

# +1 Club Planning Guide

*2020 Edition*

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## Introduction

### ***Is your club a +1 Quota Club—a club that achieves a net gain of at least one member per year?***

Welcome to Quota's +1 Club Planning Guide—a tool filled with advice that CAN help your club gain more members than you lose each year—starting now!

We've noticed a trend in Quota that—with your club's help—we can greatly reduce: *We are losing well over two-thirds of the members we recruit within the first five years after we invite them to join.*

*What can we do to change this dynamic in every club around the world? How can we better encourage lifelong membership from the start?* We asked some Quota experts these questions—450 members, leaders, and past leaders attending Convention 2006 in Gold Coast, Australia—and now we are pleased to share their best advice with you. Representatives from every Quota district and area were in attendance at this important meeting, and their voices and suggestions are contained in this special planning guide created just for you and your Quota club.

Follow their advice, use suggested resources and tips, and we bet that within one year your club will be a +1 club too. This guide is for EVERY club! If your club is already gaining 1 new member a year, this advice will ensure your membership growth year after year after year! And if your club isn't there yet, with this guide, it's a reachable goal!

### ***So, why, you may ask, do our recruits leave?***

We asked our Quota experts this very question! In small groups they discussed and recorded what they had observed and experienced in their own clubs. Three hundred fifty seven responses later, here is what we learned:

- **71% of the reasons new members leave that were cited related to the quality of a recruit's membership experience.** The experience didn't match what they were expecting; they were engaged in conflicts with other club members; their commitment was inconsistent; and they did not receive sufficient training and support from fellow club members and leaders.
- **20% of the reasons new members leave that were cited were due to circumstances outside the club experience** – recruits relocated; other family commitments intervened; and circumstances changed.
- **9% of the reasons new members leave that were cited were due to an inability or unwillingness on the part of the recruit to pay the required dues and fees.**

### ***How can we encourage our recruits to stay?***

We asked our Quota experts this question, too, and what we learned we are sharing with you in this planning guide. To learn more about how this guide—and the advice our Quota experts shared with us—is organized and can help you and your club, turn to the next page, Getting Started.

## Getting Started

This guide organizes membership development and growth advice submitted by your fellow Quotarians according to three steps that our Quota experts report will help your club operate more effectively, improve your recruitment success, and encourage lifelong membership.

### **STEP ONE: Polish and Shine Your Club...Page 4**

Getting your Quota house in order is the first step in encouraging lifelong membership with longtime Quotarians AND recruits. This chapter provides suggestions from members on ways to polish and shine your club. Take a look at the faces of your members at your next club meeting: Do they look like they are enjoying their Quota experience? Are they smiling? Are they happy? If not, this chapter—which contains some great fellowship ideas and more—is for you!

### **STEP TWO: Plan to Expand...Page 6**

As you polish and shine your club, think about recruitment! Members won't join if you don't ask! This section contains great advice from your fellow Quotarians from planning your strategy to connecting your new club members from the start.

### **STEP THREE: Keep Your Quota Members Connected...Page 9**

The final step in your mission to become a +1 club is to ensure the satisfaction of all members year after year after year. Quota experts share their suggestions for ensuring a quality experience for new and longtime members alike!

In addition to advice from your fellow Quotarians, this guide includes “Q-TIPS”—helpful tips from Quota on where to go for more information, assistance, or resources. It is highly recommended that you use this guide in collaboration with Quota's Club Success Guide. A listing of helpful resources and how to obtain them is located on page 12.

### ***How to Use this Guide***

Take a look at your club's membership numbers...

- If your club is growing each year, you're doing great! You're excelling, but you want to continue doing so! Take a look at the guide and see how you can continue to keep your membership strong. You will learn something new that will help you improve!
- If your club membership numbers are about even from year to year, you would benefit from a membership tune up. The guide can give you great advice for improving areas in which you are experiencing some difficulties. Are you experiencing some conflict in your club? Are you having difficulty finding recruits who want the membership experience your club offers? Do you want to add more service or fellowship or fun? This guide can get you started!
- If your club has been steadily losing members, it's time for a membership overhaul. This guide, along with our Club Success Guide, will turn your club and membership around—guaranteed! Use advice contained in this guide as a starting point for a brainstorming session or strategic retreat in your own club. And make the rebuilding of your club your major goal for the year!

## **Step One: Polish and Shine Your Club**

As one group of our Quota experts told us, “A happy club attracts new members.” Getting your Quota home in order is the first step in encouraging lifelong membership with longtime Quotarians AND new recruits. Every club has its own special personality, and the recruits you want to invite are people who want the Quota experience your club offers. Here are suggestions from your fellow members on ways to polish and shine your club.

### ***Assess Your Success***

- Look at how your club is operating.
- Have a “member review” evaluation.
- Do a “Health Check” of club – fake doctor, nurses; give your club a “health” check up.
- Review club bylaws; drop unnecessary requirements. Adjust as needed.

Q-TIP: Even thriving clubs can use a “tune up” from time to time. Use Quota’s “Three-Step Membership Program” to revitalize your club. Find this program on page 7 of Quota’s Club Success Guide.

### ***Bring Your Meetings to Order!***

- Set meeting dates in concrete and abide by them.
- Plan quick, interesting business meetings and plenty of time for social interaction. Keep relevant.
- Keep programs well-planned and interesting. Offer exciting programs.
- Depending on size, have one business and one social meeting monthly to promote camaraderie.
- Use committee reports to shorten meetings (come with recommendations).
- Modify meeting procedure – utilize the internet for correspondence. Make less formal.
- Hold meetings at a time convenient for members.
- Meetings procedure education. Don’t let meetings get sloppy. Maintain standards. Be prepared.
- One month hold a home meeting; next month eat out. Meet first, meal afterwards.
- Start every meeting with a “thought” (inspiration). Every meeting discuss a Quota project.

### ***Improve Club Operations***

- Have new president assign chair for each committee, then send around sign up sheet.
- Create better understanding of the roles in Quota by creating co-directors or committees.
- Have more FUN fund-raising. Vary the activities.
- Establish a service project. DO service projects.

Q-TIP: Is your club looking for new service and fund-raising ideas? Other sources for great ideas on [www.quota.org](http://www.quota.org) include: Quota Cares Month winning projects and the archived editions of The Quotarian magazine & World Service e-Zine, both found on the History & Archives page of our website.

### ***Remember Fellowship and Fun!***

- Introduce “greeter” system. Have a different set of twins (buddies, mentor/new member) stand at the door to greet members each month.
- Mix up members at club meetings. Have random seating arrangements. Assign name cards/table seating to avoid cliques and provide discussion topic to encourage interaction and/or assign one minute to learn something new about person next to you.
- “Getting to know you” section at meeting. New and long standing members alternate.
- Mix members at meetings – by birthdays, year they’ve joined, etc. They will mix and talk to find out what the order is (use their middle name – alphabetical order).
- Plan interesting social activities. Have a “getting to know you” afternoon/evening. Clubs should have social coffee mornings/evening drinks outside meetings to develop a greater bond between members. This is a way of becoming more aware of each other’s problems and family situations.
- Make meetings fun! Got to have FUN (can be solely fun, or service with fun). Some suggestions:
  - Soup and slippers night (in winter), also thongs (feet) and tiara’s night.
  - “Blue” night – wear blue, have blue food, (beat the winter blues)...no blue moods!
  - If you meet twice a month...when there is a FIFTH week in the month, organize a big, fun night. Make it special!
  - Split members: deck of cards, find your match and sit with them.
  - Obtain catalogue of ladies underwear. Cut up bras and pants sets – find your match or “bosom buddies.” Or, cut the bra in half – find your other half, ask five things of your “other half.”
  - Pin a piece of paper on everyone’s back and have every member go past and write an anonymous positive comment about that person...everyone has a piece of paper behind them; feels fantastic afterwards. We learn how fantastic we all are!!!
  - Icebreaker – take a handful of M&Ms – if you have three, tell a friend three things about yourself; if you have seven, you tell seven things, etc.
  - Tell ‘secret’ things about yourself. President (who finds out the secret things about each member) asks members at a meeting: Who is the pilot here? Who sang at the opera house? Etc.
  - Life story of each member – baby photos – collage of your life (i.e. gardening) and members guess who the member is.
  - Share the story behind your favorite piece of jewelry – retreat day, craft days, movies.
  - Secret friend – do something nice all year – rotate the friend each year.

Q-TIP: Become inspired and get great fellowship and fun ideas from other Quota clubs around the world via the [Quota International Facebook page](#) (which will be continued after the official dissolution of Quota International, thanks to the generosity of Quotarian volunteers).

### ***Invest in Club Leader Success***

- Provide good training of leaders. Keep doing/expand leadership development so clubs have strong leaders. President must prepare new leaders to take over.
- Use mentors to help train members to become leaders/directors.

Q-TIP: The Club President’s Guide to Quota and the Club Success Guide are both available online. Also available: Club President’s Management Guide, the Club Treasurer’s Administrative Guide, and the Club Secretary’s Administrative Guide. Check out the Club Leader Resources page on [www.quota.org](http://www.quota.org) for more.

## Step Two: Plan to Expand

New members will join your club only if you ask! This chapter contains great advice from your fellow Quotarians from planning your strategy to connecting your new club members from the start. Remember...the secret to recruitment success is inviting someone you like to join, someone who seeks the unique combination of fellowship and service your club offers. Your investment of time up front—with careful recruitment, in-depth orientation, and taking time to nurture new member connections after the initiation ceremony ends—will pay off with happier members who remain affiliated for years to come.

### ***Create Your Strategy***

- Talk to your members about recruitment strategy and club service needs (volunteer needs).
- Encourage diversity of members.
- Plan better screening of potential members.

Q-TIP: Quota's "Formula for Recruitment Success" is a great starting point for planning your club's recruitment events and connecting new members to your club from the start. The program—originally created and successfully used by Quota of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, U.S.A. and a winner of Quota's Excellence Award—works because it addresses recruitment and retention of new members at the same time. See page 17 of Quota's Club Success Guide.

### ***Raise Awareness***

- Create a club branding program—have a brochure and materials ready to promote your club.
- Make cards for yourself as a Quota member, club president, etc.
- Community advertising. Plan publicity to make communities aware of Quota and your club.
- Develop an introductory leaflet, "What is Quota?" Use to open discussion and take away to read.
- Obtain publicity in paper – whether it's a service project or plain fun.
- Wear your Quota club badge more.
- Do good publicity so that people want to be part of your group, because it does great things.

Q-TIP: Quota's website, [www.quota.org](http://www.quota.org) offers a wealth of publicity assistance including a Quota logos, free videos, PSA's, a Publicity Kit, and more

### ***Connect with Potential Recruits***

- Recruit new members at specific events.
- Reach out to former members who leave for special reasons and invite them back at the right time.
- Campaign/seek younger members.
- Have a meeting and ask everyone to bring a guest.

### ***Educate, Educate, Educate***

- Make sure you recruit someone who is interested in the mission. Ask what new people would like to know and what they want out of belonging to a service club. Assess whether a possible new member is looking for your club's type of service work.
- Target people who understand and accept the financial responsibilities of membership.
- Give more information up front before joining including: What are the "costs" and "values" of joining Quota. Introduce possible new members to club activities, philosophy. Clearly outline the requirements of the organization. Have fun but do explain the finer points of their commitment to the objects of Quota. Be aware of what the club expects of them and what they can give to the club. Explain historical aspect of Quota.
- Invite prospects to more meetings before joining, give more scrutiny of ability of new member by sponsor; assess how committed they are. Take new or prospective member to functions to experience Quota fellowship and friendship. Potential members need to be supported, nurtured, and educated.
- Provide a clear, written source or membership packet. Information pamphlet.

### ***Welcome and Encourage New Members***

- Be welcoming. Make sure new members feel welcome. Offer friendship!
- Challenge members to invite a new member to lunch; get to know them.
- Suggest to long standing members to make sure they greet a new member and find out one thing about them. Send each new member a "welcome" card from the members.
- Make the new young members feel good, included.
- Be a friend to them and make them a friend.
- Encourage new members—listen to their ideas. Acknowledge these ideas. Remember that each individual will be different and will be able to give different levels of commitment. Try their ideas and help them to succeed.
- Ask them if they are getting anything out of Quota. Get feedback from new members – follow up contact.
- Acknowledge accomplishments of a new member.
- Profile new members.

### ***Train and Mentor Recruits***

- Form a committee to help new members become informed. President active in forming committee.
- New member orientation course – monthly course with completion certificate learning about the Heart of Quota with homework modules on information found on [www.quota.org](http://www.quota.org), officer positions, etc. Orient in all aspects of club, etc.
- New member orientation by veteran member. Allocate a member to explain structure, bylaws and keep new members informed. Tell new members the basics – website, structure, acronyms.
- Make new member orientation a separate occasion, maybe lunch.
- Incorporate a mentoring program. Mentor, mentor, mentor – allocate a different one each year. Must follow through! Have buddy, senior partner, and/or twin so that new member is guided and taken care of. New members should be assigned to a more experienced Quotarian—sit with them at all functions to involve the new member. Do a "twin check" at each meeting! Have a sponsor (initial friend and supporter) and a twin (to broaden outlook).
- Ask the new member if they have interest in a particular job (don't tell them to do it).
- Train mentors specifically how to "Ya Ya" (godmother – Curacao) a recruit. Educate mentors; help them become "nurturers." Instead of being a "teller," encourage them to be a "listener" and ask questions of the new recruit.

### ***Involve Recruits from the Start***

- Create a survey/info sheet for new members: What expertise can they offer and what do they hope to get from Quota. Encourage profiling of members interests and areas they wish to contribute. Find out interests and get them involved. Match mentors by mutual interests of recruits.
- Involve them! To promote ownership of the club, give new members a small job or responsibility. Get new members involved immediately in projects. Give them a small job which needs reporting back. Make sure you include the new member in everything that is going on.
- Put new members on a busy committee and get them involved right away. Give a new member a position (e.g., a member of a committee); this way they learn what this committee does and hopefully become involved. Put new members of the same age on the same committee.
- Have a Christmas party for new members, their mentors, and the board of directors.
- Telephone the new members so they attend the meeting. Never let two meetings missed without contacting them. Have a review of new members (i.e., "New member's night") to discuss issues/problems in a forum and offer support.
- Send a "We Miss You" card signed by all present when they miss a meeting.



## Step Three: Keep Your Quota Members Connected

Caring about the quality of a member's experience must be the number one goal for every club that wants to ensure its future. You've created a welcoming home, invited new family members to join, and now your mission is to ensure the satisfaction of all club members year after year after year. **Quota experts share their suggestions for ensuring a quality membership experience for new and longtime members alike!**

### ***Monitor Membership Satisfaction***

- Survey members to find out how they feel about the club and why they left or why they stay. Do periodic questionnaires to find out how things are going.
- Make a suggestion box available for club members to submit ideas or concerns.
- Make sure club is operating the way that the members want. Hold discussion at club level.
- Look at reasons why members leave. Ask membership committee to do exit interview.
- Plan a 6-month follow-up night, answering questions at a member's home with mix of old/new mbrs.

Q-TIP: Quota is a personal experience and every member enjoys it in their own way. Help Quota members "make their Quota heart beat" by planning a strategic retreat or by conducting a membership survey. See page 8 of Quota's Club Success Guide.

Q-TIP: Spark membership interest in Quota locally. Quota offers a wealth of membership, fellowship, and service program ideas online at [www.quota.org](http://www.quota.org) and in the Club President's Guide to Quota. Also, connect internationally via the [Quota International Facebook page](#), which will continue activity after the dissolution of our international structure.

### ***Communicate***

- Maintain lines of communication. Explain things like SPAD, SPAM, etc.
- Keep all members informed of other members (illness, celebration in life, etc.).
- Share your resources/history of Quota. Club newsletter. Handbook of procedures. Pass along tribal knowledge.
- Bio sheet for every member so all know what each does. Enter into club newsletter.
- Call and remind members about events – keep in touch.
- Leader of the club needs to regularly follow up. Constant communication with each member either by mail or telephone call. One of committee members needs to carry on the communication to follow up.
- Introduce a buddy system to improve communication.
- Increase amount of orientation, increase the use of resources (email, text, phone), increase use of past officers.
- Keep members attuned to what the club is about. One person at each meeting shares why they joined.

Q-TIP: A club website is a great way to communicate with club members and your community. Publish photos and information about your club, maintain a press room, upload your latest club newsletter, and share information about your club's special service projects and awards. If needed, reach out to other clubs who have websites via the [Quota International Facebook page](#), for help establishing your own.

### ***Promote Participation***

- Invite children, grandchildren, nieces/nephews of members to come and do volunteer projects with the club members. This keeps the parents/grandparents/aunts/uncles involved as well as getting younger new members. Bring in a babysitter or include children.
- Put members to work and get them involved. Keep members involved in club activities; telephone them, etc. Involve members by giving a position or a job to do; change jobs. Make sure to include all members when asking for assistance. You never know until you ask. Ensure inclusion of all members whenever possible. If a member has too many commitments, promote Quota as the best commitment.
- Create an attendance reward program – pins at end of each year for 100% attendance. Get a freebie for illness or working. Offer an attendance make-up system. For frequent absences: Send cards, phone calls before and after meeting, give plan for leave of absence.
- Introduce a buddy system – buddy can perhaps pick up other member.
- Train people in public speaking to gain confidence. Introduce members gradually to speaking at meetings. Encourage time management training.
- Have members on committees so that they can see the club working and see what can be achieved.

### ***Recognize Success***

- Recognize club members. Recognize members' special talents – i.e., let a member who is a florist do an arrangement to show at the meeting and praise them. Focus on and recognize talents of members; cherish individuality. Make sure any member who achieves is congratulated.
- Celebrate the lives of members who have passed away and their contributions.
- Friendship bowl; give to someone who has done something special.

### ***Encourage and Support***

- Look around the room at the end of a function. If people aren't smiling and laughing, try a "Fellowship and Fun" activity at your next meeting. Happy members are an important goal.
- Club president must be aware of the outside pressures members have. All members should be much more aware of the signs of "overload."
- Ensure mentoring/buddy program takes place. Reestablish a Caring Partner scheme and not only during meeting but at social occasions as well, for bonding. Make it clear that any time given is appreciated, with no definite expectations.
- Make sure all members feel that they truly belong in the club. Treat members like assets. Appreciate people's efforts. Tell members how important they are. Encourage all the time and acknowledge everything anyone does. Try to make all members feel important in the club – new members as well as veteran members. Encourage personal contact and getting to know members.
- Check up on members who are not coming to meeting and find out why. Send an email saying we miss you. Send cards to absent members. Use a placemat signed by all club members saying we care and are sorry we missed you.
- Appoint a hospitality committee who sends cards/flowers in the time of need. Special birthday cards program for members (from all members). Special gifts at meetings for those celebrating birthdays. Group who visits sick or shut-in members. Acknowledge "celebration" of "anniversary" members.

Q-TIP: Read one club's success story on the power of encouragement and learn about the plan they created—a plan that just might work in your club!—on page 6 of Quota's Club Success Guide.

### ***Offer Flexibility***

- Clubs should be flexible and supportive and help whether members think they need it or not.
- Provide flexibility, leave of absence when needed.
- For members moving away, offer member-at-large status.
- Employment status change: keep in contact with the person; send invitations to club activities.
- Make members not feel guilty when they can't join in; let them understand that it's family number one, work number two, and then Quota. Take into consideration family needs. Family comes first.
- In large clubs, members do not need to be active in every activity.
- For hearing problems – health problems: sit at front, provide hearing loop, offer leave of absence (maintain contact with minutes copied, president's newsletter, buddy system).

### ***Resolve Conflicts***

- For underlying dissatisfaction, the president has to deal with this. How she/he deals with it depends on the problem. Try and stop negative attitudes in the club.
- Mediation, negotiation, compromise. Address conflict before it gets out of hand. Have a conflict resolution committee. Address the "green monster" (jealousy). Make sure you put on the other person's "hat."
- Break up cliques. Avoid cliques. It's everyone's responsibility to be welcoming, friendly.
- Past officers need to step in and help with situations with advice, etc. Revitalize the past officers.
- Members unwilling to make changes with the times: talk about it. Organize Silver Q club for veteran members.
- Avoid competitiveness among members. Do nothing to dishonor anyone. Replace negativity with enthusiasm. Encourage members to adapt and accept change. Need to address problems and feel comfortable to bring issues to the floor.

Q-TIP: "Ask Quota: Answers to Common Questions" (page 23 of the Club Success Guide) contains answers to common sticky situations that occur in Quota clubs.

### ***Offer Financial Assistance***

- Clubs can find ways to subsidize dues and expenses for members. Collect dues more often, so amount seems less (easier for some to budget). Allow payment plans for dues – monthly/quarterly/bi-yearly, etc. Staggered dues payments if required.
- Get corporate sponsorship for a member from their company.
- Hold a raffle to offset dues; internal club function (for example, soup & slippers night – donation for soup and privilege to wear slippers).
- Develop possible fund to help with financial constraints.
- Use home hospitality to reduce catering costs for meals. Bistro meals instead of set meal.
- Lucky ticket for free meal

## Helpful Resources

The following documents are available on [www.quota.org](http://www.quota.org) for your club's use as needed. Take a moment to peruse this list to see if any of them address the needs of your club and its leaders.

### ***Club Success Guide***

This guide contains encouraging leadership tips for club presidents and membership strategies that can revitalize every club. Also includes recruitment tips, ways to plant strong Quota roots from the start, and solutions to common club conflicts.

### ***Quota Cares Month Planning Kit***

This kit gives helpful how-to's on building a successful Quota Cares Month project within your club and community. Successful Quota Cares month events strengthen recruitment, retention, fund-raising, service, and publicity efforts of clubs that choose to participate.

### ***Club Leader Resources Webpage***

This page of [www.quota.org](http://www.quota.org) is filled with resources to help club leaders with whatever their club needs.

### ***Club President Guide to Quota***

This handbook is filled with helpful information on recruitment, retention, fellowship, and service. If your club is looking for new programs to interest your club members, this is the source for you.

### ***Club Officer Manuals***

Club President's Management Guide; Club Treasurer's Administrative Guide; Club Secretary's Administrative Guide are all available to view or print on the Club Leader Resources page of [www.quota.org](http://www.quota.org).

### ***One-on-One Support***

One-on-one support is available through connecting with members and leaders of other Quota clubs around the world via the [Quota International Facebook page](#) (Don't worry! This page will be continued after the official dissolution of Quota International, thanks to the generosity of Quotarian volunteers).