daxko

Engagement eBook

Inside this eBook you'll find ideas to better engage staff, members, and the community. Achieve greater impact through tools and practices to really focus your engagement efforts!

LEADING WITH INFLUENCE

By Will Sansbury

Director of Product Strategy & Design

Good leadership is essential to the member-based nonprofit movement, but sometimes you need to lead when you don't have any direct authority - such as when you need to motivate your community to action to support a program or initiative. In those cases, leading with influence can help you inspire the action that's necessary to fulfill the mission and goals of your YMCA, JCC, or community center.

Leading with influence is all about taking engagement to the next level. It's about engaging your community and then leveraging that engagement to drive the specific outcomes that you're looking for. What is the point of engaging others or in making connections if you are not influencing them toward meaningful action? A fruitless interaction - or worse, a negative interaction - does nothing to deliver your mission. Every interaction should be influential: it should motivate people to donate to your organization, sign up for your program, or just take charge of their own health and wellbeing. To communicate or lead through influence, one must:

1. Imagine a better tomorrow - When you are leading through influence, vision is necessary. When we think of people with vision, we think of people like Gandhi, Malala Yousafzai, and George Williams (founder of the YMCA). Casting yourself in the same light as those visionaries can be paralyzing, but there's good news: your vision doesn't have to be big. What if you could work with local doctors for prescriptions to participate in your programs?

A great example of a small vision is the Little Library. People place boxes in their neighborhood as a lending library. People are invited to take a book, and leave a book. The idea is simple, but it has a huge impact on the community.

2. Inspire others to see it - Once you've caught a glimpse of a better tomorrow, don't ask others to join your team. Instead, convince them that you're already on the same team by showing them the vision, letting it resonate with them, and having them get excited. But, to lead with influence, you have to have a basis of trust. Jim Rayburn, the founder of YoungLife, recognized this in his work with American high school students in the 1950s. He saw adults expect to be listened to just because they're adults, and he realized that we each have to "earn the right to be heard."

3. Foster a common identity - Once you have people rallied behind the cause, you have to forge them into a community that can execute together. Imagine this like a pick-up basketball game. Nobody organizes a pick-up game; people just come to the park, sort themselves into teams, and have fun. Leading with influence can be the same way. You give people a chance to connect and do something together, but you don't mandate how. To see your better tomorrow become reality, you don't have to have perfect alignment; you just have to share the vision and be headed to the same endpoint. Leading with influence is directional, not prescriptive.

4. Let go of control - To truly be directional, you have to be willing to give up control. Capt.David Marquet of the US Navy understood this when he took command of the Santa Fe, which was, at the time, the worst performing US nuclear submarine. Under his leadership, the Santa Fe went from "worst to first." Marquet didn't accomplish such an astounding turnaround by tightening his grip, and mandating compliance. Instead, he trusted his people to make good decisions, and let them organize themselves within the bounds of their common goal. "When we give away control, followers become leaders, and doers become thinkers," said Captain Marquet. In volunteer-led organizations, more leaders means more mission impact.

5. Lead from the trenches - At a certain point, leading with influence goes viral. You've inspired people to see a better tomorrow, rallied them to be a team in pursuit of that vision, and given them the chance to lead themselves in pursuing it. From that point on, you take a back seat role and let things play out. But that doesn't mean you become passive. Instead, you keep your eye on the vision, periodically assess the group's efforts towards that vision, and tweak, nudge, encourage, and finesse as needed. Your goal, ultimately, becomes to help the people accomplish the work. As Lao Tzu wrote, "A leader is best when people barely

LEADING WITH INFLUENCE (CONT.)

know he exists. When his work is done, the people will say, 'We did this ourselves.'"

Leading with influence isn't easy, but it's one of the most effective methods of leadership for bringing about change in a group of people or a community, and it can help you engage the people around you in your organization's mission and purpose.

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO ENGAGE MEMBERS

By Chapple Chandler

Specialty Products Representative

You can help people meet their personal goals and encourage them to become actively engaged with your organization with social media.

While new members are checking Facebook and Twitter for updates, you can put your organization on their mind with a good social media presence. If you are consistant and present on social media, you can encourage members and potential members to think not only about your organization, but about the importance of a healthy lifestyle overall - furthering your membership goals and your mission at the same time.

Here are some tips to get you started:

Find the expert:
Designate a staff member who is adept with using social media to manage your sites. Get someone who already knows their way around social media and can quickly prepare to use your social sites to engage new joins.

Focus:
Start with core social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. These two sites have one, strong similarity: followers. Facebook uses the term "likes" rather than "followers," but it's the same idea.

Create Content:
Through all social media platforms, be creative and consistent with your brand. You want to give new members an idea of what your culture is like, and what it's like to be part of your community. Paint that picture through Facebook posts and photos.

Think of Twitter as an opportunity to check-in with members. Let them know what you're up to and they'll do the same. If applicable, make sure you utilize hashtags to trend your topic and/or connect your message to a campaign.

Have a Conversation:
When a member asks a question on your social media site or comments on your posts, take that as an opportunity to reach out and respond. Providing questions, answers, and com- ments will keep the conversation flowing both directions.

See it in Action:
For a great example on how to effectively utilize social media, check out the YMCA of Greater Houston's social media hubs:

facebook.com/YMCAHouston
twitter.com/YMCAHouston
pinterest.com/YMCAHouston

MULTI-CHANNEL MARKETING GAMEPLAN

By Mariel Moore

Digital Marketing Manager

STEP 01 — SEGMENT YOUR DATABASE

» Targeted communication is key when connecting with members. Segment by membership type, member interests, new versus older members, age, and engagement level.

STEP 02 — DESIGN MULTI-TOUCH CAMPAIGNS

» Think of your campaigns over time and use various communication types. Communicate with segmented members multiple times over multiple channels. At least three touches per campaign is recommended.

STEP 03 — HIRE, TRAIN, AND EDUCATE STAFF

» Explain campaign expectations, goals, and how their tasks fit into the larger picture. When your staff understands the larger purpose they feel invested and will likely put more effort into their tasks.

STEP 04 — MEASURE EFFECTIVENESS

» Establish metrics that will be used at the outset of the campaign, measure progress throughout, and make adjustments as needed. Track overall results to measure across campaigns.

STEP 05 — FOLLOW UP

» Report results, adjust the process as needed, and repeat.

5 WAYS TO INCREASE EMAIL AND TEXT OPT-INS

By Jacqueline Jeter

Delivery Services Coach

Timely, quality communication with your members and prospects can get you closer to engagement nirvana. Start with these five tips and watch the positive impact on both retention and new memberships:

1. Ask at the front desk

What a great way to say “hello” and build immediate rapport at the same time. Try something like,

“Hi [name], how are you today? While I have your information in front of me, could I go ahead and get/confirm your email address and a number where we can send text messages? We want to make sure you receive information like facility updates, discount coupons, special events, and other promotions we have from time to time.”

2. Create signage and flyers

Let people know about your email and text opt-in campaign. Post signs and flyers near the front desk and in other high traffic areas.

3. Add a sign-up form to your website

Your website should be more than just a pretty face. Use the homepage to encourage people to join your email and mobile communities. Keep the form simple and consider adding an incentive to boost interest.

4. Raffle, raffle raffle

Run periodic branch or association-wide raffles with great incentives. Instead of collecting names, collect pre-printed cards with spaces for email addresses and/or cell phone numbers and opt-in permission boxes that can be easily checked. You are more likely to get the most updated, accurate information with a prize on the line. Just tell members that all prize notifications will be sent via email and/or text only and watch the raffle cards roll in!

5. Why not start at the beginning?

Consider asking for email addresses and text opt-ins during ALL new membership enrollments, membership renewals and program registrations. You can easily make it a part of your information gathering processes. Did you know Daxko Operations can be configured to collect and track text opt-ins?

Many opt-outs happen without members or prospects being aware of it. Once off your email list members may not even realize they have missed valuable communication and therefor don’t take the extra step to opt themselves back in.

If you have multiple ways to opt your members or prospects in you can alert them to the messages they’ve been missing . By Utilizing these tips to increase text and email opt-ins at your facility you can be sure that your messages are reaching the widest audience possible.

CREATE THAT PROGRAM WOW

By Jay Harper and Courtney Hightower

Adoption, Education, and Interactive Team Leads

When we think about a truly exceptional experience for program participants, there should be four distinct areas of focus - registration, reminders, participation, and follow-up.

Let's look at each of these areas sequentially for tweaks to improve the member experience and deliver that program WOW!

Registration:

Use your website to your, and to your program participants' advantage. We live in a world where information is easily accessible from pretty much anywhere. We've been conditioned to expect the same from everything else we consume. For this reason, it is important to keep program descriptions and information up-to-date online. Make sure programs are easily searchable by using intuitive naming conventions in your operations software and entering descriptions during set-up that contain certain keywords. For example, using the term "swim lessons" versus "aquatics" during set up can save frustration for registrants.

Your in-house registration can also be influenced by what you provide online. Some of the biggest registration pains that people will have involve paperwork. Why not expedite the program process and make all paperwork available online so parents can get a jump-start on the process before walking in the door? It's also a good practice to create a landing page on your site with all the necessary program paperwork and reminders that will appear at the end of the online registration process.

Reminders:

Having a coach or instructor reach out just before the start of the program session is a great way to ensure participants are prepared for the first day. It also helps build rapport and ease any nerves the parent or participant may have. Give the key highlights, like the date and time to arrive for the first day, the easiest area to park/enter the facility, appropriate dress, and anything else they need to bring like snacks, a towel, or a change of clothes. A personal touch is a huge win in connecting with participants and it also ensures an easier first day for everyone.

If reminder texts or a personal touch is just not an option, reminder emails are also a great way to connect with participants just prior to the start of your program. Email also may work better if you have a lot of detailed information to impart. Whether your email is a professionally designed piece to send to program participants or a personal email message from the instructor to the student, both can have a lot of impact and help create that WOW experience for program participants.

Participation:

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression." There are multiple opportunities to make the first day of the program run more smoothly and make an impact on your participants/parents from the start. Do your best to organize the first day around the participants. This gives a personal touch and sense of security to both parents and participants. It allows participants/parents to put faces with names and gives them the opportunity to ask questions.

Have a program greeter at the front desk or welcome center. This is a friendly face that can direct people to the correct location and answer questions on the first day. Have your staff be easily identifiable. Coordinate a uniform and nametag or some other type of designation for the first day.

Most of the time, participants outnumber staff. For this reason, make sure you are using appropriate, plentiful, and clear signage. People will be looking for things to guide them and they'll feel more comfortable if they know where they are going.

CREATE THAT PROGRAM WOW (CONT.)

Working in member engagement, we have heard program participants complain about lack of communication when it comes to programs. So, be sure to keep your participants well-informed throughout the program. Use technology to notify participants of last-minute updates or changes (i.e. the game got rained out!) **Use multiple channels but remember that text is king when it comes to communication – text messages are read on average within 5 seconds receiving them.**

Aside from communicating change, participants also like to be informed about their progress. Consider using progress reports for each participant. These can be short and to the point (a printed sheet with a few questions for the instructor to fill in) but they give both participants and parents more buy-in. At a glance you can see what the participant has been working on and what some of the next steps are. This creates a more engaging experience and it is a tool that could be delivered weekly or at the end of a session/program by hand or electronically. In the progress reports you can include a section that promotes other programs, for example, a "you might be interested in..." section.

Follow-up:

An obvious way to follow up on a program – and one that many already utilize – is to solicit feedback via surveys. **Getting feedback is good, but following up on that feedback is the key to success.** Claire Lew, CEO of Know Your Company, gives some good insight on feedback:

1. **Recognize the messenger** – give participants incentive for giving feedback and come with a way to recognize them when they do. You can send a prelude email – or in some way – let participants know that you'll be surveying them and that their feedback is important.
2. **Act on something small** – People feel more comfortable giving feedback if they know that they are being "heard" and action is being taken. Find ways to broadcast some positive changes (i.e. Create a "you spoke, we listened" board.)

You also have the opportunity to use the feedback to evaluate and improve the following program areas:

1. **The people** – In getting feedback, you get some insight into how the participant felt about the program. Would they participate again? Would they recommend it to a friend? How were the interactions with your staff? In doing this you get a very keen sense of areas where you can improve the program and whether you can retain these participants. Our personal experience in conducting participant surveys for organizations all over the country tells us that the number one driver in positive survey responses are your people.
2. **The program itself** – This is how you found out if you have a viable program that can grow and be successful or if you need to rethink it. Does it need to be held at a different time of day or a different time of the year?
3. **The process** – You may find out that the people had a great experience, your program product itself is good, but there are some things lacking in the processes. For example, we've heard participants say that they would be more inclined to register for the program again if the childcare pickup was simply on a different side of the building with an awning when it's raining. This sounds so small, but it really isn't to your participants. Tweak these processes, and you'll create even more demand for your programs – and a WOW program experience.

daxko
all together, better®

daxko.com/industryblog

1.877.729.4786

sales@daxko.com

twitter.com/daxko
facebook.com/daxko

daxko.com

daxko