

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK



OPTIMIST
INTERNATIONAL

A Comprehensive
Growth Program

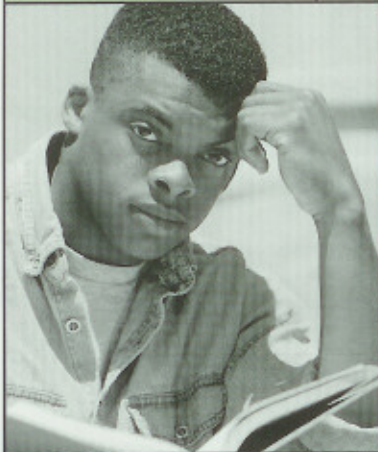


Table of Contents

Overview

Growth = Service	1
The Club Membership & Attendance Committee	1
Your Plan	1
Creating an Interest	2
Club Goals	2
Phase 1: Participation	3
Phase 2: Recruitment	4
Phase 3: Enrollment/Induction/Orientation	9
Phase 4: Maintenance and Retention	11
Phase 5: Attendance	12
Conclusion	14
Membership Committee Report	15
New Member Progress Chart	17

Overview



Growth = Service

1 = 31

Your reports tell us that for every member in our organization, we provide programs for 31 young people! Every new member has the potential for influencing the lives of 31 more young people in a positive manner. In this way we see that growth equals service in the same way that 1 equals 31!

Service creates opportunities for youth in self-development, leadership, health and welfare. By "Making a Difference," an Optimist can inspire the young person who will lead his/her country into the future.

Since it is difficult to measure the specific impact our various service activities have on youth, your overall impact and success is measured by your growth in membership.

The Club Membership and Attendance Committee

In most clubs, this is the most prestigious committee in that its members are competent, enthusiastic, and interested in the betterment of their club.

The Membership and Attendance Committee is appointed by the president and generally consists of three to seven members. The committee is charged with the growth of the club.

The Membership handbook is the guide for committee action. Read it carefully. Establish positive action!

- Set your goals. Coordinate with the president.
- Write your plan. Make it continuous with regular or quarterly promotions.
- Carry it out with enthusiasm and persistence!
- Get everyone involved. Share goals, plans and action.
- Recognize accomplishment, recruiters, and attendees.

Your Plan

Club growth is a major challenge. Such a challenge demands to be met with a thoughtful and comprehensive plan. This plan should provide for the recruitment of new members but go beyond this to emphasize other important aspects of building a strong and effective Optimist Club. For each aspect of Membership a rational plan should be established toward the set goal. (Complete the Club Goals section on page 2).

An effective, workable plan should be established and clearly written for each of the phases. As you read and absorb the following sections, review your goals and make notes on your plan (list each phase on a separate sheet). This review can be done by reading Phase 1: Participation, restating the goal and answering the following questions:

1. How important is this goal to our overall success?
2. What are the names of the people who will help carry out the plan?
3. Which programs fit our situation and people the best?
4. How will we promote these plans/programs?
5. What are the specific steps needed to implement the plan? (Arrange the steps in chronological order).

After this is done, do the same thing for the other four phases. This will allow you and the president to periodically check your club's progress toward measurable goals.

Creating an Interest

Early in the year, and periodically thereafter, the Membership and Attendance Committee should, at a club meeting, promote membership awareness, explain the membership recruitment and attendance program and review the club's goals.

Creating enthusiasm for growth is of prime importance.

The key to enthusiasm is found in the club itself. Usually, it is the desire and need for growth. A few reasons are as follows:

1. Clubs serve communities in direct proportion to the revenue and talents available. Logic says the larger the membership, the greater the service.
2. The larger the club, the greater the choice for club leadership. Small clubs may have more limited talents.
3. Club members gain from membership growth. The individual gains from the prestige of a larger club, balanced workload and increased fellowship.
4. More members increase the morale and stimulate confidence in the club. High morale is vital to club success. ■

Club Goals

For each phase of Membership, a rational, appropriate goal should be set. After you have set your goal for the year; set your goal for the coming month or quarter. Consider the following goals areas:

Goal	This Year	This Month/ Quarter
Our overall "net gain" in membership (%)*	_____	_____
Members participating in an Activity (%)*	_____	_____
New members recruited (%) of initial membership	_____	_____
New members inducted and oriented as per progress Chart (% of recruited)	_____	_____
Attrition of members (% of initial membership—the lower the better— average is 20%)	_____	_____
Attendance at club meetings/functions (%)	_____	_____

* See *Honor and Distinguished Club* requirements so that your membership goals will complement these major club recognitions.

Phase 1: Participation

Member Interest Areas

Community Service
Fellowship
Finance
Membership
New Club Building
Programs
Publicity
Youth Activities
Fund Raising
Scrap Book

A club can expect to be attractive to new members if its current members are both involved in the activities of the club and are committed to the goals of the organization.

The keys to fostering participation in club events are in:

- a) developing a calendar of club activities for the year,
- b) placing every member on a committee and
- c) recognizing the contributions of members' participation.

Develop a calendar of club activities

The club president and the board of directors should develop a calendar of all club activities for the year.

Club members can see this calendar and can be encouraged to "sign up" for at least one of these activities. Those members not "signed up" should be asked personally to participate.

Place every member on a committee

Use the "Interest Finder" found on the back of the New Member Application form to identify members' interests and abilities.

If you do not have this available, photocopy enough for your members and ask them to complete them at a meeting.

With this information, every member may be given a position. Use the "Club Organization Chart" found in the Club President's Answer Book. ■

Phase 2: Recruitment

It is obvious that growth requires new members. The life-blood of our organization is in our new members.

Over the years, we have consistently seen an attrition rate of 20% of our clubs' members on an annual basis.

Recruitment goals need to reflect that attrition. In other words, if you plan to have a net gain of ten members at the end of the year, you need to recruit ten plus 20% of your current membership.

Tools of Recruiting

How do we go about getting to our membership goal? **Ask!** Our greatest tool always has been and always will be asking someone to join. Other useful tools are an Optimistic and inviting attitude, "The Optimist Difference" brochure, "The Optimist" magazine, your club scrapbook and wearing your lapel pin to prompt conversation. Don't overlook your charm and personality as well.

How to Ask

We used to be able to recruit someone by saying, "Hey, why don't you join my Optimist Club. We do great things in the community and we could really use someone like you."

But that is not true any more. People today are busier than ever. More couples see both partners working full-time. Children are often involved in a multitude of activities requiring their parents to at least provide transportation, if not to be personally involved in the organization.

People today are making decisions about how to spend their valuable time based on two things; what difference will it make in the lives of others and what is in it for me? In order to be effective at recruiting new members, especially among the younger generation, we must be able to answer both of these important questions. To do so, we must understand the motivation of the person or group we are targeting.

We need to think like marketing executives and plan our strategy based on the needs of the target person or group. What do we, as Optimists, have to "sell" to potential members? For many of us, social activity may have been the reason for joining. Others may have joined strictly due to our service work. While these are important aspects of what we do and who we are, they may not be enough to sell others.

Young people, however, are always looking for ways to increase their skills and we can offer them an opportunity to learn and use leadership, public speaking and teamwork skills. People new to our city may be looking for a way to get quickly involved in the community and to meet new friends. Others may be looking to develop a larger network that will help them in their current or future employment. Retirees may want to find a way to continue to be active and to increase their sense of fulfillment. Corporate executives may be looking for a way to prove their interest in civic affairs and bring prestige to their companies.

None of these reasons for joining should be considered "wrong", but rather they should be seen as some of the many and varied reasons people are motivated to join our clubs. Knowing your target will allow you to address their specific needs and will allow you to be more successful in your recruiting efforts. Matching the prospects' needs with what Optimism has to offer is the key to getting people to make a positive decision about joining.

"The marketing plan you develop should first assess what the target group wants and then describe what you club's programs or activities are which fill these needs."

How to Ask

Preparing Yourself

Know your club, its activities and programs, its dues, and what it has to offer prospective members.

Know the types of members that you want to attract to your club. The club should be a microcosm of the community. The more you reflect the make up of your town, the better you will be able to serve it. Does your club represent the various racial and ethnic groups in town? Do you represent both males and females? How about your club's age range? Are a wide variety of occupations represented by your members?

Once a target person or group is selected, find out what kinds of things they are interested in. What are their personal career goals? What kinds of interests do they have off the job? What kinds of activities are they likely to be looking for? Once you know these things, match them up to the specific ways in which Optimism can help them meet their needs.

Finally, prepare yourself psychologically. Put your mind into its most optimistic mode. Think success! Remind yourself that if your prospect says "no", it is not a rejection of you personally. All good salespeople know that every "no" puts them that much closer to a "yes!"

Inviting Someone

Always invite a prospect to visit your Optimist Club as a first step. Tell them a little about Optimism and how you think it would be beneficial to them. Let them know that the decision whether to join or not is up to them and not something they have to commit to now. Tell them when the next meeting is and how long it will last. Explain that the cost of their meal, if one is served, will be taken care of by the club (if your club does not do this, you should ask it to give this serious consideration). Then tell the prospect what time you will pick them up and ask where they would like for you to meet them. Notice that you didn't ask if they wanted to come, only where you should meet them. Assume success!

On the Day of the Meeting

Make sure that you arrive early enough to be able to introduce your guest to other club members before the meeting. With pride, use the club's banner and/or scrapbook to show the prospect your club's achievements and activities. Explain the membership process as well as the enrollment and membership fees and give the prospect an application. Make sure that you have filled in as much of the application as possible so that the prospect will see that you are eager for them to become a member. Make sure that you ask the prospect how they felt about the meeting and if they have any questions about the club. Use your answers as an opportunity to reinforce the ways in which the club will allow the prospect to meet their personal needs.

Several Days Later

Call or visit the prospect again. Tell them that you would like to sponsor them and want to submit their application to the board. Ask if you can pick their application and check up that day or the following one. If the prospect says "yes", you're all set. If they balk, use your optimistic skills to answer their objections.



Answering Objections

Often a prospect will offer some reason why they cannot join an Optimist club. Do not take their first "no" as a final answer. Instead, use your skills to try to answer their concerns. Some of the more common objections and ways of countering them are listed below. Always address the prospect's concerns with a positive, optimistic answer.

"I am too busy."

"Many of the Optimists in our club share your busy schedule. They have found that a luncheon meeting doesn't take much more time than their normal lunches and provides them with a much needed break in their hectic routines." Or, "Many of our members have found that they are able to use the meeting as an opportunity to relax and have some fellowship with others. This allows them to deal more effectively with their fast paced days. Some of them even find that they can integrate work with pleasure in that they have business relationships with others in the group."

"It costs too much."

"If you think of our \$65 a year dues as an investment in your career, it averages out to only \$1.25 a week. Where else can you get the opportunity to gain leadership and teamwork skills at so little expense?"

"I don't think that Optimism has anything to offer me."

"Of course each of us is different, but I have found that the fellowship, networking opportunities, and chance to prove that I am interested in my community has been very helpful at work. I have been able to call on others in the group for advice, and made a big sale last week because of my relationship with an Optimist who needed our services. My boss appreciates my ability to lead our team, a skill which I learned through my club."

"My kids are involved in so much, I don't think that I would have the time it requires to belong."

"I know that our children are involved in lots of activities. One of the reasons that Optimism adopted the slogan "Friend of Youth" was because we saw the need to insure that all children have opportunities and activities which will help them grow into successful, responsible adults. We want to make sure that all children can enjoy some of the things that our own kids are involved in. In Optimism, each of us decides for ourselves how much time we are able to commit. It's the pooling of our resources that allows us to get so much done."

"Being Optimistic and turning negatives into positives will increase the rate of 'Yes' responses that you will ultimately get. Remember we are offering people the opportunity to share in something we know is worthwhile."

Membership Growth: Member-A-Month

Programs and Promotions



The NOW Program

NOW is a program with a proven track record designed to capture the interest of qualified prospective Optimist Club members. The central feature is a dinner (or series of dinners) at which the goals and activities of the club are explained and prospects, previously qualified for membership, are invited to join.

The NOW program is designed to last approximately four weeks, not including the planning and follow-up. The program can be repeated as often as needed. It should be held at a time when prospects will not be rushed. At least two hours will be needed for the meeting. For more information on the NOW program, contact the Membership Department at Optimist International for a NOW Program Kit.

This program is designed to add at least one new member each month. It is a good way for clubs to keep new member recruitment a priority throughout the year.

The president appoints 12 people to the Membership committee including the chairperson. At their first meeting, the committee develops a list of 25 or more prospective members. The prospects are screened, identified to club members and voted upon as described in the Enrollment Section of this handbook. This needs to be done as quickly as possible during the first month of the year.

Committee members are each assigned one month, beginning with the second month of the administrative year. Each committee member seeks to recruit one or more members from the approved list during his or her assigned month. If the member has not signed up a prospect by the 20th of the month, the chairperson calls in the other 10 committee members to help so at least one member will be added each month. The committee can easily meet a goal of two or more new members each month.

5-5-5 Program

Ask each club member to list the five top reasons why they, personally, enjoy being an Optimist.

Then ask them to list five individuals they know who might make a good member and who might accept an invitation to join.

Members should then be asked to include inviting one of those five people to join among the member's personal "five things to do today" list. They should update their lists regularly as people on the list are contacted.

Not every member will respond to leadership ideas. Work with those who will. Remind members regularly about the program. Make verbal announcements at meetings, put a reminder in the club bulletin, make and display posters.

Praise achievers, but do not berate others.

Promotions

Since the following promotions are generally short term and time limited, they should be considered as supplementary to an ongoing program. Other successful promotions are often highlighted in Optimist publications and may also be used as tie-ins to your club's recruitment program. Revision of these promotions may be made to reflect not only recruitment but also participation, involvement, and attendance.

Steak and Beans Banquet

Divide the club membership into two teams. Set a date for the banquet. The team that recruits the most new members wins and gets to eat steaks at the banquet. The losing team eats beans.

Prospect Poker

The length of the contest is set. A sufficient number of decks of cards are shuffled together for the drawings. To determine the number of decks needed, multiply the club's average meeting attendance by the number of club meetings during the contest period and then divide by 52 (example: average attendance of 43 x 6 meetings = 258 cards. 258 divided by 52 = 5 decks).

Each member in attendance at a meeting draws one card and keeps it throughout the contest. Members are issued a wild card for each new member they sponsor. There is no limit on the number of wild cards that may be issued.

At the end of the contest, the winning poker hand is selected and the winner presented an appropriate gift.

The Baseball Game

This promotion could be based on any sport that involves teams. Choose one your club is particularly fond of or one that is currently in season

Divide the membership evenly into teams. Make sure that you take into account each member's average attendance when making up the teams.

- Give the teams humorous names.
- Set a schedule so that each meeting is equal to one inning.
- Scoring is determined as follows:
- Single-bring a prospect to a meeting.
- Double-a new member (less than 12 months in the club) participates in a club activity.
- Triple-a new member attends a meeting of the committee to which he or she was appointed.
- Home Run-sponsor a new member!
- Promote and generate enthusiasm at meetings by having team cheerleaders, announcing results, giving popcorn to the leading team, and publishing the weekly results in your club bulletin.
- Award prizes to winners, both team and individual. ■



Phase 3: Enrollment/Induction/Orientation

■
“I pledge to develop
Optimism as a
philosophy of life...”

- A new member who is enrolled, inducted and oriented properly is a strong member who will in turn contribute to the strength of the Optimist Club.
- Enrollment is a necessary administrative procedure to solidify the integrity of club membership.
- An effective induction is directed at making a new member feel welcome and important.
- A thorough orientation makes a new member knowledgeable about club tradition and proud to be an Optimist.

Enrollment

The purpose of the enrollment process is to insure the integrity of the club membership and to give club members a chance to screen prospective candidates. It also insures the orderly completion of the necessary paperwork in processing the new member.

A club member puts the name, address, phone number and any other known information about a candidate on a New Member Application form and gives it to the club's secretary/treasurer. The proposal is then reviewed by the Club Membership Committee. After the name is announced to the club membership and they have had an opportunity to provide input, the club Board of Directors votes on the prospective member. Prospects who are approved are then issued an invitation to join, the application completed, and the initiation fee is collected.

The club secretary/treasurer enters the new member's name on the official roles by sending a Club Roster Adjustment form to Optimist International with the processing fee. The new member's name is added to all club records including the newsletter mailing list. A short biography about the member should be published in the club newsletter.

The club president should send a letter of welcome to the new member or call with a personal welcome.

Induction

The induction ceremony is an excellent opportunity to make a special impression on the new member joining you in service. This ceremony will be the first and most lasting experience they will remember. The impact you make and the welcome you extend will be returned in the level of the new member's interest and commitment. A new member is only inducted once. What can you do to make it a special ceremony?

Each club can devise its own induction ceremony, but it should include at least the following elements.

The Membership Chairperson should open the induction ceremony by sharing a few words with the club membership about the significance of welcoming a new member into the group. The chairperson should then ask the sponsor to introduce the new member with a short biography.

The Membership Chairperson should then offer a challenge to the new member to share their talents and resources with the club by serving on committees, working on projects and programs and attending club meetings.

The club president then invites the new member to commit to the club with the following pledge:

I, _____, do pledge to develop Optimism as a philosophy of life, promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs, inspire respect for law, promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship among all people, and encourage development of youth in the belief that the giving of one's self in service to others will advance the well being of humankind, the community, and the world.

The president should then affix the lapel pin and ask the new member to wear it with pride, signifying the member's connection with the rest of the club and the tradition of Optimism. The president then officially declares the person as being inducted into the club. A warm handshake of welcome should be extended.

The Membership Chairperson then presents a New Member Kit and explains each item, giving the membership certificate or creed last. The chairperson should then invite the club to extend their welcome through enthusiastic applause or handshakes.

Orientation

A good orientation program includes a thorough education as to what the club does and prompt involvement of the new member into the on-going activities and fellowship of the club. When done well, new member orientation will impart a feeling of "belonging", and a member who belongs is a strong member.

Periodically throughout the year, invite new members to a gathering to get to know more about the club in a warm, informal and friendly atmosphere. This might be in a member's home with dessert being served. It is often beneficial to invite the new member's partner to attend the orientation meeting as well. You might want to invite an inactive member of the club to this meeting as a way to rejuvenate their interest.

After introductions are made, a few club officers can tell about Optimist International and your club. Talk about club meetings, club bylaws, service activities, and membership privileges as well as responsibilities. Encourage them to attend club board meetings as well as meetings of your zone or district. You might consider showing the Optimist International promotional video.

Using the "interest finder" on the back of the member application form, each new member should be asked to serve on at least one standing committee with an explanation as to what is expected. Invite new members to participate in a specific way in an upcoming club project or activity.

As an adjunct to the orientation meeting, invite each new member to be a "greeter" at several club meetings. This is an excellent way for them to meet other members of the club. Make sure that a seasoned club member is assigned to greet with them to help make this assignment a rewarding one.

Sponsors should help the new member establish a habit of regular club attendance by offering to bring them to meetings. Attendance can also be promoted by calling the new member to remind them of up-coming meetings. ■



Phase 4: Maintenance and Retention

“A member saved is a member to serve.”

Current club members are valuable assets. A good organization will nurture these assets and draw out their potential.

A certain number of losses are unavoidable (death, transfer to another community, etc.). Based on experience from across Optimist International, yearly losses average 20 percent of current membership. Your task will be to keep losses to a minimum.

Your efforts in maintenance and retention will be in the following three areas:

- a) Every member should understand their obligation as to club dues and where they are spent. Certain amounts must go to pay International and district dues and insurance. International operations must pay for things such as newsletters, postage, supplies, and sending officers to district and International meetings. Funds raised from the community are to pay for service projects and activities.
- b) Always make a personal contact with the member before deleting them from the roster. Most people are interested in supporting their organization. People respond positively to people who care.
- c) Develop a mindset to think “Replacement” if a loss of a member is unavoidable. This idea of active replacement should also be adopted as a strategy of the club board of directors as early as possible.

A Penny Saved is a Penny Earned

Trite? Overused? Well, maybe. But, true? You bet. It is universal, applying not only to money but also to our members.

The best source of members for an Optimist Club is the current club roster. For each member lost, a club must add one member just to stay even.

So, A member saved is a member to serve.

Club and district leaders must rise to the challenge of reducing deletions. Every club should review membership removal policies to ensure that the following is done before a member is considered for deletion:

- 1) A personal contact is made to determine if the member has a problem with the club policies, procedures or membership.
- 2) An effort is made by the president or a board member to correct any problem and ameliorate any difference which exists.
- 3) Each member, especially those who are considering ceasing their memberships, should be made to feel that they are an integral part of the club's service and fellowship.

Nevers

A short list of nevers regarding deletions:

- 1) Never delete without at least two personal efforts to save a member.
- 2) Never ignore criticisms registered by members who consider quitting.
- 3) Never assume that a member's statement, “I'm going to quit,” is final. Often, it's just a shock statement to get some attention.

Save a member today. It's an easy way toward membership growth. ■

Phase 5: Attendance

A member who attends meetings cannot help but be involved with and committed to the club. The greater the attendance, the greater the involvement and commitment!

To encourage good club attendance, leaders are challenged to provide interesting and exciting meetings where members feel welcome and have fun!

To promote active attendance, your efforts will be directed at three areas:

a) Incentives for Attendance

Good programs are a magnet to draw members to club meetings. They can be interesting and informative. Enthusiasm for these programs can be created by the president and program chairperson. Programs should always be publicized in advance at meetings and in club newsletters. Talk about future programs in a way that will peak interest.

Interesting activities that reach our true purposes as Optimists can create pride in what we do and continued interest in attending. For instance, the Safety on Wheels program can give members great opportunities to experience the "hands-on" molding of young people as they work shoulder to shoulder with their friends in Optimism. Our Oratorical Contests make us proud that we are giving those young participants an opportunity for self-expression and development. These are truly high impact activities.

Attendance contests can serve the dual objective of having fun and boosting attendance.

One contest might involve dividing into teams and the team with the greatest attendance gets a special dessert, lottery ticket or other appropriate prize.

A weekly drawing of a member name for a cash prize can be made with the winner needing to be present to win. If the member is not in attendance, the prize can increase

with potentially lost winnings published in the newsletter.

Perfect attendance recognition is also an effective incentive for good club attendance.

All of the above will work best if provided in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

b) The Fellowship Committee

Good fellowship is one of the primary reasons members join your club. The Fellowship Committee strives to develop friendships among club attendees in an atmosphere of fun. An active Fellowship Committee will encourage active interchange between members before, during, and after each meeting and will discourage the development of "cliques" within the club. A committee that does this well will have a positive impact on attendance.

Some of the responsibilities of this committee in clubs: organizing social functions, conducting attendance promotions, providing a fun atmosphere as a sergeant-at-arms, arranging for greeters at the door, and assisting with taking attendance.

c) Follow-up on Absentees

The club should establish a good mechanism for contacting members who do not attend club meetings. Ideally, if a member misses two meetings in a row, they should be contacted. Access to attendance records and knowledge of club attendance policies are important before contact is made.

Your call should be caring in tone and designed to let them know they were missed and are needed by your club.

Your objective is to get them back and keep them as participating members of the club.



Individual attendance forms are available from Shumsky Enterprises (Item # 570)

■
“Good programs promote good attendance. Good attendance encourages good participation. Good participation ensures good service.”

Why is Attendance Important?

To the Club Because:

- A member who attends contributes to the club.
- It helps develop better fellowship at club meetings.
- It makes it easier to get good programs and more easily justifies a speaker giving time and effort.
- A speaker will always give a better presentation when a large, enthusiastic audience is involved.
- It facilitates the recruiting of new members.
- Good attendance is a sign of club strength.
- It helps conduct successful club projects.
- It builds club image.
- It provides for greater opportunity for input by a greater number of members.
- It makes for a better club all around.

To Individual Members Because it:

- Provides greater opportunities for fellowship.
- Enables them to relax from a hectic business schedule.
- Helps develop personality.
- Gives recognition through participation.
- Increases members' understanding of the activities and objectives of their club.
- Helps make the Optimist Creed part of their daily life.
- Acquaints them with opportunities for leadership and service in the community.

Accentuate the Positive— Eliminate the Negative

1. Do not conduct business, except brief reports, at club meetings.
2. Do not put down members for failings in public! But do pat them on the back in public for a job well done!
3. Do not complain at meetings. If food service is bad, work behind the scenes to get it corrected.
4. Do not ignore new members or guests. Treat them as you would like to be treated. Make them feel welcome.
5. Do start your meetings on time. If you always start late, the members will get in the habit of coming in late or not at all. Just as important as starting on time is ending the meeting on time.
6. Do use a printed agenda. This will help club leaders start and end the meeting on time.
7. Do have a program and announce it ahead of time. Well-planned programs attract attendance and increase membership. If you do not have a program chairperson, appoint one!
8. Do publicize in your club newsletters your desire to improve attendance. From time to time report positively on members with a perfect attendance record.
9. Do appoint a committee to contact designated members before meetings to remind them of the upcoming meetings and let them know that they will be missed if they do not attend.
10. Do ask each member to bring a guest. If the guest sees a good program and enjoys warm fellowship, she might just beat you to the punch and ask to become a member.

Recognition of Growth

An optimist sponsoring a new member should be presented the "Member Sponsor Lapel Pin" with pride in front of the club membership. That person may also be given the honor of being first in the food line, leading the Optimist Creed or being highlighted in the club bulletin. Clubs receiving International or district recognitions should have them presented in a prestigious manner in front of the membership.

Building a Recruiting Mind Set in New Members

All new members should be reminded of the following: You are an Optimist. You became a member of an Optimist Club because someone cared enough to invite you and you accepted. Now you are among the thousands of proud individuals who have made a special commitment to their communities and their youth.

One of your responsibilities is to help your club with the recruitment of new members. As a new member, you are encouraged to seek out and sponsor at least one new member with the first 90 days of your membership. That's a great way to confirm your membership commitment and also receive a certificate of recognition signed by the International President. Then repeat the process as often as possible.

There is no limit to the number of new members you should or can sponsor. Start recruiting right now! All you have to do is ASK! If you sponsor five new members during one administrative year (October 1 through September 30), you will be entitled to the "5 Member Recognition". As you accumulate your sponsorships, there are other recognitions for 10, 25, 50 and 75 members brought in up to 250.

Become acquainted with your club's bylaws and policies regarding the recruitment of new members. Enjoy this special opportunity. Sponsoring new members has one basic key: Ask someone! ■

Conclusion

In this handbook we have identified five phases of a Comprehensive Membership Program: Participation, Recruitment, Induction/Orientation, Maintenance/Retention, and Attendance. If one follows the logic of the handbook, it is easy to see that all five elements are closely interrelated.

Participation leads to active recruitment of new members, who in turn must be properly inducted and oriented if they are to become integral parts of the club and maintained/retained as members who regularly attend meetings. In turn, regular attendance leads back to participation. If an element is neglected, your entire membership program is jeopardized. When all elements are in place, your growth will be strong and your club will be successful.

The growth of Optimist International is greatly enhanced by the fact that men and women are not afraid to spread our great philosophy, to explore the unexplored, to try the untried. Had the pioneers of Optimism not been daring, we would not have this great organization. If someone had not invited us to join, we would not be Optimists today. ■

■
"Promise yourself—

To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best."

Membership Committee Report

Make photo copies of this form to use for each committee report

Remember: a well rounded growth program includes attention to Participation, Recruitment, Induction/Orientation, Maintenance and Attendance.

Club Name: _____

Club membership on October 1* _____ Current membership _____

This year's goal (Honor Club requirement) _____

Net gain required to reach goal _____

What programs are planned to attain the membership goal? _____

What membership materials are needed? _____

Number of prospective members currently being screened for board action _____

Names of new members ready for Induction: _____

Number of new members currently in the Orientation phase of the membership program _____

Date of last committee meeting _____ Time called _____ Time adjourned _____

Chairman _____ Date of next meeting _____

Members of Committee (check those present) _____

Others present: _____

Business transacted: _____

Committee recommendations: _____

Committee requests: _____

Reported to the board by _____ Date _____

* Should agree with Optimist International records.

New Member Progress Chart

This chart outlines the club procedure for enrolling, inducting and orienting a new member. Check each box as the new member moves through the process. Maintaining this chart may be the responsibility of the club membership chairperson, secretary-treasurer or president. Photo copy as needed.

<i>Sponsor's Name</i>																				
<i>New Member's Name</i>																				

Enrollment																				
Prospective member is recommended and pre-application given to secretary-treasurer.																				
The Application is Acted Upon:																				
a) Screened by Membership Committee																				
b) Announced to club membership																				
c) Approved by Board of Directors																				
Invitation to join is extended to prospect: Signed, completed application is collected with initiation fee																				
Paper-work completed-application processed "Club Roster Adjustment" sent with fee																				
Name is entered on all club records																				
Biography put in club bulletin																				
President welcomes (phone or letter)																				
Induction Ceremony																				
Plan ceremony with participants																				
Explain new member kit																				
Properly welcome member, take photograph																				
Orientation supervised by president & sponsor																				
Attend Orientation meeting with spouse																				
Attend club meeting - serve as "greeter"																				
Assignment to a committee																				
Participate in a project or activity																				
Attend board meeting, district meeting, social function and/or interclub visit																				
Member receiving magazine & club bulletin																				
Date of completion																				



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