

HOW TO LIGHT A FIRE UNDER YOUR MEMBERSHIP...WITHOUT BURNING THEM OUT

Presented by the Florida District Growth Development Team
October 27, 2007

DANCING WITH WHO WE BROUGHT

Determine why they joined the Pilot Club.

All people are different and each member joined for their own personal reasons. Some people can deceive themselves, and think they joined in order to provide community service, however they rarely participate in the community service projects which involve a personal time commitment. Some member joined to network, some to socialize, and some to secure community recognition. Actions speak louder than words. How are your members “acting?”

Don't assume anything.

Ask your members. Some members are quiet or shy and will not address issues or concerns publicly. Allow members to privately or anonymously address concerns. You can use questionnaires, individual phone calls and social outings to allow you to understand the needs of membership.

Just Listen. Don't Judge

Try to remember that the differences in members make your club stronger. There will be conflicts between members and as long as they remain as a difference of opinion and not personal attacks or back stabbing activities, things will work out.

Based on the information the growth team compiled, the main reason members leave the club is personality conflicts with other members.

Personality conflicts must be addressed and handled, before they destroy your entire club. Clubs must be aware of the problems associated with members always serving on the same committee or project year after year. While having experience is an asset, not being open to new ideas for a division are detrimental and newer members or passive members will not be allowed to participate fully and fairly. Sometimes as a member we must step back from our “pet” project or division and allow other members to stretch their wings.

Let your members shine.

They are not to be treated as the workers for the ideas of a few people in the club. Each member joined for a reason. Every member has some personal talent which they need to be allowed to use, and some members may need to expand their talents. People resent being used. Do not allow your members to be used to fulfill the wishes of a few people. One meeting before the plan of works is developed should be an upbeat brainstorming session. The chairs of the various divisions should all attend and develop suggestions from the brainstorming sessions into the plan of works.

Each year one project

may need to be dropped, and replaced with another project. Don't become trapped in a project. Changes occur in all communities and the needs of your community may be changing. Also the members may just become weary of the same project year after year.

Too much for so few.

A few events done correctly are more impressive than a lot of events with limited participation. Who are your members? Working women with family responsibilities? Women with limited income? Women actively involved with church, family, and other organizations? Work smart, not hard. If your membership has limitations of age, health, numbers or other commitments you may need to rethink your actives for a year or until the membership changes.

Use their strengths.

Don't try to force round pegs into square holes. That member, who is fabulous at fundraising or organizing pilot socials, may not make the best club treasurer. While some leadership skills may be developed with experience in the club, some people prefer to remain behind the scenes. Don't force leadership positions on to unwilling or unqualified members. Both the club and the member will suffer unnecessary stresses.

WHY ARE WE LOSING MEMBERS

- Other commitments
- Financial obligations
- Health issues
- Internal conflict
- Virus members ***
- In a click, one member leaves and the others in the click follow
- Age/ or fatigue
- Wanted a social club
- Wanted a networking club
- Retirement (fixed income)
- Sent to nursing home (distant location)
- Death
- No hands on activities
- Not a die hard Pilot Attitude – attend only when it's convenient
- Feel their time is being wasted – long meetings which lack focus
- Apathy
- Not enough appreciation or gratitude to existing members
- Too much hands on
- Not keeping in touch with members – communication

- Not training officers
- Job change or job commitments
- Not having fun

THE BIGGIE – VIRUS MEMBERS

Based on the brainstorming session held by the District Growth Team on August 4, 2007 Virus members are destroying entire clubs and are the main reason we are losing members. The following information regarding virus members is copied from the Pilot International Manual.

VIRUS MEMBERS – People who are hazardous to the health of your organization. These individuals are capable of undermining the vitality of a club until members feel helpless to resist the virulent negativity and choose to disband the club. The Pilot Code of Ethics is a model for what is expected of Pilots in ethics and decorum, however, there are clubs who admit to being held in control of a virus member and feel helpless to confront the situation, to the detriment of the club. Rudeness is not acceptable behavior. Robert's Rules of Order may be used to eliminate virus members.

Learn how to handle negative people. Your club and the legacy it provides your community are at risk. This situation is bigger than one negative person. This is a situation designed to empower your members' leadership abilities.

The Virus Member Quiz

1. Do you feel emotionally empty or devalued after being with this person?
2. Do you feel less intelligent or less qualified after talking with this person?
3. Would you rejoice if you never had to see this person again?
4. Do you find that you walk on eggshells and choose your words carefully when you talk to this person?

If you answered yes to all four questions, your club has a virus member.

The following techniques may be effective when dealing with your Virus Member.

Stop the Thought Technique – for you

Every time you catch yourself thinking of the person or situation hear yourself saying, “Stop the thought,” either loudly or softly to yourself. This can be amplified by adding an affirmation –

EXAMPLE: “Stop the thought. I am a kind worthy person.” BE POSITIVE!

The Mirror Technique – Effective with Bullies and Control Freaks

The technique forces the virus member to see their behavior reflected back to them. This technique enables children and adults to see the consequences of their behavior and how they come across.

EXAMPLE: If you are a speaker and someone continuously talks to their neighbors while you are speaking, this rudeness allows you to: Stop, smile, look directly at them, allow the room to turn in their direction, and with a chuckle say, "I think the rest of the room would be interested too, would you like to trade places?"

The Direct Confront Technique-Effective with Gossips and Control Freaks.

This prevents you from becoming a victim.

Other will respect you and it allows you to gain more self respect.

It is essential that you project your voice so you can be heard and speak in a well modulated tone. You may use emotion in your voice to make an impression of conviction and confidence. If you cannot think of something humorous or clever, feel free to tell them boldly how you feel about their comment.

Love and Kindness Technique-Always worth a try

Many times a virus is due to lack of self-esteem and insecurity. This technique requires that you never lose your cool, no matter what. You must be calm, use soothing and friendly tones, and you must smile. To do this you must remember how much pain this person must be in-how empty and unloved they must be feeling inside and how much self-loathing underlies their actions. This person must feel you are not an enemy, understand, and are on their side before they can comfortably change into positive behavior.

The Unplug Technique – Effective with Gossips and others

This is reserved for the most virulent virus threatening to unplug your whole organization. When you have tried everything else to no avail, there is nothing you can do but let go. You need to become devoid of emotion and visualize yourself unplugging from them, as if from an electric socket. You completely let go and no longer care what happens to them. You don't wish them evil. They are gone.

WHAT CAN YOUR CLUB DO TO RETAIN MEMBERS

- Disable virus members!
- Change meeting dates or times
- Have board meetings before business meeting
- Have separate meetings one business and one program
- Focus on the positive
- Appreciate each other and show the appreciation
- Have Pilot outings, dinner, the theatre, get to really know each other
- Don't judge others commitment against your commitment
- Allow each member to shine in the their own light
- Share the credit for the clubs accomplishments
- Treat other members as they would like to be treated
- Honor your commitments to the club, so other members do not have to fill in for you.

HOW TO GET NEW MEMBERS...WHERE ARE THEY HIDING

- New members generate new members.
- Larger budget dedicated to operations division for membership growth
- Public service announcements
- Seek out people who have recently had changes in their life, i.e., retirement, empty nest, widowed, job changes, relocation, mothers of anchors.
- Network with Chamber of Commerce members, or other industry associations which you hold membership
- Share Pilot information at your projects and fundraising activities.
- Co workers, church members, clients, relatives, friends
- Advertise the Pilot club, shirts, signs, newspaper articles
- Refer prospective members to the available websites
- Conduct share pilot events
- Invite people in your local community who have demonstrated community service to an honor luncheon and share information about your Pilot Club as well as district and international.
- Participate as a club in parades, chili cook-offs and other local events
- Always have Pilot information available to share, may just a business card with meeting information and email address
- Share your personal satisfactions with prospective members
- Ask! You may be surprised how many of your friends and associates are just waiting to be asked.
- Advertise at your meeting location with a plaque in the restaurant or meeting hall.

**PLEASE DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOUR CLUB IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE
BEFORE GETTING HELP**

**PLEASE CONTACT
GOVERNOR
LT GOVERNOR
DISTRICT OPERATIONS CHAIR
OR ANY MEMBER OF THE DISTRICT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
TEAM**

WE ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP.

TIPS FOR MAINTAINING A STRONG CLUB PILOT INTERNATIONAL MANUAL

1. **Club members are valued.** Strong club members support the dreams of fellow members. This attitude begins with a bond of loyalty within the membership. The Executive Board must set the tone for this to ensure an openness that says, “all voices are important and worthy of being heard.”
2. **A Team united for all....**Strong clubs use the word “we” a lot, but “I” is never forgotten. Club members know they have the freedom to go and do individual service and they will receive the support of the membership. The message is, “We’re behind you, so you can be the best you can be.”
3. **A Team can do more....**While the club officers are in leadership roles, strong clubs strive to share decision-making. They resolve differences by respecting and accepting compromise solutions.
4. **Members respect each other and their views** – in strong clubs, positive remarks outnumber negative by a wide margin. Members regularly express appreciation. Criticism is offered gently.
5. **Flexibility is the key!** Strong clubs have flexible plans of work and can make adjustments during the club year. They also have a little money in their budget that can be used where needed. They can then take advantage of unexpected opportunities.
6. **Be present with your heart...**Strong clubs have good listener within their ranks. They follow the rule of: Don’t try to read minds; listen within your heart. In Chinese the symbol for listen contains a heart.
 - **Friendship and Fellowship create outstanding service...**Strong clubs set aside time for fellowship. They set boundaries and prioritize in order to have fun and fellowship.
7. **Build Anchor Relationships for the future...**Strong clubs include their Anchor Members in their projects and plans. It’s important to create continuity between the clubs. These are the seeds for future Pilot membership. This creates stronger roots for the Pilot club and ensures growth as former Anchors join and become involved with the same mission for their community.
8. **Worthwhile projects are essential...**Strong clubs re-evaluate their projects throughout the years for their effectiveness and to build on their successes. Are “pet projects” for the higher good?
9. **Keep your intent on the mission and the focus is clear.** Strong clubs are dedicated to the comprehensive Pilot International focus. They stay informed about all the programs from Pilot International and use all the resources available to them. – District leaders, PI and PIF Headquarters staff.

BRING FORTH YOUR CLUB’S BEST

- **Hold meetings that enable you to get things done.** Make “how are we doing?” the focus of your agenda. Conclude meetings on a positive note.

- **Show appreciation. Say “thank you” for your members’** efforts and commitment in a way that is meaningful to them.
- **Create new alliance and partnerships.** Partner with other civic clubs to meet the needs of your community. Contact other Pilot Clubs and members-at-large in your area and include them in your plans. Share your talents and give them the opportunity to help you.
- **Give something up.** Sometimes club leaders must sacrifice their time when it is needed. These sacrifices can strengthen the leadership and inspire the membership to commitment.