Motivating Club Members

Objectives:
- To understand the levels of motivation in your club
- To provide ideas of ways to increase motivation in your club

Organization:
This document is organized into several sub-topics. For each sub-topic there is:
- An overview explaining the sub-topic in some detail
- One or more suggestions or tips for introducing the sub-topic within the district/club
- (If applicable) A resource or resources to existing documentation that supports the material presented

Overview:
Lions are motivated to serve their community; however, sometimes motivation begins to diminish in the club. Repetition, lack of involvement, and lack of challenge are the biggest factors, which lead to unmotivated Lions.

This component of your toolbox is designed to give you some background theory on motivation and an understanding of how it relates to your club. At the end of this component you will have ideas and a plan of action to increase motivation in your club.

Sub-topics:
1. Assumptions about Motivation
2. The Maslow Hierarchy of Human Needs
3. Theory into Practice: Motivate to Mobilize
4. Quick Ideas to Increase Motivation

Common Questions Related to the Topic:
- Why is motivation in my club slipping?
- What can I do to increase motivation in my club?

Assumptions about Motivation

From Douglas MacGregor's *The Human Side of Enterprise*

Douglas McGregor in his book, "The Human Side of Enterprise" published in 1960 has examined theories on behavior of individuals at work, and he has formulated two models which he calls Theory X and Theory Y.

Theory Y Assumptions

- People will usually, if given a chance, find ways to be active, productive, and satisfied in their work.

- Work is natural and enjoyable unless it is made offensive by the actions of organizations.

- Most people are ambitious, desire autonomy and self-control, and do effective problem solving. Creativity is distributed equally across the population.

- Many different things motivate people, only some involve economic rewards or security.

In situations where it is possible to obtain commitment to objectives, it is better to explain the matter fully so that employees grasp the purpose of an action. They will then exert self-direction and control to do better work - quite possibly by better methods - than if they had simply been carrying out an order which they did not fully understand. Leaders will find that the participative approach to problem solving leads to much improved results compared with the alternative approach of handing out authoritarian orders.

McGregor realizes that some of the theories he has put forward are unrealizable in practice, but wants leaders to put into operation the basic assumption that:

People will contribute more to the organization if they are treated as responsible and valued members.

Understanding Motivation Factors: Your Club and You

Answer the following questions about your club and you.

Your Club
- What are the events and projects in your club that members seem most willing to undertake? (These are one for which the members seem self-motivated)

- What are the events and projects in your club that members seem most unwilling to undertake? (These are the ones for which they are not self-motivated.) What kinds of things has the club (or individual members) been doing to try to motivate members to work?

You
- Recall a situation in which you were in the middle of a club project that required considerable effort and time (fundraiser, community project, and so forth), and thought, *Why am I doing this?* What did you tell yourself about your own motivation?

- Consider this situation: You and your fellow club members are in the middle of a club project, which requires considerable time and effort. Someone asks: "Why are we doing this?" What would you tell that person?

Understanding the Motivation Level of Club Members

Ask yourself two questions:
1. What level of skill and ability do club members bring to the project?

- Is this a task they have successfully done many times before?

- Is this a routine (but important) task?

- Does this task have a direct connection to what the club members do on the job?

- Is this a new task that will challenge the skills and abilities of the club members?

- Is this a complex task that will require new ways of doing things?

If the task is routine or well established, your motivational technique should focus on creating energy and drive, not on telling the members what to do. If the task is new, challenging, or uncomfortable, you can motivate by modeling the desired behavior and providing emotional support.

2. What is the willingness and drive of the club members to do the task?

- Has the project become so routine that it seems boring rather than challenging?

- Have the members mastered the skills needed to do the job?

- Is the task so new and interesting (service projects) that the work is a reward in itself?

- Do the members receive plenty of affirming messages for the work that they do?

If the work is its own reward, sometimes the motivation comes when the leader gives only general guidelines and lets the workers do their work as they see fit. If the members are competent but bored with the work, the leader might want to delegate supervisory tasks to several people.

The Maslow Hierarchy of Human Needs

It can be argued that the behavior of individuals at a particular moment is usually determined by their strongest need. It would seem significant, therefore, for Lion leaders to have some understanding about the needs that are commonly most important to people. Abraham Maslow developed an interesting and useable framework that helps explain the strength of certain needs.

Level 1: Physiological Needs
At the most basic level, we are motivated to find food, water and other basic **physiological needs.** Until these basic needs are satisfied to the degree needed for the sufficient operation of

the body, the majority of a person's activity will probably be at this level, and the others will provide little motivation.

But what happens to a person's motivation when these basic needs begin to be fulfilled? Rather than physiological needs, other levels of needs become important, and these motivate and dominate the behavior of the individual. And when these needs are somewhat satiated, other needs emerge, and so on down the hierarchy. A comfortable, well-lit room makes it easier to focus on the meeting program or other activity.

Level 2: Security Needs
We are motivated to find shelter, protection and safety from attack. These are our **security needs**. If an individual's safety or security is in danger, other things seem unimportant.

Level 3: Social Needs
We feel a need to join with other people, to feel part of a group. Maslow talked about having "meaningful relationships" with others, relationships that transcend the everyday encounters we have. These are our **social needs**.

Level 4: Ego-Enhancement Needs
We are motivated to receive recognition and to accomplish goals, which we (and others) see as important and worthwhile. At this level we are meeting our **need for recognition.** Most people have a need for a high evaluation of themselves that is firmly based in reality- recognition and respect from others. Satisfaction of these esteem needs produces feelings of self-confidence, prestige, power, and control. People begin to feel that they are useful and have some effect on their environment.

There are other occasions, though, when people are unable to satisfy their need for esteem through constructive behavior. When this need is dominant an individual may resort to disruptive or immature behavior-a child may throw a temper tantrum, Lions may engage in arguments with fellow Lions.

Thus, recognition is not always obtained through mature or adaptive behavior. It is sometimes garnered by disruptive and irresponsible actions. In fact, some of the social problems we have today may have their roots in the frustration of esteem needs.

Level 5: Self-Actualization Needs
Maslow felt few people ever achieved this level. At this level, we are motivated to do what we were meant to do; to fulfill one's self. This is the need for **self-actualization.**

Club Inventory
Maslow's hierarchy model is for understanding how club members could be motivated. Write some notes to yourself in response to the following questions:

1.   How does your club help members satisfy their **belonging or social needs**? For example, do weekly meetings provide this? Or would fewer meetings provide this just as well for busy people? What else?

2.   How does your club help members satisfy their **need for recognition**? For example, what awards and statements of recognition in the club or the community could an individual achieve by being a Lions club member?

Theory into Practice: Motivate to Mobilize

1. In what major job or task will your club be involved in the next three months? (This could be a routine but vital task or a new project. It should be something that you or other leaders in the club will need to motivate members to do well.)

2. Who in the club will need to be motivated to do this task? Who is the target audience that you want to motivate to do this task: all the members, club leaders, new members, or senior members?

3. How will doing the task help the target audience achieve their **belonging needs**? Note: Depending on the target, meeting the belonging (social) needs may not be much of a motivator.

4. How will doing the task help the target audience achieve their **need for recognition**?

5. In what specific ways will the factors discussed above help **mobilize** members to action?

Quick Ideas to Increase Motivation

Increase Involvement
- **Share your Enthusiasm –** Attitude is infectious. How you feel about making positive changes to your club will affect how members respond. Be upbeat and enthusiastic -- your members will be motivated to support your efforts.

- **Have an Informal Gathering –** Invite new members to meet with club officers in a casual, non-club setting. This will help them become acquainted informally with the leadership team where they can ask questions..

- **Share Praise Freely –** Important to *all* members, and especially new members, is positive reinforcement for a job done well. Often, simple acknowledgements are best – a special thank you during a club or committee meeting, a personal note of thanks, a word of encouragement. Consider creating a "Kudos" column in your newsletter or Web site to list those members who have done their jobs well, made great suggestions, or gone above and beyond the call of duty.

- **Emphasize Social Involvement –** You want to involve members in your club socially as well as through activities. Socialize with members during and outside of meetings. Share happy occasions – birthdays, anniversaries, a special achievement or the achievement of a spouse or child. The club newsletter and Web site are great places to list these special occasions.

- **Communicate Constantly –** Open communication is vitally important to the success of your club. It creates a comfortable, productive environment that will motivate members to do their best. Encouraging input from members and using your club meetings, newsletter and Web site to communicate club happenings will help you with this task.

Club Dynamics

- **Attendance Cues** – Paying careful attention to attendance trends can help uncover retention problems. Not attending meetings is one of the first signs of lack of member interest. Confer with your secretary and get a list of members who are "slipping." If they have missed three meetings or more in a row, call them to find out why. Personally calling them will show that you care about them.

- **Retention is for All Members** – While making sure new members feel welcomed, involved and comfortable, it is important to remember long-term members. As people belong to an organization for a longer period of time, their goals and needs may change. Let long-time members know that their continued membership is important by periodically asking them if they are still satisfied with the club.

- **Scramble Seating Arrangements** – Change seating arrangements at meetings from time to time to allow all members to become better acquainted.

- **New Members Make Great Greeters** – Have new members serve as greeters for club functions for the first several weeks of their membership. It's a great way for them to meet all club members.

- **Make it Fun –** Have some fun while encouraging members to mix with their fellow members. Before a club meeting begins, select a member to be the "Secret Lion." In a clique-free club everyone mingles freely and will eventually meet the Secret Lion. As the meeting nears a close, you ask the Secret Lion to identify those members who never made contact, and encourage the Tail Twister to humorously levy a fine. Done with a light touch, the Secret Lion method gets the "no-cliques" message across.

- **Think Positively** – When considering any changes to your club, keep a positive attitude. Your club might be steeped in tradition and used to doing things a certain way, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't try something new. Today's "experiment" could be tomorrow's new tradition.

- **Mix it Up** – Keep your club meetings fresh by trying something new every once in awhile. Consider having people change where they sit every few meetings to encourage camaraderie with new people, add a new quick agenda item to boost morale (such as suggestion of the month or recognizing a member who went beyond the call of duty) or change the order of your agenda items (make sure everyone involved knows if you do this so they will be prepared!).

- **Change Meeting Places –** By changing locations you will also give a new perspective to the meeting. Possible venues include different restaurants, parks, hotels etc.

- **Give Ownership –** Allow members to lead the activities. This will make the members feel needed and increase their motivation to do more in the club.

Resources:

1. Focus on Involvement: Smart Strategies for Keeping Your Members Involved in Your Club. President's Retention Campaign. July 2001.
2. Focus on Club Dynamics: Smart Strategies for Handling Cliques and Politics. President's Retention Campaign. July 2001.
3. http://www.accel-team.com/motivation/index.html