

Recruit - Retain – Recognition

- Create a payroll insert that can be included with payroll checks. Contact your payroll department and get them included with the checks or automatic deposit statements.
- Place an ad or article in your company newsletter, or the newsletter of other companies in your area.
- List your club with the Chamber of Commerce.
- If you have members who travel a great deal, encourage them to visit a club when they are on the road. Ask them to share their experiences with the club. You may be able to get some new ideas to implement.(Note: This information is easily accessible through the Toastmaster web site at : www.toastmasters.org)
- Learn how to fill out the membership form (Form 400).Make sure that all club members do as well. Consider this topic as a possibility for a speech or educational session at the club.
- Place an ad in your local church newsletter or program.
- After collecting semiannual dues, make certain that the forms and a check are sent off to WHQ. This is necessary to keep the club in good standing and to keep each member's status current.
- Develop club talking points that can be used when talking to prospective members. (Talking points are a short list of positive statements. For example: diverse cultural membership; members committed to educational growth; focused and in depth evaluations.)
- Have a guest event that is 100% devoted to guests. Have speeches that explain what Toastmasters is about, and details of meeting information, costs, and most importantly, benefits. Advertise this event by all possible means (local newspaper, company newsletter, bulletin boards, etc.).Challenge every member to bring at least one guest. Have a prize for the member who brings the most guests.
- Develop a public relations campaign that will help keep your club in the public eye.
- If you have a good membership idea, forward it on to others ---- other clubs, your district officers, me. An idea shared develops great momentum.
- At a demo meeting, distribute a form at the beginning of the meeting on which the potential members can takes notes. Use this to get specific information on prospective members, then use the information to self-close them on membership. Forward the form to the Vice President of Education for future use.(Cassandra Cockrill, D57)
- Ask a member from another club to present an educational module at one of your club meetings. Look for someone who you believe is especially motivating in his/her speaking ability. Create a guest list of individuals who would benefit from the topic. Club members serve as the welcoming committee. NOTE: The evaluation and listening modules work particularly well for this idea. There are others to choose from in the Successful Club and Better Speaker series.
- Turn guests into members by listing the names of guests in your club newsletter. (Kathy McBride, D43)
- Have membership forms filled out with standard club information. Then, all you need to do is add in information specific to the new member. This may help cut down on the time and confusion of the form.

- Create a holiday invitation (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Spring, Summer, St. Pat's, etc.) and ask each member to hand out invitations to friends and co-workers. Plan your meeting agenda around that holiday theme.
- Plan a special showcase meeting. Invite members from other clubs to help you present this special program. Have a listing of various Toastmaster clubs with their meeting location, time and date available as a handout. Representatives from all participating clubs should be prepared to sign up guests that evening.
- Conduct a SpeechCraft. Charge a fee for the SpeechCraft that will cover the new member fee and the first six months of dues. At the completion of the SpeechCraft, present certificates along with an invitation to apply for membership. Offer a rebate coupon that would make the membership dues free for the first six months.
- Take your show on the road. Look for special ways to showcase your club at places other than your typical meeting location. Offer to do special programs at a community center, library, retirement community, bookstore, etc. Get the facility to help promote your special appearance. Ask guests to join.
- Appreciation night: Honor a community member with a Club Communication & Leadership Award. Hold a special meeting to present the award, and ask the honoree to say a few words promoting Toastmasters. Send a press release to the local newspaper announcing the honor and presentation and maybe you can get some coverage.
- Design a club brochure and distribute it to prospective members. Be sure to review it at least every six months for updates and corrections. Keep it current!
- Make sure that all club officers attend training. Knowing the job will help you do the job. Remember that membership is everyone's responsibility, not just the Vice President of Membership.
- Close each meeting with the comment, "See you at the next meeting, bring a friend". Add the same comment to the bottom of your agenda.
- Arrange to car pool to meetings and events outside the club, whenever possible. Members will have the opportunity to develop friendships with other club members. These friendships will add to the enjoyment of the educational experience, and keep them coming back for more.
- Try to make sure that every member speaks at every meeting. Whether it's a speech, table topics, evaluation, thought for the day, whatever. This makes everyone feel included in the meeting.
- Develop a new member orientation packet. This could include basic Toastmaster information, as well as specific information about your club and club members. Make sure every new member gets this packet.
- As part of your meeting, take a few minutes to ask each member to jot down the names of five people they know that could benefit from Toastmasters. Challenge everyone to use this as a guest list for the next meeting.
- Make sure that your club meetings are ready for guests. Are they educational, timely and fun?
- Explain the various meeting roles and the purposes of the different parts of the meeting to guests. Help them to feel like an insider from the very first visit.
- After you vote in your new member(s), welcome them with rousing applause. Let them know that

you are glad to have them as a member.

- Send a note of congratulations to your new members. This helps them to feel wanted, and membership in an outstanding organization like Toastmasters is something deserving of congratulations.
- Build membership, and retain current members, by having an excellent product : dynamic meetings. Do periodic checks to make sure that you are meeting member needs.
- Conduct an in-club SpeechCraft. Send out a press release about this exciting educational opportunity.
- Periodically make one of your meetings a special “Guest Night.” Each member should bring at least one guest.
- Divide club members into teams for a month long membership contest. Award points for bringing a guest and for new members signed up. The winning team is served a special dessert after the meeting -- provided and served by the other team.
- Enhance membership retention by ensuring that every member is a stakeholder in the success of the club. Put every member on a committee, and make sure that they have a specific job to do. There are many benefits to this besides membership retention, including an opportunity for leadership experience.(Susan Niven, D2)
- Send press releases to local media on all special events, awards and honors. Include a photo when possible.
- Form a guest committee under your Sergeant at Arms. Ensure that every guest receives a follow up call and/or note. Be sure to invite the guest to come to another meeting.
- Invite every guest to join.(You’d be surprised how often this doesn’t happen!)
- Ask WHQ for a list of your club’s former members. Plan a special event and invite them all. Include them in the program, if possible. Ask them if they’d like to re-join. If one of your former members is high profile within the community, send out a press release announcing the meeting, their attendance and affiliation with Toastmasters.
- Build morale within your club by thanking and praising your members for a job well done or an outstanding performance. A few kind words can keep members coming back for more.
- If you own your own business, make sure that membership in Toastmasters is one of the employee benefits that you provide for your employees.
- Leave club flyers and brochures at your hair salon or barbershop.
- Ask people that you do business with on a regular basis to come to a Toastmaster meeting. Some ideas: banker, teller, grocery clerk, gardener, veterinarian, postal clerk, real estate agent, clergy, retail clerk, mail carrier, hair stylist, barber, etc.
- Do you use the services of a personal shopper? These people come in contact with hundreds of people a day, and need strong communication skills. Ask yours to accompany you to a meeting.
- Ask a district officer to come to a membership-building meeting to give an inspirational address. NOTE: your Area Governor is a District Officer, and the person you are most likely to go to for this type of assistance.

- Have a secret pal program within your club. Outside of the meeting times, the secret pal will send encouraging notes, ideas, evaluations, etc., to the person who is their secret pal. Reveal secret pals after six months. This will keep people coming to meetings as they try to figure out who is their secret pal.
- Participate in career day at school where you can tell students about Toastmasters. Don't forget, many high school seniors are eighteen and eligible for membership in a club.
- Talk to your Area Governor about your membership challenges. Sometimes getting another opinion will give you a new way of looking at the situation.
- If your club meets at a church or synagogue, request that your meeting information be listed in the newsletter or bulletin.
- Set a good example at your club meetings. Encourage excellence.
- Have at least one meeting each quarter where the speakers and educational program focus on membership and club building topics.
- Does your club stop meeting during the summer months? Continue on instead. Even though attendance may be low, you can keep your momentum going instead of stopping and then trying to build back up all over again.
- Make sure that your meeting location is conveniently located, accessible and user friendly.
- Ask for guest comments at the end of your meeting. This may give you specific information to use in inviting the guest to join. Or, it may give you information that indicates that you need to change your ways to make your club more attractive to prospective members.
- Have a formal induction ceremony to present new members with their Toastmaster pin.
- Assign a mentor/coach for each new member. Provide mentor training so the mentor can learn different ways to help motivate, coach, and encourage new members.
- Once a year schedule a social event at your club meeting. Showcase your club's best speakers, and show your guests what Toastmasters has to offer. Make sure you follow up on all new member leads.
- Create a newsletter. Make sure that it is sent to all members. If a member has been away for a while, it may help to remind them about all the excitement they are missing.
- Use a Toastmaster coffee mug at work.
- Have a monthly drawing for a Toastmaster prize. Every time a member brings a guest to a meeting, their name is put into a basket for the drawing. At the last meeting of the month a name is drawn and a prize awarded. Have a duplicate prize to give to the guest if they became a member.
- Contact local businesses to see if they will allow your club to have a counter display at their location.
- Have and use a club web site.
- Have club business cards printed with the club name, meeting location, time, etc. Members can give them out to potential guests.

- Consider a booth at a fair, craft show, trade show, career fair, etc.
- Invite your boss to a club meeting.
- Make a list of all the people you know who would benefit from Toastmasters. Invite one person at a time to a meeting. Invite them to become a member.
- Establish a procedure to follow up on new member leads.
- Put a Toastmaster bumper sticker on your car.
- Wear your Toastmaster pin --- all the time.
- Sponsor a Toastmaster event or demonstration at a community event, i.e., a Story Telling session, debate, parliamentary procedure demonstration, etc. Have a fish bowl for people to deposit a business card if they would be interested in being contacted about the organization.
- Promote Toastmasters at career fair, jobs fairs and employment fairs. Have a plan to follow up with interested groups and individuals. Emphasize the business communications skills that are learned and practiced in Toastmasters.
- Start a Speakers Bureau. Make sure that your speakers promote Toastmasters at every speaking event.
- When someone compliments you on a presentation or speech, be sure to mention that you developed your skills in Toastmasters. Ask if they would be interested in doing the same.
- Ask your doctor, dentists, optometrist, etc., if you may leave Toastmasters brochures in their waiting area. Make sure there is a phone number on the brochure to call for more information.
- Ask your guests for feedback after a meeting. Listen to what they liked and didn't like. Make changes as appropriate.
- If a guest visits your club, but the meeting time or location doesn't seem like it will work for them, make sure you refer them to another club. Contact your Area Governor if you need help in doing this.
- Contact a women's shelter about sponsoring a SpeechCraft. Since these are generally women in transition, make sure they have information about where to join a club after the SpeechCraft ends. Check with the agency that sponsors the shelter. They may be willing to have the SpeechCraft as a regular part of their program.
- If your meeting attendance is dropping, take a look at your meeting location. It may be time to move.
- If you are experiencing membership problems, make sure you don't discuss them when you have a guest visiting. No one wants to join a club that has problems.
- Be nice to your guests. Sometimes we focus too much on getting someone to sign an application, and forget basic courtesy.
- Leaflet a neighborhood with flyers about your club. (NOTE: This works well in apartment or condominium complexes.)
- Induct all new members. It makes them feel important and a part of the group. It's also impressive

for guests in attendance.

- Have a recognition meeting to acknowledge all members who have sponsored a new member.
- Take a look into the mirror. Do you smile enough? Guests want to see a smiling face welcoming them to a meeting and inviting them to apply for membership.
- Is your club so large that members aren't getting speaking opportunities? You may want to talk with your Area Governor about splitting into two clubs (with a minimum of 20 members in each club).NOTE: This option may create additional challenges.
- Tell your friends how much fun you have belonging to Toastmasters.
- Write an article for the Toastmaster magazine. If it is published, circulate it at your work and to all your friends.
- Develop a website listing your club information and showcasing your activities. Make it visually appealing and interesting. NOTE: There are specific guidelines regarding club websites. Be sure to check this information.
- Use the videos from Toastmasters at a specially designated recruiting meeting. Your District Governor or Lieutenant Governor of Marketing should have these videos.
- Post brochures and flyers about your club at your local library.
- Contact your city's various cultural centers. They may be interested in starting a SpeechCraft or club for their members. Many of these centers serve populations for whom English is a second language. It may be helpful to work with someone who is associated with the specific cultural community.
- Post brochures and flyers about your club at local bookstores.
- Invite a prospective member to attend a conference with you.
- Invite your family and friends to attend a speech contest.
- Have a guest book at your meetings and ask each guest to sign. Follow up with each guest by sending a thank you note and inviting them back to another meeting.
- Offer to pick up a guest so you know they will be attending the meeting.
- Create a club "Member Profile" handbook. The profile would answer these types of questions for each member: How long have you been a Toastmaster? Why did you join? What have you gotten out of TM so far? What do you hope to get from your membership in TM in the future? What is your current designation and do you plan to go farther and why? The booklet would be given to new club members, and would help them get to know the other members. Update annually.(Suezy Proctor, D32)
- Make sure that you have lots of membership applications (Form 400) available at every meeting.
- Order membership supplies from the Toastmaster catalog. Make sure you re-order before you run out. Have these available for guests.
- When a club member misses a meeting, without offering a reason for the absence, have another club member call them to let them know they were missed. Make the decision about which member

will call the missing guest before the end of the meeting. (Kathy McBride, D43).

- If members belong to more than one club, ask them to bring their extra copies of the Toastmaster magazine to your club meetings. Prepare a binder with these copies, and have it available for review by guests.
- Plan a club membership building contest. Submit it to WHQ for consideration in the annual contest.
- Have an occasional social meeting to recognize the family and co-workers of your club members. Remember it is their support that enables the club member to participate. It's nice to include them once in a while. NOTE: This is often done successfully around a holiday or other special event.
- Make your meetings fun. People will want to invite guests to share in the fun.
- Send out press releases on all your activities. Don't be discouraged if it takes awhile to be noticed. Small community newspapers are likely to give you the best coverage.
- Send personal notes to members who you haven't seen for a while. Let them know that you've missed them, and are anxious to have them back.
- Keep in touch with absentee members by sending out a review of each meeting by email.
- Buy a classified ad in your local paper.
- Develop a mentor program. This will help encourage new members to stay involved with the program, and it will help long term members renew their enthusiasm.
- Give a new member a gift after completing half their CTM requirements. It's easy to get discouraged, bored, or disinterested at this point. A morale boost will keep them coming back to finish up.
- Attend officer training and talk to officers from other clubs about how they prospect for members.
- As you reach the end of the Toastmaster year, make sure your membership is over 20, or that you have a net gain of five members, so you qualify to receive your Distinguished Club ribbons.
- Celebrate your charter date annually. If you are not at charter strength, make plans to increase your membership so that you will be on your next charter anniversary.
- List your Toastmaster membership and achievements on your resume or curriculum vitae.
- If you meet in a public location, have a placard or other sign that announces your meeting location, date and time. For example: The XYZ Toastmaster club meets here, Wednesdays, at noon.
- Be active in your community. This puts you in touch with other people who may be interested in Toastmasters.
- If you will be traveling, for business or pleasure, look for clubs in the area where you will be. Visit the club and see how they look for new members. Sometimes we all get in a rut and it's good to see what other clubs are doing.
- Some members feel that Toastmasters has significantly impacted their life and are willing to financially scholarship a new member. This is a way of extending Toastmasters to an individual who may be otherwise unable to join. This is typically handled by the member paying for the initial

membership and dues payment, with the new member maintaining the dues payment after the first six months.

- If a member announces that they will be moving, or have accepted a new position that doesn't allow them to continue with club meetings, have a going away gift for them --- a list of the Toastmaster clubs that meet where they will live or work. Let them know how they can transfer their membership, and make sure that they leave with a letter from your Club's treasurer, confirming that their dues are current.
- Start an advanced club that specializes in speaking on television. Contact your cable access channel or a vocational school that does this training.
- Does the company where you work have a Toastmaster club? If not, start one. Contact a district officer for assistance.
- Have a Table Topics session that is based on membership ideas. Make sure someone writes down all the ideas. Then plan a follow up strategy.
- Challenge the other clubs in your area to a membership contest.
- If you belong to other organizations that schedule speakers, try to include a fellow Toastmaster on the program.
- Write an article for your local newspaper. Make sure your biographical information includes your Toastmaster membership.
- Read our Toastmaster magazine each month. There are good membership ideas in it.
- If you have a strong club, consider being a "big brother or big sister" to a struggling club. Help out with speakers, evaluators, and being an audience member.
- Start or join an advanced club that focuses on evaluation. The honing of these skills will help you become a mentor to others in your home club.
- How many clubs do you belong to? If the answer is one, consider joining another club (at work or home) or maybe an advanced club.
- Plan an executive committee meeting and brainstorm for ideas about how to reach prospective members.
- Stay on task. Keep focused on the important success factors within the club. People join Toastmasters as an educational organization. Don't lose them because the club loses sight of your goals.
- Share pride in the accomplishments of your members. Celebrate the success of reaching a goal. Make the club a place that members want to come to share the successes that Toastmasters has helped them achieve.
- Don't lose members after they complete their CTM. Make sure all members are aware of the outstanding advanced manuals that are available. Explain and talk about the advanced manuals early on, and create an expectation of continued membership.(Susan Niven, D2)
- Have a member present a module from the Successful Club Series. These are designed to be 10-15 minute presentations that can easily be given with the club setting. They offer great information on attracting and maintaining members. Some examples: "Finding New Members for Your Club"

and "Closing the Sale."

- Read the Toastmaster magazine. This wonderful publication alone is worth the price of membership.
- If a member has missed a couple of meetings, have someone drop them a note or email. Even if you know why the member is gone (out of town, vacation, work commitment, etc.), the note may serve as a reminder that they are missed at the club and that the club is anxious for them to return.
- Don't let a new member drop out after their Icebreaker speech. Make sure that they are put on the schedule again as soon as possible.
- Treat all guests warmly and make sure that they are introduced to club officers and members.
- Ask all members to wear name tags, and have blank name tags available for guests as well. Don't make people guess at remembering names. Be sure to use your guest's name when talking with them.
- Meet weekly rather than semi-monthly.
- Even if there is a low attendance at a meeting, still have the meeting. Continuity matters. Don't give up hope. There are lots of success stories about three or four people showing up for meeting after meeting. Keep doing that, and you can turn things around.
- Make sure that every speech given at your club is a manual speech. As members observe growth in others, it will encourage them to stick with the program. Guests will want to join so they can start achieving this success as well.
- Stay on time. Nobody wants to go to meetings that start and/or end late.
- Mail dues reminders to unpaid members. If they are temporarily unable to make a meeting, at least let them know they can keep their dues current.
- If you have children over 18, remember that they can join Toastmasters. While you may not want them to join your club, encourage them to find a club that will work for them. And don't forget their friends!
- Have a time during the meeting when members can announce job promotions or special awards that they attribute to their Toastmaster membership.
- Buy a Toastmaster t-shirt from the catalogue. Wear it when you work out, run errands, go to the grocery store. Be prepared to answer questions.
- Post club flyers at local business schools and vocational schools.
- Develop contacts at local business and vocational schools. Ask to do a presentation to classes regarding communication skills and how valuable they are in the job market. Have Toastmaster club information available to pass out and encourage students to attend a meeting. NOTE: If the instructor permits, get names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of interested students and have someone follow up with them.
- Develop a list of potential members who have email. Forward information about Toastmaster events to these people. Keep people on the list as long as there is interest. Don't SPAM; only email people with whom you've had contact. Remove people from your list, if requested.

- At all levels within the district (district, division, area, club) have workshops on how to start a new club.
- Challenge another club to a membership contest. Winner gets pizza hosted by the other club.
- Award pins for recruiting a particular number of members.
- Think about groups that may not yet be served by Toastmasters: seniors, physically challenged, stay at home moms, ESL, etc. Can you start a club for them? Or invite them to your meeting?
- Start a club with mid-day meetings for stay at home Moms. The club may choose to have a parenting focus. Possible meeting time of 3-4:30, with a meeting location at a local school. Students could help out with child care, or have a club member serve as the child watcher for that particular meeting.
- Follow up with guests who visited but did not join. A personal phone call or letter may bring them back again. Or, it may help identify a club public relations problem that you can then solve.
- Break down your annual goal for new members into a monthly goal. It will seem much easier to meet that way.
- Send out dues statements to encourage members to pay their dues early. You have to pay your dues to be a member.
- Prepare a two-sided flyer. One side tells all about Toastmasters, the other side gives testimonials about the organization, along with the profession of the individual. Distribute to local businesses.
- Have a secret greeter at your meeting to make sure everyone is warm and welcoming to members and guests.
- If members have dual membership in multiple clubs, collect the extra Toastmaster magazines to distribute to local businesses. Have a card stapled to the front with information about who to call for more information.
- Prepare a flyer listing all clubs in your geographical area, rather than just an individual club.
- As you are driving around your neighborhood, keep an eye out for companies that are located in buildings large enough to employ several hundred employees. You've just located a new club lead. Now pass it on to a district officer and work with them to convert the lead into a new club.
- Contact your Human Resources department at work. Ask for a 20 minute appointment to explain the benefits of the Toastmaster program and how it can help the company's training efforts.
- If you have a guest book that you ask guest to sign, have a place for them to list their email address. Follow up with them, and send notice of upcoming events. (Kathy McBride, D43)
- Brainstorm with Toastmasters from different clubs, areas, division, and districts. They can tell you ideas that worked for them. Adapt them to your own situation.
- Once you get members, keep them. Develop a quality program to retain members.
- Don't let internal strife destroy your club. Address your problem, resolve it, and move on.
- Make a list of the best things about your club. You now have a list of selling points to use when recruiting new members.

- New club idea: Consider the existing clubs in your community. Is there a day of the week that is not served by Toastmasters? Is there a time of day missing (i.e., no morning or evening clubs)? How about a weekend club?
- Create a booklet with a map of the district, broken down into areas with a guide to all clubs in the district, times they meet, contact person, etc. Have this available to all club members and guests. (Suezy Proctor, D32)
- Give away Toastmaster products as prizes for Best Speaker of the month, or Best Evaluator of the month, or to the person who has brought the most guests.(Suezy Proctor, D32)
- Have a sample Membership Form (Form 400) filled out and laminated. Keep with your membership supplies, and have it available to assist new members in filling out the form.(David Hatchuel, D72)

*Courtesy of Mary Jo Manzanares, DTM
Toastmasters International, District 32*