

Motivating organization members can be the most challenging part of a leader's responsibilities. Yet, this should be the driving purpose behind why the leader is their position. Mentoring and motivating people is not only key to keeping members in your organization, but it also is an important factor in accomplishing the mission, vision, and goals of the organization.

Here are six strategies to try in motivating your organization's members:

- 1. Ask their opinion.** Take the time to show the member that his or her opinion is valued. For example, ask, "What one thing do you think we could be doing that we aren't that would make this group stronger?" Allowing members the time to provide input and give feedback on the organization, its leaders, meetings, and events creates a sense of ownership and belonging. With that sense, members are much more likely to become involved and contribute to the success of the organization.
- 2. Give choices.** Provide them with an array of choices for events and activities to try. Giving members the ability to skip the things they don't enjoy, and spend more time doing the things they do enjoy will increase their enjoyment and commitment.
- 3. Provide leadership opportunities.** Provide opportunities for members to lead the group on something they enjoy doing or have specific talents for. Members will surprise you and will step up to lead if an opportunity matches something they enjoy. Don't have an opportunity that matches their interests? Create one! Find out what excites your members and see if your organization can try it.
- 4. Thank them for participating.** Make a habit out of thanking members for attending events and meetings. Who wouldn't like to be appreciated for their commitment and hard work on behalf of the organization?
- 5. Take some personal time with them.** As a leader of the organization, you may know many members by name, but do you really know details about them? Invite a member to coffee. Show an interest. Answer questions that the member might have about the organization, and share with him or her how you got involved. Let the member know how he or she can share ideas directly with you instead of speaking up in front of the large group meeting.
- 6. Keep them in the loop.** Keep members informed on the progress of plans and programs, even when they are in an early stage. They have the right to know what is going on, especially with matters that directly affect them. Keeping members in the loop on important organizational matters helps them to feel a part of an inclusive group and will make them want to come back!

### References

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