



# Membership Matters. Every Member Matters.

Presented by:  
Lori Meyer  
STC Associate Fellow  
Volunteer, STC Membership Committee  
Volunteer, Multiple Chapters and SIGs

Leadership Day, May 5, 2013  
#stc13 #STC13LD

## The Challenges

- ❖ Economic fallout
  - Drop in STC membership over the last several years
  - Fewer employers are paying for STC memberships
- ❖ Time constraints
  - Less time to be involved and volunteer
- ❖ Perception of value
  - Members are taking a closer look at what STC provides for them. Many other sources of techcomm information available elsewhere (blogs, social media outlets)
  - Do we know what today's technical communicators want?



## Why be an STC member? We are....

- ❖ A unique but diverse profession
  - STC is the **ONLY** professional organization whose main focus is technical communication
  - Recognized as a profession by US Dept of Labor
  - Our members have a wide range of skills, both in and out of techcomm
- ❖ A resource **AND** a community, offering both
  - Educational and career development resources
  - Networking opportunities



To provide value we offer, we need

# MEMBERS



## To develop your membership, you need to....

- ❖ Have a plan
- ❖ Tell your community's story through member testimonials
- ❖ Provide networking opportunities
- ❖ Build relationships
- ❖ Communicate regularly
- ❖ Know your members and the value they seek
- ❖ Serve as ambassadors



## Remember that....

**Every  
Member  
Matters!**



## Membership Development - Steps

1. Plan for your success
2. Find them
3. Invite them
4. Welcome them
5. Connect with them
6. Support them
7. Recognize them
8. Listen to them
9. Focus on value
10. Keep them



## Plan for your success

- ❖ Review and update your membership information
- ❖ Develop a membership plan with goals to
  - INCREASE your membership
  - ENGAGE your members
  - KEEP your members
  - BRING BACK former members
- ❖ Consider membership in your community budget
- ❖ Get the entire leadership team involved in membership development



## Find them

### ❖ Future members are everywhere

- Co-workers
- Fellow STC members who might know potential members
- Members of related organizations
- Professionals in related fields
  - User experience
  - Instructional development
  - Graphic design
  - Higher education
- Former members
- Retired technical communicators
- Students



## Invite them

### ❖ Invite potential members to your events

- Add them to your mailing list (with their permission)
- Have a special event focused on new membership
- Warmly welcome guests and introduce them

### ❖ Tell your story

- Talk about how STC has benefited you
- Share testimonials in written communication



## Invite them

- ❖ Have membership information available at every event
- ❖ Follow up and ask them to join
  - Have membership information available at every event
  - Introduce them to members whose interests match theirs
  - Contact them, thank them for attending, and encourage membership
  - Encourage student members to continue their membership after graduation (New TC Professional member level)



## Welcome them

- ❖ Send a welcome letter as soon as they join!
  - *Do not forget this step!* It is the beginning of your community's relationship with your new members
  - Your new members **WILL REMEMBER** how their membership experience began. A welcome letter sets a positive grounding for that relationship.
  - Thank them for joining – express enthusiasm; emphasize membership benefits



## Connect with them

### ❖ Introduce them

- At a chapter event
- Through your community's communication channels
- Through a buddy system to help new member know the community and meet others



## Support them

- ❖ Make sure their membership questions are answered
- ❖ Help them with membership issues
- ❖ Listen objectively and respectfully to complaints



## Recognize them

- ❖ Celebrate their accomplishments through announcements, communications channels, and special events
- ❖ Create and maintain a community awards program
- ❖ Encourage nominations for Society awards
- ❖ Thank members who perform one-time tasks
- ❖ Recognize long-term member milestones
  - Senior members
  - 20, 25, and 30 year members



## Listen to them

- ❖ Survey your members to find out their interests and needs
  - Send out a survey at least once every two years
  - Analyze the results carefully and plan actions based on member responses
  - Share survey results with membership
- ❖ Acknowledge and listen to every member idea you receive (even if you don't/can't implement it)





## Focus on value

- ❖ Communicate regularly with all members
- ❖ Find out what they want
- ❖ Turn obstacles into opportunities to provide value
  - Get sponsors to increase revenue
  - Consider joint projects with other communities
- ❖ Make volunteering a positive and educational experience



## Keep them

- ❖ Use the STC renewal period to focus on the **value** of membership
- ❖ Encourage members to tell their stories
  - Post testimonials on your website and blogs
  - Share your stories one-on-one and encourage members to do so also



## Keep them

### ❖ Follow up with non-renewing members

- **Emphasize VALUE**
  - The value STC membership provides them
  - The value their membership adds to the community
- **Make it EASY**
  - Provide quick-reference steps for renewing membership
  - Make sure your website has easy-to-find, accurate links for membership renewal
- **Make it PERSONAL**
  - Convene a contact team to touch base with non-renewing members
  - Be sincere, enthusiastic, and empathetic in all follow-ups



## Bring them back

### ❖ Reach out to former members and invite them back

- **Have a former member mailing list**
- **Contact them by phone or email**
  - Emphasize what's new and better in today's STC
  - Invite their feedback
- **Continue to invite them to community events**
- **Make sure they know that the door open for them to come back in the future if they decide not to renew**

## Resources

- ❖ Leadership Resources page on stc.org (login required)
  - Community Handbook (revised 2013)
  - New Member Recruiting Guide
  - Membership Committee Guide
  - Sample documents
- ❖ STC Membership Department
  - Barbra Sanders, [barbra.sanders@stc.org](mailto:barbra.sanders@stc.org)
- ❖ STC Membership Committee
  - Amy Vogt, chair; Lori Meyer, vice chair
- ❖ Your Community Affairs Committee (CAC) rep



## Connect with me

- ❖ Email
  - [meyer.communications@gmail.com](mailto:meyer.communications@gmail.com)
- ❖ Twitter
  - [@lrmeyer747](https://twitter.com/lrmeyer747)
- ❖ LinkedIn
  - <http://www.linkedin.com/in/lrmeyer>



**Thank you, Barbra!**

**For all you have done  
to serve and inspire  
our members!**

