

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS

## Recruitment Tip: Are you Listening?

While recruiting members, listen carefully for one (or more) clues as to what potential members might be looking for from their membership. Then you can emphasize what your club can offer to meet their needs.

Members and potential members' commitments are strengthened when they understand the benefits of their volunteerism to others and to themselves. By tailoring your approach, you will make members comfortable with working with you toward the Soroptimist mission.

- Keep an ear tuned to gain an understanding of specific issues that are important to potential members
- Promote opportunities to utilize or develop skills/talents of potential members
- Encourage dialogue that tunes into the needs of the women and girls we serve, captures their enthusiasm and promotes the opportunity to "pay it forward"

Mastering the skill of really listening involves finding something in what is being said that can be used to help generate a meaningful dialogue. The more face-to-face, ear-to-ear listening we do, members and prospects learn you care about their input and ideas. By identifying what talents or interests members/prospects have, what they can and like to do, you can identify ways for them to become involved that match their expectations.

Focusing on members reasons for joining and ensuring that their expectations are met will not only help with recruitment and retention, but will also show through in the quality of your club's work. Everyone wants to feel important, needed, respected, and appreciated. The secret to recruiting prospects as well as retaining members is to know their talents, their areas of expertise, to assist them to see how they fit in with those talents, and how they can contribute in an important and meaningful way.

Once new members are onboard, relationship building becomes even more important. Not exactly sure how or where to begin? Start by asking. How about sending a short "How Are We Doing?" email or note to new members after a specified period of time—three or six months? This is a great way to find out if your club is meeting members' expectations early on and to identify strengths, weaknesses, and establish priorities.

Then be prepared to listen—really listen and take action to make improvements!