

Networking

Give Members Added Value to their Membership

Concept: Chief among a person's motivation to join a Lions club is the desire to help those in need and serve the local and world communities. However, membership in a Lions club offers benefits beyond humanitarian service, including:

- Develop leadership skills
- Meet peers in the community
- Expand one's personal and professional network
- Build prestige as an active community volunteer
- Learn how being a part of the world's largest service club organization can make a difference

While it is important not to let other interests inhibit the club's ability to serve the community, it is possible to feature other member benefits and offer opportunities that will make your club more attractive to potential members. Giving members the chance to network is an excellent way to add value to their Lions club membership. **Networking** opportunities can be offered in several ways, such as:

- Publish professional interests and expertise along with member contact information in the club directory.
- Allow members to make business announcements at the beginning of each meeting.
- Include news regarding members' professions or business in the club newsletter or Web site. This could be part of a monthly "Member Spotlight" column.
- Have a page featuring members' professions or business in the club newsletter or Web site. If possible, on the Web site, include links to their businesses' Web sites from this page.
- Offer discounted advertising rates to members in appropriate club, district and multiple district publications, Web sites, event programs, etc.
- Invite participants to provide information about their profession and employer when introducing themselves during club, district and multiple district functions.
- Hold a networking social event or business fair where the focus is on members making professional connections. This can be an informal get together and could include several clubs.

- Encourage members to build an interesting club program around their profession. For example, a doctor could speak about the warning signs of Type II Diabetes, a landscape architect could give advice about choosing the right trees for your yard or a car dealer could share information about purchasing a used car or the latest trends in new cars.
- Offer an executive mentoring program that brings senior or established executives together with members who might be new to their shared profession or interested in learning about the profession.

Networking allows members to make connections or do business with people whom they know on a personal level, thus strengthening the bonds among Lions and adding value to their individual membership.