

20 TIPS FOR BOLSTERING MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

(information prepared by National Grange)

1. Send a thank you note for joining or volunteering. This could be a physical card or an e-mail.
2. Give an incentive, such as a free gift, to members who renew their membership by a certain date.
3. Communicate Grange successes to members regularly.
4. When sending out membership renewal notices, provide a recap of the activities and events of the past year and tell how membership benefitted them this year.
5. Send a special certificate of thanks to members who renew for the first-time. Market research on organizations shows the first two years produce the most drops. Focus hard on the first renewal.
6. Develop a written plan. In this plan include goals such as retention rate, % of drops that were first year members, activities to be undertaken, resources available to help, etc.
7. Do a survey of important questions and issues as they arise. Ask members what projects/activities/events they would like to see the Grange host and how they can commit to helping the Grange.
8. Establish a member-mentoring plan. When someone joins your Grange, assign them to a current member(s) who will be a welcoming and friendly face for the new member when they come to their second meeting. Have the mentor explain the responsibilities and obligations of Grange membership, the ritual and traditions of the Grange and the structure of our organization. By doing this, a new member will be fully versed in the Grange structure, history and traditions as they begin their Grange journey.
9. Then looking to retain members, reach out to those who were formerly members and didn't renew their membership. Ask them why they didn't renew, tell what activities/projects your Grange is conducting and then ask them to rejoin your Grange.
10. Keep experienced members active through targeted involvement. It is important to keep both current and new members interested and involved. Keep the activities meaningful.
11. During the functions, suggest that officers look for new members and spend time with them. Have a special name tag for new members indicating their status.
12. When a new member joins, e-mail congratulations from the Master or Secretary that same day.
13. There are only two forms of currency that we can use to "pay" our members: Recognition and tradition!! Look for any opportunity to recognize any member's contribution. Draw upon the Grange's rich traditions to create a sense of being and inclusion.
14. Have new members serve as greeters during a meeting so they can get to know all the members.
15. Keep the FUN in fundraisers, community service activities and meetings to get members interested and involved. You can still accomplish your goals while keeping the process lively and fun.
16. Remember that the best time to retain members is BEFORE they show signs of dissatisfaction. Make sure members know you care about them. If they start missing

meetings or are becoming less involved in activities, give them a call to find out why before it becomes a chronic situation.

17. Encourage input from your members regarding your Grange's community activities. Ask new members for their ideas --- they may have some fresh, exciting thoughts, and asking for their input will show that you are interested in their opinions.
18. Involve new members in Grange activities quickly. Have them participate in an event as soon as they show an interest in your Grange. Ask them to co-chair a committee or coordinate a small activity in the early stages of their membership.
19. Don't let activities and fundraisers become stale. Make sure that your association's activities are still relevant for your community and your members. Periodically try something new.
20. Let members be involved at their comfort level and respect that level of involvement. Some members are comfortable jumping in feet first while others prefer to just come to meetings and test the waters for a while. Be sure to actively communicate with members to know what their comfortable level of participation is.