

# 10 QUESTIONS THAT MAY HELP YOU TO DETERMINE IF YOUR ZONTA CLUB IS WORKING FOR YOU

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Zonta International is a worldwide service organization of executives working to improve the legal, political, economic, health and professional status of women through service and advocacy. It does this because of the efforts of more than 33,000 women and men in over 1,200 clubs in 68 countries across the globe. Zonta has been in the forefront of many international service projects since 1956. The mission of Zonta at the club (local community) level, as well as at the international level, depends on the commitment and active participation of every member.

If you think your Zonta Club is in trouble and could use some help in maintaining its commitment to the ideals of Zonta, then reflecting on these 10 questions and developing a plan for the way forward may be a good idea for you and for your club.

## **1. Does your president lead?**

Zonta is a complex organization, which changes leadership every two years and yet expects great results from its membership. The president of a Zonta Club is the elected leader: she is expected to lead, and members expect to follow. Zontians are all business and professional people. As such, they are expected to be capable of Leadership, and were in fact invited into the fellowship of Zonta because they were perceived as successful or had the potential to be successful in business or the professions.

## **2. Does your club do anything?**

Ask yourself, "What does my club do?" Do we have projects that support Zonta's objects and its mission? Are we participating in international projects? Are we supporting in some way the women of our community? What fundraisers do we have and are they fun? If you can't answer "YES" to each of these questions and give examples to support your answer, then your club needs to take a hard look at itself and its existence as a Zonta Club. Zonta is after all an organization dedicated to advancing the status of women through Service and Advocacy.

## **3. How do the Club's Service Programs measure up to the mission of Zonta International?**

Zonta International, through its Foundation, is one of the largest global charitable organizations around. ZI expects clubs to support its international service programs through gifts of money and to mirror those programs through local projects in the club community. Do your club's service programs relieve hunger, provide clean water, protect women and children from domestic violence, prevent trafficking in humans, help to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, promote education among women and girls, or empower women and girls? If your club is not involved in meaningful and sustainable programs that have a positive impact on the community, then it is not being true to its mission. That could be the reason for the ennui displayed by the membership. Zontians need to be fulfilled.

## **4. How do you rate your Meeting Programs?**

Quality programs are essential to maintaining interest and zeal in club members. Does your club make the necessary effort to design and build quality programs that can sustain the excitement necessary to retain its membership? Are club meetings informative and interesting? Does the club go after high quality speakers with interesting subjects?

Members expect to grow mentally and spiritually, the monthly meetings need to provide nourishment for this growth.

**5. How do you rate your club's attendance record?**

Meeting programs and attendance are closely related, as attendance is motivated by the quality of the meetings. If more and more members elect to miss meetings on a regular basis, it is time to evaluate the quality of the meetings. Are meeting programs worthy, and timely and do they relate to the mission of Zonta? Like everything else, the planning of club meetings requires thought and effort. Lack-luster meetings will not attract attendance.

**6. How much do members really know about Zonta?**

An integral part of commitment is interest in and knowledge of the history, goals, and mission of the organization. When was Zonta founded? By whom? Why? What is the meaning of the name 'Zonta'? How many are we? What countries are we in? What are our International Service Programs? Which is the newest Zonta Club? The more the members of your club know about Zonta, the stronger, more positive, more responsive will be your membership.

**7. Do the leaders and members of your club attend international events?**

Area workshops, District Conferences, and International Conventions are ways to train leaders and members in the Zonta family. When you attend these events you will be better prepared to lead when it is your turn to be the club president.

**8. Are members of your club willing to accept leadership roles?**

A sure sign of decay in any organization is the inability to inspire members to accept leadership roles. Members will hesitate to lead an organization that is not vibrant, effective, or responsive to its mission. If members are not willing to serve, then it is important to take a hard look at the club in terms of its effectiveness in carrying out its mission and in satisfying the needs of its membership.

**9. How are new members recruited and inducted?**

Membership in Zonta is an honour and a privilege and is by invitation. Is your club recruiting members just to increase numbers? Are potential members aware of the ideals of Zonta? How are the leadership skills of potential members assessed? How do you assess the commitment to service (in both time and money) of potential members? How do you induct new members into the club? Is it just "Welcome Jane, here is your pin and dues are \$250 per year?" Or is it an event that new members will not forget? Are new members given a thorough introduction to the ways in which the club operates? First impressions are lasting and set the tone for the future.

**10. Why am I in Zonta**

Finally, you need to ask yourself this question. When you do this, write down the reasons, and share them with fellow Zontians. Remember that as a member you have obligations to the club and are an integral part of its success as an organization. If you neglect to give of your time or money, if you fail to participate in fund raising or service projects, if you do not attend meetings regularly, if you have never attended an area, district, or international meeting, if you refuse to accept leadership roles in the club, and if you know little or nothing about Zonta, then you need to examine your motives for joining and your commitment to your club. *Achieving for Zonta is achieving for yourself.*