

Optimist International
CENTRAL ONTARIO DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN

Revised: 4 July, 2015

Note: The Strategic Plan is included, as per resolution of the Board of Directors, as an appendix to the Policy Manual to serve as a guide to effective operation.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

The Central Ontario District is dedicated providing leadership to the clubs in our district, to help them grow and continue being the “Friend of Youth” in their communities.

Our vision is to be the best in providing a comprehensive range of programs and services for our clubs and members.

Our actions should be based on respect for everyone and these values should be evident in every decision we make, every activity we undertake and in every interaction that we have with people.

STRATEGIES

1.) Growth

A growth plan will be developed by the incoming Governor at the beginning of each administrative year, with an overlap into the next year, setting new club building and membership growth goals that are communicated broadly. The District growth team will evaluate at the end of each year how effective this effort has been, and report the results at the 1st Quarter Conference.

The NOW (New Optimists Welcome) program will be promoted and the effectiveness of the program will be tracked.

Target communities for new club building will be identified and the District growth team will actively assist clubs who wish to start a new club building initiative.

2.) Communication

Good communication is a key to the success of the District in relation to the clubs we serve. Clubs also need to communicate to the citizens of their communities. To support these goals the District will:

- encourage and assist clubs to establish and maintain websites and link these to the District website. Our goal is to increase the number of clubs with club websites from 40% to 60% within 2 years.
- organize training sessions on the effective and appropriate use of social media tools to further a club's presence within their community.
- encourage all clubs to update their O.I. Roster with members' e-mail addresses so that communications such as District Bulletins and Conference and Convention information can be sent directly to the members from District officers.

3.) Leadership, Mentoring and Training.

Leadership development begins at the club level. It is the responsibility of the District leadership, including the Past Governors, to ensure that potential leaders are identified, encouraged and provided with the necessary training and mentorship.

The District recognizes the importance of training our incoming leaders at all levels. In addition to training on specific topics that will be provided at all District Conferences, special emphasis will be placed on training at the District Convention and sufficient time will be allocated in the program.

Mentoring: The District Executive will support and promote the Mentoring Program adopted by the District.

Lt. Governor Training may be incorporated into other training sessions during the District Convention or the Governor Elect may opt for an independent training session(s) prior to the commencement of the administrative year, with a goal of accommodating as many of the incoming Lt. Governors, whether they be new or repeating, and ensure they have all the tools available to them to understand and perform their duties and assist the Clubs in their Zone to achieve International, District and Club goals.

President and Secretary/Treasurer Designate Training at the District Convention:

Attendance at the training provided at the District Convention has been waning in recent years. However it is important to continue to offer the training, and strategies such as ensuring that incoming club officers are specifically invited should be employed. In order to ensure maximum coverage across the District, the training of President and Secretary-Treasurer Designates may also be regionalized.

Training should be offered prior to the commencement of the administrative year and no later than the end of the first quarter. For those not attending, a summary of basic responsibilities and obligations to the district and International should be provided by either electronic or physical means directly (not via the Lt. Governor) in a manner that receipt can be confirmed. The documentation should not simply be a copy of lengthy documents offered by International but should be a relevant summary with links, bullets and user friendly formats.

4.) Conferences:

Recognizing that the purposes of District Conferences are:

- to attend to District administrative business;
- to provide members with personal development opportunities;
- to provide education and training;
- to encourage fellowship;

the District will develop strategies to increase the representation from the clubs:

- by ensuring that Club Presidents are aware that they are a member of the District Board of Directors and attendance is expected.
- by providing interesting and meaningful training sessions to meet the needs of the clubs.
- by utilizing programs such as free conference registration offers to new members.
- by ensuring that business meetings are conducted in a professional and respectful manner.
- by providing adequate advance notice to all clubs and District officers of the activities taking place at District Conferences and Convention.
- by educating clubs on the benefits of the interactions at District Meetings and how to raise funds internally to offset “out-of- pocket” expenses for members to attend these meetings.

The goal is to have representation from 100% of the clubs during the year. We will report the actual attendance by club and zone and set an annual realistic goal to progress from our current actual to our proposed optimal attendance.

5.) Youth Clubs (JOOI)

Recognizing that as an organization dedicated to “Bringing Out The Best In Kids”, one of the most important projects we can undertake is to introduce young people to Optimism by increasing the number of Youth Clubs in the District. Our goal will be to add a minimum of four youth clubs each year.

The District will support a JOOI/Youth District within CENON and will provide a framework and facilities for its leaders and members to be involved in our District Conferences and Convention.

6.) Programs

Recognizing that strong, healthy clubs have a mix of youth and community programs as well as fund raising and donations to other organizations, the Central Ontario District will encourage more clubs to participate in the O.I. scholarship programs, and will provide the necessary training and support.

The District will provide opportunities for clubs to showcase club projects that could be adopted in other communities.

7.) Finances

The District will manage its finances in a prudent manner according to its policies and limit the number of occasions where clubs are asked to provide additional funding for District programs and activities.

8.) Lt. Governor Reports:

Lt. Governors will be requested to provide written reports to the Governor two weeks prior to any meeting. and any verbal reports will be held to a maximum of 2 minutes. The District will establish a standardized format and content guidelines for Lt. Governor Reports to ensure we are capturing the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for growth and improvement in ALL Clubs.

MEASURES

The District Executive will monitor and report to Club Presidents and Members on the following items:

- growth within the district and comparative results of goals to actual growth
- accomplishment of the Governor’s goals and the communication of these goals to Clubs and members
- the District’s financial situation.
- challenges faced, significant success and perceived shortfalls by our Clubs and the District in achieving International’s initiatives and the District’s goals

CONCLUSION

The Strategic Plan is designed to enhance the image of the Central Ontario District so that the club membership is aware of the fact that the Central Ontario District serves them.

It provides for improved leadership, the development of procedures to improve communication and it promotes the sort of culture that members would like to see.

This Strategic Plan must be reviewed by the Past Governors’ Advisory Committee, and revisions suggested if necessary, at least every five years.