

## 15 Strategies for Increasing Member Attendance and Involvement

At their most basic level, clubs that function successfully – have appealing service and fundraising projects; hold interesting meetings; involve all members; communicate effectively both within the club and the community; have members that work well together and are a valuable part of the community.

Efficient clubs will be able to retain their members far more easily than one that is unsuccessful in those areas. Shaping up retention and membership strategies may take more work for some clubs than for others. But even if your club has some serious issues to address, most of these can be corrected with a unified, honest commitment from club leaders and members working together.

Here are 15 strategies your club may wish to consider for improving attendance at club meetings.

### 1. Monitor Meeting Attendance:

If a member is absent from four consecutive meetings without a known reason, that member's sponsor or the attendance committee should follow up with that person and find out the reason for missing the meetings. If there is a complaint or grievance from the member, take immediate action to correct the situation and retain the member. Have your Club Attendance Chair use the [Customized Attendance Report](#) on ClubRunner to view a graphical chart showing all member attendances, and call those that have missed two or more consecutive meetings.

### 2. Use Phone Squads:

Assemble a phone squad to call members encouraging them to attend the meeting that day. This is a great method for enticing inactive members to attend meetings. As a direct result, these members often seem to regain enthusiasm about club projects.

### 3. Relevant, Up-to-date Club Newsletter and Web Site:

Use these communications vehicles to reinforce and build upon items presented in club meetings; explain new policies and programs; remind members about important dates; report progress on various activities and celebrate club success. Increase the number of contributing editors on your [ClubRunner web site](#) to empower more members to add information pertaining to their committees and events.

### 4. Try a Lighthearted Tactic:

At each meeting an inactive member is selected and a stuffed animal is dropped off at the member's home or business place. It becomes the member's responsibility to return this "truancy mascot" in person at a regular meeting, where the returning member is properly greeted and recognized. The mascot is then sent along on its next assignment. The whereabouts of the truancy mascot should be regularly publicized in the club newsletter.

### 5. Create a "Buddy" List:

Have the club secretary assign each member a “buddy” and prepare a list with names and phone numbers of each “buddy” team. “Buddies” are responsible for ensuring that their assigned teammate attends the meeting.

**6. Produce a Desk Calendar:**

Print and distribute a desk calendar for the fiscal year that reminds members and their spouses about the club’s scheduled meetings. Add your events to your club's [ClubRunner events calendar](#) so it appears on the club web site and in every week's bulletin.

**7. Take a Roll Call:**

Ask the club secretary or attendance committee chairperson to verbally take a roll call at each meeting. The attendance chair can then call those absent, saying that they were missed while encouraging them to attend the next meeting, and to inform them of any upcoming committee or board meeting so that they could arrange a make-up.

**8. Create a Point System:**

Begin by dividing the entire club into groups with an equal amount of people in each group. The groups choose a leader who ensures that at every meeting the whole group attend. One point is given for each member in attendance at each meeting. At the end of the year the group with the most points is announced. The leader of that group gets a certificate issued by the club president and the winning group gets a prize paid for by the members of the losing groups (such as a club party or celebration).

**9. Plan Meetings Well:**

Improving your actual meetings are the most effective and immediate way to improve the perception of the club from a member standpoint. [Click here](#) for 10 valuable tips on planning effective club meetings.

**10. Develop a Chain of Command:**

Proper leadership is essential for the club’s success and contributes to every member’s development. Each club should ensure that a definite chain of command exists and that problems arising at a lower level are handled at that level. This increases the leadership abilities of the members involved and will, in turn, develop them into better leaders.

**11. Create a Harmonious Atmosphere:**

Club presidents should encourage respect among members, maintain a harmonious atmosphere, allow fresh ideas to be tried, and let members present their ideas even if contrary to tradition.

**12. Solve Problems Promptly:**

If a problem arises, the club president should meet with the parties involved to discuss it and reach an amicable solution. It is important not to let problems brew.

**13. Encourage Communication:**

Club officers should hold informal coffee or dinner sessions where any member, committee, or group can come and discuss problems, make suggestions or get advice. Encourage your members to use your [ClubRunner Discussion Forums](#) area to voice opinions or open the dialogue on important club decisions.

#### 14. Keep Activities Fresh:

Encourage members to attend other clubs' meetings, thereby creating bonds of friendship and cooperation among neighboring clubs, while exchanging ideas on fund-raising projects and service activities. Periodically try something new!

#### 15. Take Action Early and Often:

The best time to retain members is BEFORE they show signs of losing interest. It is much easier to keep someone happy and satisfied than it is to make him/her happy once they've become disgruntled. Make sure members know that the club leadership cares about them and their satisfaction as members.

Even with your hard work, some members may lose interest in the club. Classic signs of dissatisfaction include:

- Not attending meetings
- Not paying dues (or delaying payment)
- Not participating in service activities, fundraisers or social activities

If a member shows any of these signs, contact the member (or have their sponsor contact them) immediately to ascertain the reasons for not participating. Take steps to correct the situation and retain the member as soon as possible.

*Adapted from the Club Retention Chairperson's Manual*

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