

## 100's of Membership Building Ideas

### 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. Choose from the Successful Club or Successful Speaker series. (Note: the evaluation and listening modules work particularly well.)
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 members from around the district to present a special program. Invite guests and be ready to sign them up on the spot.
5. Conduct a Speechcraft. If you do not have enough members to successfully launch the program, call on members from other clubs to help out. Warning: don't expect someone else to do all the work, though. Charge a fee for the speechcraft that will cover the new member fee and the first six months of dues. At the end of the speechcraft, offer a "free" membership to all successful participants.
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. (NOTE: Toastmasters has specific guidelines regarding web sites. Be sure to check this information.)
11. Contact your city's various cultural centers. They may be interested in starting a speechcraft for their members or perhaps a club. (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. Post brochures and flyers about your club at your local library.
13. Do you live in a non-English speaking community? Ask someone to write out a poster in that language. Parents will read it and encourage their children to join so that someone in their family can communicate fluently and effectively, and so that their children can "get ahead".
14. Post brochures and flyers about your club at local book stores, both new and used.
15. Invite your family and friends to attend a speech contest.
16. If members belong to more than one club, ask them to bring their extra copies of the Toastmaster magazine to your club meetings. Prepare a binder with these copies, and have it available for review by guests. Plan a club membership building contest.
17. Send out press releases on all your activities. Don't be discouraged if it takes awhile to be noticed. (NOTE: Small community newspapers are likely to give you the best coverage.) Send personal notes to members that you haven't seen for awhile. Let them know that you've missed them, and are anxious to have them back. Press release announcing the election of new club officers
18. Press release announcing your clubs anniversary
19. Press release announcing your local Mayor's Toastmasters Week Proclamation

65. Run a Toastmaster ad in your company newsletter. Invite your boss to a club meeting.
66. 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.
67. Put a Toastmaster bumper sticker on your car. Use a Toastmaster coffee mug at work.
68. Wear your Toastmaster pin on a regular basis, not just at Toastmaster meetings.
69. 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.
70. Encourage your members to join the speakers bureau. Make sure your speakers promote Toastmasters at their engagements.
71. 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.
72. 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.
73. 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.
74. Challenge the other clubs in your area to a membership contests.
75. Challenge another club to a membership contest. Loser buys pizza for the winning club.
76. If you belong to other organizations which schedule speakers, try to include a fellow Toastmaster on the program.
77. Write articles for your local newspaper. Make sure your biographical information includes your Toastmaster membership.
78. Read your Toastmaster magazine each month. There are good membership ideas in it.
79. Plan an executive committee meeting and brainstorm for ideas about how to reach prospective members. Attend officer training and talk to officers from other clubs about how they prospect for members.
80. List your Toastmaster membership and achievements on your resume, as appropriate.
81. Be active in your community. This puts you in touch with other people who may be interested in Toastmasters.
82. 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.
83. If you will be travelling, 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.
84. Some members feel that Toastmasters has significantly impacted their life and are willing to financially scholarship a new member. This is a way of extending Toastmasters to an individual who may be otherwise unable to join. This is typically handled by a member covering the initial membership and dues payment, with the new member maintaining the dues payment after the first six months.
85. 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.
86. Contact a women's shelter about sponsoring a speechcraft. Since these are generally women in transition, make sure they have information about where to join a club after the speechcraft ends. Check with the agency that sponsors the shelter. They may be willing to have the speechcraft as a regular part of their program.
87. Membership is the responsibility of every Toastmaster, not just the Vice President of Membership.
88. Leaflet a neighbourhood with flyers about your club. (NOTE: This works well in apartment or condominium complexes.)
89. Is your club so large that members aren't getting speaking opportunities. If this is your challenge, consider splitting into two clubs with at least 20 members in each club. (NOTE: This option is viable, but may cause other challenges to develop.)

- 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.
114. Contact local businesses to see if they will allow your club to have a counter display at their location. Have and use a club web page.
  115. Have club business cards printed with the club name, meeting location, time, etc. Make sure members give them out to everyone.
  116. Consider a booth at a fair, craft show, trade show, or career fair.
  117. Research the possibility of running an ad (even better if you can get an interview or article) in Company newsletters or businesses in your area. Provide inserts to be used in payroll envelopes.
  118. Place an ad in local church newsletters or programs.
  119. Post flyers on community bulletin boards
  120. List the club with the Chamber of Commerce.
  121. 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.
  122. Develop club talking points that can be used when talking to prospective members.
  123. Have a guest evening that is totally devoted to guests. Have a speaker explain what Toastmasters is all about, how much it costs, meeting frequency and time, etc. Every member must bring a minimum of one guest. Advertise in local newspapers.
  124. Develop a public relations campaign to keep your club name in the public eye.
  125. If you have a good membership idea, forward it on to your District Officers for inclusion in the District Newsletter. Hopefully other clubs can benefit from your idea as well.
  126. Break down your annual goal for new members into a monthly goal. It will seem much easier to meet that way.
  127. 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.
  128. If members have membership in multiple clubs, collect the extra Toastmaster magazines and distribute to local businesses. Have a card stapled to the front with information about who to call for more information.
  129. Prepare a flyer listing clubs in your geographical area, rather than just an individual club.
  130. Organize an Area advertisement in local papers listing all the clubs. It makes us seem more organized and implies that you can call one and get referred to others.
  131. Organize an Area website- it makes advertising easier.
  132. Do a member survey to find why people joined your club... then focus on those benefits in your PR and in your meetings.
  133. Ask people like you to come to Toastmasters. You joined, so people like you will too.
  134. 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.
  135. Remember 85% of people self-classify themselves as "shy". Make it easy for them to make the first step.
  136. Ask older members of the club what advertising campaign worked best and repeat it. After a year, most campaigns are very repeatable.
  137. Local Government: Contact your city hall for information on how to get your message displayed on the city's cable TV programming.
  138. Get your club listed in the city's community services calendar published through the Parks and Recreation Dept.
  139. Put small cards in all the public speaking books in your local library.
  140. Toastmasters meet here holder a noticeboard with flyers in it will not get taken down every week like other flyers are.
  141. 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.
  142. Employee orientation. Give orientation staff packets about Toastmasters to give to new employees and stories about successes to share with them.
  143. Testimonials; Ask the boss for a testimonial on the importance of good communication. (He/she can hardly refuse!)

- ways to make your club attractive to prospective members.
171. 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.
  172. Invite every guest to join. Many people are waiting to be asked.
  173. Have a secret greeter at your meeting to make sure everyone is warm and welcoming to members and guests.
  174. 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.
  175. Be sure to send the membership form and a check to TI. A person is not a member until TI knows about it.
  176. Build the energy in the meeting right from the start with an enthusiastic and welcoming Sgt@Arms or meeting introducer. Be clear who out of the S@A and the Chairman is going to take responsibility for welcoming and introducing the guests.
  177. 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.
  178. Have a guest book at your meetings, and ask each guest to sign. Follow up with each guest by sending a thank you note and inviting them back to another meeting. Offer to pick up a guest so you know that they will make the meeting.
  179. 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. Make sure you have lots of membership applications readily available at every meeting.
  180. Develop a club slogan and use it on your advertising. It tells potential guests what is important to you, and reminds club members too. There are a few ATM projects that are ideal for developing slogans as a club exercise.
  181. 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.

182. Remember Zig Ziglar: "You can get everything you want in life if you just help enough other people get what they want"

#### BETTER RETENTION

183. Keep in touch with absentee members by sending out a review of each meeting by e-mail. Buy a classified ad in your local paper.
184. 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.
185. Make your meetings fun. People will want to invite guests to share in the fun.
186. 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 awhile. (NOTE: This is often done successfully around a holiday or other special event.)
187. 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.
188. Ask your guests for feedback after a meeting. Then listen to what they liked and didn't like. Make changes as appropriate.
189. Encourage your members to join the speakers bureau. Make sure your speakers promote Toastmasters at their engagements.
190. 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 almost impressive for other guest in attendance.
191. Take a look in the mirror. Do you smile enough. Guests want to see a smiling face welcoming them to a meeting.
192. If your meeting attendance is dropping, take a look at your meeting location. It may be time to move.
193. If you will be travelling, 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.

219. Have a member present a module from the Successful Club Series. These are designed to be 10-15 presentations that can be given within the club. They offer great information on attracting and maintaining members. Some examples: Finding New Members For Your Club and Closing the Sale.
220. Read the Toastmaster magazine. This wonderful publication alone is worth the price of membership.
221. Have a formal induction ceremony to present the new member with their pin.
222. Assign a mentor/coach for the new member. Make sure that the mentor can help keep the member motivated about coming to meetings and committed to their Toastmaster membership.
223. Get your stories. Have your own personal favourite success story for nervous and fearful guests. Have your OPFSS for confident guests. Share the stories at a success story meeting.
224. Have an awards night where everyone in the club gets a certificate with an award or a poem showing that their fellow club members recognize their contribution.
225. Stop the CTM and out syndrome by encouraging advanced mentoring and goal setting.
226. Get CTMers underway on ATM's by making their CTM award a receive an award project (in the Special Occasions Manual), given by the previous CTM getter as a Present an Award project. They are now 2/5 of the way to their first ATM manual!

#### NEW CLUBS

227. Consider starting an advanced club that focuses on in-depth evaluations. Suggestion: each speaker should have three evaluators, in addition to the manual evaluator. These evaluators would concentrate on a specific area, such as: visual presentation (gestures, body language, use of space, etc.); verbal presentation (verbal crutches, creative language, variety, pitch, tone, etc.); and content (organization of thought, opening, body, close, impact on audience, etc.).
228. Advanced club idea: Start an advanced club that focuses on club building ideas. Have all educational presentations and speeches concentrate on the topic of club leads, strengthening weak clubs, prospecting for members, etc.

229. Start an advanced club that does television work. Contact your cable access channel or a vocational school that does this training.
230. Does the company where you work have a Toastmaster club? If not, start one. Contact a district officer for assistance.
231. If you have a strong club, consider being a "big brother" to a struggling club. Help out with speakers, evaluators, and just being an audience member.
232. Start an advanced club that focuses on storytelling.
233. New club idea: Consider the existing clubs in your community. Is there a day of the week that is not served by Toastmasters? Is there a time of day missing (no morning or lunch hour meetings)? How about a weekend club in a metropolitan area?
234. At all areas within the district (area, division, district, club) have workshops on how to start a new club.
235. Think about groups that may not yet be served by Toastmasters in the community: seniors, physically challenged, unemployed, non-English speaking communities, etc. Can you start a club for them? Invite them to a club meeting?
236. Start a club with mid-day meetings for stay at home Moms. They club may choose to have a parenting focus. Possible meeting time 3-4:30, maybe meeting at a local school with students helping out with child care during the meeting.

#### FINALLY

237. You can help others by submitting your experiences, products, or recommendations for inclusion here.
238. Keep the ideas flowing, talk about your successes and failures. Try and decide why some worked and some didn't. Pass the wisdom on to future Club executives.
239. Plan and do. You have just read a couple of hundred ideas. It is absolutely guaranteed that merely reading them will not change a thing. Choose one, gather the resources and people you need together...and do it!

(This list is a compilation which includes many ideas collected by Mary Jo Manzanares, of District 32, pieces from Toastmaster magazines, Denise Abero of District 57 and my own editing and additions.)