

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
DAKOTAS – MANITOBA – MINNESOTA DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN
UPDATE JANUARY 2004

VISION STATEMENT

To have the Optimist International organization be recognized as the premier service organization within the communities which are served by the members, clubs, and zones of the Dakotas-Manitoba-Minnesota District.

MISSION STATEMENT

To achieve the vision of the Dakotas-Manitoba-Minnesota District through a dedicated network of members committed to an expanded sphere of service to its members, youth, and communities.

PURPOSES OF OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

The purposes of Optimist International shall be to develop Optimism as a philosophy of life, utilizing the tenets of the Optimist Creed; to promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs; to inspire respect for law; to promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship among all people; to aid and encourage the development of youth; in the belief that the giving of one's self in service to others will advance the well being of humankind, community life and the world.

THE OPTIMIST CREED

Promise yourself:

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

To talk health, happiness, and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in side of them.

To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.

To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

THRUST ONE: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the governor to assure meaningful and effective leadership development and training for the district. The governor receives ample training at both the governor-elect conference and the international convention to adequately prepare him/her for his/her term as governor. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the governor to guarantee the continuation of such training to the membership in the district. A comprehensive training program should be developed by the governor-elect that includes the training for the district convention, as well as the ensuing year when the governor-elect becomes the governor.

Goal A: To foster a Leadership Development Committee.

- Tactic 1: Develop a committee that consists of the governor-elect, past and immediate past governor and two members serving a two year term – staggered so there is always at least one person with one year of experience on the committee.
- Tactic 2: Provide a leadership development program at all district meetings and conventions under the guidance of the governor.

Goal B: To foster effective leadership at the zone level.

- Tactic 1: Provide a full day of training to all Lt. governor-elects, prior to the district convention, to be under governor elect.
- a. Optimist International Activities
 - b. Optimist International Foundation
 - c. Administration, Review of all forms which they will use
 - d. New Club Building
 - e. Membership – retention and growth
 - f. Zone meetings/District meetings
- Tactic 2: Provide training to all club president-elects during the district convention, those who are unable to attend, have Lt. Gov. follow up personally.
- Tactic 3: Provide training to all club secretary/treasurer-elects during the district convention, those not able to attend, Lt. Gov. should follow up personally.
- Tactic 4: Training may also be accomplished by use of videos.

Goal C: To provide training and idea-sharing at all district meetings and conventions.

- Tactic 1: Try and provide an outside speaker at 1st Quarter and District Convention.
- Tactic 2: Promote round table discussion at all meetings, some items:
- a. Club activities
 - b. Fund raising
 - c. Membership
 - d. Optimist benefits
 - e. PGI
 - f. Leadership

THRUST TWO: FULL AND OPEN COMMUNICATIONS

Goal A: To promote strong club presidents and clubs

Tactic 1: Train president-elects in writing releases for newsletters and newspapers.

Tactic 2: Educate all club members in completing project reports.

Tactic 3: Aid president-elects in basic public speaking.

Tactic 4: Aid president-elects and secretary/treasurer-elects to understand the need to file all reports on time with zone and district personnel for added support in problem areas.

Tactic 5: Educate club officer and members on use of e-mail.

Goal B: To foster effective leadership at the zone level.

Tactic 1: Train Lt. governor-elects in preparing written reports, zone newsletters, and the use of e-mail in contacting their clubs. Send printed copies to those without e-mail.

Tactic 2: Educate Lt. governor-elects to hold strong informative zone meetings.

Goal C: To exchange and understand district leadership's ideas and goals.

Tactic 1: Hold discussion meetings with district chairpeople and Lt. governor-elects.

Tactic 2: Provide Lt. Governor with copy of club rosters from his club as well as monthly status report.

Tactic 3: Provide copy of District Policies to all clubs, video tape all district meetings.

Tactic 4: Promote and encourage optimism and positive attitude at District Meetings and conventions.

Goal D: To develop electronic communications

Tactic 1: Develop and maintain a district e-mail directory.

Tactic 2: Develop and maintain a district web site.

Tactic 3: Develop and use e-mail to get District & Club Newsletter to members and District officers.

THRUST THREE: INVOLVEMENT

Goal A: To increase involvement at club level.

- Tactic 1: Develop programs to facilitate involvement of all members in at least one club activity.
- Tactic 2: Encourage the club president to hold meeting with new members to review club activities, and club by-laws.
- Tactic 3: Encourage presidents to conduct meetings according to the outline in their “Club President’s Answer Book”, to start and end meetings on time, to provide good fellowship and speakers, and a minimum of business. (Business is to be conducted at board meetings).
- Tactic 4: Promote regular communication between lt. governors and presidents and boards in the zone and try to find mentors for presidents from past presidents, lt. governors, or past governors.
- Tactic 5: Distribute a regular monthly club newsletter to all members, suggest use of e-mail, also mail newsletter to those without e-mail.

Goal B: To increase involvement at zone level.

- Tactic 1: Require the Candidate Qualifications committee to work with all lt. governors to assure they have the proper understanding of their duties and commitments.
- Tactic 2: Require lt. governors to meet in person with each club’s board to complete ACPC’s, so the goals that are set are realistic and committed to by the club leadership.
- Tactic 3: Require verbal and written reports from lt. governors on the status of each club regarding membership, new club building, finances, activities, and any problems at each Executive Committee meeting. The governor should assign immediate help as needed.
- Tactic 4: Require that lt. governors submit a printed agenda to the governor from all zone meetings they have.

Goal C: To increase involvement at district level.

- Tactic 1: Conduct standing introductions by the governor of all lt. governors at each district meeting and convention. Also, recognize the exceptional accomplishments of clubs, district committees, etc. as time allows.
- Tactic 2: Make time for training by areas of responsibility at all district meetings and conventions. Consider A&A points for attending.
- Tactic 3: Provide agenda well in advance of meetings to allow reports to be properly prepared and presented. Start and stop the meetings on time, and make everyone attending feel their time was wisely invested by attending by conducting the meetings in a businesslike manner.

Tactic 4: Identify and encourage new people to become involved on district committees.

Tactic 5: Provide fun and exciting games periodically throughout the meetings, provide stretch breaks, and encourage laughter.

THRUST FOUR: GROWTH

Goal A: To increase membership in existing clubs.

Tactic 1: Augment the use of the NOW programs.

Tactic 2: Utilize the Skills Development Modules when soliciting businesses for members.

Tactic 3: Utilize the PGI program for all new members.

Goal B: To increase the number of new community clubs.

Tactic 1: Extend training on new club building techniques.

Tactic 2: Utilize the Skills Development Modules to solicit businesses for members.

Tactic 3: Utilize members from new clubs as resources.

Tactic 4: Develop designated growth areas with the idea of strengthening zones.

Goal C: To build more college clubs.

Tactic 1: Demonstrate our commitment to college clubs by seeking alternative funding for dues.

Tactic 2: Appoint at least one District College Club Director to oversee the college clubs and maintain regular contact.

Goal D: To build more youth clubs.

Tactic 1: Commit resources to clubs who have established youth clubs and to other clubs interested in building a youth club.

Tactic 2: Appoint at least one District Youth Club Director to oversee the youth clubs and maintain regular contact.

THRUST FIVE: RETENTION

Goal A: To decrease the number of members lost per year.

Tactic 1: Use a plan provided for you to reach and train leaders in struggling clubs:

- a. “Planning Your Year as Club President” Keys to success.
- b. “The Club President’s Answer Book”.

- c. “Will Members Attend Your Club Meetings?”
- d. Fiscal awareness from the “Administrative Review”.
- e. “RETENTION”

Tactic 2: To implement a club mentoring program for all new members.

GOAL B: To decrease the number of clubs lost per year.

Tactic 1: Join with successful clubs to serve as an example of a successful club.

- a. “The Renaissance Program”.
- b. “The Phoenix Program”

Tactic 2: Identify the cause of a struggling club early and act immediately with intervention by the district club services committee.

Tactic 3: Encourage clubs to visit other clubs.

GOAL C: To use a mentor program for new community clubs.

Tactic 1: Employ the New Club Follow-up Program.

Tactic 2: Involve members in zone and district functions.

GOAL D: To develop a mentor program for college clubs.

Tactic 1: Provide for the special needs of college clubs such as the time table for changing of the membership rolls, as this will be a volatile list.

GOAL E: To engage in membership management.

Tactic 1: Use the awards program (Honor Club) to encourage membership involvement and growth.

Tactic 2: Use the PGI program with all club members.

THRUST SIX: FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

GOAL A: To provide the club membership with awareness of its fiscal responsibility.

Tactic 1: Explain what the dues provide for the members and the clubs.

Tactic 2: Establish the funding level needed to maintain club solvency.

Tactic 3: Promote fundraising.

Tactic 4: Explain the Optimist International Foundation and its value to the members and clubs.

GOAL B: To ascertain zone fiscal responsibility.

Tactic 1: Train the lt. governor-elect to utilize the ACPC's to its fullest by recognizing the early signs of fiscal difficulties, etc.

Tactic 2: Understand the value of the Optimist International Foundation.

GOAL C: To define the district fiscal responsibility.

Tactic 1: Establish the funding level needed to maintain district solvency.

Tactic 2: Support the lt. governors through:

- a. Realistic mileage
- b. Per diem for all district meetings and conventions

Tactic 3: Develop funding programs other than dues.

DMM DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLANNING AD HOC COMMITTEE

January 2001

Co-Chairs: Don Clauson, New Ulm Optimist Club
Past Optimist International Vice President

Ron Schatz, Missouri Valley Optimist Club of Bismarck/Mandan
Past DMM District Governor

Chairman: Lori Cook 2004-2005