

100's of Membership Building Ideas

GET MORE GUESTS

1. Places to put flyers - Bulletin boards, Library, Coffee shops, College, Churches, Retirement Center, Grocery stores, Restaurants, Recreational center, Doctor's office, Dentist's office, Movie Theater, Grocery Stores, Company internal websites, Airport, City Hall, Police Station, Banks, Post Office, Bookstores, Chamber of Commerce, Beauty Saloon, Hair Stylists
2. Ask a member from another club (look for one who you believe is especially motivational in their speaking ability) to do an education module at one of your club meetings. Create a guest list to invite prospective members who can benefit from the topic.
3. Create a holiday invitation (St. Pat's, Halloween, Thanksgiving, spring, etc.) and ask each member to hand out invitations to friends and co-workers. Plan your agenda around a holiday theme.
4. Plan a special showcase meeting. Invite outside speakers to present a special program. Invite guests and be ready to sign them up on the spot.
5. Conduct a Speechcraft.
6. Take your show on the road. Schedule your meeting in a new location where it will get new visibility. Suggestions: community center, library, retirement community, book store, etc. Get the facility to help promote your special appearance. Invite guests.
7. Appreciation night: Honor a community member at a special meeting. Ask the guest to say a few words promoting Toastmasters. Be sure to have lots of guests to help express your appreciation.
8. Design a club brochure and distribute it to prospective members.
9. Ask your Chamber of Commerce to list your Toastmaster meeting information in their newsletter.
10. Develop a web site listing your club information. Make it visually appealing and interesting.
11. Contact your city's various cultural centers. (NOTE: Many of these individuals will have English as a second language. It may be helpful to work with someone who is associated with the specific cultural community.)
12. Do you live in a non-English speaking community? Ask someone to write out a poster in that language.
13. Invite your family and friends to attend a speech contest.
14. Send out press releases and social media notices on all your activities. Don't be discouraged if it takes awhile to be noticed. Send personal notes to members that you haven't seen for a while. Announce the election of new club officers, member achievements and other items of interest. Post a photo of a meeting where people are obviously having fun.
15. Develop a silent seller award in your club. A silent seller is an award that is given to a person who has 10 straight weeks of perfect attendance.
16. Set up a silent salesman at a grocery store. The silent salesman is a display case for your club promotional material.
17. Become involved in your local Chamber of Commerce
18. Your club can open a booth at a fair
19. Participate in a parade in your local community.
20. Speak at your city's Chamber of Commerce meetings. Invite Chamber members to your meetings.
21. Have your club organize or judge speech contests or debates for High School students.
22. Give seminars to High School and College speech classes students regarding career planning and the importance of communication
23. Develop a custom-made bumper sticker that has your club's website and put it on your car.
24. Develop and Set up Highway signs that promote your club.
25. Wear Toastmasters buttons or clothing
26. Wear funny hats with the name of your Toastmasters club on them
27. Hand out balloons with your clubs name on them and how to contact you.
28. Offer a symposium or class on a topic for which one of your club members is an expert.
29. Offer classes or lectures on leadership and/or communication
30. Develop and distribute bookmarks that promote your club
31. Use a Toastmaster license plate holder for your car
32. Set up a display window at a store
33. Do a workshop on communication and leadership at your place of employment.
34. Get a Toastmasters mouse pad for work
35. Do a formal presentation on Toastmasters at a civic group like the Rotary
36. Provide leadership seminars for the unemployed
37. Invite the media to your club. Make sure to give them a reason for coming such as putting on a debate, doing famous speeches, induction of new club officers, or speech contest
38. Form a community outreach team that presents 30-minute Toastmasters programs before business, educational, community and government groups, social and service clubs, professional and trade associations and civic organizations.
39. Have club business cards made with your meeting date, location, time, and a contact number.

40. Run a Toastmaster ad in your company newsletter. Invite your boss to a club meeting.
41. Make a list of all the people you know who would benefit from Toastmasters. Invite one person from the list to each meeting. Ask them to join.
42. Put a Toastmaster bumper sticker on your car. Use a Toastmaster coffee mug at work.
43. Wear your Toastmaster pin on a regular basis, not just at Toastmaster meetings.
44. Sponsor a Toastmasters booth at community events. Follow up with people who express an interest. Promote Toastmasters at Career Fairs and Employment Fairs. Have a plan to follow up with interested individuals and groups.
45. Encourage your members to join the speakers bureau. Make sure your speakers promote Toastmasters at their engagements.
46. When someone compliments you on a presentation or a speech, be sure to mention that you developed your skills in Toastmasters. Ask if they would be interested in doing the same.
47. Ask your doctor, dentist, optometrist, etc., if you can leave Toastmaster brochures in their offices. Make sure there is a phone number to call for more information.
48. Have a Table Topics session that is based on membership ideas. Make sure someone writes down all the ideas and then plan a follow up strategy.
49. If you belong to other organizations which schedule speakers, try to include a fellow Toastmaster on the program.
50. Write articles for your local newspaper. Make sure your biographical information includes your Toastmaster membership.
51. Plan an executive committee meeting and brainstorm for ideas about how to reach prospective members. Attend Talk to officers from other clubs about how they prospect for members.
52. List your Toastmaster membership and achievements on your resume, as appropriate.
53. If you meet in a public location, have a placard or other sign which announces your meeting location, date and time. For example: XYZ Toastmaster club meets here, Wednesdays at noon.
54. If you will be traveling, for business or pleasure, look for clubs in the area where you will be. Visit the club and see how they look for new members. Sometimes we all get in a rut and its good to see what other clubs are doing.
55. If you meet at a church or other community location where you pay a small token as a meeting room fee, discuss the possibility of offering a new membership and six month dues payment as your fee. The out of pocket expense to the club would be comparable, the benefit to the church would be that a member would be sponsored to a Toastmaster membership, and hopefully this would encourage other people to join. Sponsor a new member for each period of time that you make a payment. After the initial six months, the member must continue the dues payment on their own.
56. Membership is the responsibility of every Toastmaster, not just the Vice President of Membership.
57. Tell your friends how much fun you have belonging to Toastmasters.
58. Ask the people you do business with on a regular basis to come with you to a meeting. Some ideas: banker, grocery clerk, gardener, veterinarian, postal clerk, real estate agent, clergy, retail store clerk, etc.
59. Participate in career day at school where you can tell students about Toastmasters. Don't forget, many high school seniors are eighteen and eligible to join a club.
60. If your club meets at a church, request that your meeting location be published in the church newsletter or bulletin.
61. If you have children over 18, remember that they can join Toastmasters. While you may not want them in your own club, encourage them to find a club that will work for them. And don't forget their friends!
62. Personally donate a new membership and six months of dues to a charity auction. Make the membership for a club of the bidder's choice if the auction is drawing people from a broad area.
63. Get some fellow Toastmasters to donate time for a television fundraising campaign like PBS, telethons, etc. Wear Toastmaster T-shirts. If you get a group together the station will give the organization a plug. If it's a large enough group, you may be able to arrange an on camera interview about the organization.
64. Develop a list of potential members who have e-mail access. Forward information about Toastmaster events to these people. Keep people on the e-mail list as long as there is interest. Don't SPAM! Only e-mail people that you've had contact with. Remove people from your mailing list, if requested.
65. Award pins for recruiting a particular number of members.
66. Once a quarter have a "Guest Night." Each member should bring at least one guest. Break club members into teams and have a one month membership contest. The team that signs up the most new members is served a special dessert, provided by members of the other team(s).
67. Keep lists of all your club's former members. Plan a special event and invite them all. Include them in the program, if possible.
68. Consider scheduling a social event that can showcase what Toastmasters can offer. Make sure you follow up on all new member leads.
69. Have a monthly drawing for a Toastmaster prize. Every time a member brings a guest to a meeting, their name is put into a basket for a drawing. At the last meeting of the month a name is drawn out and a prize is awarded. Have a duplicate prize to give the guest if they became a member.
70. Place an ad in local church newsletters or programs.
71. List the club with the Chamber of Commerce.

72. If you have members who travel a great deal, encourage them to visit a club when they are on the road. (This information is easily accessible through the Toastmasters web site.) Ask them to share their experiences with the executive board. Maybe you can get some new ideas for your own club.
73. Develop club talking points that can be used when talking to prospective members.
74. Develop a public relations campaign to keep your club name in the public eye.
75. Break down your annual goal for new members into a monthly goal. It will seem much easier to meet that way.
76. Prepare a two sided flyer. One side tells all about Toastmasters, the other side give testimonials about the organization, along with the professional of the individual. Distribute to local businesses.
77. Do a member survey to find why people joined your club... then focus on those benefits in your PR and in your meetings.
78. Say, "I'll pick you up on my way". The hardest step for a guest is often coming to the meeting, it's harder to have a change of heart when you are on their doorstep. It's easier for a guest when they already know someone at the meeting who will escort them in and get over those first nervous introductions.
79. Remember 85% of people self-classify themselves as "shy". Make it easy for them to make the first step.
80. Ask older members of the club what advertising campaign worked best and repeat it. After a year, most campaigns are very repeatable.
81. Get your club listed in the city's community services calendar published through the Parks and Recreation Dept.
82. Poster rounds: Have a supply of posters and replace the ones that are taken down every time you go shopping. Create a club team to cover all the local shopping malls based on where they usually shop.
83. Employee orientation. Give orientation staff packets about Toastmasters to give to new employees and stories about successes to share with them.
84. Testimonials; Ask the boss for a testimonial on the importance of good communication. (He/she can hardly refuse!)
85. Speech communication classes at Universities. Arrange to have a TM give a guest lecture.
86. Orientation week at Universities... have a booth, spread promo flyers. Get some lecturers to write a note about the importance of good communication skills in their classes.
87. Student leadership classes: Offer to run one at your local school. Have a big splash to finish the course with parents invited. That way you get the parents as possible members as well as parental encouragement for the students to join when they turn 18.
88. Billboards; Billboard owners will put on public service announcements at no cost apart from printing the material.
89. Write human interest stories for local papers. One TM got 11 stories published over about 12 months, each one approx 500 words with a photo about one club member and how they came to be living in that locality.
90. Make sure your website is on all club literature.
91. Keep club websites up-to-date- or remove all material that might date it. It's hard to make your club look vibrant if the website planner refers to things that were finished with over a year ago!
92. If one type of poster doesn't work... change it!
93. Challenge your members to use the word "Toastmasters" at least once each week with someone they have not talked about Toastmasters with before. E.g. when picking up photocopying, "for a public speaking club like Toastmasters, there seems to be a lot of reading!" Give out prizes for the most creative lines at your meetings.
94. PR is an on-going process. Marketing wisdom says most people need to be offered something 5 times before they actually buy it. Many of those 5 times for your guests will be from PR from previous executives. Leave a legacy for future executives and schedule PR as a regular component of your club activities.

GUESTS TO MEMBERS

95. Get your stories. Have your own personal favorite success story for nervous and fearful guests.
96. Have a procedure to follow up on new member leads.
97. Keep business to a minimum at meetings when you have guests. Guests don't care about the business any way. If you don't have business to conduct, skip the business meeting all together.
98. Be nice to your guests. Sometimes we focus too much on getting someone to sign an application, and forget basic courtesy.
99. If you are experiencing membership problems, make sure you don't discuss them when you have a guest visiting. No one wants to join a club that has problems.
100. Treat all guests warmly and make sure they are introduced to club officers and members.
101. Have a guest book, and ask guests to sign. Make sure you get their name, address, phone, email, for follow up. Then be sure to follow up!
102. Make sure that all members wear their name tags, and have them available for guests as well. Don't make people guess at remembering names.
103. Be sure to use your guests name when talking with them.
104. Make sure that your meeting location is conveniently located, accessible and user friendly.
105. Encourage guests to participate, if they are interested.
106. Ask for guest comments at the end of the meeting. This may give you a specific hook to use in asking the member to join. Or, it may give you information that indicates that you need to change your ways to make your club attractive to prospective members.

107. Form a Guest Committee under your Sergeant at Arms. Ensure that every guest receives a follow up call and/or note. Be sure to invite the guest to come to another meeting.
108. Invite every guest to join. Many people are waiting to be asked.
109. Have a secret greeter at your meeting to make sure everyone is warm and welcoming to members and guests.
110. Know how to fill out the membership form. Make sure all club members know how to do it. Maybe this could be used as an educational moment in the club. Have membership forms filled out with standard club information. Then all you have to do is add in information specific to the new member. This may help cut down on the time and confusion of the forms.
111. Build the energy in the meeting right from the start with an enthusiastic and welcoming Sgt@Arms or meeting introducer. Be clear who is going to take responsibility for welcoming and introducing the guests.
112. Challenge the greeter to find the best person to buddy a guest up with. Someone like them! It means the greeter has to ask a few questions for a start about the guest to make the best decision.
113. Listen to your guest talk about their interests and reasons for visiting your club. Then match them up with a club member who has similar interests. Ask them to join.
114. Take a photograph of all your members and give it to guests with names and responsibilities so they find it easy to talk to the right person and to not be embarrassed remembering names.
115. Remember Zig Ziglar: "You can get everything you want in life if you just help enough other people get what they want"

BETTER RETENTION

116. Keep in touch with absentee members by sending out a review of each meeting by e-mail.
117. Develop a mentor program. This will help encourage new members to keep involved with the program, and will help long term members renew their enthusiasm.
118. Make your meetings fun. People will want to invite guests to share in the fun.
119. Have an occasional social meeting to recognize the family and co-workers of your club members. Remember it is the support of these people who help enable the club member's participation. It's nice to include them once in a while.
120. If a member announces that they will be moving, or have accepted a new position that doesn't allow them to continue with club meetings, have a going away gift for them --- a list of the Toastmaster clubs that meet where they will live or work. Let them know that they can transfer their membership.
121. Ask your guests for feedback after a meeting. Then listen to what they liked and didn't like. Make changes as appropriate.
122. Have a recognition meeting to acknowledge all members who have sponsored a new member. Have an induction ceremony for new members. It makes them feel important and a part of the organization. It's always impressive for other guest in attendance.
123. Take a look in the mirror. Do you smile enough. Guests want to see a smiling face welcoming them to a meeting.
124. If your meeting attendance is dropping, take a look at your meeting location. It may be time to move.
125. Celebrate your charter date annually. If you are not at charter strength, make plans to increase your membership so you will be on your charter date.
126. Have a time during the meeting when members can announce promotions or special assignments that they can attribute to their Toastmaster membership.
127. Set a good example at your club meetings. Encourage excellence. Have at least one meeting each month where the speakers and educational program focus on membership and club building topics.
128. Does your club stop meeting during the summer months? Continue on instead. Even though attendance may be low, you can keep your momentum going instead of stopping and then trying to build back up all over again.
129. Meet weekly instead of semi-monthly. Even if there is a low attendance at a meeting, still have the meeting. Continuity matters.
130. Don't give up hope. There are lots of success stories about 3-4 people showing up for meeting after meeting. Keep doing that, and you can turn things around.
131. Don't let internal strife destroy your club. Address your problem, resolve it, and move on.
132. Make a list of the best things about your club. You now have a list of selling points to use when recruiting new members.
133. Make sure that every speech given at your club is a project speech. As members see growth in others, it will encourage them to stick with it. And guests will want to join, so they can start achieving this success as well.
134. Stay on time. Nobody wants to go to meetings that start or end late.
135. Mail dues reminders to unpaid members. If they are temporarily unable to make a meeting, at least let them know they can keep their dues current.
136. Have a secret pal program within your club. Outside of the meeting times, the secret pal will send encouraging notes, ideas, evaluations, etc. to the person who is their secret pal. Reveal after six months. Keeps people coming to meetings as they try to figure out who is their secret pal.
137. Don't let a new member drop out after their icebreaker speech. Make sure they are put on the schedule again as soon as possible.