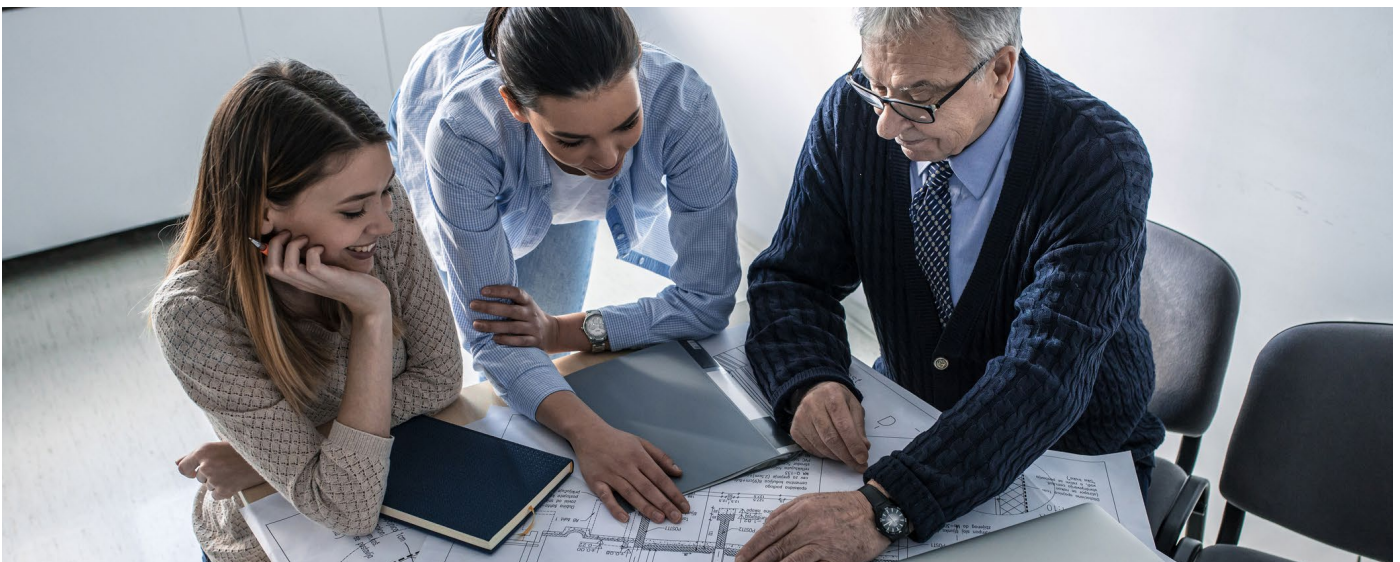


Can Lifetime Memberships Keep Retirees Involved in Your Association Chapter?



You may not have many association chapter members reaching retirement age, or maybe you do. Either way, it's important for association chapter member retention and the longevity of your chapter (and for the retirees themselves) to have a plan for keeping retirees as members and engaged in chapter activities.



Just because they've retired, doesn't mean that they should no longer be connected to the industry. They'll benefit from remaining members and they have many benefits to offer to your chapter. How much you charge in dues could be the first step to keeping retirees active in your association chapter. As people retire, the amount they have to spend on what they consider "non-essentials" often decreases. It's important for them to see your chapter as an essential service worth their money and time.

Provide a Lifetime Membership and Extra Benefits Just for Retirees

Right now, you may be charging all of your association chapter members the same amount for dues; or perhaps you have a lower membership rate for groups like your college students. Why not a special, one-time payment, lifetime membership rate for retirees? Your yearly membership dues

might be too expensive for individuals no longer working in the industry. But perhaps a one-time payment would be affordable.

Once you decide to offer a lifetime membership to retirees, publicize the decision, to current members and retirees who've left the chapter as well as to other retirees in your industry. Remind them of the benefits of membership in your association chapter and tell them about any benefits you've added just for them, like a private forum to connect with other retirees and discuss topics important in this next chapter of their lives; a job board that includes consulting opportunities; or even scholarships you have available to retirees looking to increase their skills in areas they didn't have time to explore before they retired.

Experience Counts! Your Association Chapter Wins When Retirees Stick Around

This group probably has a lot more time on their hands than many of your members, and as a result, participating in chapter activities could fit more easily into their schedules. And the time they've spent in their careers has given them the knowledge and expertise that other members would love access to.

Need volunteers to plan an activity? Have an open position on your board? You may find it easier to ask one of your retired association chapter members than a member working full-time to join the board or get involved in other ways, as a mentor, speaker, etc.

Your retirees have been through a lot since they left their full-time positions; they navigated the actual process of retiring, and most likely they have gained a new, expanded understanding of areas like financial planning, medical insurance, estate planning, Social Security, Medicare, and life overall after retirement, including keeping busy with consulting opportunities. They may be able to provide an understanding of working in different areas of your industry and spark some ideas in members for non-linear career changes. Members can learn a lot from retirees, both work and non-work related; there's a good chance your retired members would be more than happy to share what they've learned.

Successful chapters have a membership mix of those who are just starting their careers, in the prime of their careers and retired professionals. With representation from all parts of the career experience spectrum, your chapter will have the diversity it needs to be effective and engaging for all of your



members. A person's connection to their industry shouldn't stop once they retire. Keeping retirees involved by providing a lifetime membership is a great way for them to save money and keep them engaged in chapter activities, improve your chapter member retention and provide value for all of your association chapter members for a long time to come.

