



# Membership Growth Program

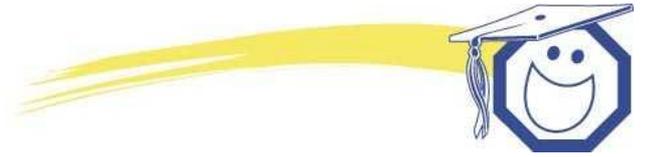


**NOW**



“NOW” is a program  
designed to capture  
the interest of  
qualified, prospective  
Optimist club  
Members.



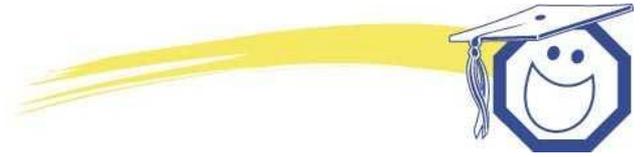


“NOW” is an acronym that stands  
for  
“New Optimist Welcome”  
and conveys the urgency of doing it  
‘NOW.’





- A program exclusively for clubs committed to achieving a net gain of 10 during the administrative year.
- The central feature is a dinner (or a series of dinners) at which goals and activities of the club are explained to prospects, previously qualified for membership, and they are invited to join.
- “NOW” is designed to last approximately four weeks not including the planning and follow-up.



The “NOW” meeting  
must be a time when  
prospects will not be  
rushed.

At least two hours must  
be available for the  
meeting.





# Key Elements in the “NOW Program

1. Selection of prospects by club members.
2. Qualification of prospects by membership committee and board.
3. Letter sent to each qualified prospective member inviting him/her to the “NOW” dinner
4. Personal invitations by table hosts.
5. “Now” dinner
  - Speech on Optimist International and club
  - Invitation to membership
  - Completion of membership invitation and collection of fees and dues
6. Follow-up prospects who did not join at dinner meeting.
7. Preparation for next dinner if required to meet goal.



# Week-To-Week Guide

## **“NOW” recruitment program**

Step by step preparation Guide (check as completed)

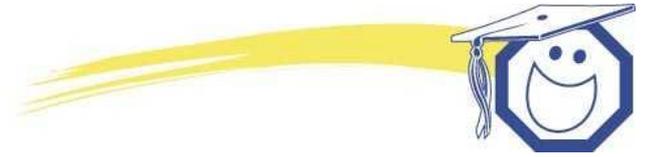
### **Planning**

- Review the “NOW” program guide
- Appoint a “NOW” Membership Chairperson
- Appoint a “NOW” Membership Committee
- Meet to make plans, review program, set dates and assign duties



## Week Number One

- Announce the program to the club and sell its benefits.
- Get names of prospects from members.
- Membership committee meets, adds names and screens prospects.
- Collect and order materials needed:
  - Scrapbook
  - Club organization chart
  - Club trophies/recognitions
  - *The Optimist* magazine
  - *The Optimist Difference* brochures
  - Member invitations
  - Name tags



## Week Number Two

- Announce prospects to club and ask for further names.
- Plan the “NOW” dinner
  - Reserve the room and plan seating arrangement
  - Plan menu
  - Arrange for coffee to be served following the meeting
  - Prepare the “NOW” invitation letters (See sample on page 2)
  - Select the “presider” of the meeting
  - Recruit the faculty/presenters
  - Recruit the “table hosts” and explain their duties



## Sample Invitation Letter

**CENTRAL OPTIMIST CLUB OF ST. LOUIS**  
**Affiliated with OPTIMIST**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
**ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI**

11 May 2000  
Mr. Samuel Anderson  
4620 Maher Street  
St. Louis, MO 63109

Dear Mr. Anderson:

The Evening Optimist Club of St. Louis takes pride in the quality of its membership and fills vacancies with men and women recommended by its members.

One of our members has recommended you as a person of integrity and with an interest in the community. Based upon this recommendation, our board of directors has granted their approval for us to invite you to become a club member.

The Central Optimist Club of St. Louis, now ten years old, attempts to be of service to youth and community, principally in the Central West End of St. Louis. The club is a member of Optimist International, one of the best established and largest federations of service clubs.

We would like to share information on the club's activities and goals with you and other community leaders. For this reason, we hope you will be our guest for dinner on Thursday, 24 May, at the Salad Bowl on Liddell Boulevard. We will meet at 6:00 PM and conclude no later than 8:00 PM.

Prior to the meeting, to serve as a reminder and to be sure you can attend, you will be contacted by our member, Tom Wright. We anticipate meeting you and sharing the fellowship, programs and activities of our club.

Sincerely yours,

*Sandra McClary*

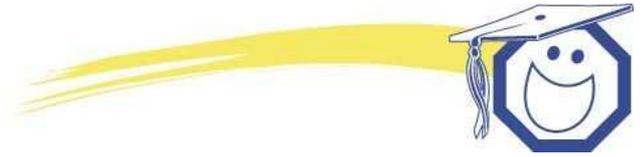
Sandra McClary, Chair  
Membership Committee



## **Week Number Three**

- Prospects approved by Board
- Mail the “NOW” invitation letters (See sample on page 2)
- Review the agenda, dinner and faculty





## Week Number Four

- Final check with all concerned
- Ask “table hosts” to call their prospects
- Appoint “greeters”
- Confirm faculty appearances
- Check with presiding officer
- Hosts telephone prospects, explain format and offer to “pick them up”
- Room set-up
- Bring materials gathered during week #1 and your:
  - Club banner
  - Bell and gavel
  - Lectern
- Table host duties:
  - Bring the prospects
  - Sit with prospects
  - Introduce one to another
  - Promote good conversation and warm fellowship
  - Introduce prospects to the audience
  - Distribute and collect applications and fees



## Agenda “NOW” Dinner

### Time

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| _____ | 1. Call to order  |
| _____ | 2. Invocation/Creed   |
| _____ | 3. Meal service   |
| _____ | 4. Welcome and purpose of meeting   |
| _____ | 5. Introduction of head table   |
| _____ | 6. Introduction of prospective members.<br>The presiding officer should<br>introduce each table host, who then<br>introduces the prospects at his/her<br>table. |
| _____ | 7. Speeches on club and Optimist International  |
| _____ | 8. Questions and answers  |
| _____ | 9. Collect applications and membership fees   |
| _____ | 10. Coffee and informal fellowship  |
| _____ | 11. Adjournment   |



## **“NOW” Dinner**

- Conduct the dinner as planned.
- After the presentations and the recruitment speech, provide an opportunity to complete Member Invitations.
- Do not be apologetic about collecting the membership fee and dues. (Most clubs collect the full membership fee and a prorated portion of the dues, based upon the balance of the dues period.)
- If, for some reason, a check will not be written at the time, the committee should arrange for personal follow-up.



## **“NOW” Dinner**

- The “NOW” committee members follow-up any prospects who did not join and begin planning the next dinner.
- Involve members added through the “NOW” program; each should participate in all elements of the membership process. This includes biographical sketches in the bulletin, a welcome letter from the president, completion of a Member Interest Finder, an induction ceremony and the other elements of orientation.
- The membership committee is responsible for these procedures. The “NOW” committee need only check to be sure each new member is quickly involved in these activities.



## **“NOW” Dinner**

- The club secretary-treasurer should make sure to complete the Club Roster adjustment form for submittal to the Optimist International office along with the new member processing fee.
- The program cannot be completed successfully unless the new members are officially enrolled.



## **“NOW” Dinner**

- Recruitment Speeches are in the book on the following topics:
  - Optimist International
  - The District, Your Zone
  - Our Club
  - Club Meetings
  - Club Bylaws
  - Service Activities
  - Member’s Privileges and Responsibilities
  - Recruitment Speech



## Special Notice

Clubs completing the “NOW” program with at least a 10-member net annual increase on September 30, are entitled to a “NOW” banner patch.

Successful clubs must request the recognition by writing to the

**Membership Department  
Optimist International  
4494 Lindell Boulevard  
St. Louis, MO 63108**

before October 20, following the conclusion of the year in which the “NOW” program was implemented.



# Membership Growth Program



**Optimist International  
4494 Lindell Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63108**

**314.371.6000  
Fax: 314.371.6006  
[www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org)**