10 Tips to Increase Membership

Every chapter should have a good mix of membership strategies for retention and to increase growth. The start of a new year is a good time to evaluate your membership plan.

1. **Exude a warm and welcoming attitude.**
   A warm and welcoming executive can translate into a warm and welcoming chapter. Your executive needs to take a pro-active approach in meeting and greeting potentially new members. The president, in fact, should stand at the door and shake the hand of members and guests as they come in for your monthly meeting. It can be hard for people to walk into a roomful of people they don’t know. Introduce yourself, take an interest in them, and introduce them to other members.

2. **Get new members involved on committees and special projects.**
   Ensure that members are aware of what your committees are and encourage them to get involved. A wide variety of skills and talents are needed to run a successful club and everyone’s contribution is needed. Use your club website to feature all the committees and what they do.

3. **Get to know your members.**
   Make sure your executive, including the Membership Secretary and his/her committee, makes a special effort to get to know each member by name. This can be a challenge, as your group grows, but it is essential. A member needs to feel that he or she is a valued part of the club, regardless of how much service or volunteer hours are contributed.

4. **Set up a club website.**
   People increasingly expect an organization to have a website. Online search has become the most common and easiest way to research an organization for more information. You want to ensure that you are not missing out on valuable exposure online. Setting up a club website is also a valuable resource to your members who need to find timely club information quickly and easily.

5. **Show enthusiasm for your chapter’s purpose and activities.**
   This may sound like a no-brainer, but show your support and enthusiasm for your chapter. It’s contagious! Don’t apologize or talk negatively about what is going on, or for a lack of events. Instead, be a change agent to plan interesting activities or programs.

6. **Make everything you do a “media event.”**
   Now that digital cameras are so easy to use, take a picture at all your events—your keynote speaker at the monthly meeting, your new members, when you meet a special guest—and send it to your local newspapers. Newspapers, especially weeklies, are always looking for items of local interest.

7. **Have a membership contest!**
   Any member who brings in a new member during the year has their name put into a hat. The drawing is held at the end of the year. And the winner gets a gift certificate or a gift. The key issue is that your membership grows as a result of a collaborative effort.

8. **Challenge every member to bring a friend to at least one meeting during the year.**
   Keep a tally of who brings the most different guests and give some kind of recognition at the end of the year.

9. **Make use of other organizations in your community to “spread the word” about your chapter.**
   Service clubs, networking organizations, and professional associations are always looking for speakers. Most municipal councils are open to presentations by local non-profit organization. Recruit members who will form a speakers’ bureau to talk about the club and its activities and projects.

10. **Want to get the media more interested in what you’re doing?**
    Invite a local journalist to speak at your meeting. When one club invited the assistant managing editor of the local newspaper, she not only spoke about her life in the media but also gave tips for ways to get better media coverage.