



Take-A-Ways from the Panel: Let's Talk Race and Panel: Let's Talk Inclusion:

"Remember that just because you are well intended it does not mean you were well executed." JBS

Marketing and Recruitment:

- Remind people that to have a village you need to be a part of the village.
- Visit your Chaplains, your Family Life Consultants, your Community Service people, your welcome center advisors, basically make sure the employees in those locations understand your club and what you offer so they can refer potential members to you.
- Photos of the membership in your ads, not just your board – show real people doing real things who are a part of your club
- Make sure your flyers say something like "everyone welcome." "We love to have visitors." "We can't wait to have you join us." "Help make this club the best part of our community" etc. Sometimes that's all it takes to make someone feel like they are allowed to attend!
- Be sure your invitations give as much information as possible. There are times people decide not to attend just because they are not completely sure what to expect.
- If this is a "no kids event," let people know that this is not a child friendly event, but next month will be, or something like that so they understand it is not always no kids.
- Have your board members intentionally attend other installation events where they can share what your club does and why people should join in. Be present at as many installation events as possible. Have nametags so that people know you are representing the Club when you invite them to join in.
- Attempt to reach people in sub sections of your military community who have not previously been a part of the club.
- If your club allows civilian employees, single soldiers, active-duty members to join, be sure they know this. Clubs have long-standing stigmas, and it will take extensive marketing to bust those myths for these modern clubs.
- Make sure you have the Data and Facts about what your club does for the community. Sharing that you gave away \$xxx in Grants and \$xxx in scholarships, did 3 major volunteer service projects and donated \$xxx amount of goods to area nonprofits will



show part of your purpose and commitment to the community. This might interest people who want more than social events.

Communications:

- When you are meeting someone for the first time, be sure to use words like Spouse and Service member, rather than Husband/Wife.
- Realize that not everyone has a traditional marriage, and we should respect the differences without an assumption.
- Do not make assumptions that would put someone into a category just because of the way they look or talk. Ask friendly and open-ended questions to understand and get to know people.
- Don't ask "So, what does your husband do?" If you are trying to figure out what unit someone is in, ask..." What Military Unit are you affiliated with?" That does not make someone feel like you only care about their service member, it does not make someone feel that you are asking if they are enlisted or officer spouse, and it does not make them feel like you don't care about them personally.
- Every time you use the phrase, "Ladies, can I have your attention" you have alienated your male spouses. Think about what you are saying before you fall back on your old habits.
- If you find that members are posting inaccurate information on social media, think about redirecting the readers to the correct information – either by inviting the reader to your Facebook group, your website, or by sharing the correct information. Don't engage in an argument, just share the facts so others can make their own decisions.

Mixing and Mingling – don't always sit with the same people!

- Make sure your board members do not all sit together. They are your best ambassadors, so spread them out around the room to keep things flowing!
- Every other month, set up a sort of ice breaker that forces people to connect with others, or sit with a different group than normal. Such as:
 - Tables set up by where you are from: Southeast, Northwest, etc. People will sit with a new group of people but have something to talk about right away.
 - Wear your favorite NFL Fan items – set up the room with groupings of Football Teams (like every table is set up with 3 to 4 teams) to group different people together.



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- Set up a jar and draw your table number and put people together who would not normally sit as a group. Be sure to provide table icebreakers to bring the people at the table together.
 - Have a nametag decorating station as you first walk in with all sorts of stickers. Each person picks 3 stickers that they identify with then sits with others who selected at least one of the same stickers.
 - Let your Sub Clubs/Special Activities groups each have a table and open the seats up to people who might like to join your group. Decorate each table by Sub Club and have a contest for the best decoration.

Events:

- Think about alternating your monthly events between day events and night events to be able to reach more people. Some people may need night events for babysitting or because they work. Some people prefer daytime events because their kids are in school, and they are too busy with sports and homework in the evening.
- Make sure your Sub-Clubs do the same – or offer both (i.e. a daytime book club and a nighttime book club)
- If you have a large population of people who live off base/off post, think about alternating where your events are held – on and off base. People do not always want to drive onto the installation to meet up with other military spouses. It is also a great way to connect with your community outside the gate!
- If you have events with alcohol, be sure to remember that not everyone drinks. Think about always having a fun and tasty non-alcoholic drink when you are offering signature cocktails. Who does not love a fun umbrella drink?
- Also, make sure your events are not all centered on drinking. Those that don't drink for whatever reason will never feel 100% included if everything is about alcohol.
- Plan your events based on your membership – if you have male spouses, be sure you are not offering only female friendly programs.
- Think about hosting more events based on what your installation needs:
 - Lots of young spouses without kids? Think about hosting Couples Mixers – Axe Throwing or Trivia Nights for couples, etc.



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- Lots of Moms with Toddlers? Maybe host a Toddler Play group at the gym or at a playground
 - Lots of working spouses? Host monthly Networking Mixers at a local bar.
 - Lots of international visitors? Host an event to showcase their cultures.

Welcome process:

Be sure to have a group of people at the door who can meet new people one-on-one.

- If possible, offer to have someone pick the new potential member up and bring them to the event. Or maybe set up a place to meet in the parking lot so they don't have to walk in by themselves. Have that greeter/ambassador walk the new person through the entire check in process so they feel comfortable the entire time.
- Have a special identifier for their name tag that shows all members this is their first event. Make sure your members know this and make a point to include the new members with a hello or a conversation.
- Encourage everyone to take the time to make the new person feel welcome and connected to the people attending,
- Make sure they are comfortable with the event and the concept.
- Help them to find a seat, connect them with another person, either other new visitors or a group of ambassadors who will include them.
- Be sure to make a point of saying “thanks for coming” to each of the new individuals as they are leaving.
- FOLLOW UP over the next few days to thank them for attending and be sure to ask if they have any questions or suggestions after their first visit.