

How to get members to come along to meetings

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www.enablingchange.com.au

It's common for group members' initial enthusiasm to wane over time. There are three secrets to getting members to come back to meetings:

1) Have meetings about interesting, enjoyable, empowering subjects

If your meetings are enjoyable, welcoming and empowering, then people will want to come back. And they'll tell others about their experiences. Positive word-of-mouth is your most powerful marketing tool. The only way to make positive word-of-mouth happen is to actually have great meetings where people feel welcomed and listened to, where they laugh, where they feel part of a family, where they enjoy food together, and where they learn things that give them more control over their lives.

The acid test is: Would you come along if you weren't being paid to be there?

2) Give people plenty of notice (2-3 weeks)

Start by giving written notice. Use a number of different methods, for instance a flyer in shop windows, a notice in the local newspaper, and written letters/emails to members. Make sure there's at least 3 weeks advance notice. And give a reminder about a week before.

3) Ask them personally!

Unfortunately, most people are busy and easily distracted, so a written notice only works for the keenest members. Less committed (or more distracted) members need to be *personally* invited. It's the only sure fire way to get them along. A phone call is best. Tell them what's on and mention any important issues so they can be prepared. To be really sure, ring them another call a couple of days before the event and ask them to confirm whether they are coming.

P.S. Remember that no more than two months should pass without updates being sent to members, whether they attend meetings or not (and media stories don't count as updates!)

Useful resources

For ideas on making people feel acknowledged and rewarded, see **Peter Kenyon's 45 Ways to Recognise Volunteers**
www.bankofideas.com.au/Downloads/Social_Capital_Handout_4.pdf