

Membership Ideas

Simple, Effective Strategies for Boosting Your Membership Efforts

Recruitment

- Never underestimate the power of public relations. Be sure to publicize your club's activities. Positive media coverage builds community support and interest in your club.
- Always have your club's brochures available at public events. Have a section on the brochure with contact information if people are interested in learning more about your club.
- Have an "Invite a Friend" night during one of your club's meetings. Encourage every member to bring a friend to the event to learn more about Lions clubs membership.
- Allow members to bring a friend or prospect to help out during one of your clubs service activities or fundraisers to get a first-hand look at your club in action.
- Hold a membership open house. Ask each member to invite at least five people and open the event to the public. Set up displays highlighting your club's contributions to the community and have members on hand to answer questions for attendees.
- Challenge your members to meet a specific recruitment goal for the year. Plan a fun, festive kick-off for the membership recruitment challenge during your meeting. Keep momentum going by reporting your success during meetings and in your club's newsletter and Web site.
- Encourage members to invite every qualified individual they encounter to consider Lions clubs membership. Remind them periodically throughout the year.
- Show your pride. Build the impression of your club as a vital part of the community. March in community parades and participate in community events whenever possible.
- Ask community welcome organizations to include information about your club in their "welcome to the community" packets. Local real estate agents may also be able to provide this service.
- Appraise the "competition." Most communities have several organizations that compete for the same members. Look at the opportunities that your club offers that other clubs might not provide. Also review the areas where other clubs may excel – a more convenient meeting time and place, for example. Make adjustments if appropriate and feasible.
- During a club meeting, have each member write down five people that they feel would be good prospects for membership. Have the individual members or your membership committee pursue the prospects.
- Have buttons or t-shirts made for each active member that says "Ask me About Lions" to elicit questions from community members.
- Have your club's meeting time and location, along with a contact name and number for membership inquiries, placed in the community calendar section of a local newspaper.
- Look at your partners for new members. Does your club work with the school system, eye health professionals or other community businesses? People that have worked with your club first-hand are often excellent prospects.
- Consider unique extension efforts, such as sponsoring a Club Branch or New Century Lions Club, to reach a new demographic.

Retention

- 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.
- To lessen the effects of cliques, rotate the seating at club meetings by requesting that everyone move to a different seat at the start of the meeting, or by having members draw a table number on their way into the meeting.
- Give praise freely. Saying “thanks” for a job well done, whether during a club meeting, in your club’s newsletter, on the Web site or by a personal note, will help members feel appreciated.
- 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 club’s service 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 club activities immediately. Have them participate in an event as soon as they show an interest in your club. Ask them to co-chair a committee or coordinate a small activity in the early stages of their membership.
- Look for unusual club programs – solicit area art museums, theatre groups or music groups to present a program. Ask those that have benefited from your club’s services to speak to your club.
- Pair new members with long-term members as co-chairpersons on committees. They will each benefit from the experience.
- To keep your club meetings interesting, make an agenda that includes only relevant items and keep content brief.
- Tape record or videotape a club meeting to evaluate your ability to lead a meeting. Make changes as necessary.
- 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.
- Inspire and motivate members at the beginning of each Lions year by holding a “meet the officers” session, giving members a forum to ask new officers questions about their goals and direction for the club during the upcoming year. Seek members’ input to help solidify goals.
- Don’t let activities and fundraisers become stale. Make sure that your club’s activities are still relevant for your community and your members. Periodically try something new.