just like we should create a philosophy to guide policies, we needed to ground our partnership in a philosophy. That being said, we would like to provide our philosophical framework for the partnership we have been able to create:

- **Open and honest communication.** The easiest things to say and one of the hardest things to do; however, when you approach any issue with openness and honesty, the conversation might get awkward or difficult, but in the end you know that it’s still given with respect in hopes of accomplishing the shared goal.
- **“We” concept.** Imagine recruiting for an organization that is not your own. That’s exactly the situation Zeta Psi and CAMPUSPEAK were in when they contracted Dan Faill to recruit their re-founding fathers at two universities. Zeta Psi’s values are secret and ritual based, so the task was no small feat: recruit men that will be the future leaders on campus and
in the fraternity while living values that can’t be shared. However, when the conversation is no longer focused on “us versus them” but how “we” (collectively) can succeed, it truly is impressive how easy it is to find yourself a part of a team and not just a contract.

- **Growth mentality.** We don’t have all the answers, but we can have conversations and debates that lead to a better understanding of the next steps and possibilities of ways to operate and function as a fraternity. This mindset serves as a powerful tool and unconscious way to acknowledge that you don’t know everything, and we are better together.

- **Shifting expectations.** Campus environments change. Student needs change. To be quite frank, shift happens. So, when a curve ball is thrown your way, you can adapt as best as possible.

While somewhat standard and elementary, this framework has led to a true partnership between our respective organizations. It has been amazing and freeing to be able to provide real-time feedback, frustrations, successes, and brainstorm new ways of operation, while staying true to our mission: to help the members of Zeta Psi experience fraternity done right. The partnership of Zeta Psi and CAMPUSPEAK continues to grow and change, utilizing the skills of a 15-year campus-based fraternity/sorority advisor with an international fraternity ready and willing to create lasting partnerships with campuses and professionals as well. From here, we are already in conversations on the best ways to engage Zeta Psi’s multiple international chapters in Canada and overseas to create an international fraternal experience that truly spans the globe, educating undergraduates and international partners on the values and benefits of having fraternities and sororities as a part of the student experience. We are also in conversations about the best ways to utilize CAMPUSPEAK’s consulting and coaching expertise in order to bring the Zeta Psi Fraternity experience to campuses with an interest in recognizing an organization that is ready and willing to be at the forefront of advancing the fraternal movement.

Our challenge to our partners in progress is this: How will you create a philosophy of partnerships with those around you?

---

*Tyler is the associate executive director of Zeta Psi Fraternity and Zeta Psi Educational Foundation, having worked for both entities for over 10 years in various roles. Tyler graduated with a B.A. in political science from Seton Hall University and immediately began traveling as a leadership consultant for Zeta Psi. Originally reworking the consultant program in 2013, it has gone through many reiterations in his time on staff now including weekly video conferencing and semester visits – which he believes are paramount in creating lasting relationships with our members. Tyler is*
recently married to the love of his life, Margaret, and tries to spend free time traveling the world with her. He has a love of Seton Hall Basketball (Go Pirates!), sports, and all things Harry Potter.

Dan Faill worked in FSL communities for over a decade before becoming a full time professional speaker in 2018. Dan was a founding father of his chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, and he traveled as a leadership and education consultant after receiving his B.A. degree. After traveling, he attended the University of the Pacific receiving his M.A. degree, and then worked in higher education at the University of the Pacific, Loyola Marymount University, Elon University, and UCLA, serving as the fraternity/sorority advisor in most of those capacities. Dan is now a full time professional speaker, coach, and facilitator with CAMPUSPEAK, and he serves as director of coaching & consulting with LaunchPoint. He served on the AFA Foundation board of directors for two years, and he currently serves as a Critical Conversations facilitator for Pi Beta Phi Fraternity for Women. He enjoys whatever free time he has spending it with his two children who also live in Los Angeles. He's also a lover of pop culture and nerdy things, and misses sweet tea dearly.