



## 10 Sure– Fire Ways to Turn Visitors into Members

Want to grow your club membership? Try this: view your club from the viewpoint of a visitor considering membership. Would you join your club again? Why would a visitor want to join your club? Does your visitor find value and enjoyment at your club meeting? With help, your club can master the following tips and watch membership grow!

1. Make Visitors feel welcome, all the time. Ensure visitors are greeted right away, politely with a smile, by the Sergeant-At-Arms or VPM or friendly member. First impressions are lasting. Many visitors will assess your club within the first 2 minutes of entering the room. Introduce the visitors by name at the beginning of the meeting and encourage members to introduce themselves to the visitors.
2. Keep meetings organised. A well organised meeting room with an agenda set out on the tables provides a positive first impression to visitors. The agenda should detail meeting roles and estimated times for each segment. The meeting should start and end on time. Participants are expected to stay within their allotted times. A well organised meetings will have visitors thinking: “I want to join a club that is well organised.”
3. Ensure members have fun!! Members laughing often during the meeting shows they are enjoying themselves. Fun and fellowship make a Toastmasters club special. When visitors see and hear members having fun while learning, the value of membership is clear. Help your club members to enjoy time together and form bonds that last for decades. Having a club atmosphere filled with fun and variety makes for a magnetic club!
4. Provide a mutually supportive , positive club environment. Visitors notice whether members care about each other. Your club meetings should be supportive, positive and encouraging. Visitors will say: “I will be supported here.” The prospect of delivering a speech is daunting enough. Visitors want a safe place to open up and speak. A supportive and positive club atmosphere shows visitors you care and that evaluations are to be valued because they are encouraging, helpful and valuable.



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5. Give something to your Visitors. Everyone loves a present and it gives the visitor something to hold if they are unsure of themselves. Have a brochure detailing what will happen in the meeting or a bookmark to give them. This way visitors feel included in your Toastmasters family. I'll share a template with you.

6. Demonstrate professionalism. Professionalism is the subtle refinement that makes a meeting special and memorable. Examples include meetings that start and end on time, the Toastmaster who provides an introduction for each prepared speaker and a summary of the manual objectives and speakers. Be courteous, one person speaking at a time and give your full attention to each speaker. Every minute is used to maximize the benefit to each member. There is an important culture of respect: we know your time is important and we value it. Encourage members to keep to time and topic. Learn to move smoothly through segments. Be professional!

7. Pay attention to detail. Yes, the details count. All members should stand whenever they speak, even for announcements at the end of the meeting. The Toastmaster should lead the applause after each speaker. The audience continues clapping until the speaker shakes the Toastmaster's hand. Details make a club look professional. The visitor will think: "These people have their act together. I want to join them."

8. Deliver helpful Evaluations. The value of an effective evaluation is enormous. They are one of the principle benefits of each meeting. Members join your club to improve, and evaluations need to be helpful, supportive and meaningful. Phrase constructive comments as "recommendations, suggestions and personal thoughts for improving your next speech". Remember, members expect real and supportive evaluations, aimed at the objectives of the speech and the experience level of the speaker.

9. Invite Visitors to join! Talk with your visitor to find out why they came along, what they are looking for and what your club can help them with. Make visitors feel valued and wanted. Explain how joining your club benefits them by practicing their communication skills a little bit and often in a supportive, positive environment. Ask your visitor to join and show them how with a Membership Form.

10. Sell the sizzle! Tell visitors why your club is the best in the world. Sell the sizzle. Like a great restaurant, every club has a unique ambience, character and personality. Give your visitor at least one reason why your club is the club to join. Find the reason your club is the best in the world and teach your members to express it regularly.