Effectively Driving New Member Growth, Participation, and Engagement

Membership recruitment is every committee leader’s responsibility, and every committee should strive to get more members involved. Here are a few tips on how to use your leaders and staff resources to get more members and engage the members you already have.

Recruitment

1. Set realistic goals.
   a. Don’t create membership goals in a vacuum. If the committee has agreed to focus on membership growth and engagement as a strategic goal, look at the committee’s growth history, and talk to your liaison to determine a stretch growth goal that the committee should strive to achieve.

2. Create a membership development plan outlining how you will achieve your goal. (ACC staff can assist.)
   a. Are there competing organizations that you can leverage for membership? The Health Law Committee worked with the American Health Lawyers Association to engage potential members.
   b. Are there other committees with whom you can collaborate whose members’ interests and needs overlap with yours? This year both the Law Department Management and Litigation committees conducted collaborative virtual programs creating opportunities for their respective members to see value in membership in both committees.
   c. Does the committee have the resources (volunteers and time) to dedicate to member outreach campaigns? The Law Department Management Committee’s membership chair has leveraged staff resources to conducted monthly outreaches to new ACC members who did not select a committee when they joined.
   d. Ask colleagues for input on how to “sell” committees more effectively.

3. Use staff resources.
   a. ACC staff has developed templates that committees can modify to reach out to prospective members. Review these templates and modify communications to suit the committee’s audience.
   b. ACC staff can also build a prospective list of committee members that leaders can use in any membership campaigns.
   c. If there are high-profile general counsel that you wish to get involved, discuss trial access or membership discount options with ACC.

4. Get your sponsor involved. The Energy Committee prepared marketing information that sponsors could sent to their in-house counsel clients to promote the committee.
**Engagement**

1. Survey existing committee members and communicate the results of the survey—letting them know of changes or improvements made based on their feedback.

2. Committees should take advantage of ACC’s monthly option to email members. It’s a great way to announce upcoming events and get feedback on new services and initiatives.

3. Welcome new members in writing and on calls. Personal letters are always a great touch, and if time is a challenge, committees can follow in the footsteps of the Litigation and Law Department Management committees and take advantage of the automated welcome letters ACC can send to new members once they join. Additionally, Law Department management allots time on each member call for new call attendees and/or new members to announce themselves to be welcomed directly.

4. Innovate. The Employment and Labor Committee, in the interest of strengthening their engagement with their members and the ACC community, updated its strategic plan last year. One innovation that came out of that process was the addition of “Sounding Boards” to their monthly calls. On each call a member of the committee leads a discussion on a subject of current interest, which allows members to sound off about their own related issues increasing interactivity and engagement. After each meeting, the substance of the Sounding Board discussion is posted to the eGroup, so that the discussion can continue online, and in some cases, may develop into a “Wisdom of the Crowd” resource. Additionally, to better align their strategic plan with ACC’s, the committee expanded their globalization efforts with the creation of a new International Subcommittee, and began producing EMEA and APAC calls for international members.

5. Take advantage of the quarterly committee newsletter service. The Employment & Labor, Litigation, and Law Department Management Committees each participate in ACC’s new optional electronic newsletter service. Committees can use this service to share updates on their strategic plan, spotlight high-profile members, spotlight the committee sponsors, and promote upcoming events. Most committees choose to send their newsletters quarterly, however, the Employment & Labor Committee has modified the distribution of its newsletter to bi-monthly to tailor its content and frequency to the needs of its members specifically.

6. Focus on enhancing your web presence. Assign leaders to review and make suggested changes to the committee webpage. Include membership testimonials, marketing pieces, calls to action, and more.

7. Assign leaders to help drive eGroup discussions. The Employment and Labor Committee augmented that use by promoting the eGroup in membership communications (including, e.g., monthly newsletters) and leveraging the eGroup to share and expand upon monthly LQH discussions and to identify topics for Shared Wisdom sessions and Sounding Board discussions.

8. Explore partnerships with other ACC approved organizations. The Litigation Committee has partnered with Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) to provide pro-bono legal services to unaccompanied refugee and immigrant children in the United States. Through this collaboration with KIND, the Litigation Committee is helping to provide charitable legal support to those in need, and providing pro-bono opportunities for its committee members.

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