

Strengthening *Your Club's* Recruitment and Retention Success

1998 District Conference Handout

I. Two Club Success Stories *In Their Own Words*

STORY 1: Can *Leaders as Listeners* techniques help strengthen *your club*? The answer is "YES!" – according to members of Quota International of Port Huron, Michigan, U.S.A. Working as a team, Port Huron members strengthened their club, one member at a time, using heavy doses of encouragement, personal connection and caring. Here is their heartwarming success story . . . *in their own words:*

Quota International of Port Huron has implemented the "Leaders as Listeners" philosophy that International introduced. This has enabled our club to move ahead by encouraging, celebrating and supporting our membership.

Our club was chartered in 1952, and we were a very successful club for many years. We were very accustomed to having every project we undertook raise a lot of money, and bring a lot of community recognition as well as satisfaction for our members. We couldn't do anything wrong, or so it seemed.

We have found that during the past four years we hit the first "bump in the road." We understand that every club goes through a cycle, we had just not ever personally experienced this before.

The "Leaders as Listeners" philosophy came along at a time when we were struggling to understand what was happening to our club. We found that by implementing this philosophy in every area of contact with our members our morale has improved, members are motivated to become active again, we have improved our fund raisers immensely and we have changed the environment and personality of our club.

We began by asking more questions of our members, and listening to what they had to say. We began implementing ideas that members suggested and believed were important. We realized it was time to make some much needed changes.

At our meetings, we began to recognize members for their individual contributions to our club. We reinstated the calling tree to notify each member of any illness, death in the family or any emergency that a member may be experiencing.

We are recognizing members with five or more years of service to Quota with a special plaque at our installation ceremony. We are recognizing each member's birthday with a card.

Overall, we are implementing the idea from "Leaders as Listeners" to make each member aware of how important they are to our club and that it takes each one of us to make our club successful.

As club president, I am trying very hard to get to know each one of our members. I realize the importance of making each member feel important and needed. The more I listen to each of them, the better our club is becoming.

The philosophy of "Leaders as Listeners" is something we knew, but somehow over the years we began to take each other and our successes for granted and stopped taking care of each other. Our relationships with our sister Quotarians are just as important as any relationship we have in life, and we realize we need to cultivate this relationship just like any other if we want our club to be what our Collect stands for.

Our club is beginning to look and feel like the club we always knew we could be. The "Leaders as Listeners" philosophy reminded us of how important it is to take care of each other.

With the "Leaders as Listeners" philosophy in place, our endeavors to be the best are beginning to be a reality once again.

Membership is growing and we are retaining our current members. Our fund raisers are beginning to reach the success of previous years. The community is becoming more aware of what we stand for, and we are able to provide service to those in need. Each member feels needed, recognized and an important part of our club's success.

We believe our club development success is an excellent example for other Quota clubs as we have incorporated a philosophy that each club already has the information about, and by implementing the "Leaders as Listeners" philosophy, each club has the opportunity for improvement.

STORY 2: Quota *caring* has paid huge dividends for the members of Quota International of Santa Ana, one of Quota's newest clubs located in the Philippines. Within the first nine months of chartering (in December 1997), the club *doubled* their membership size – from 18 to 36 members – and quickly became a Quota leader in membership recruitment. What was their *Leaders as Listeners* success secret? Club members used a wonderful local service project as the hook in recruiting new club members who shared their club's service devotion and vision. Here is their inspirational story . . . *in their own words:*

Quota International of Santa Ana's success in membership recruitment through sincere service was made visible by medical and dental mobile clinics brought to far-flung impoverished places of the town.

This service project, our club's first, started with a community survey. We gathered information on the population including their passing needs at the moment. The survey showed that most of the people clamored for health care services that they hadn't enjoyed for quite some time.

After a month of comprehensive planning and with careful consideration on the limitation on financial matters, our club members came up with this first medical and dental mission.

Our club was newly chartered with only 18 members to work on this meaningful project. However, we received many pledges of support from generous friends and other civic organizations. Financial problems were not a hindrance for us. The services of a mobile clinic, medicines, medical supplies and medical personnel were generously donated.

The medical patients treated numbered about 300 and the dental mission treated about 90 patients who were given free tooth extraction and post-operative medicines.

Community residents were so happy to undergo the diagnostic procedures and they enjoyed free consultations plus free medicines. It was so touching to learn that most of them hadn't seen a doctor in their lives. They were looking forward to another medical and dental mission to support health care needs they cannot afford.

People will be inspired and motivated to join the club if they can perceive and have the great feeling of knowing that they can make a big difference in the lives of other people.

All the people who witnessed the services delivered were so impressed that many other professionals chose to join and be a part of Quota International of Santa Ana.

II. Sharing Lessons Learned

Leaders as Listeners Techniques Your Club Can Use

Quota's *Leaders as Listeners* approach can strengthen your club's membership. This handout describes different techniques to do so, a list of helpful resources and how to obtain "one-on-one" assistance. Choose techniques that make the most sense for your club members and work as a team in implementing them. *Thank you* for extending and expanding Quota's friendship and service in your community in this, Quota's 80th year. *We can't grow on* without you!

Encouragement is contagious. Share it liberally.

Members who feel encouraged are responsible, flexible and growing. They have self-esteem, are cooperative, and want to be productive. Members who feel encouraged *encourage others*. When we look for the best in people, we – more often than not – get their best.

When people feel they don't count and their contribution is insignificant, they may become discouraged, unmotivated and passive. In fact, nothing is more destructive to a club's culture, cohesiveness or longevity than negativity.

You don't need a plan, a meeting or a mandate to become an encourager in Quota. Every member can do it! Your positive attitude *is* contagious.

Personal connection counts in Quota . . . one member at a time.

Quota is a personal experience and every member experiences it in a different way. Members, leaders and past leaders . . . *nothing* you do is more encouraging than taking the time to understand and personally connect with your fellow club members.

Recognize accomplishments, acknowledge birthdays and special Quota anniversaries, and contact members who miss meetings. Is your club's telephone tree working? Share your Quota caring . . . one-on-one: in person, via telephone, e-mail, fax and mail! Extend a personal invitation to a potential member. Then, give them one-on-one attention to show them you care.

Club leaders, take time to develop a personal relationship with each member during your leadership year. Find out how you can mentor and support them and identify the ways they *enjoy* most. Form a team of club members who will assist you in doing so.

Listen, Learn, and Customize!

Develop your own membership survey that each club member can complete on an annual basis. Why annually? Because as we add and lose club members, the “personality” of our group changes, too.

Understanding what motivates individual members will help leaders and members work as a team in customizing programs, meetings and fund-raising and service projects and finding the role that’s right for each member.

Do you know *your* club’s personality? Through the *Leaders as Listeners* program we learned that a “one size fits all” club model does not work in Quota. Every club provides a special combination of fellowship, service, and professional development opportunities. The way in which it does so determines its personality.

Understanding your club’s personality, especially when members seek differing membership experiences, will enhance *your* recruitment and retention success. *Free copies of Quota’s club programs are available from the Quota International Office, 1420 21st Street NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: (202) 331-9694.*

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Club presidents, customize *your* club leadership role. Reflect on your own talents, interests, personality and skills, and define the leadership role that works best *for you*. Doing so will enhance *your* leadership comfort and effectiveness.

Celebrate accomplishments regularly.

Celebrating your club’s successes and accomplishments -- and thanking those members who made them possible -- not only sets a positive tone, but tends to reduce conflict and minimize differences.

There is a family feeling about celebrations; they bond club members together and can deepen personal commitment. While fun, they also provide a meaningful reminder about which key values are celebrated in the club. Don’t forget to add your club’s celebration of Quota’s 80th birthday to your calendar this year.

Calling all members! Recognizing and celebrating individual achievements and contributions is important, too. Regularly write and send short handwritten thank you notes to hardworking, dedicated members for their contributions to Quota and in other areas of their life. Handwriting neatness does *not* matter; your message does!

Service: Fast Track to Strengthening Your Club!

Local service is one way to attract new members and help them feel a part of your club's family right away. A good service project can be especially helpful in rejuvenating a club that is rebuilding, too.

Form a team to suggest ways to use current or new service projects (or fund raising events that raise service funds) to attract potential members. Remember, personal connection counts in Quota! Make a point to talk "one-on-one" with individuals you meet through your service projects. Be sure to share information about membership in your club.

Every club president received a copy of our newest Club Program on *Defining Your Club's Service Personality* which will help your club learn more about each member's service interests. This kit also provides specific suggestions on ways you can strengthen your club's membership through service. An exercise which helps your club define your service mission statement is included – if you haven't already done so. *Free copies of Quota's club programs are available from the Quota International Office, 1420 21st Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036 USA. Telephone: (202) 331-9694.*

Want More Information?

- **We're Here to Help.** If your club would benefit from additional "one-on-one" assistance or advice, contact the staff at the Quota International Office or your district governor. Contact staff at: Quota International Office, 1420 21st Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036 USA. Telephone: (202) 331-9694 / Fax: (202) 331-4395 / E-mail: staff@quota.org.
- **Read the Club Alert!** Each issue of the *Club Alert* information package – which is mailed to your club president – includes *Leaders as Listeners* techniques that members and leaders alike can use. Donors (\$50 and above) to Quota's "Friend of Quota" annual giving campaign will receive one year's mailing of the *Club Alert* information package and *Leadership Link* as a thank you gift for their support. Donors of \$100 and above receive additional benefits. To participate, contact the Quota International Office.
- **Watch your Club Mail.** In the year ahead we plan to share more important lessons we are learning from clubs participating in our new and successful Excellence Awards Program. Every club president will receive a copy of what we are learning works in club fund-raising, service, recruitment and retention worldwide.
- **Come to Boston!** Convention '99 workshops will present in-depth training that club members and leaders will appreciate. Watch for more information in the 1999 *Quotarian* that will be mailed to every Quota member in February.