



Do Club Programs Affect Membership?

Think about it. Have you ever set through a 3+ hour club meeting and realized that *nothing* had been discussed or presented except a bunch of club business, most of which did not involve you? How do you think a new member or a guest (potential member) would feel? Do you use a bunch of initials and terms that not everyone may know? Do you hash and rehash *everything*; like what colors or theme you want to use for an event? Do you allow arguments and disagreements to take over discussions and become part of your meeting?

Two things can help you have better organized and more interesting club meetings. One is a detailed agenda with time limits if necessary, and the other, is a well-planned and well thought out program at *every club meeting*.

A program is not a “project” but it can be. It is some type of presentation given at a club meeting. Most of us think of speakers as our program but it helps to vary our programs and think a little out of the box. We can have people come and perform for us or put on a demonstration of how to make or do something. We can show a film or a slide show, have a skit or reading or play a game with the members. You can have a short (15-20 minutes) program if you do have a lot of business to cover or you can take the whole meeting off- site to visit a museum or playground as your program.

Most clubs like to have programs that pertain to their community or specific areas that might benefit from their volunteer work. Make sure your programs chairman has thoroughly researched the subject matter and/or speaker and knows what your club can expect. A good program should elicit some type of reaction or interest that makes members glad they were at that meeting.

It’s a great idea to do a club survey and find out what type of programs your members might be interested in. Do they prefer to be an audience only or would they like some programs where they can participate or be hands on with? It’s great to keep a file on each member and any skills, affiliations or talents they have that could be used for a program, either planned or last minute when a program falls through.

Remember, if you learn something, have fun, get involved, feel a part of a program at every club meeting are you going to be more or less likely to invite someone to come to a club meeting with you? Good programs *can* help you improve your membership.

Come to the programs workshop at Fall Board and hear The Best and Worse Programs held in our clubs.