

Membership Retention and Growth: Your Club Needs Both

Membership Retention: Happy & Engaged Members stay with the club

- 1) Club programming scheduled in advance**
- 2) Members encouraged to attend the meeting**
- 3) Acknowledgement**
- 4) Mentor/Mentee program**
- 5) Variety meetings**
- 6) Fun**

1) Club programming is scheduled in advance

Make sure that your club programming is scheduled in advance and distributed to each member regularly. Your club should have no less than the next 4 meetings scheduled for each role. Remember that people need time to prepare for their roles and finding out only a week or two before they are supposed to fill a role is not going to promote a happy membership. Think about it in these terms, “Would you live paycheck to paycheck if you had the choice?” If at the conclusion of one meeting your club is trying to fill all of the roles for the next meeting, then you are living paycheck to paycheck. For each meeting in advance that you schedule all of the roles, it is like putting money in the bank. If you are having trouble finding volunteers, don't be afraid to have your VP Education assign the roles. More often than not, members would rather be assigned roles a month or two in advance, than volunteer at the last minute.

2) Members are encouraged to attend the meeting

Call members to confirm that they will fill the role assigned. This can be delegated to the Toastmaster of the Day, but it must be done. People often need reminders and encouragement and a personal phone call is the best way to do that. This is also helpful when a member has a conflict and can't fill an assigned role. If you have called in advance, you will be able to make alternate arrangements for the role.

Call members who have missed two or more meetings. Sometime just a phone call to tell the person that they are missed will bring them back to the meetings and keep them engaged. A member who stops attending meetings and isn't contacted will feel that they are not valued by your club.

3) Members are encouraged to attend the meeting

Acknowledge accomplishments. Don't let the completion of an educational goal pass your club by. If you are not publicizing each educational milestone then you are missing an opportunity to make your members feel appreciated and valued.

4) Mentor/Mentee program

Have a mentor/mentee program. Ask an experienced member to coach a new member and teach them the ropes. This is a great way to keep more experienced members involved and help newer members learn the program better.

5) Variety meetings

Have a themed or alternate program meeting. Whether you do all Table Topics for one meeting, have a backwards meeting, or some special theme, it is a nice change of pace that keeps things fun and interesting.

Acknowledge Birthdays. This can be done at the meeting closest to the member's birthday or you can acknowledge all birthdays for the month at the first meeting of the month. Either way is a great opportunity to let your members know that they are appreciated.

Conduct presentations from the Better Speaker Series or Successful Club Series modules. Many people join Toastmasters for the opportunity to learn as well as the opportunity to practice. By giving presentations from these modules, you are creating the opportunity to learn and improve. Evaluate to Motivate. This seems so basic, but it is the most critical component of the meeting. What is the benefit of giving a presentation in Toastmasters if you don't get a good evaluation. Be sure to present the evaluation in a positive and supportive manner, and above all, be sure to give no less than two points for improvement. An evaluation with no points for improvement is a disservice to the speaker and the audience alike.

6) Fun

Have fun. Let's face it, people who have fun are more likely to continue. If your meetings are well scheduled, fulfilling, and fun, then you will have most of your members showing up for every meeting. Even if they aren't assigned a role, they will come for the fun.

Membership Growth: Make Your Club Known and Show the Value

Membership Growth ideas for ALL clubs

1. Invite a Friend
2. Coffee, Doughnuts, Pizza or happy hour
3. Give Away
4. Advertise at Traffic Stop
5. Hand out Marketing Cards/Flyers
6. Speechcraft
7. Conduct a Success in Communication or Success in Leadership Series or certain workshop
8. Appreciation Day
9. Website
10. Local Newspapers
11. Alumni Meeting (email membership@toastmasters.org for past member list)
12. Round Up Guests on your way to the meeting
13. Display Your Club Banner
14. Toastmasters Magazine
15. Host a Pizza Party or Happy Hour

Membership Growth ideas for ALL OPEN clubs

1. Visit near-by companies
2. Post meeting announcements on websites such as craigslist.org or backpage.com under the community sections.
3. Get Listed on Websites - Many communities have excellent websites and will gladly list information about your Toastmasters club. Craigslist has become an excellent place to post ads about your meetings. Also check Chambers of Commerce and other civic organizations.
4. Sandwich board – Set up a sign streetside on meeting nights. Make your own, or order metal signs and large decals from the Toastmasters catalog.
5. Shopping Center - Get permission to set up a Toastmasters table at your local mall or shopping center. Why not in a high traffic area like right outside the grocery store.
6. Advertise in Church Bulletins – Even if you are not meeting in a church, you can probably advertise in the bulletins of nearby churches, synagogues, mosques, and other places of worship.

Membership Growth ideas for Corporate/Government Clubs

1. Get Management Support
 2. Company E-mail Bulletins
 3. Ask Human Resources to include a flyer about the club in the new employee orientation packet or even with payroll checks.
 4. Ask Human Resources for an appointment to give a 20 minute presentation on the benefits of Toastmasters and how it can help the company's training efforts.
 5. Continuing Education - Inquire about the possibility of club members earning continuing education credit.
20. Round Up Guests on your way to the meeting

Membership Growth ideas for Community Clubs

1. The Library – Print cards with your club information and put a card in each book in the library that is on the subject of communication or public speaking.
2. Invite a Local Politician – Think of an award that you can give to a local politician and invite them to come receive it. Once they have accepted, you can advertise the event in newspapers and invite the community to come see him or her receive the award.
3. Conduct a session or seminar in some topic that you feel has public interest, such as a town hall meeting or a workshop on interviewing skills. Advertise it using the other methods in this listing.
4. Community Access Television - Invite a local cable station to tape and air a regular club meeting. You can also make an appearance on a local show and talk about the benefits of Toastmasters.
5. Booth at Fair or Town Day Celebrations – Set up a booth at a fair or special town holiday and have plenty of literature on hand. Talk to people about the benefits of Toastmasters.
6. Radio PSA – Send a Public Service Announcement (PSA) to local radio stations. They are required to air PSAs, but will often do so at odd hours so don't expect too much.
7. Radio Talk Show – See if you can arrange to be interviewed on a local radio talk show. If possible, you can even answer questions from callers to the show.
8. Harness Campus Media - Reach university or college students and staff by tapping into their frosh kits, campus newspapers or radio stations. Make a presentation to faculty and give them the tools to promote your club in class.