

## Let's Talk About...Membership



### Worksheet #1 **TEST THE SOIL**

Like all gardens membership success starts with great preparation. Fertile soil makes growth easier.

Start with a **Club Assessment Form**

Attached is a sample of the form which can be found at [www.Soroptimist.org](http://www.Soroptimist.org).

CLICK on Members Only, then Resources, Information & Forms, then Membership Resources, then Membership Retention, then Sample Club Assessment Form (.doc)

Also available on the Soroptimist.org site is a sample of a **New Member Survey**

CLICK on Members Only, then Resources, Information & Forms, then Membership Resources, then Membership Retention, then Sample New Member Survey (.doc)

<http://www.soroptimist.org/members/membership/retention.html>

Other options –Create an online survey through other resources like Survey Monkey  
Which methods does your club use to uncover its needs for improvement? Eg: Club Retreat

#### **SHARED IDEAS:**

- **Use the Club Assessment Form**
- **Aim High—have a contract for how members treat each other**
- **Assign a greeter for each meeting**
- **Use MeetUp.com to find individuals who share a common interest**
- **An evening social provides a less formal first impression than a business meeting**
- **Hold a variety of social events**
- **Invite a potential member out for coffee, one to one**
- **Always provide a welcoming environment**
- **Use member introductions to give the potential member a way to discover who she can relate to**

## Let's Talk About...Membership



### Worksheet #2

## PLANT THE SEEDS

There are two main ways to increase the size of your club:

**Recruiting new members**

**Retaining current members**

When a members speaks about her own Soroptimist membership, what does she say?

What does your club do to encourage members to address the recruiting challenge?

How do *you* ask a potential member to get involved?

Is your club a secret garden?

Do your club's recruitment efforts reflect the diversity of your community?

Are you a NO GUILT club?

Do you utilize both direct and indirect ways of generating membership?

Marketing—club exposure "We have a garden!"

Prospecting—direct ask "Come into our garden!"

What types of technology do you use, or have considered using?

Does your club collaborate with other private, civic and volunteer organizations?

### SHARED IDEAS:

- **Don't sell it—demonstrate it!**
- **No Guilt—help when you can (no one's perfect)**
- **Have reasonable payment options**
- **Prepare and memorize an "elevator speech"**
- **Teach members how to promote your club if asked, "What does your club do?"**
- **Volunteer as Soroptimists**
- **Have displays (exposure) at public events**
- **Appoint or elect a VP of Membership responsible for creating the club's strategic plan**
- **Have monthly/quarterly socials**
- **Recruit in pairs**
- **Remember to have fun and play well together**
- **Recruit in places "outside the box" (outside your comfort zone); seek diversity**
- **Remember to ASK!**
- **Meet in a professional (neutral) location rather than a private home**
- **Mentor new members**

## Let's Talk About...Membership



### Worksheet #3 **CULTIVATE**

The key to health includes:  
**Garden Maintenance**

How are you following up with potential members?  
Do you have a plan, or is follow-up left to chance?  
What are some clues that your member “crop” might be in trouble?  
Does your garden need some “weeding”?  
How do handle “toxic” influences?

#### **SHARED IDEAS:**

- **Follow up with potential members**
- **If necessary, wave club dues (member pays SIA and Region dues only)**
- **Use MeetUp.com, have meet & greets, use social media to attract new members**
- **SUDS: Soroptimist Understanding through Drinking and Socializing**
- **Call non-attending members to re-engage their interest**
- **Communicate with members and offer solutions to problems**
- **Treat all members with kindness and respect**
- **Do not treat deemed-toxic members poorly**
- **“Team work makes the dream work” –Poco Davis**
- **Find a way ALL members can participate in the team**
- **Send cards or emails of appreciation for attendance, assistance, anything**
- **Send a “Soroptimised You!” message to members who miss a meeting**

## Let's Talk About...Membership



### Worksheet #4 HARVEST

Is it a good harvest?

How do you measure success in membership?

What are your written club goals for membership and retention?

How often does club health need to be evaluated?

How were your current members recruited? Take a survey.

What recruiting techniques can members learn from each other?

What are cockle shells anyway, and what are they doing in a garden?

#### SHARED IDEAS:

- **The number of members in the club, and their participation and engagement relates directly to club success.**
- **Written goals are essential; review annually at special planning meetings.**
- **Sample goal: 10 new members this year**
- **Recruit by personal invitation; through events and fundraisers; website and social media**
- **Print business cards (VistaPrint.com) with complete Soroptimist information, website and phone numbers**
- **Wear your Soroptimist pin!**
- **Prepare an elevator speech**
- **Prepare folders with information to give to visitors and potential members**