

## Membership Development: Retention Worksheet

- Assess
  - Survey new and long-term members to assess what they love about the Club, their interests and their concerns.
  - Ensure the Club's member records are accurate. Can you accurately state your Club's retention rate?
  - Contact members who have left or not renewed to find out why.
  - If meeting attendance or volunteer involvement is low, find out why.
  - Review the reasons people join and stay members. Is your Club offering these benefits to members?
- Plan
  - Set challenging retention goals for the next two years. (It is typical for organizations to retain between 50 percent and 80 percent of their membership.)
  - Brainstorm a variety of ways to improve member retention and encourage more members to become active volunteers. Remember, during brainstorming, promote creativity by not criticizing ideas right away. Even "wild" ideas may lead to new, practical methods.
  - Develop a strategic retention action plan that includes:
    - New member orientation
    - Mentor/buddy system
    - Regularly scheduled surveys of member interests and concerns
    - Volunteer management system that provides small and large opportunities and time flexibility.
  - Determine whether members need additional training or educational materials on communication skills, volunteer management, diversity awareness, what other experts say about retention and other issues (see the Resource Guide).
  - Determine measures that will help you monitor the success of the retention plan as things proceed. For example, ask mentors to note details of every time they contact or meet with their new member and what was discussed.
  - Write down the retention action plan and note who will do what by when.
- Act
  - Mentors/buddies promptly follow up on concerns and requests made by new members.
  - Keep careful records to monitor progress toward retention goals.
  - Celebrate successes and share praise with everyone that helps. Develop a variety of ways to thank members personally and publicly for their contributions of time, money and attention.
- Assess again

- Continue to assess retention issues. Surface concerns and discuss them honestly-constructive dialogue around how the retention effort is going with members of diverse groups, and all members, will go a long way to building trust and improving the retention effort.