

# MEMBERSHIP MEMO

**(Membership is not a waiting game!)**

**To:** Lions and Lion Leaders  
**From:** VCC Jim McCown  
**Date:** December 1, 2008  
**Re:** My club needs help! Does it?

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## DECLINING MEMBERSHIP

Is this your club? Every year it seems like you lose more members than you brought in. Most of them are the newly recruited members. Of course we sometimes lose a member by death or transferring to another club. But, no matter how well we recruit, we seem to continue to drop in membership. Should you be doing a better job of recruiting? Well maybe yes and maybe no! First you should find out why they are leaving. Reasons could be something simple that you can correct. Maybe they were not recruited correctly! They were sold a bill of goods that they found was not the case.

Some of the reasons for leaving that you can correct are:

- a. Meetings that are boring and unproductive.
- b. Projects that have no real meaning in the community.
- c. New members don't feel involved or part of the decision-making process.
- d. One or two people are running the club and it has to be done their way!
- e. Very Cliquish!
- f. And other reasons.

Whatever the cause, it is time for you to make an assessment on why you are losing members. You can do this by rating the meeting quality, leadership within your club, committee functions and your activities. This can all be done internally.

Externally you can assess the club's image in the community. You can interview recent speakers, public officials, the news media, and school administrators. Conduct a community assessment to determine ways to expand service activities and attract new members and keep them after you attract them.

Once you have determined what is wrong with your club, the next step is to make the necessary changes.

You may have to drop traditional fund-raisers and service projects. Passing the leadership on to others, including the new members, may have to occur. Listen to new members ideas and don't be afraid to try them. Make your meetings efficient and worthwhile. This may include well planned agendas at each meeting and a fun/humorous tailtwister. Have a guest speaker at each of your meetings. Leave the club's business for the board meetings.

Other changes that may be a little overwhelming might include changing the meeting location, day, time and length of the meeting. Reduce membership costs. And finally, change the attendance requirements so members can achieve 100%.

Have you asked someone today to become a Lion?  
If not – why not?

Published frequently for those interested in membership, retention and extension.

Please send questions or ideas to VCC Jim McCown. Phone 360459 5469 or E-mail: [pdgjimmccown@comcast.net](mailto:pdgjimmccown@comcast.net).

I will share your ideas and questions in this memo!

## ASKING!!

No, I am not talking about asking a prospect to become a member.

I am referring to asking your members to work on a project or do something else. If you announce that you need a member or several members to volunteer to work on a specific project, you will find that only a very few, if any, will respond.

So what is the next step? Have you thought of asking each of them personally? It is harder for someone to say no when you are looking them in the eyes and waiting for them to respond. If they have the time available they will say yes. This takes up a lot of your time however. You might feel that instead of taking all this time to ask each person, you can do it yourself just as quick. Wrong! You need your members to be involved.

Phoning each individual can be as successful as asking them in person. However, if you have a big project, where you need many volunteers, then you may have to send around a sign-up sheet. If you don't get your slots filled by passing the sign-up sheet around, then you will have to contact them individually.

The point here is asking will get you the volunteers you need quicker than just making an announcement of what you need.