

Call to Kiwanis

Follow these steps to implement a membership drive and increase your potential for service.

You have realized additional members will help your club reach its service goals of serving the children of the world. Your club is functioning well and you have been successfully implementing the “Club Excellence Tool” and “Planning Your Club’s Success.” Now you are ready for growth.

Use these steps to start increasing your club’s membership by planning a membership drive.

1. Set up your team.

- First surround yourself with people who think as you do, that increased membership growth relates to membership service growth. Be committed to hosting a membership drive.
- Gain approval from your club’s board of directors. Board approval brings legitimacy to the project as well as the ability to budget the campaign. There are costs associated with a membership drive, such as postage and printed programs, meals, etc. that need to be taken into consideration.
- You will need to form a membership drive committee, including these positions:
 - **Project lead:** The lead coordinates the entire program, orients the members to their responsibilities and supervises them during the drive.
 - **Lead for attendance:** The lead develops and secures approval of the prospect list, arranges for printing and mailing and ensures the attendance of members and guests.
 - **Lead for meeting place:** The lead is responsible for all special arrangements for the meeting time, place and physical setup, name tags, greeters and applications.
 - **Lead for meeting program:** The lead for program arranges speakers and sets the agenda for the special program.
 - **Lead for publicity:** The lead for publicity uses multiple avenues to let all members and interested parties know of the membership drive and the special guest program.

2. Plan your guest event.

- Pick a date and time. When choosing the date for the event, consult the community and club calendars. Don’t compete with other community, high traffic events or place it too close to other club activities. A normal meeting day and time is ideal, then right off you’ll know of a guest’s regular availability for meetings.

- Pick a venue. When it comes to a location, your normal meeting place should serve you well. If however your traditional meeting space is too small to accommodate the expected attendance, you might want to move for this special event.
- Set your meeting agenda. Here is one sample you can use as a guideline:
 - **Modified standard club opening (3 min.)** You might want to forgo the pledge, prayer and song and any cumbersome traditions that might be misunderstood or make the new attendees feel uncomfortable.
 - **Meal (30 min.)** *Optional* If your club has a meal, remember you will need to pay for this first meal as you have invited them to attend.
 - **Welcome: Moderator (5 min.)** Introductions and order of agenda items.
 - **Club history: Longtime member (3 min.)** How we got here.
 - **Club plans for the future: Club president (3 min.)** Where we are going.
 - **New member perspective: Newest member (3 min.)** Newest perspective.
 - **Club meeting program: Guest speaker (20 min.)** This needs to be someone who can inspire your audience to want to provide service to the community.
 - **The Kiwanis experience: Moderator (10 min.)** This needs to be someone who can ask for their commitment.
- Order materials. The Member Services Department at Kiwanis International will send you the “Changing Tomorrows Today” brochure that contains a membership application and “Serving the Children of the World” tri-folds for sharing the Kiwanis message. You can also order 50 full-color club brochures to share your club’s information with these prospects. Call 317-875-8755 or 800-KIWANIS, ext. 411.
- Focus on hospitality. The purpose of the meeting is to inspire guests to join with you in your quest to *change the world one child and one community at a time*—keep this in mind while planning your meeting. Position greeters at the door to welcome everyone. Print name tags to aid greetings and conversation. Use place cards to guide the attendees to a seat between two Kiwanis members, and train each of those members on how to share the Kiwanis message and overcome objections. Set each guest’s place with an ink pen, a Kiwanis “Changing Tomorrows Today” with application, a club brochure and maybe a small Kiwanis family store gift.

3. Invite your guests.

- Your club should develop a prospect list. If during the year everyone adds names to the prospect list, you will have a great number of prospects to consider come membership drive time. Kiwanis International has numerous resources on building prospect lists available online. Of course this raw list of names must be refined. A well developed list does 90 percent of the work for you at membership drive time.
- Using your refined list, mail a letter on club letterhead to each prospect, including details about your club's membership, meetings, events and service projects. Maybe include a club brochure or a copy of "Serving the Children of the World" tri-fold so they have something to consider. Keep a record of who received an invitation.
- Teams of two should follow up with each person to extend a face-to-face invitation and answer any questions. Again, keep record of any follow-up communications.
- Assign people to make reminder phone calls to each attendee a couple days before the event.

4. Follow up with all.

Within a week after the special event, touch base by phone, e-mail or personal post card with every guest. Do the same for everyone who said they'd come but didn't, inviting them to the next meeting. Make a personal visit before dropping them from the follow-up process. And don't forget, the best person to invite a new member is a new member.

5. Welcome your club's newest members.

- Assign a mentor. As soon as the member has indicated their intent to join, assign a mentor to the new member. A mentor has been proven to be a stabilizing force in the process. He or she can lead the new member through the maze of joining a new club and meeting new people as well as guide them to committee and service projects.
- Plan an orientation for new members. Orientation is a very important key to membership retention. In many cases clubs invite the spouses to this so they may learn more about the organization their partner is joining.
- Install the new members. Focus the whole meeting on the new members' installation with a sincere welcome to your club and an emphasis on getting to know the new members. Now it is time to get them involved.

6. Start planning for the next membership event.

Now that you have your first successful event under your belt, there is no better time to start planning the next membership event. Establish a timeframe for your next drive. Add to your ongoing prospect list the names of those who said, "Maybe later" or who were out of town.