

Member Relationship Management Plan

Consistently providing personalized service to members is the pinnacle and ultimate challenge of club service. Such service rests on the foundation of Service-Based Leadership, organizational structure and efficiency, consistent management disciplines, and employee training and empowerment.

At its root, personalized service comes from knowing your members, what they like and dislike, and constant ongoing communication that builds rapport and trust – in other words building strong relationships with the membership. But this doesn't happen by accident – like any other discipline of business success it must be carefully planned and consistently executed in its detail by all employees.

The starting point for this is a Member Relationship Management Plan – a plan that describes and sets standards for all aspects of a club's relationship with its members and their guests. The logical person to create and implement the plan is the club's Membership Director or more accurately, the Director of Member Sales and Relationships, working in conjunction with the club's department heads.

What standards should be described in such a plan? Here is my list, though other General Managers may add or subtract items as desired:

- The General Manager's Intent and level of engagement for staff interaction with members.
- The Director of Member Sales and Relationships' role and expectations for performance.
- Club Department Heads' role and involvement in Member Relationship Management Planning.
- The makeup and function of the club's Member Relationship Committee. Key individuals to participate would be the Director of Member Sales and Relationships serving as the chair, and the Clubhouse Manager, F&B Director, Head Golf Professional, and Activity Director. Other Department Heads and the General Manager would also attend meetings on a periodic basis as necessary.
- The vital and reinforcing role of Club Values and Culture of Service in all interactions with members; suggest enhancements to these as necessary.

Other areas to be described:

- Synopsis of the membership sales and marketing effort.
- New member onboarding process and the General Manager's welcome to new members.
- Member Profiles database and member privacy.
- Member Profiles data collection, archiving of information, and methods to distribute information to employees.
- Description and examples of the ways that employees can use the Member Profiles information to provide personalized service.
- Member communications, both initial and ongoing:
 - ✓ Initial communications:
 - Welcome
 - Club rules, dress code, club governance and committees

- New member handbook
- Frequently asked questions and who to contact information
- ✓ Ongoing communications:
 - Newsletter
 - Website
 - General Manager and Department Head letters.
- List and describe all of the club's major touch points with members.
- Wow factors – how they are developed and used to surprise and impress members.
- Member appreciation events and actions.
- Calling programs and ongoing member surveys, describing purpose, methods, and uses.
- Use of Member Preference/Feedback forms to build and enhance Member Profiles.
- Wowing member guests – explains and describes the special efforts and methods the club will take to impress members' guests.
- What actions the club will take in extraordinary circumstances such as when a member has a family tragedy, golfers errant shots damage member's property, member accidents at the club, etc.
- Congratulating members for accomplishments/promotions/new jobs/business or community awards & recognition.
- Preparing the GM's routine member correspondence for signature, such as Birthday Wishes, Recognition of Honors and Awards, Anniversary Recognition, Thanking Members for Club Service and Patronage, etc.
- The use of photographs at club events and activities and providing members digital copies of photos on request.
- Describes and assigns responsibilities for developing and delivering the following employee training:
 - ✓ Member Focus and Club Etiquette
 - ✓ Values and Culture of Service
 - ✓ Touch Points
 - ✓ Daily Huddles
 - ✓ Member Engagement
 - ✓ Rendering Assistance
 - ✓ Service Recovery
 - ✓ Problem Solving
 - ✓ Empowerment

The Member Relationship Management Plan describes all elements of the club's efforts to build

stronger relationships with its members and their guests. As such it is a living document that will change with the evolving nature of those relationships and the innovations and ideas of club management and employees to continually improve the program and render higher and better personalized service to its members.

The Member Relationship Management Plan should be reviewed annually by the General Manager, the Director of Member Sales and Relationships, and all Department Heads in a joint meeting; the purpose being a never ending quest to provide higher and more innovative levels of member service and engagement.

Bottom Line: If the club wishes to ensure the highest level of personalized service to its members, all staff must understand the purpose, dynamics, limits, and details, of how it will go about creating the necessary relationships with its members.

Ed Rehkopf, Hospitality Resources International