

IDENTIFYING ICES MEMBER TYPES

Members leave groups because:

- They are too busy and need to reduce their number of commitments.
- They do not feel the meeting times are well spent.
- They do not feel they are welcome, or they do not feel they are able to contribute to the meetings.
- They do not feel they are able or welcome to contribute to the group's events.
- They do not feel that the group's activities match their interests or needs.
- They do not feel that the group respects and values differences.
- They feel that interpersonal or working relationships are tense or unproductive.
- They do not feel they will be missed if they are absent.

Suggestion for your next DOS:

Invite general participation by asking for suggestions on how to fix each problem outlined above. This will help your members feel "club ownership" (see page 2) and they will better remember the content.

Some members may have joined the organization to meet fellow cake decorators. Such members need to feel like they belong. They can be motivated by involving them in tasks that require working closely with others. By paying special attention to create a strong group dynamic that promotes inclusion, these members will be excited to stay involved. Creating an inclusive environment should include strong respect for different points of view and backgrounds.

Some members join ICES because they have a desire to accomplish certain goals. Be aware of the local meeting's tendency to slip into an unproductive mode. If there is no real instructional content at ICES Days of Sharing, if people do not follow through or plans are delayed, address these problems right away or people will become disheartened and leave. Part of the State Rep's job is to address such problems, find items of interest to local ICES members, host excellent local meetings and mediate conflicts.

Some members join ICES because they strongly believe in what ICES represents. Such individuals can be motivated by encouraging them to voice beliefs and opinions about unity and participation and sharing and inviting them to speak of ICES values at meetings. It's important with such members to make meetings interactive and not dominated by the executive committee. Include these members in brainstorming and planning what the group's goals will be.

Some ICES members will have a desire to contribute. They want to share their talents, skills and expertise with others. The wise Rep will create an atmosphere where such member participation is valued and respected. Ask these kinds of members what demos, events, speakers or programs they would like to see happen. Establish committees and give these members concrete roles to play in achieving those goals.

ICES attracts some members because cake decorating is associated with their major or future career. Involve these kinds of members by providing the opportunity to practice and share their skills or gain new ones in a public, fun setting. Invite qualified professionals to demonstrate at Days of Sharing to further stimulate and encourage creativity. The emphasis to attract and retain these members will need to be on professionalism and quality.

Ask your local members: "Why did you join ICES?"

What other kinds of Member Types can you think of?

Bring these new ideas to Midyear and we'll add them to our discussion!

—Grace McMillan