

You are in the catch-22. You have low membership and not enough people to fill the roles in your meetings, which means when guests attend, they decide not to join your club because you have low membership.

The not-so-secret secret to attracting new members is to have a dynamic meeting that provides high value for everyone. When people see and experience a benefit to joining your club, then they do. If they don't they won't.

So how can you conduct a high-energy meeting with a low number of participants? Well, it's not all that difficult, but it does take a bit of planning.

1 Get Buy In

Strategize with your current members to decide what to do about it and determine if there's enough energy to make it happen.

Part of the problem can be that people are burnt out and just don't have the energy to put their best foot forward. It's going to take everyone to turn it around.

2 Get Help

There are plenty of people committed to your success, so ask.

Start with your Area Director because their success depends on your success. They also

Dynamic Meetings

How to have a fabulous, quality Toastmasters meeting when only a few people show up



have direct access to the resources at the District level and they can help rally support around your club.

If you aren't attending your Area Council meetings, then you need to start. This is the place where you can learn what other clubs in your Area are doing, learn best practices, and build relationships so you can call on others for help.

3 Get Creative

Use some of the ideas in this article and come up with your own.

4 Get Commitment

Make sure everyone is committed to working the Toastmasters education program. This tried and true experiential learning is the foundation of our value proposition. It works. Use it.

5 Get Busy

If you take the time to make a plan for the next 8-10 meetings, then there isn't the exhausting work every week of trying to figure out what to do next. It takes time to turn a big ship around, so commit to a strategy.

The Basics:

- All elected officers attend club officer training; Phase I and Phase II
- Re-assess meeting location; you need to be easy to find, convenient to attend, and in an environment conducive to learning
- Promote your meetings; whether a community or corporate club, people need to know about you
- Personally invite friends and colleagues to attend; a personal invitation is still the best way to get guests to your meeting

Five Critical Roles:

1. **Toastmaster**, Meeting Chair, and General Evaluator can be combined into one role
2. **Timer**, Ah Counter and Grammarian can also be combined; at a minimum, have a Timer, but the other roles can be added for variety and to fill time
3. **Table Topic Master** is a critical part of the meeting so make sure this is on every agenda
4. **Speakers** are a must and every meeting should have a prepared project speech; set the expectation that everyone will take turns
5. **Speech Evaluators** are one of the most value-added parts of a Toastmasters experience and the ability to give and receive feedback is a critical skill many are seeking

Creative Ideas:

- Invite a guest speaker
- Join the District MeetUp group
- Appoint Mentors to new members
- Host the Area Council meeting before or after your club meeting and ask the AC members to attend your meeting
- Find a club close by to be your sister-club; some members may even be looking for a second club to join on a different day
- Have a guest package that includes application, promo sheet and a TM magazine
- Have every member join a committee under and executive role
- Have tent cards with names on the front & back
- Have blank tent cards for guests and write their name on the front & back
- Hold an Open House and get help from surrounding clubs to ensure full meeting
- Have a Showcase or Contest meeting for Humorous Speech or Tall Tales
- Get club business cards with meeting day, time and location
- Take your show on the road; have your members attend a club nearby
- Keep the atmosphere positive and upbeat; don't apologize or make excuses for low attendance

- Make sure Table Topics are fun and engaging; creativity is key here; get people laughing and they'll keep coming back
- Rotate all the roles among all the people; use FreeToastHost to make signup easy
- Have a formal agenda with printed copies; FreeToastHost makes it super easy
- Welcome guests warmly and treat them like a VIP; every member says hello
- Recognize members' achievements, no matter how small

Successful Clubs:

- Meet weekly
- Have population to draw on of at least 300 people
- Follow the educational program
- Celebrate!



Regardless of the number in attendance, you can still conduct a professional, high-value meeting.