

A Personalized (Club) Approach to Homecoming

Who will be in charge and what expenses should you plan for?

You need to clearly identify who will take on those responsibilities within your club. It may be one person, or it may be a committee, or decisions may be made by the entire Board. You also need to figure the expenses from your administrative fund for this particular membership outreach activity. Such things as costs for meals, printing, and paying new member fees need to be considered.

Single-Night or “Get-Em-When-You-Can”?

Will your Homecoming outreach center on a special evening when you carefully plan the evening and promote it as something special, with your “honored guests” as the focal point? Or will you individualize the approach and go after your potential members one at a time, inviting them to come and visit with your club when they can? There are lots of things to consider in making that decision.

Depending on the size of the club and the number of folks you identify as possible recruits, you may determine that one strategy or another is more appropriate. If you have only a very few people identified, planning a whole evening JUST for them could seem awkward. You may be better off to provide the same information and the same outreach on an individual basis, inviting folks to join you whenever they can. Either way **when they are there, they will be your honored guests (and should be recognized as such).**

On the other hand, if you can identify a fair number of likely prospects to invite, there may be significant advantage in planning a special **Homecoming EVENT**. Besides being able to reach more people in one presentation, with your best presenters making the pitch, seeing lots of other folks who are considering coming back is another way to encourage your prospects to take the leap. There is something psychologically satisfying about knowing that the idea of being a Lion is something that LOTS of people are considering.

Of course, even if you plan a big event for a single night presentation, not all the folks you want to reach out to will be able to come on that night. You need to be prepared to do a one-on-one approach whenever you can get those prospects in. You need to find a way to provide the *BIG* presentation on a *small* scale.

Talking Points for Your Outreach/Invitation

While you are hoping to attract folks back to Lionism, if you make that your sole reason for the invitation, some folks may say “no” as a reflex. So make that a part of why you want them to come, not the whole reason. When you talk to folks about your reason for inviting them back at this time, let them know that: 1) Lions everywhere are celebrating our 100th anniversary, and that means celebrating the club’s past and future; 2) while you don’t deny that you would like to have them back, whether or not they are ready to return, you’d like to have them there because they have been part of your history; 3) you are excited to have a chance to share with them all the accomplishments of the past and plans for the future.

Proposed Preparations/Agenda for Homecoming Night

Once all of the above decisions have been made, the use of the sections of the “Ohio Plan” that deal with inviting guests, planning the actual meeting, talking points and follow-up is recommended. **The more personal contact after the meeting the better.** Whatever approach you use, it boils down to **Just Ask**.