



ATTENDANCE: Bring 'em on!



A strong, vibrant club has lots of people having a good time laughing and enjoying each other's company in a friendly, supportive environment. Following are some ways to help achieve good attendance.

Course Outline

1. Introduction
2. Why is Attendance Important?
3. Accentuate the Positive
4. Sergeant at Arms
5. Great Programs
6. Ideas for Boosting Attendance

1. INTRODUCTION

Have you ever walked into a Club meeting that has great attendance? If so, you have probably noticed that members are having a great time! They are talking with each other, they are laughing, they are enjoying a great meal, they are entertained and they are appreciated! Is your Club like that? It can be with the proper plan with people who know how to attract other people.

Lots of members in attendance mean more involvement in club activities, more interested volunteers, more community resources and a place where everyone would be proud to invite a new member.

2. WHY IS ATTENDANCE IMPORTANT?



You probably agree that attendance at your Club meetings is important or you wouldn't be reading this section. Which of the following would you consider most important for your Club?

- A member who attends has greater "ownership" in outreach
- It makes it easier to get good programs and better speakers
- It facilitates the recruiting of new members
- Good attendance provides more networking opportunities
- It provides more volunteers for club projects
- It builds a positive club image
- It provides greater opportunity for input and new ideas
- It makes meetings more fun

3. ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE – Eliminate the Negative



- Do start your meetings on time and end on time. Respect your members who attend by respecting their time.
- Do not conduct business, except brief announcements at club meetings.
- Do use a pre-printed agenda. Have a number of club agenda photocopies and simply fill in names, announcements, program, etc. each week as you obtain them. This agenda can be turned over to your newsletter/email person to highlight coming events.
- Do not put down members for shortcomings in front of others! But do pat them on the back in front of others for a job well done!
- Do have a great program and promote the coming program in your email newsletter. Use fun, interesting program ideas.
- Do not ignore new members and guests. Treat them as you would like to be treated; make them feel appreciated!
- Do ask your members to invite their friends, co-workers and relatives. Show your appreciation when they come and recognize them in newsletter emails.
- Do not complain at meetings; do not be a pessimist. If a challenge exists, work behind the scenes to correct it.
- Do give the "Sergeant at Arms" the charge of boosting attendance and show attendance results.

4. SERGEANT AT ARMS

The Sergeant at Arms can also be a key to creating an atmosphere that is inviting to members and guests. The Sergeant at Arms:



- Helps the President keep order during club meetings
- Greets members and guests at the door as they arrive; shake hands with every member and guest.
- Pre-set club meetings with banners, flags, bell & gavel.
- Often collects “fines” for the purpose of having fun.

Note on “fining”: Although increased club finances are a side benefit, this should not be the focus nor should laughter ever be at the expense of someone feeling uncomfortable or embarrassed by being fined. A fun-loving, friendly “fine master” is the key to making this fun. A quarter is a common fine. A club president should not be fined in order to respect the office and the effort and initiative it takes to lead a club.

“Fines for Pessimism”: A new method of fining is emerging among Optimists. Remarks of a “pessimist” nature are finable. Using dirty words (pessimist words) like, “but”, “can’t”, “won’t”, “we can’t do it that way”, etc. are finable offenses. Occasionally members who exude an extraordinary show of optimism receive a “fine exemption” card. Fines for frowns, exemption card for smiles.

5. GREAT PROGRAMS

Fun, unusual programs can gain member attention and peak member’s interest in attending. Try using entertainment, especially including kids, magicians, palm-readers, fortune tellers, masseuses, puppeteers and anything out of the ordinary. Also consider “theme days” perhaps an ethnic meal and décor from a different Country every week. Each week you might commemorate special weeks or days of the year. A few occasions from a list of many are following:

- **Groundhog Day**, February 2.
- **Lincoln's Birthday**, February 12.

- **Valentine's Day**, February 14.
- **Washington's Birthday**, February 22.
- **St. Patrick's Day**, March 17.
- **April Fools's Day**, April 1.
- **Earth Day**, April 22
- **Administrative Assistants' Day**,
- **Arbor Day**
- **Mothers' Day**, second Sunday in May
- **Fathers' Day**, third Sunday in June
- **Parents' Day**, fourth Sunday in July
- **Grandparents' Day**, Sunday after Labor Day
- **Columbus Day** (traditional), October 12.
- **United Nations Day**, October 24.
- **Halloween**, October 31.

6. IDEAS FOR BOOSTING ATTENDANCE

- Mystery Handshake:** Each week the President secretly appoints someone to be the "Mystery Hand shaker" and assigns a number such as 3rd. This person waits for others to approach and the 3rd person to shake their hand at a meeting wins a prize or "hand shaker" prize.
- Attend or Miss Poker:** Each week the members in attendance select a card from one or more poker decks. This occurs each week for 5-8 weeks. The member who is present at a pre-determined date wins!
- Optimist of the Week:** This is a small certificate awarded each week or whenever appropriate to the member who shows the greatest act of optimism in the previous week. For example, getting their name in the local newspaper; being most enthusiastic at a club activity or helping a young person could qualify.
- Joke of the Week:** Each week one to three members could share their "joke of the week." If club members like it they give a "thumbs up", if they don't it's a "thumbs down" and some appropriate moaning.
- Member Spotlight:** Each week a member is invited to tell a little about themselves to the general membership and then a very brief member highlight goes in the newsletter/email. If a program does not show up, perhaps three members could give their brief biography.



- f. **Raffles:** Have a “second chance” drawing after the normal 50/50 (or 40% for club/40% for weekly winner/20% for 2nd chance winner) winner has been chosen. On the first of each month draw a ticket from the previous month’s losers to win 20% of the previous month’s jack pot.
- g. **Sporting Competition:** Join with the Membership Committee and play a game. For example Baseball: Divide into teams with appropriate names, colors, baseball equipment, etc. Nine week (each week an inning) duration with “single” attendance, an additional “double” for bringing a guest and a “home run” for signing a new member! Play Ball!