

# Membership

Leadership Academy 2015

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# Why are you here?

- Name, Chapter, What You Want Out of This

# Word's Getting Out

- Deke Sharon: “If you want to learn to sing great a cappella, sing Barbershop.”
- Alton Brown: “A good stew is like a great Barbershop quartet: each ingredient is present and blends perfectly.”
- Jimmy Fallon regularly singing Barbershop on network TV
- A Mighty Wind performing in Bioshock: Infinite
- ACDA Partnership

# Your Chapter in the Community



# Your Community

- It's about sharing your gift – and not expecting immediate gratification!
- Build long-lasting relationships with organizations that make a difference in the community
- Building relationships builds trust in and visibility for your organization. This in turn builds your perception as a successful organization. **People want to belong to successful organizations.**
- Exercise: What events/activities can we plan to build and strengthen our relationships in the community?

# Recruiting vs. Retention

- Two sides of the same coin
- If you can't recruit, you can't replace attrition
- If you can't retain, you can't grow
- Retention is the most important factor in long-term sustainability of the chapter
- As Membership VP, you're crucially responsible for both!

# The Membership VP's Role

- You are NOT the guy who does all the recruiting, communicating and retention!
- Your responsibility is to **construct and execute a successful recruiting and retention plan**
  - Recruit using all your chapter's tools (you + all members)
  - Ensure your members are enjoying the experience (you + Program VP + Director + Music VP)
  - Maintain contact with your alumni (you + Marketing)
  - Build relationships in the community (you + Board + Director)
  - Maximize the use of your most limiting resource (which is...)

# Chapter, Know Thyself!

- What is your chapter mission?
  - Competition, performance, social, quartet, community, ???
- Be true to your mission in all aspects of membership
- “Walk the talk”
  - Match your audition process to your mission
  - Attendance expectations
  - Learning tracks, eval tracks, etc.



# Part 1: Person to Guest

# What got you started on Barbershop?

# Who can you recruit?

- Guys who previously didn't have time
  - Ex: College student who just graduated
- Guys who have taken a break from singing
  - Ex: Guy who focused on his children growing up
- Former chapter members
- Transfers from out-of-town
- Guys who sing with someone else
  - But what does this do to your relationships with those groups?
  - Grow the pie instead of stealing someone else's piece?
- Guys who have never sung in an organization
- Split your recruiting efforts to maximize success
  - There is no silver bullet to get 20 new guys!

# Your Recruiting Arsenal

- Your Chorus
- Your Members (handout)
- Your Director
- Your Alumni
- Your families and friends
- Tag teachers and singers
- Chapter Quartets
- District and Division Quartets
- Invited Performers (ex: headliner quartets)
- Your Audience
- Your community relationships
- Mass Media (ex: video)

# “Free Voice Lessons”

- 6-week program to introduce interested men to a cappella singing

Maximizing the benefit:

- Make it a great experience (best teachers, members participate)
- Market it everywhere you can
- Culminate the program with a graduation show
- Think of it as giving back to and sharing your gift with your community

# Thoughts on Terms

- Barbershop as an “art form” vs. “hobby”
- Men's A Cappella vs. Barbershop
- “Glee for Men”

# Thoughts on Young Guys

- The energy you put into youth in harmony is an investment today that will pay off over 50 years
- Scenario 1:
  - Option A: I'm going to recruit high school chorus members
  - Option B: I will build a long-lasting relationship with the high school music program
- Scenario 2:
  - Option A: I'm going to recruit college kids
  - Option B: I'm going to support and encourage the college glee club by inviting them onto our show

# Thoughts on Today's World

- You WILL be Googled. Period.
- The smartphone is the most powerful recruiting tool you can imagine.
- People are noticing a gap in their personal interactions and sense of community.



# Part 2: Guest to Member

# The Membership Pipeline

- Starts at the moment a guest walks in the door
- Ends when the member can no longer be a member of the chapter (death, moving away, etc.)
  - REALLY!
- Answers the following questions:
  - When (and by whom) is a guest communicated with?
  - When is a guest asked to become a member?
  - What gates must a guest pass to become a member?
  - Is there a differentiation between a chapter member and a chorus member?

# Guest Turn-offs

- “Listen to my story”
- “You aren’t learning this tag fast enough”
- “You aren’t allowed to sing during this song”
- “This song isn’t in the guest book”
- “We don’t have a guest book”
- “You’re singing this part wrong!”
- “We don’t know you, so we won’t talk to you.”



# Exercise: Making a guest feel comfortable

# Meeting Night Fundamentals

- Is every guest greeted at the door by one or more members?
- Does every guest get an **accurate** guest book?
- Is every guest's contact details captured permanently?
- Does every guest get added to the chapter's mailing list?
- Does every guest get a personal thank-you email for visiting the chapter? From whom?
- Are guests invited to sing on the risers and told when they have to step aside (e.g., for contest run-throughs)?
- Are there program activities to make the guests feel welcome?
- Are guests encouraged to join the risers if they come late? How?
- Are guests appreciated without "showing desperation?"
- Do you provide a supportive and encouraging atmosphere for quartets or other small groups?

# The Environment You Cultivate

- When a guest performs for the group before break, do your members...
- A) Rush up at the break and be “helpful” by criticizing every aspect of the performance
- B) Cheer and say “Thank you for sharing that gift with us!”
- A supportive and encouraging environment improves retention. Period.

# Enable your chapter to succeed in Membership

- Encourage performances that put your product in front of as many people as possible
- Invest in relationships that pay off over years
- Share your chapter's gifts as often as possible
- Build a supportive and encouraging environment
- Give without expectation
- Remember what got you hooked and what keeps you hooked

# Part 3: Member to Lifetime Member



What has KEPT you  
hooked on Barbershop?

# Once a Barbershopper, Always a Barbershopper

- Polecats
- Pseudo-polecats
- Tags
- Informal singing around rehearsal
- Reunion nights
- Chapter Shows
- Division events (Convention vs. Competition)
- Retreats
- Social events

# What is the effect of competing on your plan?

- What is the opportunity cost of competition?
- How does competition impact your membership plan?
- What is your chapter's objective in competing?
- “Walk the Talk”

# Keep the conversation going!

- [mike.cating@gmail.com](mailto:mike.cating@gmail.com)
- Facebook: Barbershop Enthusiasts
- BHS HQ Blog
- Ba-acappella mailing list
- Share what works – and what didn't!
- Don't be afraid to try something new
- Don't be afraid of "I'm not interested"