



Chapter Growth Plan

Below is a game plan for growing a Chapter. Please note, however, that it is “A” game plan and not “The” game plan. Feel free to supplement it with your ideas.

Step 1: Goals. Work with the Chapter to establish realistic and definite goals for growing the Chapter. Goals that are unobtainable are useless. When the goal is out of reach, members give up hope and do not even try. Similarly, if the goal is too easily obtainable, the Chapter will not utilize the full potential. As a hint, large Chapters like Westerville, Scioto and Polaris got that way by consistently adding only one to two members per month and retaining existing members by generating referrals.

Step 2: Target List. Work with the Chapter to identify the professional categories the Chapter seeks to add to itself. Anybody is not the answer. Put together a list of five or six professional categories that would best serve the existing members.

Step 3: Recruiting. There are endless ways to recruit members. Although cold calling and mass mailing can be useful, there are more effective methods. Remember this is a networking organization. Therefore the best means of growing it is through networking. Here are some ideas: (1) Network with members of other Chapters (i.e., if you are looking for an attorney, contact attorneys in other Chapters and see who they might know). (2) Another approach is to do a mailing to individuals that members in the Chapter know.

Step 4: Best Foot Forward. Before guests visit your Chapter, have a serious discussion as to how they will be treated. The most important things are to make your guests feel welcome and demonstrate to them that you have to offer a structured, productive environment (i.e., referrals or a serious discussion as to how you can help one another). As a hint, treat prospective members as you would prospective clients.

Step 5: Follow Up. Many guests do not get involved because they are unclear on something, or else they think they need to be invited back. Therefore, be sure after guests visit that you and/or someone else contacts them to invite them back or address any concerns. Again, treat prospective members as you would a prospective client.