

# MEMO



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**Date:** November 4, 2010  
**To:** Board of Directors  
**From:** Sue Matz, Linkage to the Membership Task Group Chair  
**Subject:** Status Report

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The Linkage to the Membership Task Group met on October 19 to begin its work in identifying the best way to communicate with the membership on key issues facing the council in the coming year. The task group is made up of operational volunteers and board members (Christi West, Ann Hartmann, Sue Matz).

Guiding principles for communication between the board and the membership were drafted and are included with this memo. Board members should feel free to provide input to these draft guiding principles. In addition, the various audiences were identified and we began to generate ways in which we can best communicate with each audience. We will continue to provide updates to the board and will ask for input as we go through this process.

At the January board meeting, we will report on plans for communicating through the council annual meeting.

## **Guiding Principles for Board Communication With All Stakeholders**

The board carries a responsibility to proactively understand, represent, and consider the diverse viewpoints of our ownership in deliberations and decisions. Although the final decisions rest with the board, we understand that multiple perspectives produce better results and that integrity and transparency of our communication will lead to trust. We will use the following principles to guide our communication with stakeholders.

1. We will ensure an inclusive structure for the voices of stakeholders and include within that structure multiple communication channels in an effort to reach all voices. We will remember that our members are as diverse as our world – some want electronic communication and others will prefer face-to-face conversation.
2. We value the voices of our members and will be respectful and mindful in our communications. We will strive for communication that is broad enough so all members are reached, yet targeted enough to allow for one-on-one dialogue.
3. We will use a systems approach in communication to amplify success and limit missteps. We will treat all communication as a complex web of audiences, pathways, and messages.
4. We will approach every dialogue as an opportunity to discover new information and lead to greater understanding. Thoughts, feelings, and behavior are all sources of information, are equally legitimate, and should be taken into consideration.
5. We will provide updates, status reports, and timely communication on a regular basis. Our goal is that there are no surprises.
6. We recognize that our owners often will bring input focused on management issues and we will have a process to direct this input appropriately and continue to educate all stakeholders on the channels for communication.
7. Our communication messages will be clear and focus on what is in the best interest of our girl members. We are willing to risk short-term gains to do the right thing for girls and ensure long-term success.
8. We will listen to understand and err on the side of over-communicating.