

## 12 TIPS TO MOBILISE NEW MEMBERS FOR YOUR IN HOUSE CHRISTIAN GROUP P.1

### WHEN I WAS 25 A STRANGE THING HAPPENED TO ME

I lived on the top floor in a block of six apartments. One evening there was a knock on the door and my neighbour Harry from downstairs (who I barely knew) nervously invited me to his Rotary Club meeting on Friday night. They were having a new member recruitment night and Harry was doing his duty in inviting someone (I don't think he was expecting me to say "yes").

I said "yes" because I was keen to get to know Harry better in order to invite him to *my* club (church).

The Rotary meeting was a disaster. The club had taken part in a recent event with a neighbouring club and there had been some sort of conflict between them. A few of the members were reporting back on this and were 'bad mouthing' the members of the neighbouring club. It was not a good look and quite embarrassing. No, I didn't join Harry's club.

I wonder what good or bad experiences you've had of joining (or not joining) various clubs / groups?

### In our In house Christian groups, how can we attract, persuade new people to join us?

First let's take a step or two back. *Why* is it a good thing for new people to join our In house group and what *barriers* might be stopping them?

### WHY IS FINDING NEW MEMBERS A GOOD THING?

1. **A quorum.** It can be discouraging when only a few people turn up (or no-one) to our meetings. The bigger the core group of committed members, the more likely you are to have a reasonable quorum at your meeting. Your group feels more like a 'happening thing'.
2. **Survival.** People come and go in companies. If you don't replace the members that move on, your group will eventually collapse.
3. **Impact for Christ.**
  - a. **Active Christians.** The more Christians who attend, means more Christians in the company are 'switched on' to live for Christ amongst their work colleagues.
  - b. **Gospel growth.** Some of the new members we mobilise for our group might be 'religious' people who are confused about the Christian faith or non Christians who are actively enquiring.

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### WHAT BARRIERS MIGHT STOP NEW PEOPLE FROM JOINING?

1. They **don't know** about the group. Many might join if only they knew about it.
2. They **don't see the need**. They are happy with their own church and don't see the need for something extra at work.
3. They are **afraid** that their career will be damaged if they associate with a Christian group at work.
4. They are **too busy** and don't have time for another commitment.
5. **You're too busy** as a leader and barely have time to prepare the meetings, let alone think about recruiting new members.

Let's now think of some positive solutions to our question: How can we attract, persuade new people to join us (keeping the barriers in mind)?

### 12 TIPS TO MOBILISE MORE MEMBERS

1. **Look after your existing members.** Remember it's easier to keep a customer than to find a new one.
  - a. Is your meeting purposeful / enjoyable / well organised and run?
  - b. Is your group a place where people can build friendships and a genuine personal connection?
  - c. Connect with members in between meetings. Texts, emails, meet up, lunch, coffee.
  - d. Keep a roll of attendance. Follow up people who haven't been for a while.
  - e. Distribute a summary of the study to people who couldn't attend, to keep in touch.
2. **Have a seasonal approach** where at specific times in the year you focus on recruitment.
3. Make sure your group has a **bold and exciting vision**. Busy Christians need a strong reason to be willing to participate in an in house Christian group. Your group also has to be differentiated from what they're doing at church. Does your group have this?
4. **Allay fears.** Make sure your statements of aim and purpose are worded in positive ways that HR would be happy with. Potential members need to be assured that the in house group will conduct itself in a wise and winsome manner and not cause unnecessary offence.
5. **Use a senior executive** to attract new members. Invite them to one of your meetings to be interviewed and to give the group a plug. Their courage will inspire others.
6. **Use existing members** to recruit for the group through their contacts.
  - a. 'Bring a friend' meetings.
  - b. Help members develop an "elevator speech" about their membership
    - i. Why are they members?
    - ii. What's the biggest benefit of membership?
    - iii. Can they explain the purpose of the group?

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- c. Develop promotional material for members to pass around (spread on social media) eg. a short video, electronic flyer.
  - d. Appoint someone to be the recruitment officer for your group (someone who is likeable with good personal skills).
  - e. Coach members on creating a welcoming experience. Getting potential new members to attend meetings is only half the battle! Remind current members to greet newcomers and avoid group jargon when there are visitors.
7. Reach out to **former members**. They might be ready to come back.
8. **Raise the profile** of your group in the company.
  - a. Are there places for clubs to advertise / communicate more broadly?
  - b. Offer for your group to help at a company event eg. fun run helpers.
  - c. Can you become an official employee network?
9. **Social events**. Organise enjoyable meet and greets for members to get to know each other and to invite potential new members along.
10. Create a **welcome procedure** for every visitor to the group. Eg. a personal phone call or meeting. A welcome pack with your program, calendar, purpose of the group and 'who's who'.
11. Put on an outreach **event** in your company.
  - a. Outreach events are good for mobilising Christian contacts as well as enquirers.
  - b. Follow up every new person who comes to the event personally (face to face meeting or phone call).
12. Set **numerical membership goals** and give regular progress reports to the group. This reminds members that one of your aims is to mobilise new members.

>>> Did any of these ideas resonate with you? Which of them might you be willing to try?

Maybe if my neighbour Harry's Rotary Club had taken some of these 12 tips to heart all those years ago, I'd be a life member by now 😊.

### YOUR MOBILISING PLANS FOR THIS YEAR?

1. How to advertise your group?
2. Membership drives. When and how?
3. How to welcome and integrate new members?

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** and resources to help you, contact [craig.josling@citybibleforum.org](mailto:craig.josling@citybibleforum.org)