



Lions Clubs International

# HOW ARE YOUR RATINGS?

*An Essential Evaluation Tool For Clubs  
Administrative Guide*



## Why Evaluate Your Club?

Periodically taking a look at your club is a very beneficial exercise. It offers an insight into the state of your club – showing both its strengths and weaknesses. It also allows you to discover little problems and correct them before they become big ones that can require much more time, attention and resources. Plan on conducting an evaluation at least once a year.

## Involve Club Members

While having leadership assess the club's status works very well, involving members is an excellent idea, too. Enlist the help of several members whose opinions you trust, or even your entire membership, to take part in the evaluation process. General members provide a different perspective than club officers and soliciting many varied opinions will give you the best overall view of the club. It is also a great way to show members that their participation and input are valued. Encourage honest, frank feedback. The best way to do this is to conduct your evaluation anonymously. People are more likely to tell you how they really feel if they are allowed to do so anonymously.

## How to Conduct an Evaluation

The attached evaluation form is reproducible. Before copying it, fill in the contact name and return date when the forms are due. Plan on no more than two week's time for the completion of the forms.

Consider distributing the evaluation forms during a club meeting and having members complete them then and there. The advantage to this is a higher response rate. If you hand out the questionnaires and ask people to return them at another time, be sure to follow up with members to ensure a good response rate.

It is also an excellent idea to review the numbered scoring system when you distribute the forms. This will ensure that each respondent will be using consistent numbers when completing the evaluation. The scoring system is as follows:

4 = Always      3 = Often      2 = Sometimes      1 = Seldom      0 = Never

## Tallying Responses

When a significant number of responses is received, it is time to begin tabulating the results.

An efficient way to do this is to create a list with all question topic heads. For each question, add up the scores given by each respondent. Divide that number by the total number of respondents. This number is the average score for that question. You may also want to note the number of 4's (the highest possible score) and the number of 0's (the lowest possible score) each question received, as in the example below:

<b>Sample Results Form</b>			
<b>Question</b>	<b>Average Score</b>	<b># of High</b>	<b># of Low</b>
Following an agenda	3	5	0
Meetings start/end on time	4	20	0
Interesting programs	2	3	1
Guests Introduced	3	3	0

Also create a list of comments arranged by subject and whether they are positive/negative feedback. (See example below.) As you work, you will see your club's strengths and weaknesses emerge through your members' eyes. Some of their observations may be quite surprising; some may not. It is important for you to keep an open mind to member opinions, even if there is some harsh criticism. Remember – every criticism is an opportunity to make improvements to your club.

## Sample Comment Tally

### Positive Comments – Meetings

- Always start and end on time
- I love our programs!
- We have a great Tail Twister
- I like the new agenda format

### Negative Comments – Meetings

- Too many disruptive individuals
- Give more time to committees for reports
- The meeting room is always too cold

When you have finished tabulating results and comments, make two lists: club strengths and club weaknesses. Put items on the list in order of their scores. For the strength list, begin with the item that received the highest average score. If several items received the same average, list the item that received the most “4” scores first. Do the same with the club weakness list; beginning with the item that received the lowest average score. If more than one item has a low average, the first item on the list will be the one with the most “0” scores.

### Sample Positive Priority List

- Meetings start/end on time
- Club members given opportunity to participate in meetings
- Relevant projects
- Club sets membership goals

### Sample Negative Priority List

- Club doesn’t support multiple district projects
- Communication with members needs improvement
- New members need better introduction into club

Look carefully at your lists. Do you notice any trends? Are there specific areas where your club is strong and others where it is weak? (For example, your club scores high on all club meeting questions, but low on membership recruitment issues.) Or are you seeing strengths and weaknesses randomly throughout different areas of your club? (For example, club meetings score high on all questions except interesting programs and recruitment activities generally score high, except on the orientation question.) Looking closely at the answers will help you uncover the seriousness of any problem areas.

## Present Results to the Club

Present survey results to the club during a meeting and invite open discussion. Be sure to ask for feedback about positive as well as negative comments. The more you learn, the better able you will be to develop an effective action plan to address problem areas.

You may also want to report results in your club’s newsletter and on its Web site.

## Create an Action Plan

It may only take a few minor adjustments to correct some problems in your club. Other problems will likely need more time and attention. If your club meetings as a whole rated low, then it will take more time to correct the many problems that are present. If only the meeting program portion of your meetings scored low, that change will be easier to implement.

Consider making two lists: one of major problems, one of minor problems. Develop a prioritized action plan for addressing the areas in need of attention. When developing an action plan for improvements, look at the time and resources needed for each item. Be realistic when developing your action plan. If your club has many items that scored low, you will not be able to improve them all overnight. To help boost morale and show results, incorporate some “quick fix” items early in your plan so members will see improvements right away. Below is a very basic example of an action plan for one item that needs attention:

## Sample Action Plan

**Item:** Improve Communication with Members

**Steps Toward Improvement:**

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Budget</b>
1) Discuss deadlines with newsletter editor	Immediate	0
2) Add new "President's Corner" column to newsletter	Next issue	0
3) Add "News and Notes" section to the Web site	January 1	\$50
4) Improve news updates during meetings	Immediate	0

Once your plan is completed, present it to your board of directors for any necessary approvals.

## Implement Your Plan

Begin implementing your action plan as soon as possible. Share your plan with the club and report progress on a regular basis. For any large-scale changes, ask for member input again to make sure that your solutions are working. Celebrate your club's successes when positive changes are implemented. It will keep your members motivated and excited about their contributions to making their club the best it can be.

## What to Expect

The evaluation process will likely take a month from the time you distribute the survey to the tabulation of results. Discussion of the issues and the development of an action plan will take a few weeks. The time required to implement changes will depend on the seriousness of the issue and the number of problems that need attention. However, you will find that taking the time to conduct a thorough, annual evaluation of your club -- and following through on the results -- will yield many benefits. It's never too late to begin making positive changes to your club! A strong, efficient club keeps current members satisfied and motivated, is attractive to new members and is able to successfully serve its community.



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