MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

How do you keep them?
When does retention start?

- The first day a member joins
- Largest majority of non-renewals come from first-year members
- Loss rate as high as 50 percent
What is the reality?

- It is cheaper to retain a member than to recruit a new member.

**FACT:**

- • When a member is lost, two must be recruited to grow
- • When a member is retained, new growth occurs with every new recruit
How do you keep them beyond the first year?

- Respond and welcome promptly
- Demonstrate personal interest
- Deliver uninterrupted service
- Provide up-to-date resources
- Members’ **needs** change so does the need for ongoing research to evaluate chapter
Membership Audit

- Conduct focus groups
- Use telephone, fax, web-based
- And mail surveys
- Contact dropped members to determine why they didn’t renew
Who should you audit?

- Your officers
- Your members (new and long-term)
- Your membership committee
WHAT KIND OF QUESTIONS DO YOU ASK IN AN AUDIT?

• Why do members join?
• What do members like about your chapter?
• What benefits do they value most? What don’t they value?
• Why do they drop out?
• Do different segments of membership have different retention rates?
Audit Questions (Cont’d)

• Which segments represent the highest and lowest retention rates? Why?
• What trends are likely to impact membership?
• How does your chapter identify member expectations?
• How do you deal with dissatisfied members?
Audit Questions (Cont’d)

• Is member feedback shared with chapter leadership?
• How have member needs changed during the past year?
• What voluntary and/or other organizations is direct competition?
• Which chapter retention activities are yielding results and which aren’t?
Reasons for Non-renewal

• Members don’t see value in their membership
• Chapter assumes a member will renew his/her membership
• Renewal efforts applied only to long-term members
• Not having good members activities to get new member started off on the right foot
New Member Retention Ideas

- Welcome letter
- New member kit
- Welcome phone call
- “Help Letter”
- New member orientation or reception
- New member survey
- Publish names in newsletter
- Postcard invitations
- “How’s it going?”
- Buddy program
- “Thank you for renewing”
- Welcome all year long
Long Term Member Retention

• Continue to convince them their membership is valued year after year
• Provide ongoing attention, communication and involvement
Long-term Member Retention Ideas

• Feedback after meetings
• Annual report
• Committee involvement
• Communicate in preferred manner
• Anniversary letters
• Phone calls
• Reward members who participate in membership drives
• Add social events to activities. All business is dull!!!
• Exit phone calls
Lapsed Members

- Former members are better prospects than those who never joined.
- They were once interested
- They may not know the changes or improvements made by a chapter
- Chapters must develop activities that can return lapsed members
Member Loyalty and Programs

• Loyalty is built by providing value
• Chapters need to constantly evaluate themselves
BEST RETENTION TECHNIQUE

- Personal contact using:
  - face-to-face visits
  - Reminder letters
  - Phone calls
  - Email