Young Adult Recruiting Strategies

Recruiting, Involving, and Retaining Younger Members
Revisited
Viewed From a Leadership Perspective

West Virginia Lions Leadership School
January 27-29, 2012
PCC Steve Glass
Our Goals For This Course

• Gain a better understanding of volunteerism in our culture;
• Gain a better understanding of generational differences in our society;
• Review our current club operations (SWOT analysis of sorts): mini application of the Club Excellence Program;
• Understand that change is imminent if we want to recruit and retain Gen X and Gen Y.
Who volunteers in our culture?
Recent statistics tell us:

• Volunteering is not casual, it is part of the fabric of our lives.
• Volunteering is at a 30-year high.
• Volunteering among teenagers (ages 16-19) has dramatically increased since 1989.
• Baby Boomers are creating the highest mid-life (ages 45-64) volunteer rate in 30 years.
• Volunteering among older adults (ages 65 and over) has increased 64% since 1974.
• Episodic volunteering (99 or fewer volunteer hours per year) has increased between 1989 and 2005.
Why aren’t we getting new members, particularly Gen X and Gen Y?

- Are we asking?
- Do we know who they are?
- Do we know their likes and dislikes?
- Have we made a plan to attract them?
- Do we act like we want them?

Insanity: Continuing to do the same things that we have always done and expecting different results.
Let’s define who we are:

• Matures/Seniors – Born before 1946: We are 64 and over.
• Baby Boomers – Born between 1945 and 1963: We are 47-65.
• Generation X – Born between 1964 and 1977: We are 33 -46.
• Generation Y – Born between 1978 and 1994: We are 16-32.

We also call Generation Y the Millennials
Generation X

- Resourceful, self-sufficient (latchkey kids);
- Skeptical, self-reliant, independent, pragmatic, entrepreneurial, anti-bureaucratic;
- The “Information Age” generation;
- Flexible, comfortable with autonomy, hate the endless meetings, bottom-line oriented, to the point, result oriented workers;
- Comfortable with leadership changes and a variety of leadership roles;
- Not interested in leadership positions that require additional personal and professional time;
- Will have at least three distinct careers and 12 employers.
Generation Y

• Have been wanted, valued, and coddled from birth;
• Have lived highly structured lives;
• Are the 24/7 generation;
• Will have more than 5 distinct careers, more than 20 employers, and be self-employed by choice more than twice;
• Are open minded; highly tolerant to differences;
• Will work overseas several times, often for short periods of a year or less;
• Value education and training and see it as a significant tool in helping them to be more successful.
Summarize Gen X and Gen Y

Gen X
• May not connect with their grandparents’ concept of volunteerism as a civic duty;
• May not buy into their parents’ optimism about changing the world;
• Feel capable of helping one person;
• May prefer to focus on local, not global issues, on tangible results, not idealism.

Gen Y
• Look for variety, stimulation and “push button” action;
• Are searching for their causes;
• Exhibit a strong interest in volunteering.
Why Recruit Young Adults?

• Gain fresh ideas for service projects and activities;
• Increase hands to do more service;
• Promote membership that better reflects the community;
• Mirror current times;
• Breathe life into your club;
• Sustain your club.
LCI Membership Programs

- Family Membership Program
- Lions Family Cub Program
- Student Member Program
- LEO Lion Members
Where Do We Find Young Adults To Recruit?

• Ask current members to recruit within their family.
• Visit local colleges and universities.
• Recruit from within LEO clubs.
• Contact area businesses.
• Partner with a youth group or secondary school to implement a joint service project.
• Encourage the young adults that we have to form a team to recruit other young adults.
• Ask those we have served (scholarship winners, YE students, campers).
Talking Dues

• Young adults are concerned about where their money is going.
• Discuss dues and expenses openly and frankly.
• Clarify what dues are used for by both the club and LCI.
• Talk in terms of monthly costs, not annual.
• Consider offering a monthly payment plan.
Dress for Success

• Image is important to many young adults.
• The more that you can relate to them, the greater the chances that they will join your club.
• Dress for the occasion.
• Wearing your Lions vest may not be a good idea; young adults are less interested in uniforms and may perceive the vest as threatening.
Recruiting Tools for Young Adults

• The *Be Part of Something that Matters Brochure* (EX-801) targets young adults.

• The *Young Adult Recruiting Video* (EX-802) shows young Lions engaging in hands on service activities.

• District and club newsletters can be powerful tools with the message that they can deliver.

• An attractive club web site is critical. The young adult will seek out information here first.

• Public relations: feature young adults performing service.
Club Meetings

• Be flexible: change constitution & by-laws, if necessary; change meeting times, if needed; loosen meeting requirements.
• Let go of some club traditions: reduce the formalities.
• Give members two meeting times, i.e. dinner from 6:00-6:30 and club business from 6:30-7:30.
• Stick to the agenda – email the agenda in advance.
• Mix things up a bit: hold meetings at different locations, discuss club business during service projects or social activities.
• Utilize your Tail Twister: not as a “cop”, but rather as a “fun” master.
Get On-line

• Internet capability
• e-Clubhouse
• Social media
• LCI web site
Recruit what you need

• Does your club secretary report electronically?
• Does your club have an attractive web site?
• Does your club support youth sports activities?
• Does your club have a newsletter?
• Does your club have someone who handles public relations?
• Would your club be willing to sponsor and support a LEO club?
Service is the Key – Hit the “hot” buttons

• Highlight hands-on projects with tangible efforts.
• Be involved in several service projects so that members can pick and choose what appeals to their “hot” buttons.
• Stress global impact.
• Go green.
• Offer a variety of exciting and challenging experiences.
Key Questions for Young Adults

• What do you like to do?
• What are you passionate about?
• What is your opinion?
• How can we improve?
• Based on your prior experience, do you have any ideas for new service projects that we might consider?
Summary

• Change is a must if we are to succeed.
• Leaders must become followers and change agents.
• Leaders must become mentors.
• Youth is our future: embrace them, utilize their talents.
• We must be willing to give up value to receive value.
• Membership recruitment, involvement, and retention must become part of our service: a very real paradigm shift.