

Sweet Adelines International Region 7 POSITION YOUR MEMBERS Leadership Retreat 2009

Prepare your plan; Position your members; Produce results. A series of events that needs to be well thought out, well executed. Your membership plan is in place. Now you need to be sure your members are positioned for success. Here are some suggestions, taken directly from the Members Count! Toolkit. This is the SAI Membership Bible, an invaluable tool for your director, membership and marketing chairs and members.

A. Commitment

- a. Your members voted to be involved in the Pilot Project
- b. They have some general knowledge of what's required
- c. Will need to be reminded and given more details throughout the year
- d. Need to know your chapter's goals
- e. What will be expected of them

B. Involvement

- a. Director as well as members involved; not just "Membership Committee"
- b. Be clear about who is in charge of what; how the jobs fit together; why each is important
- c. Greeter Training
 - i. Toolkit Page 3-3
 - ii. Members may think the idea of training greeters is funny. Be prepared.
 - iii. Practice with all chorus members; observe interactions
 - iv. Select Greeter chair; skilled at assessing guest's personality; Assigns greeters accordingly
 - v. Pick official greeters from those who give the best representation of your chorus
 - vi. How to make small-talk; how to dress; always wear name tag
 - vii. Never, leave a guest standing alone
 - viii. Teach members how to talk with guests. Toolkit, page 3-6

C. Who's In Control--Guest Needs

- a. To be in control. Let her decide for herself whether your chorus is right for her. Give her the information but let her decide
- b. Sensitivity to her
 - i. Culture—physical proximity, touching, tact & courtesy, her musical ability & experience; honest answers to her questions
- c. It's all about the music
 - i. The better your chorus sings, the more likely you are to attract talented singers!
 - ii. Help available. Continuous learning.
- d. Lots of questions
 - i. Provide information she's ready to receive
 - ii. If you don't know, find out
 - iii. Keep answers positive
- e. Your chorus member's mission
 - i. Help guest make right decision for her
 - ii. Her decision will be the right one for your chorus, too
 - iii. Mostly we're amateurs; all passed audition; continuous learning; lots of help

D. Director's Role

- a. Greet each guest by name. Encourage her to sing on risers
 - b. Supervise voice placement
 - c. Explain each activity
 - d. Direct a polished chorus performance with guests as audience
- E. Guest Packets—Tool Kit p3-8
- a. For taking home; include your chorus logo
 - b. A letter from (Your chorus) membership Team customized with your chorus logo—See R7 website
 - c. A welcome “what to expect letter”. R7 website. Use your logo. Second page is basic Q&A
 - d. Clearly printed on good-quality paper.
 - e. Give contact information for someone on membership committee. Be sure the phone will be answered, a correct message taken, call returned, an email responded to.
 - f. Brochure from Int’l. “Join the chorus, join the fun”. Space on back to stamp your chorus contact info. 25 brochures for \$8.50.
 - g. Information sheet about your chorus. Use your logo!
 - h. Explain POP; can learn some music, sing with chorus for specific performances; no dues; no audition
 - i. Costs too much? Less is more. Be sure what you present is professional looking.
 - j. Limit information at first visit. Object is to give guests enough info so they will want to come back. Understand that many won’t come back but it’s important to build community good will.
 - k. Ongoing video from Int’l. Other videos. Member testimonies.
 - l. Guest Survey. Short, easy. R7 website
- F. Frequent Guest Card
- a. Guest receives “points” with each visit that can be used for bbs merchandise or \$ off dues
 - b. Whatever you can afford
 - c. Set limit on # of weeks. Maybe 7 visits?
- G. Making the Memory
- a. Greeters in place, wearing name tag, well groomed, big smiles on, guest packets ready,
 - b. Guest survey. See R7 website. Customize with your logo. Pens handy. Have guest complete before giving them packet.
 - c. Greeter introduces herself. Visits briefly with guest. Introduces to director. Answers questions. Refers guest to materials in packet for her to read later.
 - d. Strongly invite them to sing on risers with you but don’t force. Experiencing the music is what will bring them back.
 - e. Skit, Jane, Phyllis & Sandy
- H. Rehearsal-- An Event to Remember
- a. Encourage your guests to sing with you on the risers
 - b. Make a place for each guest on the risers
 - c. To voice place now or later? Allow for flexibility.
 - d. Involve as many music staff as possible
 - e. Explain the POP—learn music, perform, how many weeks? no obligation
 - f. Explain reason for each warm-up; demonstrate properly
 - g. Learn part of a new song.
 - h. Promise to learn the rest next visit.
 - i. Plan a well-polished performance
 - j. Compliment and encourage all singers
 - k. Make it fun; lots of laughter

- I. Following Up #1
 - a. Phone call, post card, email from director. Thank them for visiting, looking forward to seeing them again.
 - b. Sincere. Enthusiastic. Short.

- J. The Hook
 - a. Fewer guests than last week.
 - b. Provide guest a packet, and name tag
 - c. Or maybe a guest communication box with a folder just for her.
 - d. Packet should include customized second visit letter from R7 website. Gives info about your music staff, a bit about SAI and specific info about your chorus.
 - e. Int'l brochure "History of Barbershop"
 - f. Audition information; next week she'll receive music & learning CD
 - g. Be sure guest rehearses on risers. Is she comfortable with her voice placement?
 - h. Find a space for her
 - i. Be sure current members provide space for her, Assist her with music and encouragement
 - j. Be sure director greets her by name and welcomes her back

- K. Following Up #2
 - a. Post card, phone call, email from Membership Chair
 - b. Include first-time visitors who did not return. If they say they won't be back, end the conversation positively.

- L. The Line
 - a. Customized letter. R7 website. See a pattern here? Be sure information is factual and current. Entices guests to return for 4th visit.
 - b. Expense sheet from treasurer. Dues info (half price for under 25), what it buys, regular expenses, payment options; opportunities to receive help with chorus expenses.
 - c. Chorus newsletter. All for taking home.
 - d. Again, on risers. Help with music or voice part?
 - e. Accurate learning CD, all parts; audition music; info about audition process.
 - f. Director's friendliness, encouragement, sincerity is critical

- M. Following Up #3
 - a. Note, phone call, email from President
 - b. Include second-week visits who did not return.

- N. The Sinker
 - a. Customized letter from R7 website. Explain audition is only for those who've already decided they want to join your chorus. Can still participate in POP without audition.
 - b. Advantages of chapter membership. Costume, makeup, competition, voting, performances
 - c. Fund raisers. Your chorus year, other pertinent information.
 - d. Don't down-play time commitment. All events optional. Members do what they do because they want to.

- O. Adding On/Reinforcing—The Guest Information Classes
 - a. Could immediately follow vocal lessons
 - b. Presented by chapter officers, director or assistant director
 - c. Away from rehearsing chorus; guests rejoin the risers after class
 - d. Different topics every week. POP, Membership requirements, time commitment, dues, audition, chorus year; chapter, regional and Int'l governance, educational opportunities, chorus goals, performance opportunities. Everyone learns differently

- e. Keep classes short. Allow for questions. Answer honestly but positively. Enthusiasm is contagious
- f. Video from Int'l; video of chorus competition if you're proud of competition performance.
- g. Reinforce information with handouts

P. Helping Her Along

- a. Greetings from members and director with each visit. Members need to wear their nametags!
- b. Follow your plan. Keep your members involved, informed. Most guests will not join. Many will want to participate in the POP only. Chapter good will is also important.
- c. Consider a written or verbal survey of those who decide not to join.

Q. Over the Hump!

- a. Audition should be private
- b. Make a big deal. Congratulations from the assisting quartet members and director. Encouragement and help for those who don't pass the first time.
- c. Have set, written requirements for turning guests into members. Implement it as soon as she passes! Don't make her wait! She'll know she's special if you continue to treat her special!
 - i. Standing Rules
 - ii. Membership Application
 - iii. Membership Options
 - iv. Minimum payment
 - v. Strategic Plan
 - vi. Who votes on membership
 - vii. Performance expectations
 - viii. Dues and payment options

R. At Last

- a. Make a big deal
- b. Short ceremony; small gift
- c. Name tag
- d. Copies of current repertoire; accurate learning CD
- e. Member Expectations—see Toolkit p5-5. Be sure to customize
- f. Customized welcome letter. R7 website
- g. Brochure from Int'l. "Welcome New Members" \$8.50/25. Space to stamp your chorus info
- h. "Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me When I First Started" Toolkit, p5-2&3
- i. Chapter directory
- j. Assign a Big Sister

S. Big Sister Program That Works

- a. Toolkit p5-8
- b. Lasts the entire first year of membership
- c. Take care when appointing Big Sister Chair and matching Big Sisters with new members
- d. Not all current members want to be Big Sisters.
- e. Potential big sisters might well be greeters. They might have already formed a bond with certain guests by the time the guest passes her audition
- f. Plan activities. Make a big deal of the Big Sister/Little Sister relationship

T. Taking Care of Those Who were Already There

- a. Make them an integral part of the membership process, beginning through the first year
- b. Everyone needs to feel useful and important

- c. Make special effort to keep communication lines open, show consideration and recognize contributions
- d. Director's attitude and participation is especially important here
- e. Member of the Year, Longevity Awards, Awards and recognitions for other important things