



### Creating a Membership Plan

**Contributed by: Chrissy Bagby**

As someone who is creating a membership plan, if you Google membership strategies - oh, the places you'll go. But what's at the heart of creating a successful membership plan for your chapter that will keep your chapter community strong and vibrant?

- 1) **Make new friends, but keep the old.** A good membership plan incorporates recruitment of new members and retention of those already in your ranks. Sacrificing one for the other leads to potential problems down the road. Develop strategies and set goals for both.
- 2) **Know your numbers.** What are your retention and recruitment rates? Are they trending up or down? What is the optimal number of members to have in your chapter at any given moment? Make sure your plan includes tracking membership recruitment and retention numbers on a monthly basis. Identify a membership goal for your chapter and develop a strategy to get there.
- 3) **Understand and talk about your value.** You bring something unique to the table for local professionals, whether they are current or future members. Through chapter membership they'll become part of a close-knit community of peers and/or have the opportunity to gain management experience and build skills sets they may not yet have had the chance to get through their jobs. Ask your current members why they're members and use what they say to attract others.
- 4) **Encourage feedback.** Ask for feedback early and often. Capture the good and don't fear the negative. Feedback lets us know what we are doing right so we can build upon successes, and it allows us the opportunity to improve.
- 5) **Remember you work for your members.** We all do. We must be good stewards of the resources and community with which they have entrusted us. Ultimately, we are all here to ensure they have a positive experience and stay an engaged member of our community.
- 6) **Ask for help and do it early.** We should all expect to run into situations that confound us. Reach out to your support system before you feel overwhelmed. Your regional leadership team is your sounding board and can help with creative solutions. They can connect you with other chapter leaders who've faced similar situations. Also, your ARMA HQ membership team is here to help you work through solutions. Don't let problems snowball.
- 7) **Use your resources.** Beyond your regional and HQ membership teams, there are resources like the Chapter eHandbook, which, for example, helps with templates, forms, processes, and procedures. Also, the Region Leadership Conferences are a great way to connect with other leaders to discuss pain points and share successes. Your HQ staff are committed to developing opportunities for you to plug into association-wide programs – for example, the #ARMANextGen spring recruitment campaign. Make sure your chapter is involved with these to amplify your efforts.



## Chapter Connection

- 8) **Enthusiasm is infectious!** Your enthusiasm for your chapter and your leadership position is tangible. The same is true if your enthusiasm is lacking. The absolute best membership tool at your disposal is YOU. If you're having fun, people will want to be a part of what you've created.

I'll be doing a deeper dive into some of these topics in future *Chapter Connections*, so let me know if this was helpful and if there are topics you'd like to see covered. You can always reach me directly at [chrissy.bagby@armaintl.org](mailto:chrissy.bagby@armaintl.org) or 913.217.6004.