

# How to Host a Successful Membership Drive

## Membership Matters!

Altrusa needs to always be thinking about recruiting new members. They are the future of the local clubs and the International organization. Being able to recruit new members will bring new energy and new ideas to your club. Recruiting new members shows the importance we place on Altrusa now and in the future.

Below are steps to help you “Host a Successful Membership Drive”. Use these as a guide and make it fun for everyone involved.

- 1) Establish a recruitment team (membership committee) and formulate a goal.  
Work together with the club and board to establish these goals:
  - What types of people do you need to help the club succeed? (Then determine how best to reach this audience.)
  - Who would complement the current membership?
  - Try to develop a member profile.
  - Why are you asking people to join?
  - Why do you need them?
  - What does the club need in the terms of skill set and talents to compliment the existing membership and future leadership of the club
  - How many new members can your club reasonably assimilate into the group?
  - Will you allow people to join at any time or only during designated recruitment periods?

Think back to when you first became involved. What attracted you? How were you recruited? If you weren't, how did you hear about the Altrusa? Why have you stayed involved?

Get everyone involved. Be Honest! There's strength in numbers.

- With more people in your club you can get new ideas.
- You will have more skills available to draw upon.

Do not start recruiting members until the club is clear about what members your club needs. Review the Clubs goals and plans for the next 1 – 5 years and discuss whom you should target to become members.

People join organizations for many reasons: they want to get involved, meet people, make new friends, explore interests, develop leadership skills and have fun. Clubs need new members because they bring new ideas and talents, in addition to replacing old members.

2) Decide your target audience. (Determine how best to reach this audience.)

- Keep in mind your member profile.
- What places do these prospective members most likely frequent?
- Do they have special interests?
- What kind of publicity would attract their attention?

But most of all, have your current members identify people they know who may want to get involved and personally invite them to attend a meeting. Word-of-mouth is the best and least expensive type of publicity that you can use.

Talk about your Club and tell people what you have to offer them. Tell them how Altrusa can benefit from someone like them. Let them know how their talents, skills and interests would help the organization.

Recruitment campaigns need to have a visual element as well. Have those members with "artistic talents" work on your posters, flyers, banners, etc. Be creative. Your publicity can be effective only if it's noticed. Sending special personalized invitations is nice, but it is a more expensive way to invite new members though it can also set Altrusa apart from other organizations

Once you have decided who your target members are, you have to discuss where you can find them. You have to know your area well and understand the people you are targeting.

Some ideas how to attain new members:

- Ask someone
- Bring a guest to meetings
- Advertise in newspapers & cable TV
- Letters or personal contact with local businesses
- Contact with Chamber of Commerce
- Place customized bookmarks in library books
- Check into placing pamphlets in doctors' offices, hospitals, cafeterias, libraries, etc
- Host an Open House
- Give membership chair one minute for recruitment focus at every meeting
- Invite family members to join
- Send letters to people in the news with an invitation to visit the club
- Honor outstanding community members with awards
- Build a club website or Facebook page
- Use group email to promote your club
- Have a reward program for those who bring in new members – make recruiting fun
- Invite the media to cover well known speakers
- Use word of mouth
- Network with coworkers, friends, and family
- Follow up with guests
- Lead by example—how many members have you recruited?

- Have members give talks at other organizations
- Look for members in ethnic groups not represented in your club
- Provide brochures for new employee packets in members' companies
- Ask the District for help
- Share your club experience with other community groups
- Participate in community events
- Publicize club successes, elections, events, in local newspapers
- Circulate the club newsletter widely
- Design a club brochure
- Form/join a speakers' bureau
- Wear your Altrusa pin (great way to open conversation about Altrusa)
- Send newsletter to guests
- When asked about your leadership skills & career success, tell them about your club
- Ask every member to submit 3 prospects to the membership chair
- Practice selling your club at Club meetings—have your one minute elevator speech ready
- Conduct a Membership Satisfaction Survey
- Consider bringing your boss to a club meeting
- Bring your co-workers to a club meeting
- Be sure your strategic plan has specific goals regarding membership. Remember membership is a year round priority.
- Display a thermometer showing progress towards club goal
- Develop a welcome letter from the president for all new members
- Recognize new members in newsletters
- Regularly check the Altrusa web site for ideas
- Invite spouses to social functions
- Ask recipients of Altrusa service or donations to speak for Altrusa

Remember to keep your new member kits available and handy. Don't forget to send club members to district conference and attend the membership workshop. Most of all make sure that prospective members feel important and welcome.

- 3) Determine the venue and budget required.
- 4) Set a deadline for when you want to achieve your goals and target numbers.
- 5) Set a timeline of tasks. Be sure to assign specific responsibilities for each committee member with completion dates.
- 6) Be sure to include specifics on member retention along with ideas for inviting previous members to renew.
- 7) Consider the type of event that will best meet the interest of your target audience (Consider recruiting members at an established Altrusa event, cookout, tea, wine and cheese party etc...). Pick strategies and methods that fit within the individual strengths of your members.
- 5) Be sure that the event utilizes the diversity and talent of the members.
- 6) Make use of available resources. (Membership brochures, sample yearbooks, dues information, scrapbooks of club events, sample newsletters.)
- 7) Share the value of membership in Altrusa. Guests need to see the value of becoming a member in Altrusa. What's in it for me?
- 8) Utilize the club's membership recruitment and retention plan. Be sure to schedule recruitment and retention plan activities throughout the year. Use your strategic plan to assist with

this. Be sure your goals are clear and your strategic plan is up to date. Assign different members to be in charge of various events throughout the year.

- 9) Continually evaluate and adjust your plan accordingly. Feedback from team members, newly recruited members and the club are essential. The feedback can come from formal surveys and casual conversation. Feedback is important to keep the membership drive fresh and useful.

New member involvement is essential, it is equally important to orient them to your Altrusa Club's goals and objectives, organizational structure, rules and norms. This demystifies the club and helps the members feel more comfortable with the club and understand its processes. Proper orientation leads to a better understanding, more commitment and less frustration among the new members.

After you've successfully completed your recruitment and orientation, spend time getting to know your membership and let them get to know you too. Don't forget your old members since, without them, you wouldn't have had a group for your new members to join.

Talk to all new members about their skills, interests and previous experiences. Once you have this information, it will be easy to get them involved in your club's projects. To be sure that their club experience is a positive one, assign new members tasks that are well within their skill level and that they can successfully accomplish.

Finally, allow your new members time to get involved and feel comfortable with the group. After a few months, have them participate in a group evaluation process. Go over your organizational goals and objectives and look at your plans for the future. Ask for their feedback and input. It is a known fact that people are more committed and motivated if they feel that they have a stake in what's going on. Have them help to shape the Clubs future.

Above all, **have fun together**. Make time to socialize and celebrate your achievements. If all you do as a group is work, it will become a burden to participate and your members will quickly lose interest.