

## Best Practices for Engagement and Retention

- 1) **Conduct efficient meetings**
  - a) Use a Consent Agenda to dispense of minutes and financials, all in one vote, removing any item that a member requests
  - b) Follow the agenda, deferring items to committee as needed
- 2) **Offer interesting meetings**
  - a) Include a team-building or advocacy exercise, speaker or service activity:
    - i) Members sharing their expertise as first in their field
    - ii) Nonprofit leaders explaining their mission and how members can support it
    - iii) Elected leaders detailing non-partisan issues and how members can be involved
    - iv) Leadership compass identifies leadership styles and reduces conflict
    - v) Write to legislators, create flash cards for a literacy class, share an online advocacy tool (two-minute-activist)
- 3) **Offer quality service and advocacy projects**
  - a) Anti-violence against women—support a local shelter, a program for prevention, a “living wage” program, or programs that help domestic violence survivors, teen moms, foster girls, human trafficking victims or women recovering from addiction
  - b) Support an education or jobs initiative—literacy, Dress for Success, tutoring or mentoring
  - c) Health care awareness: breast cancer awareness program, heart health, etc.
  - d) Generate community awareness with an event for any of these subjects
  - e) Write an advocacy or editorial piece for your local newspaper, politicians
- 4) **Develop a useful strategic plan**
  - a) Address committee direction, incorporating plans that engage membership and leadership
  - b) Include support for ZIF and involvement at the international, district and area levels
  - c) Member input should be solicited and utilized for plan development or change
- 5) **Participate at the international, district and area levels, including ZI fellowships, scholarships and awards**
  - a) Develop financial support for delegates and others to attend events (i.e. budget, fundraiser)
  - b) Encourage leadership at higher levels
  - c) Identify club member(s) with experience and/or interest in education to serve as the project leader(s)
- 6) **Execute inspiring fundraising events**
  - a) Create a fashion show with volunteers from nonprofits or elected leaders as models
  - b) Celebrate a “Woman of the Year” during a brunch, lunch, tea or dinner event
  - c) Develop a Rose Day fundraiser: Take advanced orders and deliver them on Rose Day
  - d) Work with a florist to develop a program selling roses, poinsettias, Christmas trees, etc.
  - e) Create a raffle and sell tickets at community events
  - f) Printed programs should include ZI’s mission and vision, as well as the club’s service and advocacy efforts
  - g) Use these programs as talking points in seeking sponsors and benefactors

- 7) **Engage members with well-organized committees**
  - a) Schedule “committee awareness” time following a membership recruitment or installation event
- 8) **Cultivate friendships and avoid cliques** to maintain a healthy and engaged membership
  - a) Arrange seating: hand out at door with signs on tables—alphabetically, by birthday, height, clothing color, etc.
  - b) Optional social or team-building events—painting parties, escape rooms, etc.
    - i) Encourage non-meeting social time: Count off at a meeting, all common numbers get together for lunch or a drink
- 9) **Integrate, involve, recognize and welcome current and new members; share tasks**
  - a) Track participation by committee, follow up on opportunities, congratulate high achievers
  - b) Ask or assign new members to committees that are a good fit, coordinate with mentors
  - c) Schedule optional social or team-building events—painting parties, escape rooms, etc.
  - d) Acknowledge shorter terms and increments than ZI: first anniversaries, five-year increments
- 10) **Offer good orientation and mentoring programs**
  - a) Develop mentoring plan per new member interests, create meeting reminders, carpool, greet and/or sit with them, introduce them to others, accompany them to committee meetings, provide one-on-one guidance
  - b) Arrange for the new member to perform a common club activity, “shadowing” or assisting, an experienced member as the greeter at a meeting, providing the inspiration at a meeting or selling raffle tickets at an event
- 11) **Use regular surveys to track the pulse of members**
  - a) Address topics of interest—meeting schedule, location, service or advocacy projects, fundraisers
  - b) [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) is a good free tool
- 12) **Budget for affordable club dues**
  - a) Minimize the cost of meetings by considering affordable venues, and keep administration to a minimum
  - b) Seek sponsorship for activities