

EXCELLENCE IN MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

QUOTA INTERNATIONAL OF ANDOVER, MA.

1. Describe your club's outstanding recruitment accomplishment this year.

The trend over the past few years for our club has been to attract one or two new members, but lose three or more due to moves, jobs, or family commitments. This year's Board of Directors made membership recruitment a priority, established a membership budget (\$400.00), and directed the committee to do what was necessary to strengthen the club. The result was an increase of membership by almost 35%. This percentage will likely increase by May, as we have additional strong candidates.

Our recruitment efforts this year resulted in more than increased membership. The membership committee felt an obligation to produce a new club brochure and additional supportive materials for recruitment and publicity. We created information packets for prospective members, as well as folders for new members. Both of these packets have cover letters stating the goals of our club and member responsibilities. The membership chairmen and club president conducted an information and question night for our nine new members, and we established a partnering or mentoring program. We continue our outreach to women in the community whose achievement, appointment or promotion is noted in the local papers. Our Quota "introduction letter", along with a brochure, is sent out to congratulate them and inform them about our club and our service to the community. We invite them to a meeting, in the hope that they will join Quota.

2. How did your club achieve this success?

The membership committee began meeting in the summer to work on the brochure design. We wanted an attractive piece that would give the club an identity and show the personality of the group. Not only does the brochure give the history of Quota International, but it also emphasizes the community service commitment of Quota International of Andover. Benefits and responsibilities of membership are in print, along with photos of service projects. This brochure (sample enclosed) has been useful in prospecting for new members, and was helpful to the Ways and Means Committee when requesting donations for a recent fund-raiser.

Our next project was to draft a cover letter that could be handed out or mailed to potential new members along with QI material illustrating the global community, of which we are a part. The letter clearly states the mission of the club, recent service accomplishments, and membership obligations. We have found this printed material to be most helpful in our recruitment.

Once we felt "armed" with our material, we formulated plans for a Membership Reception to be held in October. In the past, we have invited potential members to a cocktail hour at one of the local restaurants. This is expensive for the club and results in a fairly low attendance of interested prospects. This year, we put the emphasis on location and content of the reception. We were fortunate to have the use, at no cost, of a lovely room in the Andover public library, a historic renovated building centrally located in our town. We planned for light refreshments and used the services of one of our members, the owner of a catering business.

With a confirmed date, time and place, we started a "wish list" of speakers. We wanted prospective members to hear about our community service projects, not just from Quota members, but also from some of the people we have served. We invited representatives from the Lawrence YWCA and the Quota scholarship recipient from a local community college.

Getting the word out about the Membership Reception was key to a successful evening. The committee designed colorful flyers and postcards for posting and mailing. Each club member aided in the distribution of these, plus we had some good publicity in the local newspapers. (See enclosures). The meeting information was put on the library web site.

The reception was clearly a success, since all but one guest joined that night or at a later date. There were also those who could not attend the meeting, but read about us in the paper and/or saw a flyer. They received a mailing from the membership chair, and were invited to attend the next business meeting.

The success of the reception was due in part to the planning and preparation of informational materials that could be handed out; but mostly, it was due to the eloquence of our guest speakers and our own members. The YWCA director spoke about the work Quota of Andover has done to support the many projects of the "Y". She made a wonderful advocate for Quota and was able to talk glowingly about our service and about the number of individuals in Andover Quota that she has come to know.

Our scholarship winner, the mother of two sons also in college, was our second speaker that night. She is fulfilling her dream of a degree in the Deaf Studies Program. She spoke with such feeling and gratitude, that most of us were very moved that our club had been able to financially assist her. This was a night that we could all feel good about what we do, and several of our members talked about what it has meant to them to be a Quotarian and the friendships that they have made.

3. How has your recruitment project/program benefited your club?

The benefits are increased membership and a better awareness of Quota throughout the community. The club members seem to be more cohesive and have a better understanding of themselves as a club. There is even a certain amount of pride and a greater desire to "spread the word", now that members have some supportive material to help with recruiting.

The mentoring program we have established will strengthen friendships between the new members and their partners, or "big sisters". We hope that this special attention will aid in retention of all members, so that we can apply next year for the membership retention award!

4. What is your best advice to other clubs that want to improve their membership recruitment success?

Getting people to know about Quota is the key. Whether it is a one-on-one introduction, a membership tea or evening, or a mailing campaign, printed materials are important. Information needs to spell out what special service work the club does, what the benefits are to the community and how that member benefits personally. It is important that any potential member also understands the financial commitment to their club. This way, a new member can make his/her commitment with a full understanding of what it means to be a Quotarian.