Planning a Club Programme

A well-planned programme is essential for the success of the Club and the recruitment of new members. The programme should be well organised and contain a variety of subjects of interest to all members.

Stage 1: Why plan an effective programme?

An effective programme guarantees; -
1. The future of the club
2. Effective succession planning with many members willing to take office within the Club
3. The involvement and enjoyment of all members

Stage 2: Who plans the programme?

In some Clubs the President leads the planning of the programme for her presidential year. In others this is done by a small committee that contains a cross section of members; sometimes it is the Club Executive Committee and sometimes a speaker committee.

Many clubs involve all their members in 2 or 3 groups which plan for 1/2 or 1/3 of each club year.
Stage 3: When should it be planned?

Planning should ideally be one year in advance so it is ready in time for circulation ahead of the Club year in May. Good forward planning gives members confidence and enables them to plan ahead and ensure that they can attend meetings.

Stage 4: What should it contain?

In some clubs the President chooses a theme taking into consideration the Federation, National Association, Network, Region or Country themes, the programme focus areas and remembering that Soroptimists inspire action and create opportunities to transform the lives of women and girls throughout a global network of members and international partnerships. Alternatively, a theme may be determined by whatever planning groups the Club is using and it should be the main reference point for all decisions on the Club’s activities. A theme can help to give coherence to the programme.

An ideal starting point for a programme could be a session where members brainstorm ideas.

Presidents or club members often choose a charity to support which reflects the theme. However, many clubs choose organisations to support as part of their project planning and continue with these for a year or more as decided in their development plan.

It is essential that all members take ownership of the programme and feel involved at all times. A good programme builds on members’ expertise and involvement.

A pattern of meetings often contains two meetings a month which could involve a meeting with a speaker and a club meeting with time devoted to project work and other matters of importance that arise during the year; e.g. annual special days. Alternatively, meetings may be a mixture of project work, discussion, speakers and business.

Chosen speakers should also reflect the theme and there should be a balance between the serious and less serious content; after all Soroptimism is often described as the three Fs: Fun Friendship and Food!
What should it contain? (Continued)

Social and fundraising events should also be included in the programme and again they should cater for the interests of all members.

The venue and the layout of the Club meeting place is important. Remember we are a professional organisation and our venues should reflect this.

Project work is at the heart of Soroptimism and therefore should be at the heart of every club programme.

All club programmes should contain provision for:

1. An Annual General Meeting, including discussion and approval of the club budget
2. Recognition of United Nations Special Days
3. Soroptimist Saturday of Service