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**Membership Handbook:**

*The guide to recruitment, development, and retention*

**Mission statement:**

The mission is to create and develop a purposeful plan of action for local chapters to recruit, develop, and retain members to sustain the organization for generations to come.

**Strategic Goal:**

The goal of this handbook is to provide guidance on identifying and recruiting young professionals seeking community establishment, providing development opportunities to foster personal and professional growth, and to ultimately retain a sustainable membership environment for future generations.

**Who is this for?**

Local chapter leaders in JCI who are feeling stuck, overwhelmed, or just need a little extra push for actionable steps to grow your membership – and retain it.

If you feel like you’re barely keeping your head above water, it’s time to take a step back, look at the bigger picture, and create a plan of action that will truly help you maintain momentum this year and for the future of your chapter.

*Basically, it’s for you.*

**Your Why + Purpose**

Before you define your strategy, let’s talk about you. (You’re amazing if nobody has told you yet today!)

Your vision and purpose for the chapter will filter into everything else that happens, so it’s important to dig in deep to the why behind the what of everything you plan to do. Whether you realize it or not, purpose drives you. You need a clear vision and expectations for yourself and others who surround you to find a place of passion to move forward.

*When talking to someone about JCI, who would get them more excited? A person who is very ‘meh’ about things, or someone who is very passionate and excited about Jaycees?*

**Questions to ask yourself first:**

● What are your long-term and short-term goals?

● What’s the vision for the impact you’ll make this year (and beyond)?

● How do you plan to impact your community?

● Imagine the ideal situation:

○ What does it look like?

○ How many members do you have?

○ How does it make you feel?

○ What is missing from that right now?

○ What are the steps you need to take to get there?

You may not have all the answers right now, but this guide will provide you with the tools to get there.

Remember this: the people you choose to engage in solidifying your focus and carrying out your strategy will determine the progress you make on advancing your mission more than anything else.

Surround yourself with people who will drive you towards your vision, not distract you from it. If you focus on the negative, you see the negative. Keep your vision in mind to stay on track, and you’ll be able to activate effectively for growth.

**Questions to Consider for your Chapter:**

Overall chapter growth has a few components: number of new members, scheduled activities and impact in the community. The following questions should be asked and answered throughout the year.

* Is your chapter promoting the mission of JCI?
* Are your bylaws and constitution current and available to every member?
* Are Board members promoting the ultimate goals of the chapter?
* What is the progress of the chapter plan?
* Are your events/meetings accessible?
* Is your chapter inclusive?
* Are members participating?
* Are members passionate?
* Are ALL your members growing?
* In what ways is our chapter diverse, and in what ways can we become more diverse?
* Do members seem satisfied with projects and project assignments?
* What is the chapter’s image in the community? (Hint: it should be the mission of JCI!!!)
* Does the community turn to the Junior Chamber for help?
* Do young people turn to the Junior Chamber to grow?

Special attention must be made to the lasting effects involvement has had on past members. The following additional questions should be asked and answered:

● Did being a member of the chapter give past members the skills they needed to get a better job?

● Did their involvement make them better citizens?

● Did their involvement give them the courage to stand and be counted?

● Did their involvement give them more confidence in taking and completing tasks?

True chapter growth is not a year-long goal. It is a lifetime goal for the chapter. A member’s improved standing in the community should be indicative of personal growth. After all, the Junior Chamber is all about learning and improving ourselves and our communities. The only way we truly achieve this improvement is by practice. The results are worth it. The best gift a chapter can give a community is a better, more involved citizenry.

**Growth, Simplified.**

● Determination of the chapter’s membership needs

● Development of a plan that follows chapter objectives

● Scheduling of activities to meet the plan

● Following through with scheduled activities

● Make sure to have a dedicated area at each event to promote your chapter

● Staff this area with members who are comfortable talking with prospects

● Always have a survey, but don’t expect it to be filled out without offering a prize

● Talking with people and exchanging contact information is the best way to find ACTIVE members

The first growth step involves the determination of the number of members the chapter will need to fulfill objectives. Officers should look at the chapter’s calendar of events and determine whether enough manpower is available to accomplish scheduled activities. This should be reviewed along with a roster listing the names of members and renewal dates. The membership plan (which is part of the overall chapter plan), should also be reviewed.

***See*** [***Appendix A***](https://docs.google.com/document/d/19GLMbQcJw-e701JLLz6jNdZ4OYJJ10k_/edit) ***for a downloadable Membership Plan.***

**Understanding Your Audience**

If you don’t know who you’re speaking to, you’re speaking to, well, nobody.

Think about your ideal member: they’re involved, they’re passionate, they're inclusive, they want to connect with others and advance their community for good, and they add diversity to your chapter. Yes, every chapter has different needs and goals, but you need members that you can enable to trust the future of your chapter for generations to come.

● What are their needs and goals?

● What drives them?

● What value can they find from JCI?

● Where do they spend time?

● What else do you need to know about them?

As a whole, they should be in a life stage where they are finding their place: whether they’re right out of school, transitioning to a new job, or new to the area, they need to find a welcoming community that is genuine and connected. Show them the value that JCI brings.

***See*** [***Appendix B***](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1_7NR3BOEJvywK1TDpFThe93jS1AJ96R1) ***for the Ideal Member and Growth from JCI USA.***

**Defining the Member Experience:**

* *Discovery* – The prospect has a problem (or a social concern) that deeply troubles them.
* *Contemplation* – The prospect considers whether your membership offers a viable solution to the problem.
* *Activation* – The prospect completes the buying action. They join your membership.
* *Onboarding* – The new member looks for validation of their buying decision.
* *First 30 Days* – The new member assesses early experiences to determine if promises of value will be kept.
* *Beyond 30 Days* – The member continues to assess whether their investment has been worthwhile.
* *Pre-Renewal* – The member faces the renewal decision.
* *Post-Renewal* – The member assesses whether their loyalty is appreciated.

**Recruitment, Development, and Retention**

**Recruitment** is essential to your local organization because the members you gain today will be the leaders you develop for tomorrow. You must recruit your ideal members with the long-term vision of your chapter in mind. This will require you to identify your organization’s purpose, passion, and goals; determine who your ideal members are; and ultimately provide an engaging and attractive experience.

**Simple Recruiting Method- Have a Conversation:**

* ALWAYS keep a positive attitude.
* Be honest, be yourself. You don’t have to have a prepared speech!
* Introduce yourself, making sure to ask the name of the person with whom you are talking.
* Listen to those you are trying to recruit. Have a conversation with them.
* Find out information about the person. Asking what a person does for work is a great starter question.
* Follow up: what do you do for fun?
* Next: What do you do to impact your community? What is it that you care about?
* This last question will tell you what part of JCI to highlight.
* Talk about specific projects or programs using information learned in step two.
* Share an example of how you have grown because of the Jaycees.
* Invite the prospect to join you at an event, or give them information about an upcoming event they may enjoy.
* Always give them a JCI Michigan business card. Write your contact info on the card, invite them to contact you any time. TELL THEM THE BEST WAY TO REACH YOU. Or, use the JCI Michigan stickers AS business cards!
* If it’s going really well, add each other on social media.
* Usually, if a prospect gives you their contact information, THEY WANT YOU TO CONTACT THEM.
* Always remember this, especially after a big event where people give you their information.
* Follow up. Follow through. And when in doubt….
* FOLLOW THE MISSION.

***See*** [***Appendix C***](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1_7NR3BOEJvywK1TDpFThe93jS1AJ96R1) ***for JCI USA Action Guide on Recruitment***

**Recruitment Strategies:**

* **Member Referrals**: have your existing membership reach out to family, friends, coworkers, and anyone they may know in the community. Remember, providing a list of 10 potential members to your president is one task on your Passport to Civic Leadership!
* **Prospective and New Members:** If a prospective or newly joined member comes to an event or meeting, encourage them to bring a friend along with them.
* **Business Leaders:** Reach out to local businesses. The owners/managers/employees may all be potential members. Share how JCI can offer opportunities to improve upon professional skills, and enquire if they would be willing to join. If the owners/managers are not of Jaycee-age, they may have employees who are, and they may even sponsor their employees’ dues. If feasible, offer some form of incentive for the businesses; i.e. offer to put their logo on an event flyer or purchase gift cards to their store and include that in your membership welcome packet.
* **Welcome Wagon:** Reach out to local real estate agents and see if they would include flyers for your JCI chapter in their packets for new homebuyers in the area. Host “New to Town” mingling socials, possibly partnering with other entities in town.
* **Membership Booth:** Set up a booth at a high pedestrian location, or participate in street fairs and events with a membership booth. Offer to provide assistance to another community entity hosting an event, in trade for being able to set up a membership booth (i.e. a community theatre group is performing a play, the JCI chapter is working concessions at the play, with a JCI membership booth and a theatre group booth).
* **Voter Registration Lists:** These can be obtained from the county courthouse and used for mass mailing.
* **Signature Projects:** ALWAYS have a membership booth at your signature projects. Running signature projects are a great way to promote your chapter throughout the community and to prospects!
* **Open Trainings:** Offer trainings in various topics, made available to everyone in your community. Topic examples: How to Manage a 401K, Resume Building, Cooking Classes, Spanish for Beginners, Reducing Your Carbon Footprint, Yoga for Beginners, etc. Promote these events throughout your community.
* **Guest Speakers:** Bring guest speakers to either your monthly General Membership Meetings, or host an afternoon with a guest speaker as an event. Examples: motivational speakers, authors, historians, elected officials, business owners, coaches, leaders from organizations, etc. These can all be local guest speakers or you can reach out to anyone in mind and book them to come. Remember, if you are inviting a guest speaker, it is best practice to have a thank you gift for them, especially if they are speaking free of charge.
* **Membership Nights or M-Nights:** these are events specifically aimed at recruiting new members. Think of these as a sort of open house to showcase your chapter to prospective members. They can be anything from a bowling night, an informal social at a bar, board game night, summer bbq, pumpkin carving night, etc. Open up your chapter socials as M-nights and promote them throughout your community.

***See*** [***Appendix D***](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1_7NR3BOEJvywK1TDpFThe93jS1AJ96R1) ***for more info on M-Nights!***

**Contests and Incentives**

Recruiting can be promoted through contests and incentives for members. These need not be complex or expensive. The most important step when developing an incentive program is to identify the types of incentives that will interest the members. It is also vital that you do not rely on tangible incentives. These are just ideas to make the work a little more fun! Examples:

* Recognition in the chapter, district, region, or state newsletter
* Special parking at meetings
* Name mentioned in a letter to the editor of the local newspaper
* Gifts, plaques, pins
* Tickets to a sporting or arts event
* Registration to a state event or conference

Have fun with it! There’s a photo floating around from a chapter from the 1960’s. The members were next to a sign that read “I’m the ‘lazy Jaycee’. I can’t remove this sign until I recruit one new member for our club”. The sign would be placed in member’s yards. Let’s avoid calling members lazy, but be creative and have fun with encouraging members to recruit.

***Check out JCI USA’s webinars on Membership Recruitment:*** [***Recruitment A***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DixuDU6p9mU&list=PLsYAnFEwYvBxrvttMeydF761v1NZr_0f1&index=5)[***Recruitment B***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcyKVtKsLNY&list=PLsYAnFEwYvBxrvttMeydF761v1NZr_0f1&index=22)

**Development** is the answer to the long-debated question of whether leaders are born or if they can be taught to lead. The truth is that individuals can be trained to become better leaders in your organization if they’re provided with the right development opportunities. This is the key to continuous growth in your organization. It is your responsibility to ensure that adequate development opportunities are provided to your members.

**Passport to Civic Leadership (Degrees)**

This program is JCI USA’s number one tool for member activation & retention. It’s designed for members to achieve the maximum value from their Jaycee membership by being an active member.

Any questions about this program can be directed to your district director, state Membership VP at [membership@jcimi.org](mailto:membership@jcimi.org) or the National Program Manager at [passport@jciusa.org](mailto:passport@jciusa.org).

**The Fine Print**

* **Degrees must be achieved in the current year.** Backdating is not permitted.
* **Qualifications for degrees may be worked on simultaneously!** However, you will not advance a degree until all requirements for the lower degree are complete. For example, you may have all requirements for your 5th degree completed, but are still working on your 4th. Once you complete your 4th degree, your 5th degree will also be submitted and that’s what level you will be at.
* **If you don’t finish a degree in one year, don’t worry!** You won’t have to start it over; the requirements you already completed will remain intact.
* **Activity should be “checked off”** using the JCI USA Passport Document: [Passport](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScEDGkWWO0Hr_gOKVAMEinzJ_e1MA0Q9_BcXqh8QR_ak1Zm4g/viewform)
* **To Keep Track of Your Progress:** email [membership@jcimi.org](mailto:membership@jcimi.org) to enroll. A google drive will be sent to you and your chapter president so you can keep up with your progress.
* **Chapter presidents need to approve** all Passport activities. The google drive created for each individual member will also be shared with the chapter president so they can approve the tasks.

***See*** [***Appendix E***](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1_7NR3BOEJvywK1TDpFThe93jS1AJ96R1) ***for Passport Tasks.***

***See*** [***Appendix F***](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1_7NR3BOEJvywK1TDpFThe93jS1AJ96R1) ***for more info on Passport.***

***See*** [***Appendix G***](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1_7NR3BOEJvywK1TDpFThe93jS1AJ96R1) ***for Passport Resources.***

**30-60-90 Activation**

Your chapter is gaining new members! Congratulations! Here’s a guide to activating your new members, and a timeline to do so.

**30 Days Since Joining**

* Give the new member a welcome packet
  + Newsletter
  + Personalized letter from President
  + Contact info for other chapter members
  + Invites to social media/mailing lists
  + Passport to Civic Leadership information
  + List of member benefits
  + Info on the chapter and JCI MI
  + Swag
  + Member survey (include interests/hobbies, family, occupation, etc)
* Establish a mentor for the new member

***See*** [***Appendix H***](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oWY8HA6ofaS82vbJI6r1Sgd950aKpVE2L0hzIE8nUkg/edit) ***for an example Member Survey.***

***See*** [***Appendix I***](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1w47gyK0JQ4d54YBrmMjuSAybCNK2bg9q/edit) ***for a JCI USA Member Survey.***

**60 Days Since Joining**

* Hold a New Member Orientation
  + Can be for a group or 1 on 1
* Invite the new member to upcoming events/GMM's
* Encourage them to enroll in Passport to Civic Leadership
* Keep in contact, get to know the new member, make them feel welcomed

**90 Days Since Joining**

* Ask them to join a committee for an upcoming project
* Have them make a referral for new member, or encourage them to invite a friend
* Invite them to a State conference or District event (if applicable)
* Check in with them on their Passport progress, congratulate them on progress made

*If a member is not activated in their first year of membership, they have only a 50% chance of remaining a member. If they make it to their 2nd year as a Jaycee, they have a 65% chance of remaining a member. By their 3rd year as a member, there is an 80% chance they will stay a member until they age out.*

***Check out these JCI USA Webinars:*** [***Chapter Health and Wellness***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4cwuFmPbeA&list=PLsYAnFEwYvBxrvttMeydF761v1NZr_0f1&index=20)***,*** [***Motivating Your Members***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSk-xgonWlw&list=PLsYAnFEwYvBxrvttMeydF761v1NZr_0f1&index=23)

**Retention** is a direct reflection of how successful you are at implementing and executing your plan of action. If your current members don’t renew, the perspective of potential members may be influenced negatively. It is your job to ensure you are providing a valuable experience to each member who is onboarded and create ongoing value to them through genuine connections.

**90-60-30 Day Retention**

**90 Days Before Renewal**

If you haven't established contact with a member, now is the time to do so! Reach out to them, invite them to EVERYTHING!

**60 Days Before Renewal**

* Contact them and remind them their renewal is coming up
* Continue to invite them to everything, even if you need to just set up a 1 on 1 coffee outing- remember to not make it only business, don't Jaycee vomit- Make them feel valued, ask about their life
* If contact is difficult, ask their mentor or a member close to them to reach out

**30 Days Before Renewal**

* Gently remind the member their renewal is approaching
  + If money is an issue, and your chapter offers assistance or sponsorship, let them know!
* Reach out to the JCI Michigan membership team if you need help contacting
* Never bully or pressure a renewal

**Retention Tips:**

* Find out why the member joined, and make sure your chapter is upholding what drew them in. For example, if they joined for networking opportunities, make sure your chapter is holding networking events.
* Ensure that each member feels respected, valued, and included. Avoid cliques and gossip, if you see cliques and gossip starting, put an end to it.
* Recognize members on social media, in newsletters, at GMM’s, etc. Examples- birthday/anniversary posts, job promotion announcements, congratulating their accomplishments (in Jaycees or in general). Feature “Meet the Members” with a bio and picture on social media or in newsletters. If your chapter can afford it, do some sort of birthday thing for members each month at GMM’s- i.e., 3 birthdays this month, those 3 members each get a drink or a dessert on the chapter. Or they get a $5 gift card to a coffee shop.
* Encourage members to run a relaxed social around their interests. The socials don’t have to be huge planned out events- for example, a member loves doing crafts, so have a social where they teach the other members whatever craft they enjoy. Another member is really into astrology, so they share about that to everyone. A third member spends a lot of their time restoring classic cars, so they can share about the restorations they’ve worked on. You could do separate socials for each member to share, or do a show-and-tell style one-day thing. Everyone participates.
* Invite members to write an article for the chapter newsletter- it could be about a local topic/issue, personal interest, Jaycee-related, etc.

***Check out JCI USA’s webinars on Membership Retention:*** [***Retention A***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCO6F3j3Qo8&list=PLsYAnFEwYvBxrvttMeydF761v1NZr_0f1&index=4)[***Retention B***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-qhYtcocG0)

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: It’s More Than You May Think**

The foundational definition is the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.

**Diversity includes many facets, such as:**

● Race

● Gender

● Sexual orientation

● Cultural identity

● Physical capabilities

● Mental capabilities

● Economic status

● Occupation

● Religion

● Age

● And many more – DEI is an ever-evolving topic.

How will you ensure that everyone has a seat at the table, and a voice in the organization? Take a reflective look and identify who is or is not represented in your chapter. Why are they not represented? How can your chapter do more to facilitate equity and inclusivity to create space and be welcoming?

**Here’s a DEI framework to consider:**

Increase Awareness →

Promote Education →

Elevate Equity →

Lead Inclusively

Some DEI things to consider for your chapter:

* Include pronouns (if the person is open to sharing their pronouns) on nametags/emails/member directories
* Take into consideration if there are any accessibility limits to your meetings/events- i.e. if you have virtual meetings or events, is closed captioning offered? If you meet in a public space, are there accessible entrances for wheelchairs or other mobility aids?
* If you have programming specifically for Christian holidays (Easter egg hunts, Christmas events), is there programming you can incorporate for other religions?
* Look at DEI initiatives in your community, and explore how your chapter can participate to further that initiative.
* Explore partnerships with local organizations that focus on marginalized groups. For example, LGBTQ groups, the ARC/Special Olympics, NAACP, First Nations tribes, Latinx organizations, NCAPA, etc
* Host trainings on the topic of DEI, open the trainings up to the public.

**Helpful resources:**

* JCI-Michigan’s DEI Diretor - [dei@jcimi.org](mailto:dei@jcimi.org)
  + 2023 DEI Director’s Calendly: <https://calendly.com/deijcimi>
* [Four Pillars of JCI-Michigan’s DEI Strategy](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qTH9_bvGLAx_8_wFNt2LSR8CXXrFK0l2KyeYdwVg7G0/edit?usp=sharing)
* [DEI Calendar 2023](https://www.worktango.com/resources/articles/dei-planning-calendar-for-2023)
* [DEI Initiatives - 6 Questions to Ask](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MSLGKwASYXYumO4UPok-rGDNFCTLTtkR/view?usp=sharing)

**Under 20 Corrective Action Plan:**

Chapters require a minimum of 10 members to retain their charter. However, chapters under 20 must still either submit a Corrective Action Plan to JCI USA, or pay the difference in dues to JCI USA. For example, if a chapter has 15 members, they must pay a fee for the 5 members they are short. As of 2023, that fee was $25/member.

JCI USA does an assessment of every chapter’s GlueUP in November of every year, and those under 20 members receive a letter instructing them of the process of choosing between a Corrective Action Plan or paying the invoice. Chapters have until the first week of January to decide which route they would like and take action.

If choosing to submit a Corrective Action Plan, the chapter has until Jan 15th to submit the plan, which is then reviewed by the National President. The plan must include a meeting with a Membership Director or a designee. If approved, on Feb 1st the chapter has 90 days to get their membership to 20.

If the chapter has made progress, but is not up to 20 by the end of the 90-day period, they may request an additional 90 days to continue the plan, at the discretion of the National President. For example, if a chapter has been showing significant efforts and has recruited 3 new members but still needs 2 more to get to 20, they may be allowed additional time.

If you have any questions, you can email [membership@jcimi.org](mailto:membership@jcimi.org) for more information and assistance.

***See*** [***Attachment J***](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1_7NR3BOEJvywK1TDpFThe93jS1AJ96R1) ***for the Under 20 Letter and Resources.***

**Extensions (New Chapters):**

Creating a new chapter requires a minimum of 10 members. It is a four-part process, consisting of different stages, a Pre-Approval, Extending, Final Approval, and Post Approval process. If you are interested in creating a new chapter, please email [membership@jcimi.org](mailto:membership@jcimi.org) for assistance and guidance.

1. Pre-Approval Process shall consist of; the person or group organizing a new extension shall supply a plan of action to the Extensions Committee that consists of a budget, timeline, and detailed plan of how the Chapter is going to be started. A contact list of everyone involved in the extension shall also be supplied as part of the Pre-Approval Process, along with the name of the proposed Chair. The proposed Chair must have (1) been a Corporation or Local Chapter Officer for 2 years, or (2) served as a Local Chapter President, or (3) been an individual member for 4 years. The proposed Chair shall serve as the Chairman of the Board of the extended chapter during the Post Approval Process. The Extensions Committee shall review the Extension Plan, then provide feedback and recommendations for changes or provide a Pre-Approval.
2. The person or group organizing an extension shall supply a monthly progress update about the extension to the Extensions Committee. The suggested timeline to complete an extension is a 3 month or 90 day period.
3. A Final Approval Process shall consist of; the person or group organizing the extension shall provide to the Extensions Committee, all completed extension paperwork, a check for the charter fee, a check for a minimum of 10 charter members’ dues, and a minimum of 10 charter membership completed applications. The Extensions Committee shall review all extension submissions to make sure everything is complete and then shall submit to the State President for final approval.
4. Post Approval Process shall consist of; once the new Chapter’s paperwork is submitted to the Michigan Jaycees, the Michigan Jaycees Legal Counsel shall be presented a copy of the paperwork so he or she can work with the new extension to make sure all paperwork is properly filed with the Jaycees, State of Michigan and Internal Revenue Service. The Extensions Committee shall assign one member for the Committee to serve as a liaison to a newly chartered chapter to serve as a liaison for one (1) year with that chapter. The Extensions Committee liaison will serve as an additional resource for the chapter beside the individual or group extending the chapter and the assigned District Director.