

Chicken Soup for the Women's Soul

M-Event was created to take the frustration out of planning an M-Event.

Includes the following:

- How to Run a Soup M- Event
- Sample M-Event Agenda and Script
- Recruitment steps
- Sample telephone scripts
- Sample press release
- Sample Invitation to JOIN
- Comfortable answers to challenging questions
- Invitation

How to Run a Soup M-Event

- 1 Plan your date and time.
- 2 Plan your menu around your theme.
- 3 Prospect! Invite 4 times the guests as you wish to have attend. (If you want to sign four new members you must have 6-7 guests attend. To have 6-7 guests attend, invite 4 times that number or 24-28 guests.) Have the invitations follow your theme also.
- 4 Invite your guests! Personally! Written invitations are fine, but it is the personal contact that will get them there. If possible, drop off the invitation in person. Always call them 2-3 days prior to the event and ask if you can give them a ride! Compliment them by telling them you think they will be a fun member. Would they like to come?
- 5 Plan your activities for the night.
 - a. **Decorations:** Use a variety of bowls and dry ingredients used in soups ie pasta, spices or rice. Use bright colors! In a jam – print out some clip art and decorate the table with the pictures.
 - b. **Food:** Decide what kind of soup you will serve. You could make it easy and have cup-of-soup, homemade soup in a crock pot or purchase soup from a local restaurant or vendor. You can buy frozen soup mixes at Sam's Club or something similar that makes great soup. Have this hot and in a crock pot before the meeting begins so that you are ready to serve your soup. You can also have crackers, croissants, buns or sandwiches.
 - c. **Activity:** Encourage members and perspectives to bring their favorite readings from any of the Chicken Soup for the Soul books or any inspirational books. Also, the local library has several copies of such books if members do not or you are doing this for an extension. Also include some books with shorter readings or quotes for people who don't want to read an entire story.
 - d. As people are enjoying their soup, encourage members and perspectives to read something out of one of the inspirational books you have or they have brought.
 - e. Remember to leave time for wrap up and invitation to join.
- 6 Have fun! Getting guests to your Membership Night does not assure they will join. To assure you they will join, make this night so much fun they would hate to miss out on anything else! Plan games and activities to involve guests with your members. Take several minutes to go through the agenda and script provided in this packet. Talk about Women of Today.
- 7 Personally ask each guest if they would like to join tonight. If they choose to learn more first, this allows you to follow up with them for your next meeting.
- 8 Follow up with those guests who do not join. Send them a note thanking them for coming. If they have not said they absolutely are not interested, invite them to your next meeting and/or social. Do not quit until they say "no!"

WOMEN OF TODAY SOUP'S ON INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Date

Welcome

Icebreaker

Purpose of Women of Today

Serve Soup and Inspirational Readings

Benefits of Belonging

Invitation to Join

MINNESOTA WOMEN OF TODAY CREED **"SCRIPT" FOR M-EVENT**

WELCOME - Brief, "Hello, my name is _____. The YOUR TOWN Women of Today would like to welcome you to YOUR TOWN chapter organizational meeting. Thank you for taking the time to come and find out what we have to offer.

ICEBREAKER - About 2 minute's maximum. Time to acquaint one another. "At the beginning of our meetings we introduce ourselves and share a little information. This helps us to get to know one another and to become comfortable with speaking in front of other people. We'll go around the room, state your name and answer the ice breaker question."

EXAMPLES: "What's your favorite movie?" "Where did you grow up? When did you move here?" "What's your favorite activity?" "How many children in your family? Tell us about them."

PURPOSE OF THE WOMEN OF TODAY - 5 to 10 minutes. Give solid information. An overview of the organization and its goals. 1. Discuss the meaning behind your creed. 2. Share leadership training, fellowship and personal growth stories. 3. Tell of your commitment to each other and your community. 4. Answer any questions.

ENRICHMENT EXERCISE OR A SKIT – 20 minutes. Serve the soup and take turn reading stories or quotes from the books available. When taking the time to build friendships and learning each others personalities, we will be better able to work together toward success.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE - 10 to 15 minutes. "Our organization is geared toward women. We provide leadership training, personal growth and development, friendships and community involvement." "To become a member of the Women of Today in YOUR TOWN, we would need to receive your annual dues payment of \$ _____. "This Women of Today chapter is a part of a large network. Our chapter, the _____ Women of Today, will be here to help you get started and support you in any way we can. We believe in helping our members become strong and solid members. The State and National organization supply us with programming information, project ideas, educational and training information. They are always willing to lend a helpful hand by speaking at a meeting or help solve a problem." Next have someone go

through your state organizational structure. Be brief but include National, State District and Local. Then have a different person go through the programming areas we have to offer. Be brief. Give them the basics. Don't overwhelm them.

BENEFITS OF BELONGING - 5 minutes. Have each Women of Today member share one or two sentences on what they enjoy most about Women of Today. Ideas: Helping the community, becoming a leader, projects that were a success and those that failed (there's usually a good laugh with the flops) building self esteem and confidence, becoming a better speaker and writer, achievements, having fun, building lasting friendships and volunteer experience is often valuable in many careers.

INVITATION TO JOIN "Does anyone have any other questions we could answer?" Answer them the best you can. If you don't answer, write it down and tell them you will find out and get back to them but be sure you do. "At this point in our meeting, we would like to invite each of you to join our organization. Remember to ASK EACH PROSPECTIVE MEMBER INDIVIDUALLY. Answer any other questions they may have. Let them know the dollar amount again and who they should write the check out to. HINT - First ask those who you are sure will join. Their action will help convince the others. Thank each prospective, even if they choose not to join. Smile and tell them you will keep them informed on upcoming events. If a guest says "yes" but does not make an effort to pay, advise them that you will hold their check until you have enough members required to complete the extension.

NEXT MEETING Whether perspectives joined or not, the date, time and place of the next meeting or event should be shared with everyone before they leave. Remember, you should continually recruit new members. If the perspectives didn't join, do some more public relations and make more phone calls to prospective members before the next M-Event.

DON'T GIVE UP! Sometimes it takes 3 to 6 meetings before a perspective will join. Schedule your meetings 2 to 3 weeks after the other until the membership goal has been met. As the saying goes, OUT OF SIGHT OUT OF MIND. Don't give them the chance to forget about you.

Recruitment

The First Step - Names

- A) Locate names of prospective members
- B) Don't eliminate someone because you think (s)he may not join
- C) Utilize ideas that worked for current members when (s)he joined

You Have Names - Now What?

- A) Recruitment lists
- B) Invitations
- C) Newspapers
- D) Telephone calls

Prospective Members - Getting them to a Meeting or Event

- A) Fun meetings
- B) Personal invitations
- C) Ride offerings
- D) Incentives for current members to bring prospective members

They're at our Meeting - What do we do?

- A) Introduce prospective members as guests
- B) Assign a seasoned member to sit next to each one
- C) Invite each prospective to join
- D) Communicate during the Social Time of the Meeting
- E) Figure out what has worked best for you in the past

Hosting an effective Membership Night

- A) Have a theme meeting
- B) Send out invitations 10-14 days prior
- C) Supply appetizers or meals
- D) Plan for a mixer activity that is fun and includes everyone
- E) Gather everyone towards the end of the night and explain about the organization
- F) Answer any questions
- G) Invite prospectives to join

Reasons for Recruiting

- A) New ideas for, and fresh outlook on, chapter events
- B) Excitement to the chapter's membership
- C) More members alleviates the stress on volunteers for large projects

Always Remember

- A) Keep a positive attitude
- B) Ask, ask, ask, and ask again
- C) NEVER let anyone leave without asking that person to join
- D) Believe, and you can achieve anything!
- E) Bring incentives/gifts for attending prospective members

Sample Telephone Scripts

It's a known fact that more prospective members attend your events if they are called first. This is also the most important step in getting new members. Here is a sample.

After Sending out an Invitation to a Prospective Member

Hi, my name is [YOUR NAME] from the [YOUR CHAPTER] Women of Today.

Do you have a few moments to talk?

[IF NO] When would be a better time?

[GET A TIME TO CALL BACK & CALL BACK AT THAT TIME]

[IF YES] Thanks. Did you receive your invitation to our [EVENT NAME]?

[IF YES] Great. Did you think you would be able to join us? Do you need a ride or further directions? Did you have any questions about our organization? Thank you for your time and I will be excited to seeing you there.

[IF NO] I apologize that the invitation did not get to you yet; it was sent. Let me explain to you what will be happening, on [DATE] we will be. . [EXPLAIN YOUR EVENT] Did you think you would be able to join us? Do you need a ride or further directions? Did you have any questions about our organization? Thank you for your time and I will be excited to seeing you there.

Sample Press Release

Contact: Name Address City. State. Zip Phone Number
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(THEME) MEMBERSHIP NIGHT TO BE HELD

The (city) Women of Today invite everyone to a (theme, if there is one) Membership Night on (date given fully, such as Tuesday, June 20, 2007) at (place) at 7:00 p.m. You will have an opportunity to learn more about the Women of Today, projects such as (list local projects), meet new friends and have some fun in the process.

The Women of Today is the most dynamic, fastest growing young person's organization in the country. Women of Today members are action-oriented and interested in the betterment of their community through community service and leadership training.

For more information on how you can be a part of your community through the Women of Today, contact (name) at (phone number).

Sample Invitation to Join

Thank you for attending our Soup event. It was wonderful to see you here tonight. I have just a few questions for you. Would you like to be actively involved in your community? Could you benefit from leadership training or personal enrichment programs? Do you want to meet new people? If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, then the Women of Today is the organization for you. We meet monthly on the _____. Membership dues are only _____. Would you be interested in joining our local chapter today? You would be a wonderful addition to our group. *[If they say yes]* – get their dues, name, address, phone, email, date of birth and send to the Chapter Service Center ASAP. *[If they ask a challenging question]* – check out the comfortable answers included on the next page. *[If they say NO]* – Don't be afraid to ask why? They may have some misinformation or this may allow them a chance to ask some of those challenging questions. Please be respectful of a NO – but try to get enough information as to why. For example, you could say, 'I'm sorry to hear that you are not interested, but can I ask why?'

Comfortable Answers to Challenging Questions

Q: What is Women of Today?

A: Women of Today is a non-profit, community service organization which offers leadership training, fellowship, and the chance to make your community a better place to live.

Q: What did you say your organization is again?

A: We are a leadership-training organization who sponsors community education and fundraising activities. We have over 125 chapters across the nation. Our members are community volunteers who use or gain leadership skills through their activities within the community. Our group is composed of mostly women over age 18, from a diverse background - our diversity is one of the reasons many have joined.

Note: Often people may use this question as a "shield" to distract you or throw you off guard. It usually means they are not really listening to your first words. You will have a bit harder "sell" with a person who tosses you this question, but all is not lost. Now is the time to use what you might already know about the person (children, interests, profession) or what you can gather (new to the community, children in the background) to sell them the piece(s) of Women of Today that will be most appropriate.

Q: What kind of leadership training would I get?

A: We offer personal enrichment programs to improve your speaking, writing, leadership and personal skills. You also will have the opportunity to chair projects, work on fundraisers or hold leadership positions.

Q: In what ways can I improve my community?

A: Our chapter serves the community in many ways. **[EXPLAIN SOME OF YOUR SERVICE PROJECTS]** We are always looking for new ideas, plus we get lots of ideas from our state and national organization.

Q: What is the time commitment?

A: One of the great things about Women of Today is that you can be as involved as YOU want. There are no "requirements," but it is suggested that you attend the monthly general meetings to keep up-to-date on what is happening.

Q: How big is Women of Today?

A: The average chapter size is around 15-25 members; the national organization has about 3000 members.

Q: Why should I become involved with the organizational levels outside my community?

A: District, state and national meetings are a wonderful opportunity to get the "big picture" of our organization. It's like seeing opening night of a play - all the smaller, but equally important, pieces come together. Things make sense when you see the whole picture. We are a vital part of community service in 18 states. Across Minnesota, we have over 125 chapters and more than 1900 members. The volunteer service hours reported at these meetings are overwhelming. We work with several foundations and special charitable organizations as a state and national group, even though a great percentage of this money stays within the local communities.

Q: Why should we raise money for people in other communities?

A: We help people all around us: in our towns, counties, state, nation and globe. We help them because we believe in helping each other and helping people whom, some day, may help us or someone we love. Our support of the Kidney Foundation or the March of Dimes may one day benefit our next-door neighbor or even our own family.

Q: How come it costs so much money to join?

A: Cost wise, the Women of Today dues are less than \$3.50 per month. That money is not wasted - you receive training materials, programming ideas, project "how to" materials, educational materials from the various programming areas, public relations information and much more. The dues also provide you with a core of volunteer leaders at your disposal - the dues provide for district, state and national officers within a phone call away. At many meetings on all levels of the organization, training forums are offered. This is both educational and personal - trainings for which you would pay substantially outside of Women of Today.

Q: Why should I pay dues to be a volunteer?

A: Your dues pay for the support you and your chapter will receive from our state and national organization. These organizations provide training, monthly mailings and updates, organizational newsletters, service by officers, and a great deal of programming information.

Q: What if I do not have the money right now?

A: The cost of joining is comparable to a magazine subscription, basic cable for a month, or one self-help class. We believe that it is money well spent and believe you too will agree as soon as you join and become involved with community projects.

Q: Why do you need to have a separate organization - there are enough organizations in this town already?

A: Women of Today can complement those other organizations. We can jointly work on projects and fundraising. At the same time, we are providing opportunities for young women to support and encourage each other's development as leaders.

Q: How can I find time; I'm a very busy person?

A: You do not need to do more than you wish. You pick the projects or fun nights that fit with your interests and your schedule. We value your contributions whatever they are. Also the more members who join, the more the workload is shared. It may seem busy at first, as there are such things as organizational paperwork and items to complete. As you grow, you are more able to choose what involvement you want. Most of our members are employed, have children and partners. We have found that our members are involved in a number of areas within their communities, and we encourage that. Busy people know how to get things done and manage their time. We encourage chapter members to do what they are interested in and committed to doing. We also realize that there are times when you cannot be as active; at those times we suggest you step back and take a break so you won't get burnt out.

Q: How could I possibly fit this in; I'm already involved with too many things as it is?

A: Then you already are an active volunteer. What other groups are you involved with?

[WORK RELATED] Many of our members have joined Women of Today because it offers the chance to network with a large and diverse group of people. There are many who are looking for friendships and contacts beyond work or office friendships, and have found that variety within Women of Today.

[PERSONAL] Are you finding them to be enjoyable? Sometimes our community involvements lose their interest just as other things within our life often change. Do you find that there are sometimes not enough volunteers to get a project or activity accomplished? If that happens, I hope you will consider calling the Women of Today - we often partner with other projects and groups within the area. Many people find the educational activities and fundraising that we are a part of to be very rewarding. What is the focus of the other activities you are in?

[IF THE FOCUS IS PURELY GIVING] one of the best features of Women of Today are the personal enrichment, focus on women, educational, and informational activities in which we participate.

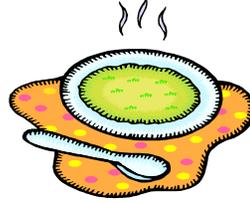
[IF THE FOCUS IS PURELY ON DOING] Women of Today feature many fundraising and community service projects. We are a fun group, you should visit a meeting sometime.

Chicken Soup for a Women's Soul

Please join the Women of Today for a delicious, hot bowl of soup, pleasant conversation and membership information.

Date:
Time:
Location:

RSVP (yes, no maybe) to:



Would you like to be actively involved in your community?
Do you want to meet new people?

Could you benefit from personal enrichment or leadership training?

If your answer is yes to one or more of these questions, then Women of Today is the organization for you. You are invited to share the experiences of thousands across the country by joining a local Women of Today Chapter.

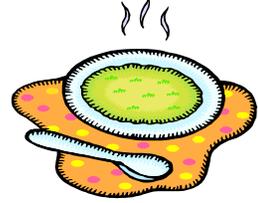
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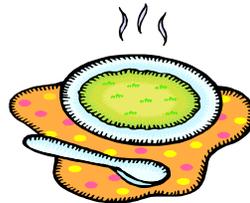
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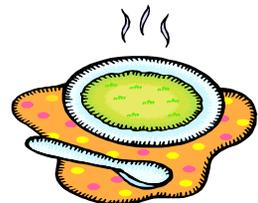
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