# N.O.W. PROGRAM

# N.O.W. PLANNING GUIDE

# **Program Introduction**

Planning a **N.O.W.** event is no different from planning any other project. Planning and organizing are the keys to success. Involve as many club members as possible in your N.O.W. event so that each member has a sense of ownership.

Detailed in this guide are the steps to be taken to conduct a successful N.O.W. event. You must take these steps to insure success

# Hosting a N.O.W. event is as easy as 1-2-3, A-B-C

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# THE "I" METHOD

# IMAGINE

Imagine the outcome of your N.O.W. event Imagine the growth that you will achieve Imagine the excitement that your members will share Imagine the service to children that will result

# IGNITE

Ignite your club leadership with the same enthusiasm that you have. Convince them that this is a great program and that it will be successful.

# INVITE

The **N.O.W. PROGRAM** allows everyone to participate at each one's comfort level. Send invitations to prospective guests.

# INDUCT

Have a real special induction ceremony soon after the N.O.W. event. Induct each new member and present him/her with their new Optimist lapel pin.

# INITIATE

Conduct a "New Member Initiation" immediately to orient new members. Expose them to the 'culture' and the organization of their new club and give them an insight to the club's present and upcoming projects.

Hand out "Membership Interest Finder" forms and encourage the new members to indicate their areas of interest and service preference.

Provide Orientation and Mentoring to new members

# INVOLVE

Involve new members immediately. Ask them to serve on committees and work on projects. Always welcome their input. Recognize them at club meetings and allow them to lead in some areas.

# IMAGINE

Imagine the new friendships, new ideas, enthusiasm, personal growth, and opportunities to serve that will come from this event. Imagine how many more children's lives will be enhanced because a new Optimist member is on board

# **BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN KIDS...RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW**

# N.O.W. PROGRAM TIME LINE (Time Line for Success)

- 1. Follow the timeline below and dramatically increase your chances of successfully conducting a **N.O.W. Event**
- 2. Do not compromise the success of your **N.O.W. Event** by taking shortcuts.
- 3. Create passion

*Excitement creates passion and passion gets results!* Get your members excited about conducting a **N.O.W. Event.** There is no greater way to serve more children than by increasing the number of active, happy members in your club. Members join to support and uplift the children in your community. They will stay active if they are doing meaningful projects.

### PRE-PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Take a couple of weeks to pre-plan and prepare for the N.O.W Event activities Weeks 1 & 2

- **1.** Select committee members (3-4)
- 2. Select committee chair
- 3. Discuss possible N.O.W. Dinner dates and select one
- 4. Check on location availability and meal prices
- 5. Create a budget for the event
- 6. Print N.O.W. promotional forms to present to club members
- 7. Update and print club brochures
- 8. Order membership application forms and other necessary resources from OI
- **9.** Plan for name tags and table favours, and also door prizes for N.O.W. dinner guests
- **10.** Determine presenters for the event
- 11. Set the "New Member Induction" date for one week after the N.O.W. dinner
- 12. Plan 1 or 2 service projects to be conducted soon after the New Member Induction
- 13. Decide which dignitaries/district officials (if any) to invite to the N.O.W. dinner.

#### PRESENTATION TO CLUB

Generate Enthusiasm among your club members for the N.O.W. event. Week 3

Present the N.O.W. Dinner Program to club members. Get approval to make this the full program for that meeting.

- 1. Present the N.O.W. dinner date
  - **a.** Plan the dinner for the evening, regardless of the club's regular meeting time
- 2. Explain the details of the N.O.W. Program
- 3. Educate members on their role in the process
  - **a.** They nominate guests
  - **b.** The committee makes the calls
- 4. Distribute and explain the ABC prospective list handout (Appendix B)

- 5. Distribute and explain the importance of the **Sponsor Guest List** (Appendix C)
  - a. Ask them to provide at least five names and return their Sponsor Guest Lists to you by the next meeting.

6. Ensure that each member knows what is expected of them and at what time **Week 4** 

# 1. Collect Sponsor Guest Lists

- 2. Make individual contact with members to determine other potential guests
- 3. Select greeters and table hosts
- 4. Prepare and mail Invitations.

#### Week 5

- 1. Keep members excited by updating them on the progress of the event
- 2. Ask for more names to invite
- 3. Send letters to new invitees and call them with event date, location and time
  - a. Be sure the caller has great people skills ensuring a high-quality followup and positive message.
  - b. Be sure the Sponsor's Guest List includes personal information about the prospect, so you can build a relationship.
  - c. Include the Sponsor's name as you introduce yourself to the prospect.
  - d. Build your pool of prosects by asking the prospects for names of their friends/associates who might be interested.
- 4. Make final reminder calls to invited guests
- 5. Keep the sponsors and members excited. Let them know how the phone calls went.
- 6. Meet with greeters, table hosts and presenters to review their part on the agenda
- 7. Finalize arrangements at dinner location

#### N.O.W. DINNER EVENT

It is time to tell others how your Club "Brings Out The Best In Kids!"

#### Week 6

- 1. Keep the program (dinner) to no longer than two hours.
- 2. Have designated Greeters at the door to welcome guests, help them with name tags, introductions, and seating.
- 3. Have assigned table hosts at each table and be sure that everyone is introduced and feels welcome.
- 4. Follow the prepared agenda
  - a. Talk about club projects using presenters that were involved in particular projects and are passionate about their involvement and accomplishments
  - b. Give a broad based overview and use different presenters for each project
  - c. Keep presentations on club meetings brief (no more than two minutes)
  - d. Use an enthusiastic person to present "Why I am an Optimist." They must be able to connect in 2-3 minutes and make prospects feel that they want to be an Optimist too.
- 5. Allow for a Question and Answer Session
  - a. Assume that prospects want to join. Close the Sale!

- b. Have door prize drawings or dessert during this time.
- c. Collect applications and fees from those attending.
- d. Follow-up the very next day with guests that were invited but did not attend Invite them to attend your club's next regular meeting
- e. Send "Congratulations Letter" (Appendix F) to all new members
- f. Send a "**Thank You Letter**" (Appendix G) to all guests that did not join Invite them to attend your club's next regular meeting

#### FOLLOW-UP AND RETENTION

#### Week 7

- 1 Induct new members at next regular club meeting
- 2 Recognize sponsors for contributing to the growth in membership
- 3 Brief members on the two upcoming projects and seek their involvement

#### Week 8

#### **1** Involve new members and their sponsors in service projects!

- 2 Determine if another N.O.W. Event is needed for the administrative year and set date, if necessary.
- 3 Announce date to club members

# N.O.W. - THREE EASY STEPS (As Easy as 1. 2, 3)

There are three simple steps to planning a successful N.O.W. Event

- **1. Promote** start the excitement!
- 2. Invite
- 3. Dine (NOW Dinner)

#### **1. PROMOTE**

- A. Form the N.O.W. committee and appoint the chair (if not in already in place)
- B. Educate your members about the NOW Program.
- C. Share the committee's plan
- D. Explain the NOW Program as a "Packaged Recipe" for successful membership growth and the member's role in ensuring this success.
- E. Assure them of the success of the plan if their input and help is guaranteed
- F. Inform them that the committee will make all the calls to prospective members once nominated by them.

(This will eliminate the fear of rejection that some members have)

- G. Convince them of the importance of nominating high quality members...people like themselves that have an interest in serving their community and kids.
- H. Distribute the ABC List (Appendix B)and explain its use
- I. Go over this list every week with members as you discuss the upcoming NOW Dinner to ensure a great pool of prospects
- J. Show members the **invitation letter** (Appendix D) to be sent to their guests and assure them that your follow-up call will be friendly and tasteful
- K. Make personal requests to individual members. Privately ask for their help.
- L. Suggest particular ways in which they can help
  - a. Suggest at least five names
  - b. Think of couples that like doing things together
  - c. Think of singles that are looking for new contacts in life

# 2. INVITE

- A. Mail all invitations at the same time
- B. Build relationship with prospect
  - a. Follow up with phone calls to every prospect a few days after the mailing so the association with you can still be made.
  - b. Use someone that has great people skills and is comfortable using the telephone to make the follow up calls thus ensuring a high quality follow up and most importantly a positive message.
  - c. Ensure that member's **Sponsor Guest List** (Appendix C) includes personal information about the prospect so that the person calling can connect quickly with him/her.
  - d. Include the sponsor's name as you introduce yourself to the prospect
  - e. Increase the pool of prospects by asking the prospects for names of their friends/associates that might be interested
- C. Keep the sponsors excited. Let them know how the phone calls went
- D. Ask the sponsors for more names to invite

The invitation letters and effective follow up calls are crucial to ensuring that a high percentage of the prospects attend the N.O.W. Dinner.

#### 3. DINE (The N.O.W Dinner)

- A. Plan the dinner for the evening regardless of the club's regular meeting times
- B. Keep the program (dinner included) to no longer than two hours
- C. Have designated "Greeters" at the door to
  - a. Welcome guests
  - b. Help them with name tags, introductions, and seating arrangements
- D. Assign designated **"Table Hosts"** to each table. They will ensure that every one at the table
  - a. Is introduced and feels welcome
  - b. Has a club brochure
  - c. Has an application and help to have it filled out
- E. Follow the prepared **agenda** (Appendix E).
- F. Talk about **club projects** not Optimist International
  - a. Use presenters that were involved in the particular projects and are passionate about their involvement and accomplishments
  - b. Ensure that the presentations are no more than two minutes each
  - c. Make presentations on a variety of projects showing that we are broad based and that there is something for everyone
  - d. Use a different presenter for each project
- G. Ensure that the presentation on **club meetings** is brief, to the point (2 min.) and includes
  - a. Meeting time and place
  - b. Programs and social activities
  - c. Newsletter

#### H. Use a passionate, enthusiastic person to present "Why I am an Optimist"

- a. Must be genuine and sincere
- b. Must be able to connect with the prospects in 2-3 minutes and make them want to be Optimists too.
- I. Close the sale in the Questions and Answers session.
  - a. Be open for questions
  - b. Assume that they want to join
  - c. Encourage them to include, on their applications, the address to which they would like their magazines and newsletters mailed

#### d. Ask to collect their applications and checks.

- J. Keep prospects in attendance by giving **door prizes** (small gifts)
  - a. Make sure that each prospect "wins a door prize"
  - b. Use this time (while they wait for the prize) to help them get their applications filled out
  - c. Have key persons circulating that, in addition to the table host, can help them with questions regarding the application

#### **RIGHT AFTER THE EVENT**

#### **FOLLOW UP**

- 1 Make follow up calls with invited guests that were not at the dinner
- 2 Invite them to your next regular meeting
- 3 Send the "Congratulations Letter" (Appendix F) immediately
- 4 Invite the new members and their sponsors to the **New Member Induction Ceremony**
- 5 Remember to **recognize** the sponsors for their service and commitment to growth
- 6 Inform the newly inducted members and their sponsors about the club's **upcoming projects** and how they can participate
- 7 Get commitments

#### **INDUCTION & INVOLVEMENT TIPS**

#### (Ensure that your new member is happy and productive)

- 1 Induct the new members as soon as possible
- 2 Make the event special
- 3 Invite the Governor, Lt. Governor and District Membership Chair to be part of this special evening
- 4 Give each new member a packet of information about your club
  - a. Club meeting times and location
  - b. Club projects
  - c. Club Newsletter Zone and District information
- 5 Include a Membership Interest Finder form in the packet and encourage the members to indicate their areas of interest, expertise, and service preference.
- 6 Provide Orientation and Mentoring for New Members
- 7 Get them involved **NOW!** Remember they joined to help!
- 8 Welcome their input
- 9 Keep them informed via phone calls, emails, and newsletters if they were not able to attend a meeting.
- 10 Let them know they were missed!

#### **NEW MEMBER RETENTION TIPS**

#### Reflect...

- 1 Why did you join your Optimist club?
- #1 answer to serve children and make a difference
- 2 Why do remain a member of your Optimist club?
- #1 answer fellowship, to make new friends and have fun

#### New members join for the same reasons. They are looking for the same things.

Recruitment is not enough. We must follow up by inducting them in our club as soon as possible and involve them in our activities.

We must review our club meetings.

- Are they fun and interesting?
- Do you have a member of the month program?
- Are members asked to share their experiences and the things that they are thankful for?
- Do you recognize their achievements and those of their families?
- Do you have guest speakers that can add value to your meetings?

Today more than ever, if we expect people to invest their time in another meeting, we must insure that their investment of time is worth their while.

The key to successful membership recruitment and retention is to keep the current members happy and fulfilled with meaningful activities and meetings that are worthwhile. Happy members recruit new members!

# **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A** 

**Member Announcement** 

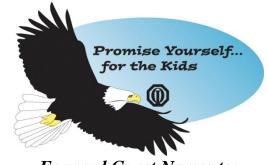
The \_\_\_\_\_Optimist Club

N.O.W. Dinner (New Optimists Welcome)

March 30, 2009

**Community Country Club** 629 W. Standard – Anywhere, OH 68253

> Social: 6:00 p.m. **Dinner: 6:30 P.M.**



Forward Guest Names to: 132-492-8641 Fax: 123-000-9000

THE \_\_\_\_\_OPTIMIST CLUB N.O.W. DINNER GUESTS DATE:\_\_\_\_\_

# **ABC** Optimist

Abstractors Academics Administrators Coaches Staff Teachers Accountants Acoustical Products Actuaries Adjusters Advertising Aerospace Aging Service Agriculture Air Conditioning Air Lines Air Traffic Controllers Alcohol Treatment Ambulance Services Antique Dealers Architects Armed Forces Asphalt Associations Athletics Attorneys **Auctioneers Automobiles** Body Work Dealers Painting Parts **Repair Shops** Awnings **Bakeries** Banking Barbers Batteries **Beauty Shops** Beer **Beverages** Bicycles Blue Printing Boats Bonds Bookkeeping Books **Bottlers** Bowling Boxes Boys Wear

Brake Service Breeders **Broadcasters** Brokers Brushes **Builders** Building Materials **Bus Lines Butchers** Cabinets Camping Candies Carpenters Carpets **Cash Registers** Castings Chairs Chemicals Child Care Chiropractors Churches City Officers Cleaners Clergy Clocks Clothing Coal Coffee Collection Agencies Colleges Communications Computers Consultants Contractors **County Officers** Credit **Dairy Products** Data Processing Decorators Deliverv Demolition Dental Laboratories Dentists Department Stores Designers Detective Agencies **Direct Mail** Doctors Doors

Draperies Druggists Dry Goods Duplicating Economists Editors Education Electric Companies Electrical Contractors Electronics Employment Agencies Energy Engineers Engines Excavating Export Factories Farm Sales Farmers Federal Offices Feed Fences Fertilizers Financing Fish Fixtures Flooring Florists Food Products Food Services Freight **Funeral** Directors Furnaces Furniture Furs Garages Gasoline Generators Gifts Golf Courses Driving Ranges **Retail Sales** Government Grains Grocers Guns Gutterina Hardware Hauling

#### Health Care Heating Home Appliances Furnishings Improvement Hotels Ice Import Information Services Insulation Insurance Investments Iron Jewelers Laboratories Law Enforcement Lawn Care Sales Leather Legislators Lenses Libraries Linens Liquors Live Stock Loans Locksmiths Luggage Lumber Machine Shops Plastic Magazine Sales Mail Order Manufacturing Marketing Meats Merchandising Merchants Metal Workers Millwork Mirrors Mobile Homes Monuments Mortgages Motels Motorcycles Motors Movers Museums Music

**Prospect List** 

Navigation Newspaper Business Editors Office Publishers Distributors Notary Public Novelties Nurseries Office Equipment Oil Opticians Office Staff Packing Houses Paint Contractors Sales Paper Products Pawn Brokers Personnel Management Staffing Pest Control Pets Pharmacists **Photographers** Physical Fitness Physicians/ Surgeons Pianos Pilots Pipes Manufacturers Products Plating Plumbing Plywood Podiatrist Police Pollution Control Poultry Printers Produce Property Management Public Utilities Publishers **Quality Control** Radio/Television Radios Railroads **Real Estate** 

Recreation Refrigeration Rental Equipment Research Restaurants Roofers Rubber Products Sales Sand Savings & Loan Associations Saws Scales Schools Scientists Security Security Systems Seeds Service Stations Sheet Metal Shoes Siding Signs Social Service Sporting Goods Manufacturing Retail State Officers Stations Steel Stock Yards Stocks/Bonds Stokers Stones Storage Storm Windows Stoves Surgeons Surgical Supplies Surveyors Swimming Pools TV/Radio Tables Tailors Tanks Taxes Taxicabs Teachers Telecommunication Telemarketing Telephone Televisions Tennis Clubs Textiles

Theatres Therapists Tiles Tires Tobacco Tools Tourism **Towel Services** Trade Trailers Transportation **Travel Agents** Trees Trucking Trucks **Trust Companies Typewriters** Uniforms Unions Upholstery Utilities Vacuum Cleaners Vending Machines Venetian Blinds Veterans Veterinarians Video Equipment Wall Coverings Warehousing Water Companies Welding Windows Word Processing Wrecking Writers X Rav Zoologists

Appendix C Sponsor Guest List

Spons	or:		
Phone	:		
(H)		(W)	
Guest	Prospects:		
1.	Name:		
	Address		
	Phone		
	(H)	(W)	
	Brief Personal		
	Introduction		
	Optional: E-Mail	Cell Phone	
2.			
	Phone		
		(W)	
	Brief Personal	、 ,	
	Introduction		
	Ontional: F-Mail	Cell Phone	
3		cent none	
5.			
	Phone		
		(W)	
	Brief Personal	(```/	
		Cell Phone	
Л			
4.	Address		
	Phone		
		(W)	
	Brief Personal	(```/	
	Optional: E-Mail	Cell Phone	
5.			
	Address		
	Phone		
	(H)	(W)	
	Brief Personal		
	Optional: E-Mail		
	Optional. E-Widli	Cell Phone	

Appendix D – Invitation Letter



The \_\_\_\_\_Optimist Club 212 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St. Anywhere, Ohio 63902



May 6, 20XX

Jerry Jones 1651 Ready Road Your Town, OH 69292

Dear Jerry,

The\_\_\_\_Optimist Club takes pride in the quality of its membership and fills vacancies with men and women recommended by our members.

One of our members, Arnie Williams, has recommended you as a person of integrity who has an interest in the community and helping kids. Based on his recommendation our Board of Directors has granted their approval for us to invite you to become a club member.

The \_\_\_\_\_Optimist Club, now 58 years old is engaged in providing service to youth in our community. Our Club is a member of Optimist International, one of the largest and best established organizations of service clubs.

We would like to have the opportunity to share information on the Club's activities and goals with you and hope that you will be our guest for dinner on Tuesday May 21, 20XX at the Community Club House. Our Social time will begin at 6:00 p.m. and our Dinner at 6:30 p.m. and we will conclude by 8:30 p.m.

Please expect a phone call from one of our members as a reminder and with a personal invitation to attend.

We look forward to meeting you and having the opportunity to share the fellowship, programs and activities of our club.

Sincerely,

Roger Wilson President 132-643-3212 Tom Denton Membership Chair 132-643-9283 Appendix E - Agenda

#### Agenda N.O.W. Dinner

TIME

NAME

\_\_\_\_ Call to Order

\_\_\_\_ Invocation

\_\_\_\_ Pledge

Meal Service

\_\_\_\_\_ Welcome and Purpose of Meeting

\_\_\_\_\_ Introduction of Guests and Members

Presentation of Club Projects (2 minutes each) Your Project

\_\_\_\_\_

Your Project

\_\_\_\_ Presentation on Club Meetings (2 minutes)

\_\_\_\_\_ Why I am an Optimist Testimonial (2 minutes)

\_\_\_\_ Questions and Answers

Ask for Applications to be completed \_\_\_\_\_ Door Prizes

Thank and Adjourn with the Optimist Creed

Appendix F – Congratulations Letter



The \_\_\_\_Optimist Club 212 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St. Anywhere, Ohio 63902



May 6, 20XX

Jerry Jones 1651 Ready Road Your Town, OH 69292

Dear Jerry,

*Congratulations!* Your membership in The\_\_\_\_\_Optimist Club has been approved.

\_\_\_\_\_ at the Community Country Club, 212 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Anywhere, Ohio 63902 at Noon.

The\_\_\_\_\_Optimist Club is committed to "Bringing Out the Best in Kids" through a variety of service projects. We are excited that your membership and support will help make it possible to serve more kids, - right here! – right now!

We will look forward to seeing you on\_\_\_\_\_. If you have any questions, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,

Roger Wilson President 132-643-3212 Tom Denton Membership Chair 132-643-9283 Appendix G – Thank You Letter



The \_\_\_\_Optimist Club 212 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St. Anywhere, Ohio 63902



May 30, 20XX

Chris Christopher 2901 Centennial Drive Any Town, Any Country

Dear Chris

Thank you for taking the time to attend the N.O.W. Dinner of the Optimist Club of Your Town.

While you continue to consider the invitation to join our club, we invite you to attend our next regular meeting on Day, Date at the Community Country Club. Lunch will be served at 12pm.

We guarantee great fellowship and would be happy to have you. We look forward to the opportunity to further share with you in a club meeting setting.

Roger Wilson President 123-210-0000 Tom Denton Membership Chair 123-567-0000 Appendix H – Additional Resources

# **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

# **WWW.OPTIMISTLEADERS.ORG** TEACHING AND LEADERSHIP MATERIALS

- Power Points:
- Choosing Optimism
- Orientation for New Members
- Mentoring Program ( can be modified to fit your club)