

STEPS TO EXPANDING AND RETAINING MEMBERSHIP

TEN TAKEAWAYS

... on **gaining** members:

1. Increase name recognition on campus through big events and ventures.
2. Ask professors or related organizations to make a plug.
3. Use free food to attract membership.
4. Establish a mentor/buddy program for first-years or new members.
5. Start meetings with introductions, icebreakers or a fun song all year long.

... on **retaining** members:

1. Create opportunities for your members to get to know each other outside of your committee.
2. Empower members by delegating leadership roles and responsibilities.
3. Require a short, fun application to encourage accountability.
4. Embrace success and failure by debriefing after projects.
5. Text, call, facebook, or email members with personalized reminders and appreciations.

Increase Name Recognition:

- Host an annual event or plan a venture to get your name out on campus. Think of Carolina Kickoff's Blackout Night, AHR's Human Rights Week, or HOPE's Box-Out.

Find New Members:

- Have free food. The most important piece of hooking new members is getting them there in the first place.
- Ask professors of related courses or from related departments to make a plug for your committee.
- Host interest meetings multiple times throughout the semester.
- Advertise in the pit (be loud!)
- Have a well-designed website (see [Publicity and Marketing DevDoc](#)).

Hook New Members:

- Create a membership program by pairing new members with current members to assimilate new members into existing committee culture.
- Consider requiring an application, even if you accept everyone that applies. This increases accountability and makes members feel more invested in the committee.
- Begin meetings with icebreakers, a song of the week (Beyonce is always a good choice), and introductions every meeting of the year, so that newcomers feel welcome at any point.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

How do we attract new membership to our committees?

How do we keep members engaged and invested so that they stay involved?

How do we encourage people to join our committee all year long?

How do we encourage sophomores, juniors, and seniors to join our committees too?

Communicate Effectively:

- Send clear, concise, and organized emails. Put action steps in **bold** and use numbers and bullets where appropriate (See **Publicity and Marketing DevDoc**)
- Do not be afraid to contact people using texts or phone calls. Group texts are very helpful.
- Switch up the modes of communication: Facebook, phone, email, twitter...

Build Friendships:

- Host social events - dinners, parties, farm days, scavenger hunts, Yopo dates - where members can hang out outside of meetings. Do not feel the need to discuss committee matters at these events!
- Reflect upon the work you are doing and encourage people to share challenges, even more personal ones (an activity such as Crossing Lines can help with this... talk to Catalyst).
- Friendships lead to more fun at meetings, give people an additional reason to attend meetings and events, and make working together as a committee easier.

Delegate:

- Organize your committee into subcommittees so members are part of a smaller, tighter-knit group, and have specific responsibilities.
- Give committee members leadership roles to empower them. Everyone can be the leader of some facet of your committee.
- Delegate tangible tasks and actions to committee members.
- Frame the co-chair position as one of support and unification, not as one of doing all the work.

Debrief and Appreciate:

- Discuss events and projects after their completion.
- Embrace successes as well as failures.
- Send personal thank-yous to committee members who worked hard towards the event or project. Nothing will help membership retention more than ensuring that members feel appreciated and needed!

Encourage **ACCOUNTABILITY** through...

An application

A mentor/buddy program

Friendships within committee

Allocation of responsibilities

Small leadership roles

Contact DevCo for more help on Membership and Retention!

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