

“Time for Your Close-Up: Strategies to Make Being a Zontian Easier” Membership Retention

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MATERIALS NEEDED: 2 handouts for each Zontian and flip chart paper and marker for each group.

1. *Membership Trends:*

- ***in North America:*** down 13.3 % from May 31, 2002 to Dec 31, 2007
- ***in District 11:*** down 1% from May 31, 2007 as of March 3, 2008.

2. *Next Biennium Major Focus for ZI~ Membership Retention*

Membership losses have been greater than membership gains in recent years (since at least 2002):

- ***Revolving Door:*** From 2000 to 2007, 11,454 Zontians joined ZI AND LEFT ZI; also 15 clubs chartered AND DISBANDED in this time period.
- ***In District 11:***

2006-2007: Losses=212, Gains=171 (net loss of 41)

2007-2008: Losses=178, Gains=165 as of March 3, 2008
(net loss of 11)

3. Surveys Say:

A. According to the 2006-2007 District 11 Survey, what were the most commonly cited reasons why members joined Zonta? (See if participants can guess the following). (The total is greater than 100% because survey respondents were permitted to choose more than one answer.)

- # 6 Share similar values (3%)
- #5 Community services (5%)
- #4 Networking/business contacts (10%)
- #3 Meet new people (24 %)
- #2 Friend/relative is a member (37%)
- #1 Zonta's goals/mission (47%)

B. According to the 2006-2007 District Survey, what were the most commonly cited reasons that members renewed their membership in Zonta? (See if participants can guess the following).

- #4 To make new business contacts (3%)
- #3 Other, such as excited about a ZI project or dedicated to ZI's goals (15%)
- #2 Friend(s) in club (30%)
- #1 Continue to work on club projects (52%)

C. Surveys say, the most common reasons members resigned or did not renew their membership was what? (Once again see if they can guess the following).

- #5 Personality issues among members.
- #4 Club lost focus on ZI goals.
- #3 Too many demands by the club.
- #2 Relocation.
- #1 Not enough time to devote to Zonta, because of personal or professional reasons. (*Most commonly cited reason.*)

4. Divide participants into groups to brainstorm how to make it easier to remain a Zontian, considering the survey answers in 3.C. above. (#3 on their handout) In other words, have them come up with solutions to these problems in retention. They should consider the survey answers in #1 and #2 on their handout when coming up with solutions. Ask each group to come up with as many ways to address each problem listed in 3.C.

NOTES for presenter:

A - Provide flip chart paper and markers to each group if possible.

B - Depending on the number of attendees, 3-5 groups can be used to address specific reasons for resignation. Reason #1 and #3 can be combined if needed. Also general discussion before groups on #2-Relocation can eliminate the need for a group on this topic.

C - Don't forget to gather all the group reports and submit them to Bea for compilation.

Solutions: (May be provided by the presenter if no groups bring them up.)

- Get new members involved right away in club projects.
- Provide clear goals and expectations of new members.
- Provide flexible projects. Offer projects on weekends, weekdays, mornings, afternoons and weekends.
- Provide fellowship opportunities and refreshments at club projects.
- Provide structure so that those who want to can take on roles of greater responsibility.
- Give honest and sincere thanks and praise.
- Recognize members in speeches, media and meetings.
- Maintain club focus on ZI service and advocacy projects.
- Provide strong club service and advocacy projects.
- Recruit qualified business and professional people.
- Recruit members with leadership skills.
- Recruit members who are willing to accept active roles in the club.
- Compare the uniqueness of ZI:
 - Zonta is a democracy.
 - Zonta is an international organization, not a federation.
 - Zonta is committed to supporting UN agencies.

5. *Call to Action.*

- We know why members are leaving Zonta.
- Ask each member to write down one thing **they** will do when they return to their club to make it easier to be a Zontian, addressing the problems cited in 3.C.
- Ask each member to write down one thing they **will suggest to their club** when they return to address the problems in 3.C.