

Kiwanis

Serving the Children of the World™

www.kiwanis.org



Planning a New Club Charter Night Silent Auction

A silent auction can:

- Promote the new club in the community
- Raise funds for a new club's service account so they can immediately implement a service project
- Offer an opportunity to recruit additional members
- Increase attendance at charter night
- Provide the new club an event to rally behind so members can enjoy the satisfaction of doing something positive for the community.

Best of all, it will be a lot of fun for everyone involved.



How to Plan a Silent Auction

1. **Select two coordinators** to take charge of the auction.
2. **Create a basic solicitation letter** for donors on letterhead. See sample letter. Make the purpose of the auction very clear (i.e. new playground equipment, starting a Key Club in the local high school, etc.) so donors can see who will ultimately benefit from their donation. Let them know how their donation will be acknowledged during the event for example, consider putting the donor's company name in the program and displaying company information next to the item.
3. **Create a list of potential donors.** Knowing who will attend your event, find items that might match their interests and buying potential. Consider places that can provide physical items like stores, art galleries, sports teams or gift shops as well as certificates for services or free passes for events from spas, theaters, restaurants, wineries, or hotels.

TIP: Reviewing the Chamber of Commerce membership and/or the phonebook can provide ideas.

4. **Collect items for the auction.** Mark and label each item with the donor's name, contact information, product description and retail value. All this information will help you organize your items, set your starting bid price (a good rule of thumb to set the starting bid is between half and 2/3 of the retail value) and send thank-you notes after the auction.

TIP: If someone provided a service or gift certificate, play up the presentation of the item by using a basket or ribbons to entice bidders.

5. **Follow-up on letters** that did not generate a donation.
6. **Create bid sheets for each item.** Create extras in case there are last minute donations. See sample on back page. Bid sheets can be stapled to folders which can contain additional information about the item.

NOTE: If there are restrictions on the item like block out dates or expiration dates, make them known before attendees bid.

7. **Publicize the auction** to those who might be attending so they can come prepared. Let them know how they are able to pay for their items.
8. **Running the auction.** Have people monitoring the tables to answer questions and encourage bidding. If an item is not receiving bids, consider lowering the starting bid. Keep in mind the item is a donation so any money bid on an item is better than none. Remind attendees how long items will be open for bids. There is usually more activity as time is winding down. When the auction time is over make an official announcement and collect all the bid sheets. Inform winners how to pay for their item(s).
9. **Send thank you letters** to donors highlighting the success of the event. Include a copy of the printed program if one is created.

Kiwanis

Dear Business Neighbor,

On [date], we will celebrate the opening of a new community service club in our neighborhood, the Kiwanis Club of [club name]. Kiwanis is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to changing the world one child and one community at a time. Our club is made up of people who enjoy the fun, fellowship and networking opportunities that Kiwanis offers, while giving back to our community.

We will hold our first fundraising event, a silent auction, in conjunction with our charter night celebration. One hundred percent of the proceeds will be used to fund service projects here in our community. The first project we want to accomplish is [project description and impact]. We ask your support by donating an item or service to our silent auction. Your donated item or service will be well acknowledged throughout the evening.

Thank you in advance for your generous support. Should you desire more information, please give us a call.

Sincerely,

Jane Smith, Co-Chairman
Kiwanis Club of [club name]
Charter Celebration Committee
[phone]
[e-mail address]

Jim Jones, Co-Chairman
Kiwanis Club of [club name]
Charter Celebration Committee
[phone]
[e-mail address]

The Kiwanis Club of xxx meets every Wednesday at [time], at [location] located at [address]. For more information contact [contact name] at [contact phone number and e-mail].

