

24 ways to improve your membership

For a book called "86 Ways To Get More Clients for my Consulting Business", I am looking for anecdotes of successful ways to get business. Please include the consultant's name, consulting specialty and link to a website where I can get a photo.

As we approached midnight of December 31, 1999, we were worried about Y2K and a new Dark Ages. Among the dire predictions for this technology disaster that was sure to ensue because programmers didn't distinguish between 1900 and 2000 were:

- All computers will cease to function
- 911 could cease operating
- Banks will fail and people will be using toilet paper as barter currency
- Elevators will stop working
- GPS satellites could fail, leaving people stranded
- Planes will fall out of the sky
- Prison doors will fling open, freeing violent criminals

Earlier that year, President Bill Clinton included this comment in his 1999 State of the Union address:

"We need every state and local government, every business, large and small, to work with us to make sure that [the] Y2K computer bug will be remembered as the last headache of the 20th century, not the first crisis of the 21st century."

Y2K caused a few blips but because of the preparation, little disruption.

Since then, technology has advanced well beyond the capabilities of most of us to understand how it works. However, we have to understand the results of those technologies and consider how life has changed for us to pursue two goals, more members or participants in our organizations and more participation by those members.

Some differences between then and now are: our 24/7 reliance on the internet for everything from family contacts to business negotiations; the decrease in public smoking; Blockbuster is gone, Amazon Prime is here; you probably invest more time and money in a restaurant than in a home-cooked meal; you have as much chance of disconnecting on a staycation as you do on a remote island vacation; and mass shootings are so frequent, we no longer think "It won't happen to me."

Also, you no longer use a fax machine or a rolodex. Instead, you have a smart business card and perhaps your own QR code. You're surprised to learn that there are still stores that develop film photography and will even print them for you.

Today's big technology is 5G. Briefly, 5G stands for fifth-generation cellular wireless network. It's a cloud-based network that connects people on mobile devices to the internet faster than previous networks. You don't need to know how it works, just that internet users will expect its speed and that your online presence will be even more vital.

People, your members, will probably consume even more online content on their computers, phones, and smart devices. If you and they are behind with online marketing, starting or increasing your online presence will be vital. If you haven't already, you should launch a website, start a company blog, and consider creating marketing videos aimed at existing and potential members.

Remember, when you face something new to be done and no one on your staff or your members can do it proficiently, hire what you can't do.

As we face the competing demands of work-at-home and work-at-the-office with 32 hours of work for 40 hours of pay, we have to focus on expanding our membership numbers and participation. Here are some detailed and lighthearted ideas that leverage the principles of attraction and information marketing, emphasizing the interconnectivity of these professions, even similarly disparate ones.

1. **The YouTube Yoda:** Start a YouTube channel where you showcase your expertise in short, humorous videos. As a speaker, use your oratory skills to captivate; as a consultant, share quick tips; coaches can offer motivational snippets, and trainers can demo mini-lessons. This cross-pollination of skills boosts your brand and makes you the go-to "Yoda" of your field.
2. **Blog Like a Boss:** Pen a blog that's so entertaining it could be stand-up comedy, yet so insightful it screams expertise. Each post should intertwine your speaking, consulting, coaching, or training experiences with life's absurdities. Think 'Seinfeld' meets Harvard Business Review.
3. **Meme Your Way to Fame:** Create and share witty memes related to your industry. A picture of a cat hanging from a tree with a caption about resilience? That's coaching gold. A meme about surviving a meeting that could have been an email? Speaker and consultant catnip!
4. **Podcast with Personality:** Launch a podcast where you interview people from different professions (real or comically fictional). Each episode can reveal insights into speaking, consulting, coaching, or training.
5. **The LinkedIn Lothario:** Use LinkedIn to connect and to charm. Post engaging stories, industry jokes, or puzzling scenarios that showcase your expertise. Let your profile be a tapestry of your professional personas - speaker, consultant, coach, trainer.
6. **Tweetable Treasures:** Create tweets that pack wisdom and humor in brief. Whether it's a quick tip from your latest speaking gig, a consulting anecdote, a coaching insight, or a training triumph, make it so share-worthy that it goes viral in the business community. If not Twitter/X, then use the newest work-related social media.

7. **The Quirky Quiz:** Develop an online quiz that's both amusing and informative, helping users determine what kind of professional help they need – a speaker, consultant, coach, or trainer. Each result also subtly pitches your services.
8. **The Irresistible Infographic:** Design infographics that are so visually appealing they're like the sirens of the sea for professionals. Each should distill complex concepts from your speaking, consulting, coaching, or training into digestible, delightful visuals.
9. **Emails That Entertain:** Craft an email newsletter that people actually want to read. Mix in industry insights with personal anecdotes, throw in a cartoon or two, and ensure each message resonates with your multi-faceted professional identity.
10. **The Networking Ninja:** Attend events (virtually or in-person) to network, and to entertain. Be the person who distributes the current version of a business card and leaves a lasting impression with a witty remark or a memorable anecdote. Your goal is to be remembered as the insightful and helpful professional everyone needs in their contact list.
11. **Go beyond/instead:** Everyone issues newsletters and memos. To help ensure your messages are read, communicate in other ways to differentiate yourself. Create a quiz, survey, poll, webinar, map, or game
12. **Attracting new members and retaining current members:** As you create your membership drive remember to ask/answer these questions: How will this message help the member do a better job? What are you giving to your members that they can't or don't get elsewhere? And what are you asking for in return? Time? Money? Is it a fair trade?
13. **Make them feel necessary and important.** Ask members and potentials their opinions and try to adapt their suggestions. Tell them what they want to know, not what you want to tell them. Gather new members who are the most acquainted with whatever is the newest technology or methodology to find or create programming that will bring other members up-to-date.
14. **Create fun and informative gatherings:** Whether real or virtual, offer information to be used at the office or away, perhaps as an interactive panel at your next conference. Remember, no matter how long you've been in the business, there's always something you can learn.
15. **Test your mailing list regularly:** Make sure it's current and relevant. Note when members have a career change (or title change). Keeping current means you're paying attention and being responsive. Keeping current saves you money and time and avoids wasting the recipients' time.
16. **Value time:** Think twice before issuing newsletters, memos, or other communications. You're interrupting the recipient's work time, once to stop what they were doing to concentrate on the new message and once to stop processing the message to return to the previous work.
17. **Show your appreciation with meaningful rewards:** If an organization or individual participates in an activity multiple times within a time period, reward with a public recognition, or a gift card, or, time off from work. Survey your members to know what they value.

18. **Why it is vital:** When your members are selling a service or product, remind them to define the customer's problem—too much clutter, too many phone numbers or passwords, tax-related papers are a jumble—and then why your product/service is the solution. "Why" is the most important question to answer.
19. **Give them a reason:** Acknowledge the question your existing and prospective members are asking is "why." Why should they want to join you? What problems do they have (known or not realized) that you can help them define and answer?
20. **Stress your positives:** whatever your solution is (environmentally sound, charitable support/donations, or diversified hiring), rather than your competitors' negatives. Make your new members pleased and proud that they're connected with you.
21. **Make pre-requests:** When you must have a meeting, distribute a note describing the issue at hand and request comments or suggestions before the meeting so other participants can consider them and add to the discussion. This can be more efficient than saving the meeting to discuss the issues.
22. **Less is more:** More is not necessarily better. A barrage of welcoming letters followed by sales pitches followed by more may be enough reason for people to unsubscribe and maybe even cancel membership.
23. **The AI revolution:** Artificial intelligence is here to stay. How does it affect your members and their members? Is it a threat or a way to ease their daily chores? What are its strong and weak points? As a starting point, AI isn't human and can't create human connections. When you have a writer (or other creative) in your circle, value their ability. Ask how they think they can be used if AI is handling drone work.
24. **Accessibility:** The scope is accessibility is ever-widening. Be sure people with neurodiversity issues, physical disabilities, gender, and age issues have their problems considered and addressed. A popular example is steps that incorporate a ramp. When the ramp is part of the initial design, people with accessibility issues can use it from day one. They can't if it's an afterthought. Here are some examples of stairs/ramps: [8 Amazing Examples of Ramps Blended Into Stairs » TwistedSifter](#)