



Membership 001: Investing in Our Membership

Membership is a continuous process of recruiting, orientating, activating, and renewing.

Key Presenter: Debbi Benke, 2015-2016 MNWT Membership Vice President

Target Audience: Chapter Membership Vice President, Chapter Presidents and anyone that is Membership Driven!

What is Membership and why should we hold it so valuable in our organization?

Membership is belonging to something of importance, being accepted for who you are and wanting to remain in that organization because you have felt those two powerful things; being important and being accepted.

How do we “Invest in Our Membership”?

One way to Invest in Our Membership is by – Making the member feel accepted and important.

- Get to know your members – members like when you get to know them and their talents. This will help build a strong rapport with them.
- Know what each member likes to do:
 - Organize a project;
 - Be a leader of an event;
 - Donate items to an event instead of working at it; and/or
 - Will attend and help at the events even though he/she doesn't attend the membership meetings.

Let's put more depth into why we are recruiting and why we need these new members. The Minnesota Women of Today is in need of more and more members to keep our organization alive and thriving. But don't add members to just add – add members because those members will do something productive and successful for your chapter and for the organization as a whole.

The 2020 by 2020 campaign has started and we want to see the pledge forms come in. This campaign is not only to add or recruit new members, it is also to reactivate our members that are not active. When we work together as a team, we will see this vision become reality.

Be zealous about the Women of Today and your chapter. When we focus on what members are and what membership truly means in this organization, we can only revel in the notion that our career is focused on helping people develop their inner-most lifelong dreams.

YOU need to make a commitment to “Invest in Our Membership”!

Another way to “Invest in Our Membership” is by using the ROAR tools that the Minnesota Women of Today have created. It is a great resource to use!





Membership 001: Investing in Our Membership

Membership is a continuous process of recruiting, orientating, activating, and renewing.

Key Presenter: Debbi Benke, 2015-2016 MNWT Membership Vice President

Target Audience: Chapter Membership Vice President, Chapter Presidents and anyone that is Membership Driven!

What is your chapter doing to “Invest in Membership?”

How does your chapter recruit prospective members or community members?

Here are new social ideas to recruit the community and/or prospective members into your chapter:

What Just Went POP?

- During your M-event, have balloons that match your theme. Before you blow them up or put helium into the balloons, put a piece of paper into the balloon with some fun facts about your current membership. Whether it is regarding a “bloop” during an event, your base membership number or what embarrasses your current chapter president, you can do anything, just have fun with it!
- Have another set of balloons with pieces of paper with an “x” dollar amount for those that sign and give dues that evening. The “x” dollar amount will be the amount the new member receives off their membership dues. (If the chapter treasury allows and budgets for this)

Banana Split Bonanza

- During your M-event, invite prospects to join you with a banana. Play the “banana split card game” before preparing the banana splits that you will eventually enjoy.
- Make sure you bring toppings for the banana splits.

Freezer Workshop Meals or a Tasting Party

- Have an M-event inviting community members and friends to a Freezer Workshop Event. Tastefully Simple and Wild Tree (organic) are two home parties that supply these Freezer Workshop Meals.
- During the event you can have prizes or dollar baskets to help raise funds for your treasury. Make sure your friends invite a friend...this will help with more prospective members at the event.
- When the consultant has done her introduction, make sure to make the Women of Today presence known and invite those attending to join the Women of Today. This workshop is a lot of fun!

Recruitment in ROAR

- 1) Make a list of names, calling this list a “Prospective List”
 - a. Make sure you use the list of Prospective Members that your chapter has created. Invite those on the list to special events (Kids’ week events, chapter socials, growth seminars, membership nights)
 - b. Don’t eliminate someone because you figure they may not join – you never know until you ASK! Add people that:
 - i. Attend your book club;
 - ii. Work with you;
 - iii. Come to parties that you attend;
 - iv. Are your child’s best friends’ or classmates’ parent(s);



Membership 001: Investing in Our Membership

Membership is a continuous process of recruiting, orientating, activating, and renewing.

Key Presenter: Debbi Benke, 2015-2016 MNWT Membership Vice President

Target Audience: Chapter Membership Vice President, Chapter Presidents and anyone that is Membership Driven!

- v. Wait in line with you at the grocery store;
 - vi. Helped you find some clothes/shoes while shopping; etc...
- 2) Invite prospective members to an event, project or social.
- a. Personalize your invitations;
 - b. Offer to give them a ride to the meeting or event;
 - c. Furnish an incentive to join;
 - d. Put together themed meetings and events;
 - e. Have fun at your meeting; and/or
- 3) Host effective Membership Nights.
- a. Introduce yourself and the current members to the prospective member
 - b. Ask questions to get them to talk and feel comfortable
 - c. Tell them about the Women of Today (be Passionate about the organization ~ know what you are going to say)
 - d. Believe in the organization.
 - i. List some great features of your organization, like “Annually, Minnesota Women of Today raises over _____ dollars given to foundations and distributed to communities across Minnesota.”
 - ii. Find out how much your chapter has raised this year or the last 5 years and show what an impact you’ve made in your community
 - e. Invite prospects to join – remember to ask EVERYONE: you never know until you ASK!
 - f. Bring incentives for prospective members that join during the event.

Orientation in ROAR

Orientation is critical in the new member success. However, it also helps the current members as well. Remember the member wants to feel wanted, accepted and important. Make them feel this way by orientating them about the organization. This orientation should be kept short and interesting and within the first month of joining.

- 1) Complete STEP I with the new member(s) that is designed to promote the orientation and activation of a new member.
- a. All steps of the program must be completed during the member’s first 120 days (date from when dues are paid). By participating in the required activities, the new member becomes familiar with all levels of the organization.
 - b. To certify in STEP I the individual must complete all of the mandatory requirements and two of the optional requirements. The certification form should be sent to the State Contact within 30 days of the completion of the program.
 - c. Remember these requirements must be completed WITHIN THE FIRST 120 DAYS OF JOINING the local chapter.



Membership 001: Investing in Our Membership

Membership is a continuous process of recruiting, orientating, activating, and renewing.

Key Presenter: Debbi Benke, 2015-2016 MNWT Membership Vice President

Target Audience: Chapter Membership Vice President, Chapter Presidents and anyone that is Membership Driven!

2) Create New Member Packets that include:

- a. Structure of the organization;
- b. Updated bylaws and policies;
- c. History of the local chapter;
- d. Local Officer list and explanation of the duties;
- e. Parliamentary Procedure – how to make a motion, voting, etc.;
- f. Recent projects that were completed;
- g. Programming – explain the specific areas of programming;
- h. Organization terminology (glossary of the Women of Today acronyms); and
- i. Running a project.

3) Conduct a mini orientation.

- a. Advertise in your local paper / newsletter informing new members of the orientation;
- b. Have your new member packets and the STEP I Certifications ready; and
- c. Remind yourself that this is beneficial for new and current members.

Activation in ROAR

Think back to when you became a chapter member. Did you know everything that consisted with being part of this organization that you just joined? Of course not...but you were anxiously waiting to know more about the organization, know more about what you could do to be a part of the chapters' events and wanted to be an active participant.

If there is no activation, the desire to know more about the organization shrinks or dissolves and this new member is more than likely to drop out than continue with their membership.

This can be avoided by planning an activation program for the new members and/or the reactivated members. Keep in touch with members regularly and keep them informed with the chapter happenings.

Big Sis/Lil Sis Program¹

The Big Sis / Little Sis program was designed to match up a new member with an experienced member who will show the new member the ropes. The purpose of the program is to make the new member feel a part of the chapter and give her guidance so she will become active. This program has been proven to be effective in retaining new members. If they understand the organization, they are more apt to become and stay involved.

¹ Resources in the Membership Manual: *Welcome to the Big Sis / Little Sis Program - for Big Sis (includes Incentive Sheet)

*Welcome Aboard letter - for Little Sis *Big Sis / Little Sis Sample Newsletter Articles



Membership 001: Investing in Our Membership

Membership is a continuous process of recruiting, orientating, activating, and renewing.

Key Presenter: Debbi Benke, 2015-2016 MNWT Membership Vice President

Target Audience: Chapter Membership Vice President, Chapter Presidents and anyone that is Membership Driven!

Setting up the Program:

- 1) Decide who will be in charge of this program in your chapter. If you have a Membership Manager, she is the most likely. If not, you will need to recruit someone else.
- 2) You will need to explain the program to your chapter first, either with an article in your chapter newsletter or at a general meeting.
- 3) Make a motion at your meeting to approve this program. "I move that our chapter participate in the Big Sis / Little Sis program." Explain the program and hopefully pass the motion.
- 4) Ask for volunteers to be a Big Sis. The requirements are:
 - a. Have enthusiasm for the organization.
 - b. Be willing to make a commitment of six months to help the new member become active.

Implementing the Program:

- 1) Set up the pairs. The Big Sis should not be the new member's recruiter or close friend. The idea here is to add to the list of members the new member knows.
 - a. Give each Big Sis a copy of the Welcome to the Big Sis / Little Sis Program letter found in the Membership Manual. This includes instructions and an Incentive Sheet which gives the Big Sis all the information she will need to do her job.
 - b. Give each Little Sis a copy of the Welcome Aboard letter found in the Membership Manual. This will explain the program to her so she knows what to expect.
- 2) Keep them focused. Your job is to ensure that the Big Sis knows her job is important and feels a sense of responsibility in performing it.
 - a. Put notes in your chapter newsletter as reminders or highlight Big Sis / Little Sis pairs for their activity. There are BS\LS Sample Newsletter Articles in the Membership Manual.
 - b. Check on the pair's progress along the way. Make sure there is some activity going on.
 - c. The Big Sis should be encouraged to participate in the orientation for her Little Sis. But do not take for granted that she will just do it. Follow up with her.
 - d. Give thank you notes or small incentives at meetings for pairs who sit together, who complete a suggested activity or who are graduating.
 - e. Give recognition or small gifts to pairs who have completed at least 10 items on the Big Sis / Little Sis Incentive Sheet.

Finishing the Job:

- 1) Notify the Big Sis / Little Sis when their six months is up. At this point, the pair should have completed their Incentive Sheet and the Little Sis is ready to "graduate."
- 2) Recognize the pairs who have completed the Incentive Sheet or their six months as Big and Little Sis. Congratulate them with a note in the newsletter or at your meeting with a small gift.



Membership 001: Investing in Our Membership

Membership is a continuous process of recruiting, orientating, activating, and renewing.

Key Presenter: Debbi Benke, 2015-2016 MNWT Membership Vice President

Target Audience: Chapter Membership Vice President, Chapter Presidents and anyone that is Membership Driven!

Retention in ROAR

Retention is very critical to this organization. It is the most important and most overlooked area in many chapters. Retention is the manner in which we keep members interested and active in the local organization. With New Member Adds and the continued retention to the chapter numbers, the overall membership number will grow! Without retention, the new members replace those that drop, not adding to the overall membership or retention number. **Retention is THAT important!**

Everyone wants to feel important. This is part of “Investing in Our Membership” – keeping our members that we currently have and making them feel part of the “team.” We must not let them feel left out!

- Incorporate the STEP II & STEP III of the STEP System and utilize them.
- STEP II is for the person who has been a member for 12 months or less. By participating in this program, they will become activated in the local, district, regional, and state levels.
- STEP III is for the person who has been a member for more than one year and up to five years, or for any person in good standing that leaves the organization for any length of time and then rejoins the organization at a later date.
- Send out letters to current Membership
- Encourage members to be active in the chapter, district and state levels of the organization
- Hold Membership socials
- Utilize Newsletters – have a member spotlight – highlight new members – report the event that a member set up
- Recognize the chapter members by giving them awards for renewing their membership
- Hold a renewal party – this can be a game night or some type of fun chapter renewal social
- Hold a renewal ceremony
- Be sure to utilize the Big Sis / Lil Sis program if you haven't started it yet

Retention Checklist²

This is a questionnaire for your chapter. Your chapter board members should read it and answer the questions with a YES or NO.

- 1) Do you have a sound organizational structure: Officers, standing chairmen and committees, project chairmen with adequate committees resulting in efficient operation?
- 2) Does every member understand your purposes of a chapter and your yearly goals?
- 3) Do you keep your chapter plans and goals within a reasonable limit considering the time, interests and capabilities of your members?

²Taken from the United States Women of Today



Membership 001: Investing in Our Membership

Membership is a continuous process of recruiting, orientating, activating, and renewing.

Key Presenter: Debbi Benke, 2015-2016 MNWT Membership Vice President

Target Audience: Chapter Membership Vice President, Chapter Presidents and anyone that is Membership Driven!

- 4) Do you give every member a chance to participate as much or as little as she wishes, in whatever she wishes?
- 5) Do you keep all members informed?
- 6) Do you make each member feel welcomed?
- 7) Do you welcome and encourage new ideas from each member, old and new?
- 8) Do you ask each member to participate?
- 9) Do you give adequate direction and help members?
- 10) Are your meetings productive and interesting?
- 11) Do your committees' meetings accomplish what they set out to do?
- 12) Do you say "Thank you"?
- 13) Do you use experienced members for guidance and help whenever you can?
- 14) Do you review your program at the end of the year and make constructive criticisms for future programs?
- 15) Do you make members feel that this is their chapter?
- 16) Do you offer a well-rounded program: Community Involvement, Personal Enrichment courses, etc?
- 17) Do you care about your members all year long, and not just when they are due?

If you answered NO to any questions, your chapter may be headed for retention problems. Please utilize this questionnaire a number of times during the year – it can serve as a good reminder of ways to work continually on retention.

Here are some questions you could add to this questionnaire:

- 18) Does your chapter utilize the Big Sis/Lil Sis program?
- 19) Does your chapter hold social events for your chapter members?
- 20) Does your chapter hold m-events for prospective members?
- 21) Does your chapter use a prospective list and utilize it?
- 22) Does your chapter utilize a chapter newsletter?

Invest in Our Membership!

Investing in Membership is very important. We need to remember to thank our members for being who they are and being involved in the organization; whether they are involved little or big time. They still need to be thanked and appreciated. This will also help with the sense of belonging and importance. It will help retain the current membership.