



IODE Canada

KEEPING CHAPTERS HEALTHY

We can promote and maintain healthy chapters with behaviours that include:

- Welcoming with a hello, and a smile.
- Supporting others' ideas in a positive manner that shows respect.
- Welcoming new ideas from new members or members new to a role. Being open and receptive.
- Creating a safe environment for all members to feel welcomed.
- Remembering to praise in public and correct in private.
- Guiding new officers and explaining procedures while being gentle.
- Listening actively (as if they are the sole person you are focused on). Listening actively is intentional and focused.
- Taking new members or members new to a role to events/meetings/social activities.
- Giving members information materials (pamphlets or new members folders) on IODE, the Chapter, the role of different officers.
- Displaying people's names during gatherings eg. On the Zoom square, on tent cards, wearing name tags. This helps all members, new or old.
- Answering questions without prejudice.
- Showing an interest in the member. Let them tell you about themselves.
- Asking open-ended questions (prioritize "what" and "how" questions and ones that you don't know the answer to). "Why" is challenging and may promote defensiveness.
- Pushing "pause" on the agenda; "slow the agenda down" and explain language (specific to IODE such as PAM, PEC), projects, processes, procedures, protocol, history... to new members. Talk to new members following the meeting to explain and/or answer questions.
- Offering a Q & A session in the meeting and asking if there is something that they would like to share with the group.

Leadership:

- Sharing responsibilities in meetings, projects, community involvement.
- Mentoring by giving guidelines/notes/information/advice to members new to their role in a positive manner. (Especially when they are assuming a role that you have had.)
- Exploring interests and strengths to develop into an officer or convenor position.
- Inviting a new leader to "make it their own" and "find what works for them". Trust them to lead their way. Respect new ideas or questions.
- Observing and learning from others with more or different experience than yourself.
- Role-playing about how to respond when someone asks you "What is IODE?"
- Encouraging individuals to get involved in various ways.
- Inviting potential leaders to travel to regional meetings with present officer.
- Assisting in a role, allows the member to have a better idea of the officer role.

- Developing documents that outline the officer roles and what it entails for your particular chapter by month.
- Passing the *Primary Chapter President's Handbook* to members who may chair a meeting. (Found on IODE website).

Engaging all members:

- Involving members in activities beyond regular meetings where there are opportunities for person-to-person communication e.g. Projects, coffee sessions (in person or over videoconference), social events, visits to other chapters' events.
- Giving members a ride to meetings to include some personal time.
- Providing all members with a membership list that includes contact information.
- Allowing reminiscing time by members to introduce the history of the group. Remember to laugh and cry with other members.
- Having multiple people participating in a Chapter meeting. Perhaps have individuals share something of interest to them with the group. A chapter member may be a guest demonstrator.
- Keeping communication lines open. Email or call as a reminder before meetings.
- Ensuring that every member receives the chapter's meeting minutes via email, snail mail, especially if they have missed the meeting.
- Following up with an email or phone call to absent members regarding actions coming up in the near future e.g. collection drives, work project dates.
- Sending personal notes to individuals in the chapter to support, congratulate, celebrate... enclose a tea bag and invite the recipient to take a moment to relax and enjoy a cup of tea. Recognize event convenors, illnesses, successes.
- Showing appreciation to members in various ways.
- Being empathic. (Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another by imagining what it would be like to be in that person's situation.)
- Socializing gives members an opportunity to get to know each other better. Have chapter outings, tea or coffee, parties, barbeques, banquets.
- Monitoring and trying to include those who are not participating actively.
- Having a written Chapter history and creating check lists for major projects.

Creating Continual Entry for new members.

New members need an immediate feeling of welcome. We can facilitate this by:

- Acting and welcoming immediately when a potential member shows interest.
- Ensuring that you have the name and contact information to follow up with the individual and to be in contact before and after formal meetings.
- Engaging members immediately in some way – don't wait for a meeting. eg. Project activity, fundraising activity, social event, coffee and conversation.
- Sharing information openly, honestly, frequently. Include chapter history, website and social media.
- Avoiding the "telling mode" as much as possible – no "dictatorial teacher modes".
- Assigning a specific member to mentor a new member from the moment they indicate interest in IODE.

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