Motivating Club Members

Important note: People act to satisfy their own needs and desires, not the needs of organizations or other people!

Emphasize the benefits and satisfactions members will gain, not the benefits to you or the organization. A person's reason for joining your group will tell you how he or she wants to contribute.

- If they joined out of a need to "belong" somewhere they may be motivated by the opportunity to plan social activities or other high "people contact" projects.
- If they are interested in learning new things then they may be interested in researching a new issue for the group, helping to plan an educational program, or taking on a project that has never been done before.
- Some members are dedicated to the cause of the group. They are ideal for recruitment of new members or other public relations projects.
- If the person is there "just for the fun of it" then have them act as host when guests are present or plan social functions.
- People also join because the group relates to their major or future career. They are motivated by projects that bring them in contact with faculty or with professionals in the general community.

Things You Can Do

Sometimes there are not set recipes for motivation. It isn't always possible to create a perfect match between members and a project. However, there are some general motivators that are appreciated by everyone.

1. Be polite at all times.
2. Don't play favorites.
3. Give members a chance to take part in decisions, particularly those affecting them.
4. Treat people as individuals. Refer to people by name.
5. Ask people to do useful, challenging work. "Busy Work" soon becomes boring and causes people to lose interest.
6. Give weight to the fact that people carry out best their own ideas.
7. Utilize special talents of members that may involve experience in their majors or hobbies. This increases commitment to a project.
8. Recognize the limits. These might be time constraints, financial limitations, or personal attitudes, Identify the constraints and help people to work them out.

9. Give lots of support. Show your members that you have confidence in them and that you expect them to do their best.
10. Make use of the work people have done. It's very discouraging to work hard at something, only to have it ignored.
11. Allow people to "goof." Don't expect that someone will always be right.
12. Have fun. Laugh!! Get together for a social activity.
13. Be a good listener.
14. Criticize or reprove constructively.
15. Criticize or reprove in private.
16. Praise in public.
17. Delegate responsibility of details to members.
18. Make your wishes known by suggestions or request.
19. When you make a request or suggestion, be sure to the reason for it.
20. Play up the positive.
21. Be consistent!
22. Ask members for their counsel and help. Allow them to provide you with feedback on your performance.
23. When you are wrong or make a mistake, admit it.
24. Use every opportunity to build up in members a sense of the importance of their work.
25. Give members goals, as sense of direction, something to strive for and to achieve.
26. Allow people to do a variety of tasks. Give them the chance to change and to grow as they participate. As a leader, you need to be continually aware of the interest level of your entire group, not just the most active.

These are some ways to increase the motivation of all the people in your organization. Increasing motivation doesn't require doing everything listed in this pamphlet. But deciding to make use of one or two ideas discussed here may help to raise the level of involvement and interest demonstrated by your members.