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**Annex (attached):**

Professional Membership Brochure  
Student Brochure  
Current Professional Membership Application  
Current Student-to-Professional Membership Application  
Letter to Employer (MS Word doc)

## Introduction and Key Dates



Membership and servicing our members' needs are critical to the future of the Florida Public Relations Association and each chapter's budgets and stability, and your membership drive will play a key factor.

It may seem easier to recruit new members but your key focus should be on RETENTION. Current and past members are the ones most likely to remain with the chapter. Gaining feedback through surveys and phone calls and conveying the results to your leadership can help your chapter provide the programming and services members want, and keep them engaged. As Membership Chairs and V.P.s, you can help other chapters by sharing those results with your state counterpart.

The best tactic to encouraging renewals is still GRASSROOTS. Phone members after renewal notices are sent out to ask if they are renewing; and if they aren't, it's an opportunity for a brief exit interview, which can help your chapter to improve its member services.

Important dates to keep in mind are:

1st week of September: Renewal notices are sent out by the state office.

Mid September through November: Membership drive.

October 31: Memberships lapse if not renewed.

Quarterly state board meetings: Membership rebate checks are handed out to chapter presidents. The November one will be largest due to the largest number of renewals that quarter and pro-rated memberships later in the fiscal year.

Quarterly: Assist Chapter Presidents with the membership portion of their quarterly reports. Also offer help with the annual report due in June.

December 31: After this date, non-renewed members will be purged from the database and not included in the Membership Directory, if one is in print that year. A \$25 late/processing fee will be charged in addition to membership for renewal after this date.

August 31: End of fiscal year for chapters and FPRA. Please do not use old application forms at meetings after this date to avoid confusion on prices.

## Goals Worksheet



FPRA's goal, as of the 2014-15 Strategic Planning Session, is to increase membership by 5 percent each fiscal year from 2014-2017. If the goals are met, membership will be at 1,000 by the end of 2014, and 1,100 by the end of 2017. The target objective just to maintain is 73.5 percent retention, but ideally, higher retention by chapters could offset efforts to draw in new members.

### **What are your chapter's membership goals?**

Whether or not these were set at your chapter's Strategic Planning Session, please share these with the FPRA V.P. Member Services and your Chapter President by November 5. Check the September Membership report from the FPRA State Office for your starting figures or contact Christopher Carroll, APR, CPRC, at [state@fpra.org](mailto:state@fpra.org), if your Chapter President did not receive it.

Fiscal Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal, Total Professional and Retired Members:  
(Categories 1-4) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of New Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Retention percentage: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal, total Student Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## Tips to a Successful Membership



1. Membership is everyone's responsibility! Every board member...and every chapter member!
2. Chapters should develop a renewal campaign and at least two membership campaigns throughout the year. These may reflect the State's theme or the Chapter President's theme.
3. Set a realistic, quantitative goal at the beginning of the year for retention, new members and students. Update the board and membership regularly on the progress.
4. During the renewal period, (October – November) EVERY member should get a call from a board member. Thank them for their membership and encourage them to renew.
  - a. If you have a large membership or time constraints are an issue, split the list among the board and ask them to make calls in the evening after work. This enables you to leave voice-mail messages and takes less time on the telephone.
  - b. For senior member renewals, it might be wise to enlist an active senior member to make those calls to their colleagues.
5. For members who have not renewed, the president or membership chair should call to find out why they are not renewing (i.e. dissatisfied, changing jobs, moving, leaving field)
6. When a member changes jobs, this should equate to two members for the Chapter: The person who moves to a new company and the person who replaces them!
7. For membership development, begin a membership program early in the year. Chapters are encouraged to adopt the State's membership plan and may adapt it to their specific needs. The plan should include:
  - a. Developing a prospect database that is utilized and updated throughout the year;
  - b. The database should include those professionals whom you WANT to be members including representatives from: city and county government, major corporations and small businesses, agencies, banks, hospitals, colleges and universities, the chamber, non-profits, hotels and attractions;
  - c. A timeline of how you will contact prospects - direct mail, telephone, e-mail, newsletter mailing or personal invitation to a meeting;
  - d. Membership packets at every event with a flyer or brochure outlining member benefits, newsletters, membership application, copies of previous White Papers or other marketing collateral;
  - e. A plan to engage the member once they have joined through member orientations, committee recruitment and communications.
  - f. Ways to ensure prospects and new members feel welcome at chapter events through mentor programs, greeters and board placement around the room.

8. Thriving chapters usually have a good mix of professionals.
  - a. Diversity is key and chapters should be wary of building a membership that is too heavily non-profit or allied driven and is not representative of all the PR professionals in your market.
  - b. Chapters should ensure they have a good mix of new members and existing members, senior practitioners and young professionals.
  
9. Chapters must remember that a strong membership relies on continually delivering **value** to the membership. This is accomplished through:
  - a. Providing consistently strong programs...the single most important thing chapters can do!
  - b. Keeping your members involved through committees, networking opportunities and consistent communications;
  - c. Making your members visible in the community through publicity, a speaker's bureau and community involvement;
  - d. Providing professional recognition for your members' accomplishments at meetings and through your newsletter, website and press releases.
  
10. Keep in mind that FPRA is a volunteer organization. To remain motivated, board members and chapter members must be aptly recognized and feel appreciated for their support and efforts.
  
11. Chapters must continually engage their senior members. In some cases seasoned professionals may not learn as much from monthly programs as the less-experienced practitioners. So, chapters can engage senior members by:
  - a. Promoting the Counselors' Network and offering local CN programs
  - b. Inviting past-presidents and involving them at special events such as installation and Image Awards;
  - c. Asking Senior members to help in **very specific ways**. For instance:
    - i. Ask a Senior member to help secure a high profile speaker
    - ii. Ask for assistance with a specific sponsor
    - iii. Ask them to host a Counselors' breakfast
    - iv. Ask them to participate in the chapter's speaker's bureau to the chamber, Rotary Club etc
    - v. Ask for help in judging Image Awards
    - vi. Ask for help in proctoring the APR or CPRC exam
  
12. Committee involvement is key to making members feel a part of the organization and to growing your leadership. When a new member joins a board member or committee chair should call immediately to ask the new member to serve. Then utilize them!

**Membership is EVERYONE'S responsibility**

Develop a prospect database. Revise and work the list all year long

Recruiting a lot of new members is not the goal: ENGAGING and retaining your members IS!

Membership diversity provides rewarding networking opportunities

Don't expect your senior members to attend every meeting. Instead ask for their help with specific requests to keep them involved

Active committees are critical to leadership development and important for the continued growth of your chapter

## FPRA Membership FAQs



**Q:** If an FPRA member leaves a company and that company keeps the membership and replaces the member, what is the process?

**A:** If the replacement member has been a member before, all they need to do is submit a resume and application to their local chapter. No application fee is necessary. If the replacement member has not been a member in the past, they need to fill out an application, submit a resume and a one-time \$35 application fee. If the replacement member is a current FPRA member, all they need to do is submit new contact information. No application is necessary.

**Q:** If a person leaves a company and the company lets them take their membership with them, how is the membership transferred?

**A:** The Executive Committee and State Board has determined that memberships paid for by a company are non-transferable from the company to the individual.

**Q:** If a member leaves a company and wants to rejoin with a new company (that has not had a previous member), what is the process?

**A:** The member needs to have their new company pay the membership dues (cost dependent on time of year), fill out an application, submit resume describing new duties and turn it in to their local chapter. No application fee is necessary. **Until the member rejoins with the new company, their membership is inactive.**

### General Membership Tips:

Individual Memberships are fully transferable. If an individual changes jobs and has an Individual Membership, all they need to do is inform their local chapter AND the State Office of their change and provide new contact information.

When you first become a member of FPRA and pay the **\$35 application fee**, that is a one-time fee. A member never has to pay that fee again, unless they let their membership lapse for more than 12 months.

## "Best Management Practices" Membership Ideas from Chapters

**Dick Pope/Polk County Chapter:** DP/PC Chapter recognizes the most recent member to join in a pinning ceremony at meetings; and on the tables at their October, 2014 meeting, was a sign thanking members who had renewed their memberships as of October 1. (Pictured to right).



**Volusia/Flagler Counties Chapter:** Since 2013, the chapter has awarded \$180 (or the cost of membership) and a coupon for coffee or another product, to the member referring the most new members before the end of the membership drive.

**FPRA**  
Top 10 reasons to join the  
Florida Public Relations Association

- Regular Chapter Meetings**  
Local chapters meet regularly for professional development, and to learn from guest speakers and conduct general business.
- Local Chapters Throughout Florida**  
FPRA offers a network of 15 local chapters throughout the state.
- Network of Public Relations Professionals**  
Stumped on a project? Need an objective opinion? Join FPRA and access a network of PR pros to call for help.
- Exclusive Access to Professional Resources**  
E-newsletters, case studies, industry articles, a state membership directory and resources - just a click away.
- Professional Accreditation**  
Obtain your APR (Accredited in Public Relations) and the advanced CPRC (Certified Public Relations Counselor) professional designations.
- Annual State Conference**  
FPRA's state conference is second to none. Featuring nationally-known speakers, it helps members stay current on PR techniques and practices.
- State/Local Professional Development Seminars**  
Tackle your professional development needs with webinars, seminars and workshops.
- State/Local Recognition**  
Enter the local Image Awards and the state Golden Image Awards competitions and measure your work against the best PR projects in Florida.
- Resourceful website**  
Members can access FPRA's statewide job bank online, and exchange ideas and information at any time. Visit: [www.fpra.org](http://www.fpra.org).
- Counselors' Network**  
For seasoned professionals, the network offers advanced educational opportunities with some of the best PR practitioners in Florida.

Visit [www.fpraocala.org](http://www.fpraocala.org) for more information.

**Ocala Chapter:** Sends a flier encouraging renewal to its members, with a visual of the "Top 10 Reasons to Join." The style of the flier follows the chapter's annual theme.

Share *your* chapter's tactics and ideas for recruitment, retention and recognition.

## New Member Pinning Ceremony Script

I am delighted that you have expressed your desire to join the \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of FPRA. FPRA has been serving Florida Public Relations Practitioners for more than 75 years, so it's not surprising that we attract top professionals like you.

You have been voted by the Board of Directors to hold active membership in our chapter. So as we now provide you with the emblem of our association, your FPRA pin, it is my privilege and honor to induct each of you as a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of FPRA. Wear your pin with pride.

As a member, you are expected to exhibit the best principles of public relations professionals in adhering to high ethical standards and our code of conduct in your respective business careers.

You will find that your level of benefit corresponds with your level of involvement. So take full advantage of the resources offered including monthly membership meetings, professional development programs, chapter projects, networking opportunities, and the strength and support of other members.

FPRA Members, I present to you new members:

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and ask you to extend them your friendship and help make their segway into our Chapter a positive experience.

## Sample Membership Survey



### 1. How many luncheon meetings were you able to attend during the past year

None

One

Two - Four

Five - Seven

8 +

### 2. Is the monthly meeting date convenient for you?

Yes

No

#### If not, please indicate your first choice for an alternative meeting day:

Tuesday

Wednesday

First or Third Monday

#### Comments:

### 3. Is lunch a convenient time for our monthly meetings?

Yes

No

Sometimes

#### If not, please indicate another time that you would prefer to meet.

Breakfast

Dinner

Alternate meeting times

**4. Please indicate what prevents you from attending the monthly meetings (multiple answers).**

Time of day

Day of the week

Price

Location

Topic

Nothing, I attend most/all of the meetings

Other

**5. What topics and/or speakers would you like us to explore for our meetings and/or professional development seminars (multiple answers)?**

Research

Community Relations

Leadership

Crisis Communications

Financial Information/Budgeting

Non-profit sector

Branding/Imaging

Special events

Planning

Sharpening your writing skills  
Technology

Tools of PR

Online PR

PR Basics

Creative Thinking

Working with printers and other vendors

Opening your own business

Florida-based business

Evaluation Mechanisms

Media Relations

Other

Agency Operations

## Sample Mission Card



### Front

FPRA brings together key communications professionals for networking and professional development to help you do your job better.

### Back

Signature Events:

Roast & Toast

ER for PR

Image Awards

Food for Thought

Media Roundtable

Benefits:

Accreditation

Monthly Meetings

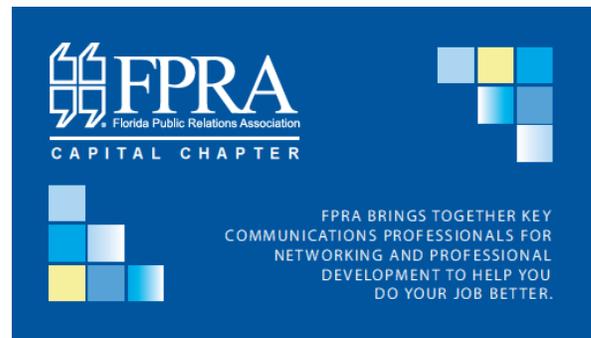
Mentoring

Socials & Networking

Media Training

Volunteering

Scholarships



**Sample Advertisements**  
(Customization Available)



Still the **most affordable** investment you can make in your career.

# Renew TODAY!

- The nation's oldest association for public relations professionals.
  - Increased earning potential.
- Chapter and statewide professional development opportunities.
  - A network of nearly 1,000 top PR professionals.
- Opportunities for professional Accreditation **and** Certification.



*Log into the the Member section then click the "Renew Membership" link in the left column.  
Forgot your username or password? Email [state@fprra.org](mailto:state@fprra.org).*

Still the **most affordable** investment you can make in your career.

# Renew TODAY!



A collage of six images: a hand holding a camera lens, a smiling woman's face, a group of business professionals in a meeting, a woman in a suit, a woman in a brown jacket, and a woman in a white lab coat.

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