

Slide 1 – no notes

Slide 2 - Member organizations can be frustrating. If you speak to leaders of these organizations, this will be a part of the discussion in a short amount of time. These organizations are based on members who often are unavailable to volunteer but hold the organization to a very high standard. This can lead to an inability to move goals forward because members will get involved but ultimately blame the organization for a lack of success. The end result is membership loss. Fortunately, membership recruitment and retention strategies are symbiotic.

Slide 3 - Organizations fail when they take the approach of “doing what is best” for the member even if the members do not agree. Organizations easily focus on the very big picture and miss the smaller steps that are critically important to members. While the approach may seem beneficial in the long term, member engagement will wane as members see a parenting approach.

To develop a complete value-based approach and increase recruitment and retention, organizations should develop goals around the big picture while also including goals membership has shared as wants. Approach all goals with the same enthusiasm. As the members see wins for their wants, they will focus on their long-term needs.

Slide 4 - DEFINE VALUES BASED ON MEMBER NEEDS..AND WANTS

It is common for members and leaders to have differing ideas of what is best. Members of a professional organization may focus on ideas such as respect, pay, social concerns, and continuing education. Leaders may focus on a bigger picture such as long-term viability of the profession, political positioning, and workforce retooling. Members will rally behind the big picture, but only if they see equal time spent on their goals

Organizations fail when they take the approach of “doing what is best” for the member even if the members do not agree. Organizations easily focus on the very big picture and miss the smaller steps that are critically important to members. While the approach may seem beneficial in the long term, member engagement will wane as members see a parenting approach.

To develop a complete value-based approach and increase recruitment and retention, organizations should develop goals around the big picture while also

including goals membership has shared as wants. Approach all goals with the same enthusiasm. As the members see wins for their wants, they will focus on their long-term needs.

ENGAGE Membership engagement is a common problem for most member-based organizations. Members have little free time or desire to engage unless they feel the return will be significant. You need to find ways to engage your members. One way to achieve this is to develop accountability for those who voice concern. If a member shares a concern, tap them to work on the solution. If a member voices concern over continuing education, enlist them to chair a committee to focus on continuing education.

BE PERSONAL Everyone likes when a boss or coworker takes a personal interest in them. Members are no exception. It is very common for leaders to position themselves in meetings in such a way that they appear unapproachable. Leaders may sit on a platform, voice their goals, and then at breaks retreat to be near each other. Leaders need to branch out and communicate with members. Some organizations ask leaders to spread out in the meeting room, sit with groups at lunches, or form groups during breaks with people they have never spoken too. This may be awkward for the leaders in the beginning, but the impact can be life changing for members who may have never had a chance to interact face to face with the leaders of their organization.

REACH OUT TO LAPSING MEMBERS It is essential to view membership as a recruitment and retention strategy. Recruitment is not the only mission of a strong membership campaign. Recruitment fails if members decide to lapse after the first year. It is harder to gain a new member than recover a lapsed one in most cases. Members lapse for a variety of reasons. Many will voice a concern over membership fees or that they feel the goals of the organization do not reflect their goals. This is often a knee-jerk answer that is not a true reflection of the reason they chose not to renew. Organizations often fail to accept that members will not simply join or renew just because the leaders feel their goals are right. Reaching out to members, especially a lapsed member, can be the difference between salvaging a member or losing one.

A good membership committee plan includes retention policies. Who will call your lapsed members when they fail to renew? How will you track their reasons? What will be your reply to commonly given reasons or will the committee just nod their head and make a checkmark next to a box? Knowing what to say to a member and when to relay issue up the line are critical.

BE ADAPTABLE Change can be difficult, but it is inevitable. The organization of twenty years ago will likely not succeed today unless it has continued to adapt its mission. Organizations need to be willing to accept that their mission may need to be altered in order to remain relevant to members. The best ideals fail without

strong member support and a membership organization without members is powerless. A regular strategy meeting with leaders and members where everything is on the table can ensure that the organization does not become fixed and immovable and allows effective recruitment and retention.

Slide 5 - It is critically important to any membership recruitment campaign that you answer this question first before all others. If you are not able to explain or quantify the value of membership you will be unable to develop a successful recruitment campaign. One might argue that if you are unable to answer this question, your organization has bigger problems

You should begin by evaluating the programs and services you provide, the number of members that use each and the value each program brings to those members. Is your membership value in the educational resources you provide, continuing education and accreditation and tradeshow or conference discounts? Affinity programs that cut costs off a member's corporate bottom line or their state and local advocacy efforts? What are programs and services that set your organization apart from others who provide the same or similar programs or services? If you can determine this, it will allow you to create a more compelling message, write strong promotional copy and clearly articulate the value of membership.

Slide 6 - no notes

Slide 7 - no notes

Slide 8 – no notes

Slide 9 - **Give current members a recruiting toolkit.** If you're like most associations, your current members are your best sales people. How do you support them? Make sure they have appropriate tools to help explain why someone should join, including talking points about the benefits of membership.

This could be paper-based pamphlets or member application forms, or could simply be boiler-plate text that current members can copy-and-paste into emails or Facebook messages that they send to colleagues.

Offer one event a year at your 'members-only' rate. If you usually have one rate for members and another for non-members, pick one signature event and offer it to anyone at the members price. This is a great demonstration of the kind of value they will get if they do decide to join -- which you should be sure to mention during said event!

Co-host an event with another association. Cross-promotion can be a great way to grow membership for both organizations. Consider the possibility of offering discounts to members of another organization as further incentive to join.

Simplify the sign-up process. Creating an online membership application form and using a web-based payment system can make it a lot easier for prospective members to get on-board with your organization. At the same time, make sure you don't paint yourself in a corner by forcing new members to sign-up online -- some of them may still prefer to sign a form and write a check. Make sure your systems can accommodate both online and offline payments.

Run ads on social media sites. Facebook Ads and LinkedIn DirectAds both start at around \$10 per campaign. And because people enter so much personal and professional information into these kinds of sites, you can get VERY specific with who you target. Recruiting for the Philadelphia Fisheries Workers Association? You can reach fishermen in Philly directly using LinkedIn's targeting.

Hold a club assembly only on membership

Give the membership chair one minute at every club meeting

Service projects that serve a need in the community

Print club business cards with club meeting location and time

Hold wine and cheese receptions for prospective members

Make prospective members feel important

Use group email to promote your club

Ask corporations and employers to sponsor or subsidize membership

Have a reward program for those who bring in new members

Create more fun

Give a money back guarantee—if after 3 months a new member does not want to be a club member, return their fees

Invite the media to cover well known speakers

Use word of mouth

Network with coworkers, friends, and family

Follow up with guests

Have members give talks at other organizations

Participate in community events

Write letters to the newspaper about the campaigns your club is working on

Publicize club successes, elections, events, in local newspapers

Circulate the club newsletter widely

Design a club brochure

Form/join a speakers' bureau

Wear your club's pin

Mention your club at meetings of other organizations during announcements
Send newsletter to guests
When asked about your leadership skills & career success, tell them about your club
Ask every member to submit 3 prospects to the membership chair
Give testimonials about your club while guests are at the meeting
Repeatedly invite prospective members
Practice selling your club at Club meetings—have a one minute elevator speech ready
Bring your boss to a club meeting
Make direct contact with women's business associations
Bring your co-workers to a club meeting
Bring your subordinates to a club meeting
Have new member kits
Have members constantly promote and rave about your club
Have incentives for recruitment
Contact all members who have resigned in the past 3 years
Invite spouses to social functions

Slide 10 - What you think is a minor change in the process may turn into a significant change to your prospective membership outreach process producing improved results. When possible, test your changes to ensure you are heading in the right direction.

Include networking tips in newsletter or new member pack. Networking is a primary reason for joining and one of the most important benefits to offer. Produce a short article or checklist on how to use these networking opportunities more effectively. Add to a meeting or convention brochure. Also could fax the list to pre-registered attendees shortly before conference.

Use testimonials from some members who aren't active but still feel membership is valuable. If members feel we understand and are trying to help them cope with challenges they are more likely to renew. Ask those who are not active but continue to renew to contact other inactive members.

Consider conducting focus groups Members with varying years of experience focusing on the needs of a small segment. New member focus group. Send all participants an agenda and set of rules. Take attendance; let everyone know who is attending. Make a list of who speaks so you know who to ask for input.

Give an incentive, such as a free gift, to members who renew by a certain date. Communicate successes to members regularly.

Generate segmented and targeted renewal notices. Tell each segment how membership benefited them this year.

Send a special certificate of thanks to first-time renewals. The first two years produce the most drops. Focus hard on the first renewal.

Identify and recognize members with the most tenure. Sends a message that people stay a long-time.

Identify at least four specific contacts to make with first year members that are above and beyond the normal. Phone, fax or special newsletter.

Color code correspondence so members can quickly identify types of information. (Such as one for educational info., one for legislative, etc.)

Institute a "thank you" column in publication to recognize members for involvement and leadership.

Send a member profile form to new members to gain information.

Have a special edition of your publication focus on how your organization is helping members prepare for the next century.

Be sure your Web page has hot links to individual members for business referrals and networking purposes.

Keep experienced members active through targeted involvement. Need to keep older members and new ones interested and involved. Keep the activities meaningful.

Produce materials that clearly show what the company/employer gains by joining and participating in your organization.

Consider having a meeting, designated to invite potential members, have a well planned meeting and targeted interactions.

During functions, suggest that officers look for new members and spend time with them. Make sure new members' nametags indicate their status.

Scan industry, professional, and community publications, as well as the Internet, for ads by members. Try to get them to use the association logo or some sign of affiliation.

Place videos of past meetings on website for members only – Select part of one or a whole video occasional on the general access section of website

Establish standards for responding to members. one way is to put individual e-mail addresses of key leaders on your Web site

Send mini-surveys that can be done quickly (via email).

Increase meeting attendance by featuring an interview with the meeting's keynote speaker in the publication that comes out a month before the meeting.

List new members on your Web site.

Combine and coordinate all forms of member communication to support membership recruitment and retention efforts.

There are only two forms of currency that you can use to pay members: Recognition and Tradition!! Look for any opportunity to recognize any member's contribution. Create a Tradition in your chapter and recognize those that uphold that tradition.

Assign a hostess or mentor for each new member for a few meetings, so that he/she has someone to sit with. Orientation meetings for prospective members and the new membership that has already joined are very important. In these meetings all the responsibilities and obligations of membership should be covered. It is only after complete explanation of the workings of your association that the new member will decide if this is what he/she wants to join. After realizing what he/her responsibility will be, you can be fairly sure that he/she will make a good working member when she does join.

Have new members serve as greeters during a meeting so they can get to know all the members.

Keep the FUN in fundraisers, community service activities and meetings to get members interested and involved. You can still accomplish your goals while keeping the process lively and fun.

Remember that the best time to retain members is BEFORE they show signs of dissatisfaction. Make sure members know you care about them. If they start missing meetings or are becoming less involved in activities, give them a call to find out why before it becomes a chronic situation.

Encourage input from your members regarding your association's community activities. Ask new members for their ideas — they may have some fresh, exciting thoughts, and asking for their input will show that you are interested in their opinions.

Involve new members in association activities immediately. Have them participate in an event as soon as they show an interest in your chapter. Ask them to co-chair a committee or coordinate a small activity in the early stages of their membership. Ask those that have benefited from your associations services to speak to your chapter.

Periodically ask long-term members what their interests are, as these will develop and change over time. Assign responsibilities based on their interests, and give them increasing responsibilities to challenge them and keep them motivated. 50.

Inspire and motivate members at the beginning of each association/board year by holding a "meet the officers" session, giving members a forum to ask new officers questions about their goals and direction for the association during the upcoming year. Seek members' input to help solidify goals.

Don't let activities and fundraisers become stale. Make sure that your activities are still relevant for your community and your members. Periodically try something new.

If it does not happen inside some of the projects above; make sure there is effort to keep addresses up to date (mail, email and fax and phone)

Slide 11 – no notes

Slide 12 – no notes