

## Increase Membership with the Pennsylvania Plan.

I have told many people thru the month that I would distribute a copy of the "Pennsylvania Plan". It is a proven way to increase membership. So here it is.....

Overcoming the challenges of membership recruitment has been found to be difficult for individual Lions clubs to the point that many have asked for a step by step process for recruiting members. The Pennsylvania Plan is such a process. It has been successful in the past, is currently successful and can be successful in the future.

1. The club should appoint a strong membership chairperson and a minimum of 2 Lions to serve on the clubs membership Committee.
2. The club chooses a time period for its special membership recruitment program. The time should not exceed 60 days.
3. Once the time period has been set, the club should concentrate on the membership program. At the club's first planning meeting, the chairperson distributes the prospect list sheets. He / she then takes one category at a time on the prospect list sheet and asks each lion to put down as many names of prospects as they can think of for that category. Prospect list is church, work, clubs, neighborhoods, golfers, sports team coaches, teachers, doctors, lawyers, people from restaurants, Welcome Wagon lists, even a telephone book, and especially new members of the community. The chairperson emphasizes that by listing a name does not mean that club member will necessarily be the recruiter of that prospect.

The Chairperson reemphasizes that this is just the development of a potential prospect list. If this is done in each of the categories, and done well, the club should have names of many future Lions. The chairperson reminds the Lions not to eliminate any prospective names because they think the person won't join. Other members may have more influence.

4. At this point the chairperson gathers the prospect list sheets, eliminates duplicates, puts the names in alphabetical order on a master list and has copies made for the next meeting, so that every Lion has a copy of the list.
5. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> planning meeting of the club, the master prospect list is distributed, by the chairperson, so that the entire club may review the list of names submitted. The membership can exercise its right to accept the list or reject any of the names **before** they are ever approached. Once this process is finished, the chairperson starts down the list of names trying to find out who will take that particular name to contact and attempt to recruit that prospect as a Lion. The very important item to remember is that names are never assigned to the club members. The chairperson asks that the club member who believes that he has the best shot at recruiting the prospect is the one to take the name. Unless you have an exceptional Lion, it is recommended that individual club members take no more than five prospects.

If after all names have been reviewed and there are names remaining, these names can be kept for future membership consideration, throughout the year. Do not try to get rid of names just to get rid of them.

Also at this meeting the club members will decide what type of special membership meeting they will have. Membership Social, Special Club meeting, Friendship Day, Wine and cheese, etc... The club should set a date, time, and place for this special membership meeting, develop an agenda and determine presenters. Presenters should get a small Bio of the prospective member, no more than 5 or 6 facts.

6. The chairman prepares a letter inviting the prospects to the special meeting and presents copies to the club members at the 3<sup>rd</sup> planning meeting. He / she also includes copies of the agenda and club brochure. The chairperson emphasizes that the Lion who will contact the prospect and that the letter should be followed up by a personal phone call within 7 days of the mailing. The contact Lion should encourage a positive response from the prospect and even offer to bring the prospective member to the special membership meeting. The contact Lion should not try to sell Lionism.

7. The 4<sup>th</sup> planning meeting of the club is report night. The membership reviews the original list of prospects one at a time and asks the contact Lion the results of their contact. At the conclusion of this process, the club prepares for the special meeting by reviewing presentations, meal or snacks and how to make prospects welcome and comfortable.
8. Sometime during the special meeting applications should be given to the prospects and the prospects should be invited to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the club.
9. The next regular membership meeting should be a well planned event. There should be a organized opening, an active ( but not overzealous) Tail twister, lots of fun, a brief discussion of club activities a very spirited presentation by a Lion that can motivate the prospects into the spirit of Lionism. (longwinded can equal boring).
10. Hold an impressive ceremony. Induction night should be well organized procedural event with the spirit of Lionism. All of the necessary supplies should be available, i.e. new membership kits, universal Lions emblems, membership certificates signed by the president and sponsor. Whatever induction procedure the club desires can be used.

Following these ten steps can help a club renew itself by gaining new members to continue the work and traditions of Lionism.

This is a tried and true plan, it does work. I was speaking to a friend of mine who is a Personal Director for Prudential Life Ins and he said that they have used this type of plan to recruit employees for many years.

If I can assist you in any way my contact info is in the District Directory...

Stay safe and take care of one another, God Bless

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Governor Joe Skinner