

# TAG! You're it!

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Serving the Children of the World®

Our future is in your hands!

## Seven steps to achieving club excellence



### Step 2: Assess Club Vitality!

Once club members have renewed their commitment to excellence (step 1), it is time to assess the current situation of the club. By using the recommended tools, your club members identify how satisfied they are with their experience in the club and the impact you have in the community, in order to recommend the improvements that will take your club from good to great.

How good is your club? How can it be better? How can it better serve your community?

[Achieving Club Excellence](#) is about providing a meaningful and fulfilling member experience. By providing a positive club experience and educating and inspiring members, you ensure your club's vitality and strength. Creating an excellent club experience is everyone's responsibility, so have all the members in your club use the [Club Excellence Tool](#) to assess the health of your club. Review and discuss the findings with club leaders and members. Determine where there is room for improvement and make recommendations on what changes should be made to keep members coming back.

The other key component of the assessment is measuring the value and impact of your club's service projects. Is the club's service meeting the needs of the community? Are there other needs that should be addressed? Are the current service projects still relevant? The club should do a [Community Analysis](#) to answer these questions. Use your findings to make recommendations for possible improvements to your club's service projects.

## Top-20 ways to retain members

1. Recognize members for their contributions regularly. Say thank you at meetings, in newsletters and on the Web site. Create many types of awards and take advantage of all opportunities to publicly thank volunteers.
2. Keep members informed. Offer a variety of communication links to the organization: meetings, newsletters, email, [Web sites](#), etc.
3. Create pairings of volunteers so that they can share the work. Pairings allow for seasoned volunteers to mentor the new members.
4. Educate members on the [mission and vision](#) of the organization. Make them feel a part of the purpose and accomplishments.
5. Welcome new members quickly and appropriately. Get them involved in activities as soon as possible.
6. Get the right volunteers in the right jobs. Match skill sets and interests with tasks that need to be done. Keep them motivated.
7. Listen to the members. Use their ideas to get things done. Build enthusiasm for the projects.
8. Give the members a "day off." Spend some time getting to know each other and having some fun. Take it easy.
9. Clearly define the expectation for leadership roles. Support leadership with adequate preparation, training and materials.
10. Get the members involved in planning and decision making. Allow everyone to take ownership of the successes.
11. Handle complaints quickly. Listen to the member and take corrective action. Let them know that you care.
12. Give the members something valuable to do. Make sure that the volunteers see the value in what they are tasked to do. Measure the success and recognize them for the effort.
13. Let people get to know each other. Have time at meetings and projects for them to interact socially and informally. Have name badges. Introduce new members to the group.
14. Ensure that all members are enjoying the benefits of membership: fun, fellowship, feeling of accomplishment, sense of making a difference.
15. Provide members with [visible reminders](#) of their membership: lapel pins, name badges, clothing, screensavers, mouse pads, decals, bumper stickers, etc.
16. Conduct thoughtful, thorough exit interviews to identify problems and take corrective action.
17. Offer [different types](#) or levels of membership. Allow members to seek their own comfort level of activity.
18. Avoid burnout by giving them a break from activity. Allow members to take a leave of absence when they need one.
19. Give them a reason to show up! Ask them to participate in the project. Give them a job. Make them a part of the program, meeting or project.
20. Make it fun! Create a friendly environment. Have greeters. Share stories.

## Spotlight on...

### Prospect points...How to create a prospect list

Prospecting is the foundation for building a database, especially a database that will be used to disseminate information or, in our case, reach prospective club members.

Prospect lists can be bought from sources in almost any industry, but remember: No mailing list is perfect! Lists that Kiwanis International has secured for clubs to use in new-club building and membership growth campaigns have taught us a number of very important points. **First**, at a cost of around 10 cents per name, they are expensive in relationship to results. **Second**, the contact information is generally not up to date on a purchased list. **And last**, and maybe most important, acquiring a list gives a sense of approval to stop visiting prospective members and just send out a blind letter of invitation to a future meeting. This, as we all know, never receives a favorable response and, therefore, the project grinds to a halt with the starting of the negative spiral down to the inevitable, "We tried it and it can't be done."

#### Prospecting by personal visitation

Since most people are at their place of work during the day, this is where we need to contact them, in most cases. So the base of a good list is best formed from [chamber of commerce](#) memberships, trade associations or, city directories. Make sure to have the physical street address, not just a Post Office Box, and a Postal Code. Use a contact name as well—blind letters are never well received.

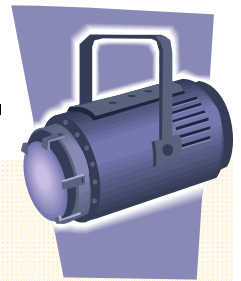
Have your sponsoring club and other clubs close to the new club site review the list for people they know. Get their approval to use their name as a referral, if they know a prospect. You will immediately gain the prospect's respect when referred. Better yet, have the referrer make the call with you. Beware of holding companies and blind corporations. Contact the local Rotary, Lions, etc. and have them remove from your prospect list the names of people who are members of their organization. It will prevent wasting time calling on them and it is a professional courtesy.

Of course the best prospect list is made up of the people you and your team members know. Starting with your own contact list and that of other friends is best. If the new club site is unfamiliar to you, then here are some suggestions that might aid in building a strong set of prospective members.

1. Local chamber of commerce
2. Dignitaries you met on the site survey
3. City, township, county government officials
4. Water hook-up listings
5. Business license applicants and new business listings
6. Other public information lists
7. Trade membership lists
8. PTAs and PTOs of area schools
9. Churches and other cooperative non-profits
10. Directories (build your prospect list organized by job classification)

#### Special focus prospecting

Clubs with a special focus need some varied approaches to building a group of prospects. If your focus is the senior population, you might spend more time on lists from churches, senior activity centers or communities with age restrictions over 55. However, don't rule out the more traditional methods previously mentioned.



Young Professional market prospects may come from a [Key Club](#) or [Circle K International](#) arena, and using colleges as part of your prospecting is very important. Using sites like [My Space](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#) are a great avenue to build prospect contact for a younger demographic.

Try these methods of reaching this group:

- ⇒ **Build a Web site**  
[BlogSpot](#) and others will let you build a [Web site](#) or blog for free. This is the place to send prospects to learn more about the club you are proposing and to communicate with you and others. Check out the use of [RSS](#)—it could save you time.
- ⇒ **Network**  
By spreading your message you will find new friends that can help you attain your goal.
- ⇒ **Try something new**  
What was hot last Christmas is old by tax refund time.
- ⇒ **Using the prospect list**  
Managing the list is very important as well. Envelopes, prospecting cards, etc., will make your personal visitation job much more enjoyable and productive so make sure you have a team member who is familiar with database management.
- ⇒ **Create a database**  
With your prospect list, perform a mail-merge using your recruiting letter. Making each letter personalized with the prospect's name and address is a nice touch. A blind lead on a letter (i.e., Dear Chamber member) is not very effective.
- ⇒ **Produce a master list**  
Record recruiting information (i.e., which recruiting team was assigned to which name, when to call back). It is a must with any kind of prospecting method.
- ⇒ **Produce a set of address labels**  
Create the actual prospect cards and place the labels on 3 x 5 cards so detailed notes can be made about each prospect when contacted. Comments like "Not in, call back later." "Not interested." "Left application. Pick up check and application Tuesday." will help the team leader reassign prospects for follow-up or remove them from the master list.

Using these simple steps will produce a fun and successful project.

