

# NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE SONS OF UTAH PIONEERS MEMBERSHIP ENHANCEMENT



## TOOLBOX

**Intent and Purpose:** The concept of a Membership Enhancement TOOLBOX is derived from the SUP Strategic Plan [Five-Year Outlook] that was adopted by the SUP Board early in 2023. Chapters have primary responsibility to find what works for them to strengthen their respective chapters and increase membership, however, in an effort to enhance its support to chapters, the National Society recognizes its role to provide active leadership that makes the National Society a true partner.



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**The Toolbox is designed to share ideas on recruiting, strategies to increase activity levels, increase awareness and exposure in our communities, and methods to generate enthusiasm in chapter membership.**

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With the over-arching goal to increase net membership (real growth) in the National Society by 100 members for each of the five years (2023-2027), this document is a collection of suggested methods and strategies that will provide options for chapter leadership to implement in their respective chapter to help them recruit and retain members, stabilize chapter operations, and enhance the value of membership in the National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers.

# STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING MEMBERSHIP

## (LOW HANGING FRUIT)

1. Develop a Chapter initiative to identify prospective members in specific demographic groups by life changing events. Such as:

1. New retirees
2. Those aging into Medicare
3. Those becoming empty nesters
4. Senior Missionaries returning home

These events are often accompanied by additional income, extra time and/or a desire to pursue new interests.

2. When appropriate, seek opportunities to educate Bishops, Stake Presidents, and other influential individuals in your area about SUP' s Vision Mission, Values, objectives, and activities (See Appendix A). These people are good resources for finding prospective members, providing opportunities for use of church property, recruiting guest speakers, and helping with Chapter support.
3. Set a 90-day period for focusing on 1st year renewals and members with low participation. These groups are more vulnerable to, not renewing. The risk is enhanced when first year membership is transferring from \$35 to \$60 annual dues for the National Society.
4. Contact former members of the chapter and give a personal invitation for them to return.
5. Review Life Members who live in the chapter area and give them a personal invitation to become active in the local chapter.

6. Use the World-wide Chapter listing of members who live in your general area (zip codes) and visit them, give a personal invitation for them to come and join the chapter.
7. Give a personal invitation to family and friends who might have an interest in becoming a member, regardless of where they live. If a chapter is not nearby, they can join the World-Wide Chapter, receive the quarterly award-winning Pioneer Magazine and participate in it's programs/chapter meetings via Zoom.
8. Invite family/friends to attend a chapter meeting with you to experience the fellowship and brotherhood between members of the chapter.
9. Give a gift of a "first year membership" and/or a 1-year subscription to the Pioneer Magazine to family members for special events – birthday, Christmas present, etc.
10. Explore the possibility of creating a "Youth Chapter" in your local area. This will give exposure to SUP at an earlier age and plant the seeds of future membership in the National Society. This would have to be coordinated with the National Society.
11. In chapter board meetings have "recruitment" as a permanent item on the board agenda. Discuss it and make assignments, with return and report expectations.
12. Use "Awards" or "Certificates" for longevity in the SUP or longevity in the chapter – 5, 10, 15, 20-year awards. People will continue their activity in the chapter just to receive the recognition.

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## Keys to Success

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- 1. Visits and invitations need to be made by personal contact. Someone needs to “ask” or “invite” them in person to return/join.**
- 2. Take copies of the application(s) with you when you visit them. [Some chapters only use the National application for both National and local chapters, other chapters use separate applications.]**
- 3. Approach family members, friends, business associates, church congregation members, and community influencers.**
- 4. Growth will primarily come from our peers and our circles of influence, however, this should not stop us from pursuing “younger” members which will be the vital blood life to the SUP.**



## STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING CHAPTER IMAGE AND IDENTITY IN THE COMMUNITY

1. Sponsor chapter scholarships for graduating high school/seminary students. Coordinate with the local high school/seminary principals. Have them help with the screening of applicants. Use relevant criteria, such as, academics, essay competition on pioneer values and/or pioneer life, school citizenship, writing family pioneer histories, etc.
2. Don't overlook the possibility of providing "scholarships" for elementary school students. A cash prize for some activity (essay on pioneers or pioneer life, art project depicting pioneers or pioneer life, etc.) at the school for 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, or 6<sup>th</sup> graders will automatically get the interest of school faculty and staff, as well as, the families of the participants. These cash prizes would be of a much smaller amount, e.g. \$10, \$20, \$50 would be sufficient to generate the interest. [Use your imagination.]
3. Participate in community celebrations (farmers markets, art festivals, street festivals, etc.) – SUP booth with information on the organization, membership applications, etc.
4. Have a chapter entry (with signage) in community parades – Officers riding in cars, chapter float, handcart pull, horse drawn wagon, etc.
5. Co-sponsor a community service project in partnership with other service organizations – Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Chamber of Commerce, etc.
6. Use the Modern Pioneer/21<sup>st</sup> Century Pioneer Awards to prominent members of the community to let them become familiar with your organization. As part of that you might give some thought of giving them a

“first year membership” and/or a 1-yr. subscription to the Pioneer Magazine along with the award. Each chapter should evaluate the likelihood of this yielding increased membership through those individuals continuing to renew that membership.

7. The same idea in #5 above, you may want to consider presenting the chapter meeting speakers with some kind of “token of appreciation”, e.g. chapter pin, SUP patch, key chain, pen, etc. Everyone likes a little something that shows appreciation for their time and effort.
8. Sponsor a Pioneer Skills activity in conjunction with a major community celebration. The Pioneer Skills activity could be centered around children to introduce them and their parents to Pioneer Life.
9. Use the various “Community Calendars” that are regularly updated, e.g. radio station public service announcements, local newspapers listing of upcoming events in the community, local Chamber of Commerce communications on community events, and other community organizations that may have marques or newsletters that would announce your meetings, Treks, or other events of the chapter.

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## Keys to Success

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- 1. Must have members willing to represent the chapter and present the SUP in a good light.**
- 2. Must have the chapter finances available to cover the incidental costs of participation and funding of programs.**

## STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF CHAPTER MEETINGS

1. Have the meetings at a time/place that meets the needs of your membership. (Who might you be excluding because of your meeting time/place?)
2. Assign “Greeters” at the entrances to welcome everyone who attends your meetings. A friendly smile, handshake, and a “kind word” sets the tone for the meeting, especially those who are attending for the first time.
3. Need to have quality speakers with interesting and appropriate topics. Call upon local church leaders, college or university professors, local historians, etc. who would have interesting histories of people, events, and places of interest.
4. In your meetings take some time to emphasize SUP’s responsibility for maintaining assigned monuments. Periodically, review the history of monuments in your chapter meeting. Identifying maintenance needs of certain monuments, raising the funds for repair/refurbishment, celebrating the completion of projects and rededicating these monuments will enhance camaraderie among the chapter members and enhance enthusiasm for active participation in the chapter.
5. Improve the quality of the meals at your chapter meetings. People will attend in order to have a good meal.
6. There is no set format for meetings, however, having the Pledge of Allegiance, an invocation and blessing on the food, song, recognizing visitors, recognizing birthdays for the month, etc. -- all seem to be basics.

7. Develop a simple chapter logo to use on a stationery set (letterhead, envelopes, and greeting cards) that can be used for official and inner chapter communications.
8. Establish chapter traditions at the meetings – use of a gavel, bell, horn, etc. to get attention, display of the SUP logo or banner, wearing of name badges, chapter vests, patches, chapter shirts, etc. will all add a sense of belonging and identity.
9. Have electronic media capabilities available for speakers who may wish to use Power Point or other technology for their presentations.
10. Use TREKS throughout the year to enhance interest in local monuments, historic sites, or attractions in your chapter area.
11. Have Chapter Events where spouses/partners are invited to attend – Christmas dinner & program, Sweethearts luncheon, etc. You could also consider having an annual joint meeting with the DUP camps in your area, which would include spouses/partners, of SUP/DUP members.
12. Take the opportunity to have an event or two each year that would include families, including children, grandchildren, and others. These might include a Summer Family Picnic, Halloween Costume Party, a pancake breakfast, etc.
13. Review your board structure. You might consider increasing the size of the chapter board to provide additional opportunities for chapter members to serve and have relevant responsibilities. Remember the familiar phrase, “...every member should have a ‘calling’, a ‘friend’, and to be ‘nourished’ (uplifted) ...”



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## Keys to Success

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1. Always look for ways to improve your meetings – little things make a difference.
2. A good speaker is key – ask around, your members all know someone who would be good. Check the Trail Marker Newsletter for suggestions from other chapters.
3. Good meals are always an enticement to attend meetings.
4. Look for ways to involve families. This is especially important for the “younger” members of our chapters who still have children at home.
5. Spouse/Partner involvement is a powerful tool. They encourage us, have great ideas, and love to attend our programs.



## STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING CHAPTER COMMUNICATIONS

1. Consider establishing a chapter website where chapter information can be archived and made accessible to all members – some members may not be technologically savvy, but this will attract younger members. This would also be a good way of keeping chapter members informed of chapter happenings.
2. The chapter needs to produce a newsletter, preferably each month, that keeps members informed of coming events, recent happenings in the chapter, news of individuals in the chapter, etc. This will keep them connected.
3. A postcard sent via USPS to each member the week before the upcoming meeting is a good way to remind them of the meetings.
4. A small token of appreciation/gift personally delivered to each member by chapter leadership during the Christmas Season goes a long way to endearing members to the chapter.
5. The creation of a Facebook page for the local chapter is a good way of communicating with chapter members, this would be especially appealing to younger members. One of the younger members may even be willing to create it and manage it.
6. Telephone calls by the chapter leadership to chapter members who may be experiencing health issues, personal tragedies, or other unfavorable circumstances in their lives, is especially appreciated by them and endears the chapter to them.

7. For chapters who have a small, hometown newspaper, the chapter should establish a good relationship with the reporters/editors of the newspaper and provide them information on the happenings and/or upcoming events of the Chapter.
8. The chapter should provide information on their activities and events to the Trail Marker Newsletter, as often as possible, not just the four required times a year to qualify for the Award of Excellence. Many people view the Trail Marker on-line who are not currently members of SUP. If they see what you are doing it might spark an interest in becoming a member of your chapter.

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## Keys to Success

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1. Electronic media is not the wave of the future, it is here now. We can either embrace it or get left in the dust. The sooner we become conversant with it, the sooner we will be more attractive to younger prospective members.
2. If a chapter decides to create a Facebook page or a website, you must have someone to maintain them and keep them current. If not, then don't do it.
3. The more opportunities that we have to reach out to the chapter members and have contact with them the more likely they are to feel connected and have a desire to participate.



## STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING CHAPTER FINANCES

1. Scholarships: In order to provide scholarships, the chapter needs a way to develop the funds to award the scholarships. Most chapters who provide scholarships receive donations from members. Scholarships are usually \$500-\$2,000 per scholarship. Some chapters partner with other organizations in the community – banks, businesses, etc. who are often looking for opportunities to participate in such activities, as long as they get part of the credit.
2. Review your chapter dues structure. No one wants to raise dues, however, there are costs involved in some of these efforts to increase our membership, improving chapter communications, involvement in community events, etc. Costs associated with signage, rental of facilities/equipment, rising cost of meals, postage, Modern Pioneer awards (plaques), printing, etc. all need to be covered. You may need to spend some money in order to get new members to join. In the long run, the influx of new members' dues will cover much of the increased cost. *(As an example: One chapter has annual dues of \$160. This amount covers the cost of the monthly luncheon meals. They have 85 members, but the average attendance each month is 50. The difference in those paying dues and those who don't attend on any given month actually end up making it possible to pay for the other incidental expenses.)*
3. Many service organizations in communities have annual community breakfasts, picnics, or other public events for which they accept donations. A chapter might look at that possibility, being careful not to violate the provisions of being a sub-unit of the Non-Profit status of the National Society.

4. As a sub-unit of the National Society, a chapter is eligible to receive funds that may be bequeathed to them by individuals as part of that person's estate planning. Don't be afraid to make this possibility known to your membership. Many individuals are looking for worthy causes, be a worthy cause.
5. Chapter members and other individuals, as part of their tax strategy, may make regular or periodic charitable gifts to the chapter. Be sure to provide them with a receipt that clearly identifies the charitable donation.

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## Keys to Success

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1. Each chapter's circumstances may be different, however, in each chapter there are those individuals who have funds that they are looking to donate to a "worthy cause". We need to be a "worthy cause".
2. Individual chapter members need to realize that it costs money to belong to the SUP. If we provide them a good product that is of value to them, they will continue to support the chapter, even if it may cost them a little bit more.



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# IN SUMMARY

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**It is recognized that each chapter is different – different locations, different circumstances, different demographics, and different expectations of what membership in the National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers means.**

**As you review these items in the “TOOLBOX”, some of the chapters are already doing many of them. These are simply suggestions for your considerations. If they don’t fit your particular circumstances, don’t use them. If you feel that they might help in strengthening your chapter, try them.**

**These are not new ideas, and the TOOLBOX doesn’t contain every tool that is in the “Shed”. If you find something else that works for you, please share it. We are confident that there are at least a few things somewhere in these suggestions that will help each Chapter increase its membership, improve the quality of its meetings, improve its image in the community, and enhance the feelings of fellowship and brotherhood amongst its members.**

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# APPENDIX A



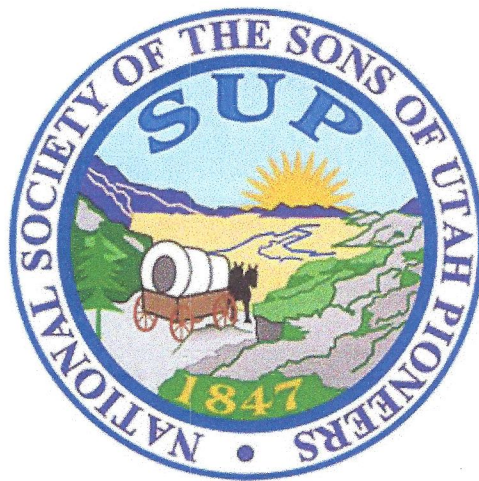
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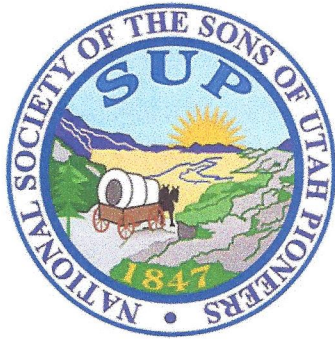
VISION STATEMENT

MISSION STATEMENT

PIONEER VALUES STATEMENT

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# VISION STATEMENT

**A National Society with an international influence to honor and preserve the values, memory, and heritage of pioneers for all generations.**



**MISSION STATEMENT  
OF THE  
NATIONAL SOCIETY OF  
THE SONS OF UTAH PIONEERS**



**Come to know our fathers and turn our hearts to  
them,**

**Preserve the memory and heritage of the early  
pioneers of the Utah Territory and the western  
U.S.,**

**Honor present-day pioneers worldwide who  
exemplify these pioneer values, AND**

**Teach these same values to the youth who will be  
tomorrow's pioneers.**



# PIONEER VALUES STATEMENT

We Honor the Pioneers for their  
Faith in God,  
Devotion to Family,  
Loyalty to Church and Country,  
Hard Work and Service to Others,  
Courage in Adversity,  
Personal Integrity, and  
Unyielding Determination.

**NOTES**



# NOTES



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