

II. THREE STEPS TO MEMBERSHIP SUCCESS

Three Steps to Membership Success will help you strengthen your club. It contains proven strategies that work. Some were learned through operation of QI's Leaders as Listeners Program since 1995. Others were learned from clubs which created and shared them through Quota International's annual Excellence Award program.

STEP 1: MAKE YOUR QUOTA HEART BEAT!

Techniques to increase member satisfaction in your club: Find out why members join and stay in Quota. Create a member survey. You CAN encourage increased participation in your club. Pages 9 - 10.

STEP 2: KNOW THY CLUB, GROW THY CLUB

Learn more about your club's operating and service personalities through two fun-to-use programs. Use this information in planning club activities and recruitment events AND help your club operate more effectively. Create your club's service mission, too. Pages 11 - 17.

STEP 3: FORMULA FOR RECRUITMENT SUCCESS

The secret to successful recruitment begins with one satisfied Quota member—perhaps you—inviting someone you like to join, someone who seeks the unique combination of fellowship and service your club offers. Step 3 will help you plan your next recruitment function. Read helpful hints on planning a meaningful initiation ceremony. Learn steps for encouraging lifelong membership from the start that not only involves all club members, but strengthens every member's affiliation – old and new. Pages 18 - 23.

WHAT AREA OF YOUR CLUB DO YOU WANT TO IMPROVE?

Even thriving clubs can use a "tune-up" from time to time. Conduct activities throughout the year at meetings or plan a club retreat. Use one, two, or all three steps to strengthen your club's membership. If you want to recharge, revitalize, or rebuild your club, all three steps are recommended. Be sure to discuss your plan with your club and invite a team of members to assist you.

- For answers to common Quota Questions, see page 24.
- For more information on other membership and leadership resources, see page 26.

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STEP 1: MAKE YOUR QUOTA HEART BEAT!

Club presidents, our plan for strengthening your club doesn't begin with recruiting new members. Your club's membership journey begins with understanding what makes Quota special to you and your club members.

Quota is a personal experience and every member enjoys it in their own way. One of the most wonderful legacies you can share with your club is helping your members increase their membership satisfaction. Here are two activities that club presidents can use to get started. Use these at your next club retreat or meeting!

ACTIVITY 1: WHY DO MEMBERS JOIN? WHY DO THEY STAY?

At a club meeting or retreat, ask your members to discuss the following questions:

- While members join and remain club members for very different reasons, there is usually one reason that is most important. Why did you join Quota?

Personal Connectors genuinely enjoy each other's company.

Service Advocates share the club's service goals, and they enjoy serving their community with fellow members.

Lifelong Learners value the personal and professional growth opportunities membership offers.

- Why do you remain affiliated?
- How has Quota changed your life?
- What makes Quota special for you?
- How do you like to participate? Members who participate in area and international meetings and/or who choose to travel through Quota's district and international leadership track, **global connectors**, develop an increased appreciation for the international portion of their Quota membership. **Local connectors** appreciate their club experience above all else.

GREAT IDEA! The responses members give to these questions will make wonderful stories to share with recruits at your next recruitment function. Why not share the story which begins on page 20 ("On Being a New Member of Quota") with your members as a heartwarming example.

ACTIVITY 2: CREATE A MEMBER SURVEY

Members differ in the way in which they want to participate in their club, the type of “service” they enjoy, their personal interests and skills, how much time they have available, and their leadership development desires. Understanding *how* members want to participate in their club is a first step in encouraging lifelong affiliation.

Create a membership survey that you can use in your own club! It’s a wonderful tool for learning what is working well, what can be improved, and how to help every club member feel special. Consider inviting a group of club members to join you in developing it.

STEP 1: Brainstorm questions and be creative! Think about what you want to learn from individual members.

- How members like current fellowship, service, and leadership development activities?
- How would they improve or change them?
- Are they a lifelong learner, a service advocate, or a personal connector?
- Do they like the timing and location of meetings?
- Do they want to develop new personal, leadership, or service skills?
- What do they like best about their club experience?
- What would they improve, change, or add?
- What time constraints do they have now?

STEP 2: Develop your survey from all of the ideas presented. You can give every member a copy of the survey in printed form, or if your club is small, seek member answers to these questions in person or in a telephone call.

STEP 3: Important! Be sure to report back to your club on what you have learned from the surveys and how you plan to use this information to help the club.

STEP 4: Take action! Quota is a personal experience and every member enjoys it in a different way. Members join and remain club members for very different reasons. What do you do with survey information once you have it?

Understanding what motivates individual members of your club will help you “customize” programs, meetings, fellowship opportunities, fund-raising, and service projects for all members. It also helps you find out how individual members WANT to participate. Remember, members may WANT to participate in changes from time to time too!

**HELP! Is it okay if several members do a whole lot of the club’s work?
For Quota’s answer, see page 24!**

II. THREE STEPS TO MEMBERSHIP SUCCESS

STEP 2: KNOW THY CLUB, GROW THY CLUB

For years, Quota's leaders tried to find the perfect model to guide the behavior and operation of all clubs. But they couldn't! Why? Because different clubs in Quota have different personalities. Your club operates, conducts service, and celebrates in different ways than other clubs in your district.

Understanding more about your club's personality will help you to operate more effectively and recruit members who are a good match for your club. This chapter offers activities that will help you get started!

A. DEFINE YOUR CLUB'S PERSONALITY

Understanding what values are most important to your club and the type of members who would feel welcome offers tremendous opportunities in recruiting individuals who will remain within your Quota family for years to come. Through the Leaders as Listeners program, we have learned that most clubs fit one—or a combination—of these three types. All three are equally important and equally valued by Quota International:

SERVICE CLUBS define their culture and operations through their service work. Members are dedicated to Quota's service goals, and they are united in their desire to make a difference. Quota offers them the opportunity to enhance their individual impact, an experience they find rewarding, and they enjoy carrying out club service projects together. Service clubs seek members who *want to work!* Performing service is a higher priority for most club members than personal/professional development, club administration, or socializing.

PERSONAL CONNECTION CLUBS define their culture and operations through their social activities and personal relationships. Members value their friendships with their fellow members—and they do have fun! They genuinely enjoy each other's company. Meetings and programs are enjoyable and fun. Members are happy to write a check or plan fund-raisers to finance service work (rather than working on service projects). Members join these clubs seeking personal connections to (and support from) other members. They want their Quota affiliation to help make the world "a smaller place." Interpersonal relationships are a higher priority for most members than club administration or service.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLUBS define their culture and operations through the use or development of their professional skills, contacts, and interests. Members value Quota's time-honored traditions, operations, and standards. Members who join these clubs appreciate the opportunity to develop and practice new leadership and professional skills, mentoring others who are developing such skills, and/or the ability to network with other professionals who share their skills, experiences, and successes. They appreciate the opportunity to travel through Quota's leadership ladder. Professional growth, club operating success, and club administration are higher priorities for most club members than performing service or socializing.

ACTIVITY 1: DEFINE YOUR CLUB'S PERSONALITY

Learn more about your club's shared values by conducting this enjoyable discussion program. Please allow 30 – 45 minutes. Conduct this discussion program at a club meeting or retreat. If your club is large, you can ask members to discuss their responses to Tasks 1 and 3 in small groups. Before starting, please do the following:

- Obtain a flip chart and markers or black board and chalk. If you use a flip chart, please have masking tape handy to post flip chart sheets.
- Photocopy the three club models and distribute to every club member can have a copy.
- Write the following words on a flip chart or photocopy this list and give to each club member:

Fun!!!	Friendly	Mentors Others	Energetic	What Dead-
Hardworking	Protocol	Dedicated	Strict	lines????
Serious	Loyal	Punctual	Responsible	Informative
Supportive	Professional	Structured	Diligent	Builds Skills
Meaningful	Organized	Disorganized	Achieving	Efficient
Caring	Traditional	Networking	Formal	
Businesslike	Enthusiastic	Informal	Entertaining	

TASK 1: DESCRIBE MEETINGS, MEMBERS, CULTURE AND ATMOSPHERE

STEP 1: Ask club members to discuss the following question: If you were describing your club to an individual attending a club membership recruitment function, what words or short phrases would best describe your club's members? Please use words from this list or create your own! (Write audience responses on a flip chart or black board.)

STEP 2: Ask club members to agree on the three words that BEST describe your club's members. Write on a flip chart.

STEP 3: Ask club members to discuss the following question: If you were describing your club to an individual attending a club membership recruitment function, what words or short phrases would best describe your club's meetings? (Write on a flip chart or blackboard.)

STEP 4: Ask club members to agree on the three words that BEST describe your club's members. Please use words from this list or create your own! Write on a flip chart.

STEP 5: Ask club members to discuss the following question: If you were describing your club to an individual attending a club membership recruitment function, what words or short phrases would best describe your club's culture or atmosphere? (Write on a flip chart or black board.)

STEP 6: Ask club members to agree on the three words that BEST describe your club's culture or atmosphere. Use words from this list or create your own! Write on a flip chart.

STEP 7: Summarize and review the three words selected to describe your club's members, meetings, and culture/atmosphere: (write on flip chart using this format)

- our club's members: _____
- our club's meetings: _____
- our club's culture: _____

TASK 2: DETERMINE YOUR CLUB'S PERSONALITY

STEP 1: Ask club members to read the three models described on the handout.

STEP 2: Large Group Discussion. While some characteristics in each of the three models may seem familiar, discuss which model describes this club the most. Give reasons why? Do any members think this club is the combination of two types of clubs?

STEP 3: Vote: Please take a vote and record the number of members who selected each model (via raising hands or ballot). Record votes on the flip chart using this format:

- Service Club Model _____
- Personal Connection Club _____
- Professional Development Club _____
- Combination of more than one type / Please specify: _____
 - Service and Personal Connection Club _____
 - Service and Professional Development Club _____
 - Personal Connection and Professional Development Club _____

TASK 3: TALK IT OVER

If your club is large, you can ask members to discuss these issues in small groups. Have a recorder write down their thoughts and submit them to the club president.

1. If there are discrepancies in how members view the personality of your club, ask them to talk it over. What suggestions do members have for helping your club grow and flourish?
2. Ask members to brainstorm how to use club personality information to improve recruitment of new members. What type of member would feel comfortable in this club?
3. Ask members to brainstorm how to use club personality information to improve club operations, programs, activities, and events.

B. ASSESS YOUR CLUB'S SERVICE

HOW CAN SERVICE HELP YOUR CLUB? Local service is the fast track to helping new members feel a part of your club's family, and it is a sustainer of a vital, energetic club. A good service project can help rejuvenate a club that is rebuilding, too. Are you interested in a new approach toward recruiting new members? Launch a new service program and think about how to use it (and the fund-raising events that make the service possible) to attract new members. Here's how your club can get started:

STEP 1: Determine your club's service personality. Learn how members enjoy conducting service and compare that to the club's current service opportunities. Activity 2 (begins page 15) will get you started. After your club program is over, decide whether your club would benefit from defining its service mission, too (Activity 3, page 17).

STEP 2: Plan projects that members will enjoy. Want new ideas? In addition to reading the *Quotarian* magazine, check out the We Share Foundation Web Site (www.wesharefoundation.org) and review winning Quota Cares Month and Excellence in Service Award applications and many more service ideas contained on the Quota Club Service Directories published on the site.

STEP 3: Promote your service project success. The We Share Foundation's Publicity Tips kit is filled with helpful ideas and information. Print it from the We Share Foundation Web Site or request a free copy from the QI Office. Articles in the media create credibility for your club and project. Use the We Share Foundation's Polish and Shine service for assistance in polishing in your news release. For details, click the Polish and Shine button on www.wesharefoundation.org.

THREE TYPES OF QUOTA SERVICE. Through the Leaders as Listeners program we learned that most clubs within Quota's international network like to conduct service in one (or a combination) of three, equally meaningful and valuable ways.

In **HANDS-ON SERVICE**, club members volunteer their time and talents to assist those in need. Hands-on service bonds club members primarily through the act of planning and providing assistance to people in need. Members who enjoy hands-on service appreciate direct contact with and service impact on the individuals being helped. Members find it meaningful to volunteer their time and labor to help those in need, and they are willing to make the time available to do so. Quota examples:

- Hosting a Halloween party for disadvantaged children.
- "Adopting" and assisting a disadvantaged family.
- Sponsoring and organizing a day-long workshop on increasing life skills of teenage mothers.

In **PARTNERSHIP SERVICE**, club members volunteer their time and talents to assist charitable, nonprofit, or community organizations in need. Partnership service bonds club members primarily through the act of planning and providing assistance to charitable organizations that help others. Members who enjoy partnership service find it meaningful to support the charitable needs of the partnering organization, and they are willing to make time available to do so. They want to achieve greater service impact and/or prestige in their community. They enjoy the fellowship that emerges from participating and they appreciate direct contact with the partnering organization. Quota examples:

- Building a Habitat for Humanity home for a single mother.
- Organizing and coordinating the redecoration at a shelter for abused women and children.
- Participating in an organization's community project (i.e., Red Cross, Ronald McDonald House, Salvation Army, Children's Hospital)

In **GRANTS AND GIFTS SERVICE**, club members donate funds (grants, scholarships, or fellowships) or gifts (food, supplies, or equipment) to assist individuals, charitable organizations, or community agencies in need. Grants and gifts service bonds club members primarily through (1) mutual appreciation of helping individuals or organizations in need in a meaningful way and (2) the organization and enjoyment of events that raise funds for the club's grants and gifts service donations. Members who enjoy grants and gifts service may have limited time to participate in hands-on or partnership service or they may not be interested in doing so. Quota examples:

- Providing hearing aids to people who cannot afford them.
- Giving Christmas parcels to farm families suffering through a continuing drought.
- Donating funds to: deaf students (scholarships), to send a gifted student with hearing loss to an honors science camp; to local fire brigades to purchase equipment; to Quota's Club-to-Club World Service Program; to furnish a respite house for handicapped people.

ACTIVITY 2: DEFINE YOUR CLUB'S SERVICE PERSONALITY

The first step in using club service to strengthen your club's membership is understanding the different ways each member in your club enjoys participating in service. Please allow 30 – 45 minutes for this discussion program. Before starting, please do the following:

- Obtain a flip chart and markers or black board and chalk. If you use a flip chart, please have masking tape handy to post flip chart sheets.
- Photocopy the three service models and distribute to every club member.

TASK 1: TALK IT OVER

Please give every member a copy of the three service models to read. If your club is large, you can ask members to discuss these issues in small groups.

1. Discussion: Share your favorite, most meaningful or most memorable service experience. What factors made this experience so special? How did you benefit from this experience? How did your club benefit from this experience?

TASK 1: TALK IT OVER (CONTINUED)

2. Read the three service models. Discuss the similarities and differences between the three service personality types described in the handout. Are there any other “personality” types not included?

TASK 2: VOTE!

Using a show of hands, please vote for the service personality (or personalities) that most closely matches the type of service you believe your club **CURRENTLY** offers. (Please record votes on a flip chart using this format):

Hands-on Service ____
Partnership Service ____
Grants & Gifts Service ____
Combination – Partnership and Grants & Gifts Service ____
Combination – Hands On and Partnership Service ____
Combination – Hands On and Grants & Gifts Service ____
Combination – All Three Types of Service ____

TASK 3: VOTE AGAIN!

Using a show of hands, please vote for the service personality (or personalities) that most closely matches the type of service **YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO** in the future. *Please do not be concerned with your club’s current service projects. It can be the same as your current service or it can be different.* (Please record votes on a flip chart using this format):

Hands-on Service ____
Partnership Service ____
Grants & Gifts Service ____
Combination – Partnership and Grants & Gifts Service ____
Combination – Hands On and Partnership Service ____
Combination – Hands On and Grants & Gifts Service ____
Combination – All Three Types of Service ____

TASK 4: LET’S TALK AGAIN!

If your club is large, you can ask members to discuss these issues in small groups.

1. Please discuss and compare the similarities and differences between your club’s votes for current service and their votes for service that members desire. Are there any surprises?
2. Brainstorm ideas for one or more service projects that reflect the desired service personality (or personalities) voted by your club. How can your club use your ideas to recruit new members? Please be specific.

ACTIVITY 3: CREATE YOUR CLUB'S SERVICE MISSION

After your club program ends, invite members to create your club's service mission. Doing so will help your members during membership recruitment and community education activities.

WHAT IS A SERVICE MISSION?

Your service mission is your reason for doing the service that you do. The mission statement communicates both what your club hopes to accomplish and how it will pursue that goal.

HOW CAN YOU CREATE A SERVICE MISSION?

Ask members – or a committee – to discuss the following statements. Ask a writer to craft key elements into an inspiring statement that communicates the essence of your club. Get member approval of the final mission statement:

1. Name of organization.
2. Statement of purpose. (The ultimate results you exist to achieve. One sentence.)
3. Statement of the nature of the services your club provides.
4. Statement of vision (A statement of desired future impact.)

SAMPLE MISSION STATEMENTS:

Here are examples that you can use, edit, rewrite, or use as discussion starters:

- The service mission of Quota International of (club location) is to offer a helping hand (locally and globally)(in our community) by sharing our time and talents with individuals in need to transform (their) despair into hope.
- We, the members of Quota International of (club location), offer a helping hand by sharing our talents and hearts to transform despair into hope.
- The mission of Quota International of (club location) is to achieve greater service impact by connecting and supporting the charitable work of all who care to (strengthen our community from)(help our community flourish from) the power which results from caring and sharing together.
- The service mission of Quota International of (club location) is to unite individuals who care in service to those in need to (celebrate and support)(make a difference to)(make a difference in the lives of) those they serve...and those with whom they serve.
- The members of Quota International of (club location) unite in service to (celebrate and support)(make a difference to)(make a difference in the lives of) those they serve...and those with whom they serve.

II. THREE STEPS TO MEMBERSHIP SUCCESS

STEP 3: FORMULA FOR RECRUITMENT SUCCESS

Attitude counts in Quota! The secret to successful recruitment begins with one satisfied member inviting someone they like to join, someone who seeks the unique combination of fellowship and service your club offers. Once you've completed Steps 1 and 2 of *Strengthen Your Club in Three Steps*, you are ready to talk about recruiting new members you like who want the experience *your club* has to offer. This final step, Step 3, includes Quota's formula for recruitment success and ways to connect new members from the start!

FACT: Well over half of all new members Quota clubs recruit resign within five years for reasons other than illness or relocation. The largest percentage of losses occurs during the first three years after a member joins.

FACT: On average, it costs membership organizations seven times as much to acquire a new member as it does to keep the one they already have.

What can your club do to reverse these costly trends? Encourage lifelong membership from the start. Through the Leaders as Listeners program, we have learned that the best approach to encouraging lifelong membership is bonding your new member to your club from the start.

PARTNERS PROGRAM: CLUBS LEARNING FROM CLUBS

In 1999, Quota International of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, won the 1999 Excellence Award for their **Partners Program** – a recruitment and retention program that *will work* in any size club! The critical ingredient simply is the club's willingness to share a personal Quota connection on a consistent, ongoing basis with every member who joins.

Why not give their plan a try? You have nothing to lose and "everyone" to gain. Says who? QI of Baton Rouge! The first year they used this program, 12 of 13 new members enthusiastically renewed their Quota membership for another year. Their only loss was a new member who left the club due to a job transfer.

New members were not the only Quotarians who reported benefits from this program. Veteran club members who served as partners reported that this program enhanced their membership enjoyment, too. Do you want to learn more? Read on for QI of Baton Rouge's success secrets – then give it a try in your club. Many clubs have adopted this program with great success!

ACTIVITY 1: PLAN YOUR PROGRAM AND GET EVERY CLUB MEMBER ON BOARD.

You can do a lot in a lunch! The QI of Baton Rouge Membership Committee met at lunch and developed an agreement on recruitment and retention goals and strategies; allocated responsibilities for different parts of the program; and drafted a calendar of actions for the year.

QI OF BATON ROUGE... IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Ÿ The whole club has to work together to make it truly successful. It is useless to recruit new members and bring them to boring meetings and functions even if their partner is working hard to get them there and make them feel comfortable. We believe that officers should (1) look at *how* they ask their members to spend their time, (2) ask their members what works for them, and (3) inject a heavy dose of fun, fellowship, and friendship in everything they do.

ACTIVITY 2: RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS OF YOUR CLUB'S

FAMILY. Quota International of Baton Rouge is a large club and they like to recruit new members in groups they call “classes.” Baton Rouge believes this approach helps strengthen each recruit’s fellowship bonds from the start, including with their fellow new members. Here is Baton Rouge’s recruitment timeline:

- # **January:** The club publishes short biographies of prospective members in the club newsletter so all members can get to know them.
- # **February:** A recruitment event is planned (an annual membership brunch) and the social aspect of this function is emphasized more than information.
- # **March:** Letters of invitation to prospective members are mailed along with club information and an invitation to the club’s annual picnic.
- # **April:** Recruits are initiated.

Successful and strong Quota clubs come in all sizes and many clubs benefit from recruiting new members of their club’s family one at a time throughout the year. Whatever approach you choose to use, remember that the product you are offering is a special Quota experience. Invite individuals who would value the type of fellowship and service *your club* offers and be sure to share what makes your club’s so special!

QI OF BATON ROUGE... IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Ÿ Our club is a ‘personal connection’ club, and we like to impact the community with service initiatives. But every club needs a warm and friendly atmosphere. So talking to the members and figuring out a plan that emphasizes what they want and desire in their club membership precedes recruiting and will greatly aid retention.

ANOTHER CLUB'S RECRUITMENT SUCCESS STORY

The Beenleigh club in Queensland, Australia, has created a special formula for recruiting and retaining members that begins with members sharing what makes Quota special to them. The club holds a recruitment cocktail party annually after the first business meeting of the year. Several members speak about the club, offering information and reasons for joining. According to Past Club President Karen Murphy, the recruitment party is a good way to entice new members because “it’s a very positive evening. The members speak spontaneously from the heart. And we always include one new member to share her reasons for joining Quota. Last year we got six new members from this party.”

During the Beenleigh club’s recruitment event, then new member Crissty Norman shared her delight in Quota International with this heartwarming story. Consider sharing this with the members of your club and ask them to write their own stories:

ON BEING A NEW MEMBER OF QUOTA BY CRISSTY NORMAN

The fellowship in the club is quite amazing to experience. People honestly care for one another, respect each other, and are genuinely happy for you in the good times and comfort you in the bad—*but it’s more than this*. The community spirit shines like a beacon. A need and a desire to help others less fortunate, an attitude of respect for others and a lack of selfishness abound—*but it’s more than this*.

Activities and events offer fun, childlike enjoyment that everyone can share. There is always a smile for everyone—*but it’s more than this*. All pull their weight and do so willingly. There is a feeling of equalness, a combination of different ideas and varying abilities molded together to make a success of whatever project we undertake—*but it’s more than this*.

Individuals are accepted for who and what they are. Their strengths, weaknesses, abilities, and experiences help broaden our horizons and make us all better people and Quotarians—*but it’s more than this*.

Quota challenges us. The challenge is to do things that perhaps you never thought you could do; the challenge is to succeed as a group member, to watch a project go from an idea in a meeting to a blossoming event that is enjoyed by all—*but it’s more than this*. Quota offers growth. As the club grows and develops with each new member, so do the other members—*but it’s even more than this*.

It’s a feeling of belonging, a sense of responsibility, an attitude of caring. It’s being part of an extended family where the joys are multiplied and the sorrows divided. It’s knowing that you are making a difference to someone somewhere. It’s seeing the welcoming faces when you arrive for a meeting. It’s sitting in a room full of friends feeling a sense of pride in each other and yourself when successful results of another event are heard. It’s knowing that all over the world members share the same purpose and feelings about building a better world for all.

But still it’s more than this. It’s something different to each member, but one common thread runs through Quota everywhere: it’s just such a great feeling.

ACTIVITY 3: LAUNCH YOUR NEW MEMBERS WITH LASTING MEMORIES.

A meaningful and dignified initiation ceremony leaves a long-lasting impression on a member, and the occasion is your opportunity to make a new member feel welcome as an integral part of your club. With a ceremony conducted from the heart, you can inspire lifetime membership in your new members.

QI OF BATON ROUGE... IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Ÿ Scheduling the recruiting function in February allowed us to combine new member initiation with officer installation which made it very elegant and special. The ceremony was their official welcome and it was meant to share personal information. Roses and pins were presented to the new members and the initiator talked about each new member in personal terms—their work, how long they lived in the community, where they grew up, their education and interests and hobbies, children, pets and husband info. If they wrote humorous notes on their information sheet, that was included.

WHAT SHOULD AN INITIATION OF NEW MEMBERS ACCOMPLISH?

SHARE INSPIRATION: Initiation is not just a formality or rite of passage for new members, but an opportunity to inspire all members. This special occasion can energize new members while reaffirming the current members’ decision to remain active.

SHOWCASE CLUB ACHIEVEMENT: It’s an opportunity to showcase achievements, share your pride and show your club’s connection to the larger international organization. You’ll send the message that your club reaches out to touch the global community.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: Show a genuine “welcome” and hospitality to the new members. Let current members learn some personal things about new members. Doing so helps current members find common interests and gain respect for new members’ personal and professional accomplishments.

GAIN AUDIENCE ATTENTION AND APPRECIATION: The initiation ceremony is a presentation like any other. Keep in mind that audiences want to be inspired, informed and in most cases, entertained. The initiation should be fast paced, very interesting and accomplished in 10-15 minutes (depending on the number of members to be initiated.) Add interest by setting a theme, sharing an inspirational thought or reading poetry. Why not consider using props, too. Be creative.

WHAT SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED IN THE INITIATION?

The ceremony is NOT a lecture on the responsibilities of members. Recruiting events and later orientation can give details of the requirements and responsibilities of membership. The tone should be pure warmth and friendship, not duties and obligations.

For more ideas and an adaptable initiation script, contact the QI Office (in the South Pacific, contact Beris Pritchard) for a free copy of *Rites of Initiation: Open the Doors to New Members With a Bang and Not a Whimper* written by Past International President Bobbie Carey. This document is also available on-line on www.quota.org under “For Clubs.”

ACTIVITY 4: PLANT STRONG QUOTA ROOTS FROM THE

START. After recruiting 13 members in 1998, the Baton Rouge club launched their Partners Program with the goal of helping new members feel welcome and satisfied after joining. Here is an overview of the plan that worked for them.

ASSIGN PARTNERS: The club began by assigning each new member to a volunteer Quota partner, *a current club member who is different from the member's original sponsor*. Veteran members were invited to volunteer to serve as partners, and the Membership Chair made the matches taking into consideration similar professions and interests. At a "Partners Only" lunch, the program was outlined and input was solicited.

ORIENT NEW MEMBERS: Because the Baton Rouge club recruited new members in a "class" group, a special supper was held at a member's home. All new and current members were invited. New members met their partners for the first time with a "getting to know you" activity and veteran members shared the history of the club. Longtime members enjoyed the fellowship, fun, and information as much as new members.

PLAN SOME 'ONE-ON-ONE' TIME: Partners were asked to do anything they could to forge a personal connection with their assigned new member. Here are some "one-on-one" suggestions:

- Write personal notes or make phone calls to welcome the new member to the club.
- Take the new member to lunch.
- Call the new member prior to club meetings; greet them at the door; introduce them to their club members before and after the meeting.
- Act as a resource for general information.
- Serve with them at their first service or fund-raising project.

WELCOME AND INVOLVE NEW MEMBERS AT CLUB ACTIVITIES:

Throughout the year, partners and members made new members feel welcome at all club activities, programs, and meetings. New members were invited to recruitment events, too, to help greet and welcome prospective members. At the club's annual Open Door Tour Fundraiser, partners mentored new members in tour procedures and plans, and they enjoyed working together during the event.

WELCOME AND INVOLVE NEW MEMBERS AT DISTRICT ACTIVITIES: In September 1998, the Baton Rouge club hosted the District 21 Conference. New members were invited to attend and participate. The Friday night activity divided participants in groups of eight. Each group dined at a member's home. This was the hit of the conference. *(This idea was adapted from the New Zealand Convention...another example of clubs learning from clubs.)*

ACTIVITY 5: TAKE TIME TO LISTEN AND LEARN. At the end of the first year, the Membership Committee planned these feedback opportunities:

FOCUS GROUP FOR NEW MEMBERS: A special lunch was scheduled for the class of new members. The Membership Committee asked for feedback on their experience and asked for suggestions on how to make it better and to improve the club overall.

PARTNERS COFFEE: Partners met for coffee to give feedback about their experiences. Input from the new member focus group was shared. Partners concluded that the program was very worthwhile and wanted to continue “mentoring” new members for a second year. As one member put it, “They have feeder roots, not tap roots yet.”

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: The committee met and evaluated their program and made suggestions to the outgoing and incoming presidents. They also prepared suggestions for next year’s membership committee to consider.

WHY THIS PROGRAM WORKS... LESSONS LEARNED

LESSON 1: The program addresses recruitment and retention at the same time.

LESSON 2: The whole club participated to make the program work and to help all new members feel welcomed throughout the year. Also, the president listened to the members and made each meeting interesting and filled with fun and fellowship (which the club wanted.)

LESSON 3: The Partners Program immediately connected new members to the club. New members had their own personal “mentor” for two years.

LESSON 4: Veteran members enjoyed sharing their Quota knowledge and experience in a meaningful way, thus increasing their own membership satisfaction.

LESSON 5: The club evaluated what worked and didn’t work from the view-points of both new members and the partners. They looked at actual results. The feedback not only improved the Partners Program, but club operations as well.

LESSON 6: Club members were excited by the successful retention rate and were willing to continue recruiting.