

MAKING THE LIONS EXPERIENCE JOYFUL AND PRODUCTIVE- RETENTION

Our Lions experience will hopefully be one of the most pleasurable and satisfying experiences of our lifetime. The difference we make in our communities and the lives we assist is a tremendously gratifying experience. We are good at attracting people to join with us but we let far too many exit our clubs from a combination of different factors. We must be constantly aware of our members and make sure that their needs are being met. These are ideas that will help us to make sure that our members have a longtime satisfying experience being Lions.

OUR CLUBS MUST HAVE A WELCOMING ATTITUDE TO ALL

- . Your club must make sure that all our members and guests feel comfortable and welcome at our events. We must show kindness to all and make them feel comfortable.
- . We must practice the Lions code of ethics in all that we do. It is what we are built on.
- . Member outreach to guests should be warm and genuine. This is how we will grow.
- . When newcomers are invited to our club events they should be the most important people there.
- . All members of our club must be treated with dignity and respect.
- . Conflicts should never present themselves at club events. They must be resolved with the club officers or in private setting away from club activities.

When we bring a new member to our club there are 4 things that must be accomplished as soon as possible

PRESENT A MEANINGFUL INDUCTION CEREMONY

- . Have someone in your club trained to present a meaningful program for the new member. Make it a day that will be remembered for a lifetime.
- . If possible bring in someone from outside your club to do the ceremony. Someone like a district governor, past district governor or a zone chairman.
- . Make sure you have all the necessary materials for the new member- new member packet, Lions pin, membership certificate, polo shirt or vest etc.
- . Inform the new member of the service opportunities the club involved in.
- . Present a history of the club and its importance to the community.
- . Have the new member tell the club about themselves- Reason for joining, family, occupation and whatever they wish to share.
- . Have a period after the meeting where the club can meet individually with the new member and welcome them. Make them a part of the club immediately.

ASSIGN ALL NEW MEMBERS A MENTOR

Have your best members available to guide the new member's transition into the club.

- . Mentors must be well respected by the club and know the club members well.
- . Have someone not necessarily the sponsor mentor the new Lion. The new Lion must meet the whole club and not just the sponsors friends.
- . Mentor should reach out to the new members away from Lions to make sure that their needs are being satisfied.
- . Mentor must find out what the new members priorities are for the club and make sure they are brought forward.
- . Mentors must commit to the new Lion until they are integrated into the club.
- . Mentors should be familiar with the LCI mentoring guide. It is quite useful.

ORIENTATION, ORIENTATION, ORIENTATION

- . New member should have an orientation within first six weeks of membership.

. Club should download LCI orientation guide and customize it for the needs they have.

. Points that must be covered: Dues structure, Club officers, service projects, Lions Club International history, clubs history, districts benefits to the club.

. Twice a year club should have an update orientation on events from Lions Clubs International that have been brought forward, and schedule orientations for any Lions who have not had one.

GET NEW MEMBERS INVOLVED IN A PROJECT YESTERDAY

. Make sure your club has as many service projects as it is capable of doing comfortably. Projects plural is the key so members will have options.

. Explain to the new member how our club projects strengthen and enrich the community.

. Remember that people join Lions to be of service to others. We need to be constantly involved in projects that make our communities better for all.

. Have a new member shadow a project chair so that they will understand what goes into making our projects successful.

. Encourage the new member to ask questions and give input.

. Help the new member find which projects are the best fit for them. Introduce them to the chair and let them loose.

. Make sure your project chairs and committees are welcoming to new members and integrate them immediately into the work at hand. This needs to be a part of your clubs culture.

SATISFYING OUR VETERAN LIONS WITH THEIR LIONS EXPERIENCE

. Constantly update the service opportunities your club takes on- Vision screenings, diabetes awareness programs, food drives, environmental projects, youth projects etc.

- . Ask your members for ideas of where the community can best utilize Lions resources.
- . BE OPEN TO ALL IDEAS (especially new members suggestions). Never be dismissive of different ideas. You never know if it might work if you don't try.
- . Regularly meet with community leaders to find out where our resources can be best utilized- city managers, police, fire, parks and recreation, health clinics etc.
- . Constantly seek to do more. The more involvement our members have the more satisfying their experience will become.

Three keys to Veterans Members Satisfaction

HAVE FUN

- . REALIZE THAT EVERYONE ENJOYS BEING PART OF A FUN GROUP
- . Often fun times need to be created. Team competitions, silliness, pranks etc.
- . Train your tail twister. There are several excellent tail twister guides if you google Lions clubs tail twister guides.
- . Always make sure that everyone is comfortable at all club events. Conflicts at events should not be tolerated and immediately ended. Resolve conflicts at another time and place.
- . Ask your club members for suggestions for fun things the club can do.
- . Be sure to have events that are entirely social. Invite families and have them in parks and recreational areas or other fun locations. Do these as often as possible for we are a family too.
- . Use jokes and humor at your meetings. A good laugh is always pleasurable.

RECOGNIZE OUR MEMBERS ACHIEVEMENTS

- . Our only true sense of gratification comes from the recognition of our peers.
- . Make sure ALL members know they are deeply appreciated. THANK YOU are the two most important words in our language. However we do recommend that you double everyone's pay annually.

Recognize all event chairs and do it promptly after the conclusion of the event. Have it in the club budget for trinkets- Lion pen and pencil sets, women's Lion jewelry, wallets, belt buckles etc.

- . Constantly reinforce the appreciation of the club to those who have stepped forward and taken on responsibilities.

- . Be sure to recognize our member's achievements in our communities away from Lions. Many do awesome things in different places.

- . Try to recognize all members who have participated in club events. They work equally hard to make it happen.

HAVE PRODUCTIVE CLUB MEETINGS

- . Assess how many meetings your club NEEDS to have monthly.

- . Realize that most young people are not interested in meetings but want to do service activities.

- . When you meet allow for a period of social engagement. We like each other.

- . Have an agenda and stick to it.

- . BRIEF IS GOOD. No one has ever complained the business part of a meeting is too short.

- . Do not fill your meetings with reports of far off projects. If a distant event chair has something that is urgent then give them some time.

- . Make your meetings family friendly. When children are present have activities for them.

KEEPING THE BACK DOOR SHUT- WORK TO KNOW WHO IS INACTIVE AND BE SURE TO PURSUE THEM

LIONS ARE GOOD AT ATTRACTING MEMBERS BUT POOR IN RETENTION

Over a six year period Lions in California attracted 21,000 + new members. In the same time period we lost 22,000+. This pattern has accelerated in the recent past.

WE MUST MAKE SURE OUR MEMBERS DON'T SLIP AWAY

. Take attendance at all projects and meetings. Have a club officer note all members who are present at projects and meetings. Make sure your roster is current. WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE WHO IS ABSENT.

. If a member has missed 4-6 weeks call them. Ask if everything is OK and can we be of assistance. If you leave a message CALL BACK. We need to pursue those who are absent.

. IF A MISSING MEMBER IS CONTACTED THEY WILL IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZE THEY HAVE BEEN MISSED. THEY ARE A PART OF OUR FAMILY AND MUST KNOW THERE ABSENCE IS NOTICED.

. YOU NEED A MEMBERSHIP RETENTION COMMITTEE TO FOLLOW UP WITH INACTIVE MEMBERS. The committee needs to receive reports from the club officer who is taking attendance at each event. Using this information they will know who they need to contact.

. Retention committee needs to be persistent. If there is no response to phone calls visit the member. This way the member knows that they are truly missed and a part of the family.

. Clubs with under 20 need probably need 1 person. Clubs with 20-40 members will need 2 people. Clubs over 40 will need 3. Recent past presidents are excellent people to have on your retention committee.

HAVING A MEMBERSHIP RETENTION COMMITTEE IS THE BEST TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH FOR YOUR CLUB

