

# 5 Ways To Improve Engagement Through Association Chapter Member New Year's Resolutions



Every year many of your association chapter members set new year's resolutions, making goals for things they want to accomplish – professionally and personally – in the new year. Since you're always looking for ways to improve member engagement in your association chapter, how about giving your members ideas for making their resolutions stick, by tying professional development and chapter engagement to those resolutions?



## The science behind resolutions

According to research, intentional thoughts and suggestions can positively impact a person's ability to remember something, as well as how they perform and behave related to those thoughts and suggestions. The reason is something called response expectancies: the way we anticipate a response to a situation influences how we will respond to it. In other words, once a person believes something will happen, their behaviors, thoughts and reactions all play a role in making it happen. And the more specific those behaviors, thoughts and reactions, the stronger the likelihood that they become reality.

## 5 chapter-related New Year's resolutions for your association chapter members

Your members may know they want to make some changes in the new year, but that doesn't mean they know exactly what they want to do or need to do to make them happen. Here are five chapter-related recommendations for member resolutions that can give your members and your chapter the boost and connections to turn those resolutions into realities.



**Attend more events in a year.** Or a quarter, or a month. Maybe some of your members have been “phoning it in” the past few years, keeping their membership active and paying their dues but not doing much to engage with the chapter. But they know they want (and need) to be involved, to connect with other members and network more. “Attending more events” is very general though, and general thoughts are less likely to become specific actions. Recommend they make more specific resolutions, like attending your annual conference or attending a monthly meeting once a quarter. Or even something like “meet someone new at every meeting they attend and have coffee with that person outside of the meeting.”

**Increase their volunteer time.** If you’re like pretty much every association chapter, you’re always looking for chapter volunteers. Volunteering benefits your chapter – allowing you to hold all your great programming and keep the chapter operating – but your members may not realize how much volunteering can also help them. Association chapter volunteering allows them to connect with new people, be “in the know” sooner about goings on in your chapter and changes in your industry, etc. Many members will tell you that they don’t have the time to volunteer, so set up some of your volunteer needs as micro-volunteering opportunities and share how volunteering can fit easily into their schedules.

**Drive chapter improvements.** There’s a good chance some of your members, though happy and engaged, would like to see chapter changes somewhere, like added programming, a new meeting location, more interesting speakers, etc. First, remind members that you’re always open to suggestions, but that changes can’t happen without their help; ask what they’d like to see that you don’t currently offer. If they have something in mind, make it easy for them to contact someone on your board (provide contact information) to start the discussion about a new association chapter initiative or a committee to make their suggestion reality.

**Become a thought leader.** Maybe you have members interested in becoming thought leaders – at their jobs, in your chapter, your industry and maybe even in the community. If they’ve benefitted from a connection made through the chapter or implemented something at work that they learned at one of your education sessions, they can and should share that with the board and the chapter should hear about it, through your association chapter emails, newsletter, website, video, meetings, etc.

**Achieve career goals with chapter engagement.** It’s likely you have members trying to get promoted at work or who want to move into new jobs. There’s a good chance they need additional education, certifications or even connections before they can make that move. Suggest they commit



to doing things that will help them get what they need, like attending an association chapter networking event to make new contacts in the industry, coming to a meeting to hear an relevant speaker or signing up for a continuing education session. Even volunteering can help them get the skills and the connections they need to make the career shifts they want.

### **The power of suggestion: a powerful motivator for your association chapter members**

For resolutions to have their intended impact on your members and on the chapter, it's your job to help your association chapter members keep their resolutions top of mind and reachable. Use your email communications and chapter meetings to bring up the topic; check in with members and see how they're doing meeting their resolutions; and ask how you can help.

Many of your members believe in the power of New Year's resolutions. If you can show them how easy it can be to connect their resolutions to your association chapter, your members will be happier and more engaged, which are some of the many resolutions you probably want to come true for your own chapter.

