

## Chapter/branch Leader's Tool Kit

### WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

One of the key ways you can impact your chapter/branch member retention rate is to start at the beginning! Member retention starts when a new member joins the association. There are a number of meaningful gestures and activities chapters can sponsor to make members feel welcome, obtain their input and encourage their involvement in the chapter/branch. Here are a few suggestions:

#### A Welcome Letter/E-Mail or Phone Call:

The chapter/branch leadership can execute an outreach program for new members. A simple welcome phone call that introduces you as a chapter/branch member/officer and invites them to the next chapter/branch meeting or event is a great first step in establishing a long-term relationship with the chapter/branch. If you only have a small group or one individual tasked with making this connection, consider developing a welcome postcard or e-mail message that you can send each new member, which acknowledges their joining the chapter/branch.

#### Create a New Member Kit:

Navigating a new environment can sometimes be somewhat challenging for new members. They need to find out about events, who to contact about various issues, and how to maximize the networking opportunities offered by the chapter/branch. Leaders may want to develop a "Everything you wanted to know about the *(name)* chapter/branch" guide that could include:

- A Welcome Letter/e-mail
- Chapter/branch leader contact information
- Current Chapter/branch Roster
- Chapter/branch Meeting Schedule
- Directions to Meetings
- List of Committees
- Url of the chapter/branch page on the EAPA web site
- Copy of chapter/branch newsletter and url of chapter/branch website

#### New Member Welcome Program:

Nothing says "Welcome!" like public recognition. Acknowledge new members at a chapter/branch meeting. The chapter/branch president or membership chair can include this as part of the standard agenda, or can create a special event focused on welcoming new members. Some suggestions for new member programs include a quarterly networking mixer or monthly informal get together over coffee.

#### Recognition:

Put it in print! Does your chapter have a web site, newsletter, or listserv? Use it to tell the rest of the membership that you have new members. Develop a section or page on your chapter/branch web site that announces who the new chapter members are, and provides a bio with information about their career, EA involvement, areas of expertise, etc.