

## District's Role in Revitalization

What can Districts do to help with Altrusa's three R's – Revitalization, Recruitment and Retention? The answers will vary according to districts. Although each district has its own policies and procedures for addressing revitalization there are some basic good practices that every district can implement in their revitalization efforts.

### Revitalization

How does a District know that a club needs help in revitalization? Here are some warning signs:

- Club requests assistance
- Club membership falls and remains below charter strength
- Membership has fallen below previous levels and has remained at this low level for several years
- Club does not submit reports requested by District or International
- Club does not participate in District Conferences or International Conventions
- Club does not pay required fees and dues
- Club is unwilling to accept visits from District officer
- Club cannot identify members willing to assume officer and chairman positions

District officers should try to be aware of potential difficulties for their clubs, so that they can be ready to help when needed. The information in the District's club information file, such as previous club visit reports, is invaluable for this purpose.

The District should address revitalization regularly. An ongoing program of workshops in this area can help to keep revitalization a top priority and ensure the members are aware of the resources available to them. Include the District Revitalization Plan in the President's workshop material at each Conference. District officers visiting clubs in need of revitalization should have the plan with them when they visit, so that they can discuss the available resources and the District process for reimbursement if available.

The District may also appoint a revitalization committee. Revitalization work can then be divided among the committee members allowing for more one-on-one contact and assistance from the District to clubs. A committee of this type would report directly to both the Governor and the District Membership committee chair since a Revitalization committee is a subcommittee of the membership committee.

The District could also set aside district funds to be used specifically for revitalization efforts. These funds could be used for new member recruitment activities and events. Districts could use these funds as incentives for clubs to work on revitalization. Assisting Under Charter Strength (USC) clubs with funding to promote membership via District designated funds is encouraged. (See sample forms for requesting district revitalization funds).

The District is encouraged to celebrate UCS clubs that gain charter strength...recognition of such clubs at district conference and/or recognition in the district newsletter/bulletin.

## Recruitment

Sometimes clubs need help in knowing where to find prospective members. Conference workshops can include tools to help with this challenge. Sources from which to recruit new members may include local Chamber of Commerce lists of contacts, yellow pages for cold contacts, newspaper articles or announcements on promotions or interesting people. A Club may also need help on holding a recruitment event. Again, Conference workshops can supply this information. One good resource is the professionally developed PSA targeting prospective members and recruitment letters for warm and cold leads (**Keyword = Marketing Toolkit**) found on the International website. Information which also emphasizes the importance of consistent branding for Altrusa is provided.

If there are cluster clubs in an area, a District may choose to fund a booth at a Community's Expo, allowing the cluster clubs in that area to staff the booth. Local, District, or International brochures could be handed out to booth visitors. Displaying their club banner and their club display board is also helpful in member recruitment. This may also be considered a marketing event. Providing door prizes at the booth could be fun.

District officers or committee chairs could be a featured speaker for a club recruitment event. Being supportive of one another and working as a team is the key role for Districts.

## Retention

District Conference workshops can also feature tips for retention (**see sections II and III**). Making Conferences fun and relevant to members is also important. If members feel the time and expense of Conference is worth it, they will keep coming. Sharing success stories, offering opportunities to network with clubs with similar needs, providing personal growth /public interest workshops, and having fun activities enhance the success of Conference. Review the Conference evaluations to see what the members rated highly, to see what areas could be improved and to see what was missing. Report the results in the District's DSB. Let the members know that their suggestions are being heard.

**SAMPLE**  
**OF A**  
**DISTRICT**  
**REVITALIZATION**  
**PLAN**

## DISTRICT NINE REVITALIZATION PLAN

**Purpose:** To strengthen under charter strength clubs (less than 15) in District Nine in 1) membership, 2) leadership, and 3) retention. Each club in the district that is under charter strength (15 members) will be encouraged to participate.

### *Part I: Club Responsibility*

Each participating club will have the responsibility of developing a database of potential members and develop a database of programs.

#### **A: Potential Member Identification**

1. **Develop a list of between 50 and 100 potential members. The potential members can be invited to one big membership meeting or “several at a time” to attend program and events in this plan.**
  - a. **Brainstorm names of potential members. It is suggested that a special planning meeting be held where each member will “brainstorm” to come up with names. Members are asked to bring sources of potential members, such as chamber of commerce membership lists, local yellow pages, United Way lists, etc. Letter can also be sent to businesses asking for names of people in the company that they would like to see invited to participate.**
  - b. **Brainstorm names of potential members. It is suggested that a special planning meeting be held where each member will “brainstorm” to come up with names. Members are asked to bring sources of potential members, such as chamber of commerce membership lists, local yellow pages, United Way lists, etc. Letter can also be sent to businesses asking for names of people in the company that they would like to see invited to participate.**
  - b. **Participate in a community event, festival or art show. Designate an Altrusan to be a guest speaker at a meeting of another organization or set up an Altrusa booth at a community event or festival. At the Altrusa booth, have a display of projects, Altrusa brochures or rack cards and 2-3 door prizes. Ask guests to sign up for an “Altrusa Door Prize”. They will ask you “What is Altrusa?” and Altrusans can explain Altrusa while the guest is writing their name, email, telephone number and address on their door prize drawing card. While guests are filling out the card with their information, ask them if you may invite them to an Altrusa event. If they say yes, they have shown interest. Save all the cards at the end of the event to prepare your database of potential new Altrusans.**

**Tip #1:** When you arrange to have a booth at a festival, it is important that you have an Altrusa event scheduled within 2-3 weeks of the

festival to invite your prospects to attend.

**Tip #2:** After visiting with a guest at an event, jot down a few notes about the guest and the conversation to serve as a reminder when making follow-up calls.

If you remember their story, your follow-up call will be more successful.

**Tip #3:** While working a festival or event, do not sit behind the table or spend time on cell phones. Better to stand in front of table to engage with festival goers.

2. Put these names into a computer database to allow for easy mailing of letters and/or sending emails or making follow-up phone calls. Sending a “Thank You” acknowledgement for visiting your festival booth is a suggestion.
3. Invite guests to an Altrusa event. Ensure the event has a “PURPOSE” and includes more than just a repeat discussion about Altrusa. Make each guest feel their time/contributions are valued. Ensuring each meeting as a PURPOSE will attract potential new members and help retain current members.
4. Always follow up with invitation. When guests attend an event, follow up to see their interests and say thank you. Follow up is so important and often forgotten.

#### **B: Development of a Program List:**

Each club should develop a list of interesting, thought-provoking topics that would promote personal and professional development and networking. This list can be added to and referred to throughout the year as the project progresses.

1. Each member should write down areas of personal and professional development that they would like to have addressed. In “brainstorming” fashion, the group should discuss each possible program’s topic. As these ideas are shared with the group and recorded, additional ideas are also recorded as they are generated.
2. Explore Altrusans as potential program presenters. The club should look at their own members as potential presenters. Also, consider Altrusans that are in surrounding areas as presenters.

3. Put all ideas into a computer database, along with the names and addresses of potential speakers or contacts for that topic. Review topics from several years back to see if they could be revisited.

### ***Part II: District Responsibility***

1. District Nine will have the responsibility to support the efforts of each club undergoing official revitalization within this plan both financially and by providing leadership training. Under charter strength clubs (clubs slightly under charter strength by 5 or less members) will receive encouragement/support from the District Nine Membership Committee (recruitment and retention committees) whereas the District Nine Revitalization Committee will assist those clubs with less than 10 members.
2. The Revitalization Committee will be selected by the incoming Governor and must demonstrate a dedicated and committed purpose to the revitalization of District Clubs in Under Charter status. The members must be committed and willing to spend time and effort in revitalizing and moving these struggling clubs forward. The Revitalization Committee will assist these UCS clubs with resources... helping them produce rack cards, updating the club website and Facebook page and identifying and developing new members to step up in leadership positions. Recruitment activities such as local festivals and other guest events will be supported by district funds.

#### **A: Development and presentation of a membership event**

The District will develop a presentation on leadership that would encompass a meal (breakfast, lunch, dinner, or other suitable function) if desired. This presentation can be given by district officers and can be paid for from District Nine Revitalization funds. The program will be geared for Altrusans, new Altrusans and potential Altrusans on broad leadership categories.

1. An outline or script will be developed so that any District Officer(s) can fill the role of presenter and deliver the same message.
2. The District Officer(s) will work with the club if help is needed in advance of the event.
3. An evaluation will be distributed at the end of the function to fine-tune future presentations.

#### ***B: Development of a leadership training session***

When a club has reached charter strength, it is recommended that a leadership training seminar be offered to that club for the purpose of training all club members.

1. An outline will be developed to assist the visiting officer(s) in making the leadership training presentation.

2. **An abbreviated set of handouts with an overview and responsibilities of each office and committee will be prepared to give to each members of the club.**

### **C: Evaluation**

**Following the completion of each revitalization project, an evaluation of the event is encouraged. The District Nine Revitalization committee and club officers involved will complete an evaluation to assist in improving other revitalization projects.**

**D. District Nine Policy on Revitalization- The District Nine Board established a policy in 2015 that states: Prior to a club's official disbanding, that club must contact the Revitalization Committee and work with the committee for One year, minimum, to attempt to revitalize the Club.**

**This biennium, chairs of the Membership, Revitalization and New Club Building committees participate in quarterly conference calls to coordinate overall membership objectives.**