



Steps to Re-Connect with Lapsed Members

There are a lot of reasons why our once-engaged, eager-to-participate members start to feel a little distant. Our members have the same pressures that we do, jobs, kids, family commitments, and more.

But there are ways to reach out to members who have gone a little silent and re-engage in a way that meets them where they're at in their lives and journey. And

members are more likely to return to communities that are more welcoming and inclusive.

Before we dive into steps you can take to re-engage lapsed members, let's ask ourselves the big question: Why go after members that have left?

Why Re-Engage Lapsed Members?

The value of re-engaging lapsed members is well documented, and the value is quantified in the commercial sector. According to Annex Cloud:

- Almost 65% of a company's business comes from repeat customers. Do they have another sibling coming up? What will they say about Scouting to their friends?
- 82% of companies agree that retention is cheaper than acquisition.

Re-engaging lapsed members represents "low-hanging fruit" for many organizations. First, the family has already demonstrated interest in Scouting at some point. Second, they're already familiar with what Scouting offers youth.

Understanding Why They Lapsed

While retention is almost always a focus, lapsed members are a normal part of the member lifecycle, faced by organizations of all types and sizes. Recapture campaigns have limited success as they focus exclusively on converting that member back to an active Scout but, ***without considering what went wrong and what's going to be different, your relationship may be destined for a breakup – again.***

Understanding why members have not shown up or let their membership lapse is a critical component for reconciling what originally went wrong and building a strong foundation for a long-term relationship. Perhaps the value you're delivering is no longer aligned with what they're looking for. Perhaps they never realized the value in the first place because they weren't engaging from the beginning, and no one noticed. Finding the why is important.

This information helps you and your unit understand the possible issues at hand, allowing you to pinpoint a specific reason a Scout family did not stay will help you quickly understand how you can make the experience better the second time around or for another family.

Re-Engage Your Lapsed Members

1. Have a plan

While lapsed members may represent an easier sell because they're already familiar with your organization, they've already made the decision to disengage. Creating a thoughtful, specific strategy for re-engagement, including the messaging, is a must.

When conducting a win-back campaign or a single-touch email, use it as an opportunity to drive interest in the activities and programming that you have planned for the coming year. These serve as an important reminder of the value of your organization's membership and may make the difference in whether an individual makes the choice to renew.

2. Show them the value

I can't speak for your email, but mine is full of "We've missed you!" messaging, and I'm not opening any of them. Are you? Remember, the focus of getting them back shouldn't be only on the renewal or revival of attending, it should be long-term success. Focus on what's in it for the Scout and family. Put yourself in their shoes, using what you've learned about why they've lapsed.

It goes without saying that all effort should be as personalized as possible. Whether it includes personal details in an email and introducing the exciting changes you've made to this year's or giving them an actual phone call from someone on your leadership team, members want to feel special. Make these initiatives memorable and use them as an opportunity to show how much they mean to you. This may be your last opportunity to re-engage them- make it count!

3. Keep it from happening again

The best way to re-engage and win back lapsed Scouting families is by ensuring they never leave. Leverage technology to be proactive, use Scoutbook, a Facebook page, What's App or whatever way helps communication with your families. With the efforts made, planning in hand and applying what you've learned to proactively engage families, membership will not fall off your books. These timely strategies will give families a chance to reengage and rejoin your unit with an entire new outlook.