

Membership Services Committee
Ambassador Orientation
and
Manual



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Table of Contents

	Page
I. Welcome.....	3
II. Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce.....	5
A. Purpose.....	5
B. Board of Directors.....	5
C. Programs.....	5
D. Committees.....	5
E. Benefits.....	5
III. Ambassador Membership Benefits.....	6
IV. Ambassador Responsibilities.....	6
A. Purpose.....	6
B. Expectations.....	7
C. Chamber Membership Retention/Recruitment.....	7
D. Events.....	8
V. Member Benefits.....	9
Appendix A	
Board of Directors.....	10
Appendix B	
Chamber Member Follow up Sheet.....	14
Appendix C	
Personal Calls and Visits.....	15
Appendix D	
Frequently Asked Questions.....	16
Appendix E	
Nine Tips.....	18



Ambassadors

Who are these friendly smiling people?

The dictionary defines Ambassadors as an official representative of the highest rank or messenger. So why does the Chamber need messengers as part of its Membership Services Committee? The answer is simple; the Chamber Ambassadors are needed to help make new members feel welcomed, informed and pointed in the right direction. They are also there to help existing members stay enthusiastic. Ambassadors point members in the right direction and assist them in being involved in areas of interest. Ambassadors are always looking for ways to increase membership. They realize the importance of having a strong membership base. The more members we have, the stronger the organization will become, as well as, making Lenoir County an even better place to live and do business.

Being an Ambassador offers you a unique opportunity. You will be able to meet with Chamber members and decision makers, on a professional basis while helping your Chamber meet its goal of personally contacting each Chamber business for increased membership retention. You will also find out that through your Ambassador experience you will gain numerous business contacts and share in a special fellowship with other volunteers and business leaders.

Some people will say, all that the Ambassadors do is shake hands, cut ribbons and attend meetings and eat. Well, this is partially true, however, along with these duties; Ambassadors must make a person feel welcomed and part of the

Chamber. If an Ambassador is enthusiastic enough, members will be encouraged to attend Chamber sponsored events, and to participate in membership. A new person may not feel comfortable in attending an event if they do not know anyone there. The Ambassadors make that person feel comfortable.

All in all, we would say the Ambassadors are an invaluable group of individuals who take time out of their jobs to help promote the Chamber, Lenoir County and the Chamber members. The Ambassadors are the Chamber's Official Representatives of the Highest Rank.

What the Ambassadors have in common is their commitment in seeing that the Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce is the best that it can be. We are personally glad you have chosen this mission. Thank you for your commitment and support to the Ambassadors as together we continue to maintain a well-informed, involved, responsive and committed membership.

Before we get into the responsibilities or "mechanics" of being an Ambassador, take a moment to be proud of the fact that you are important and a welcome member of the Chamber's premier volunteer organization.

Thank you,

The Board of Directors
Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce

II. Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce

A. **PURPOSE:** Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce is to continue developing an economically prosperous business district while maintaining the character and integrity of Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce, making it the “heartbeat” of the community.

The Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce is a united effort promoting commerce, culture, trade, good fellowship and cooperative relationships amidst diverse individuals and businesses. The membership of the Chamber is made up of individuals, businesses and organizations.

The Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Tourism Development Authority and ”VisitKinston”, is also dedicated to raising the awareness of our community through tourism, and markets the area as a tourist destination.

B. **BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** Volunteer their time and talents to provide guidance and direction. They provide additional assistance by participating in one or more of the various Chamber committees. **Appendix A**

C. **PROGRAMS:** Annual Meeting and Banquet, Junior Leadership Lenoir, Administrative Professionals’ recognition, Festival on the Neuse, Small Business Awards, Pinnacle of Achievement Award, Living the Good Life Business Expo, Wake Up Lenoir, President’s Forum/Straight Talk, Young Professionals, Spelling Bee and Maximize Your Membership.

D. **COMMITTEES:** Membership Services, Special Projects, Governmental Affairs, Lenoir 20/20, Agri-Business, Community Development, Business and Tourism Development, Young Professionals of Lenoir County and Manufacturing and Industry. The Chamber administers the Lenoir County Education Foundation.

C. **BENEFITS:** Business Advocate, Business Before/After Hours, Business Expo, Chamber Newsletter, Chamber Website, Committee Involvement, E-Blast, Website Business Directory,

Business Directory, Membership Decal, Relocation/Visitor Packages, Professional Development, Hot Jobs, Hot Deals, Referrals, Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies, Special Events, Tax Deduction, and Regional Legislative Agenda.

III. Ambassador Membership Benefits

A. As an Ambassador there are unsurpassed opportunities for business contacts. You will have multiple opportunities to meet with businesses and individuals in Lenoir County and surrounding area where you can promote your product(s) and service(s).

B. As an Ambassador you will have increased exposure to your Chamber and its many initiatives and be one of the first to be alerted to new Chamber programs and initiatives.

C. As an Ambassador there is additional recognition for yourself and your company in the business community through your Chamber's website, at certain Chamber events and in Chamber publications.

IV. Ambassador Responsibilities

A. Purpose

Membership Services Committee functions as an arm of the Chamber acting as the "Customer Service Department" of the Chamber. As an Ambassador you will be the link between the management structure of the chamber, the Board of Directors and the "Customers" of the Chamber, the general membership.

The Primary purpose of an Ambassador is to keep the membership informed, on a person-to-person basis, of the activities of the Chamber, to encourage active participation in Chamber committees and activities and to retain the current membership.

Ambassadors are encouraged to identify potential members through their contacts with current members and bring this information to the next Ambassador meeting. You may contact potential members

themselves and sign them up as new members. Each Ambassador is asked to sign up one new member per year.

B. Expectations

1. The Ambassador's company must be a Chamber member in good standing and the Ambassador should maintain professional conduct at all Chamber functions.

2. Ambassador meetings are held monthly on the first Tuesday at noon. Each Ambassador brings their lunch if needed. Reminder notices will be emailed. As an Ambassador, you may not miss more than 3 consecutive meetings without a valid excuse. If you can't attend be sure and notify the Chamber office.

C. Chamber Membership Retention/Recruitment

1. Membership Retention Calls: Ambassadors are asked to contact up to 4 Chamber member businesses each month. Ambassadors will select member businesses from a contact list provided at each monthly meeting. Use the Chamber Follow Up to track any changes, concerns or suggestions from that business. It is important to the Chamber that we have the correct information such as updating the number of employees, key employees and their email addresses and making sure the Chamber has the business website. It is also very important that these businesses know what opportunities are available with the Chamber. As an Ambassador you are to remind your businesses about BBH, BAH, Ribbon Cuttings and any upcoming event. While at a Chamber event please help Chamber members feel welcome and introduce them to other members.

Appendix B Chamber Member Follow Up Sheet,

Appendix C Personal Calls and Visits,

Appendix D Frequently Asked Questions

2. New Member Recruitment: Each Ambassador is asked to sign up one new member each year. The Chamber has New Member Recruitment folders that include the benefits of membership, new member incentives and the application

form. As you become more familiar with the Chamber you may find that there are businesses that would benefit by being a Chamber member. You can approach them yourself or visit them with the Director of Membership. One way to recruit a prospective member is to bring them to a Business Before/After Hours so they can see one of the benefits of membership. (**Attach folder**)

D. Events that Ambassadors are asked to attend and assist

1. Ribbon Cuttings: This event is held for new businesses, newly renovated businesses or new management. There is a short ceremony where the Board Chair, the President of the Chamber, the Owner/Manager, and Public Officials speak. Ambassadors participate by talking with those attending and by holding the ribbon during the ceremony. It usually lasts 30 minutes.

2. Business Before Hours or Business After Hours: These events last approximately 1 ½ hours. BBH are from 7:30 am –9:00 am and BAH are from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm. Ambassadors are asked to be at the door to welcome attendees, help with name badges, ask attendees to participate with the 50/50 Raffle that benefits the Education Foundation or make sure everyone puts a business card into the basket for a drawing. Both of these events are excellent opportunities for Ambassadors to introduce attendees to other businesses, make business connections and to get to know people in the business community.

3. Festival on the Neuse: Each year Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce organizes a BBQ Festival on the Neuse. Come for the BBQ, Fireworks, Live Bands, Wine Garden/Brewery Tours, Children’s Activities, Rides & Shows, Classic Car and Truck Show, Shopping, Arts & Craft vendors and Farmers Market.

4. Other events that need volunteers are: Living the Good Life (a Business Expo); and the Spelling Bee (to raise funds for the Education Foundation).

- V. Member Benefits – www.kinstonchamber.com- Here are a few of the member benefits you need to be familiar with. Each Chamber member is listed on the Chamber’s website directory and printed Directory and has access to other member benefit opportunities
- A. Each Chamber member has a login and password to access their online account
 - B. Update Accounts
Can keep information and representatives’ current
 - C. Hot Deals
Can post specials that the public can access as coupons
 - D. Hot Jobs
Can post any job vacancies
 - E. GIS Mapping
Provides location of each Chamber member
 - F. Basic expanded listing
Expand their Chamber website information on Chamber’s Directory Listing by adding additional information.
 - G. Upgraded Enhanced listing through ChamberMaster. For additional cost per month ChamberMaster can upgrade the basic directory listing with pictures and logos. Another option is banner advertisements placed on various pages of the Chamber’s website.
- VI. Networking 101 or How to work a room
Networking is not just small talk; it is about gathering information about the person or business so that you can connect them to your business, the Chamber or a Chamber business member. Networking helps you with your professional development, it helps with your interviewing skills and it helps get you noticed by other businesses.
- Appendix E** Nine Tips for Building Your Business at Networking Events

Appendix A

The Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce Lenoir County Education Foundation 2014 Board of Directors

Name & Address	Office	Business	Phone-Fax-Cell-Email
Tammy Kelly 1791 NC Hwy. 11/55 Kinston, NC 28504	Chairperson	Lenoir County Coop. Extension Service	252-527-2191 Fax: 252-527-1290 Cell: 919-495-1116 tammy_kelly@ncsu.edu
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Stephen Hill 311 N. Herritage Street Kinston, NC 28501	Past Chairperson	Mother Earth Brewing	252-523-9094 ext 22203 Fax: 252-939-4306 stephen@hillco.com
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Dr. Jack Harrell 315 Airport Road Kinston, NC 28503	Diversity Affairs VP	Jack Harrell, DDS	252-522-2575 Fax: 252-522-4871 Cell: 252-560-8098 jhortho@centurylink.net
Scott Crocker 510 Plaza Blvd. PO Box 5369 Kinston, NC 28503	Young Professionals VP	W. A. Moore & Company Insurance	252-527-1147 Cell: 252-560-1961 scrocker@wamooreins.com
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Sandy Landis P. O. Box 3553 Kinston, NC 28502-3554	Term Expires 12/31/2016	Community Council for the Arts	252-527-2517 Fax: 252-527-8280 Cell: 252-939-5749 slandis@kinstoncca.com
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Appendix B

CHAMBER MEMBER FOLLOW UP SHEET

Name of Business _____

1. Is their business information correct? (i.e.: New Representative, emails, website) Do they have any social media information that needs to be listed?
 Yes
 No - What corrections need to be made?

2. Does the Chamber member know that the Chamber's Newsletter appears in The Kinston Free Press on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month?
 Yes No

3. Does the Chamber member display the membership decal for the current year?
 Yes No (Do they have one?)

4. Would the Chamber member like to serve on a Chamber committee?

<input type="checkbox"/> Business/Tourism Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Lenoir 20/20
<input type="checkbox"/> Membership Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Projects
<input type="checkbox"/> Agri-Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing/Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Education

5. Is the Chamber member satisfied with the communication they receive from the Chamber? Yes No
Explanation: _____

6. Are they aware of Hot Deals/Hot Jobs? Yes No

7. Do they have their login and password? Yes No

8. Are they taking advantage of their expanded online directory listing? Yes No

9. Did you invite them to Business after Hours, Ribbon Cuttings or Business Before Hours? Yes No

10. Have you thanked them for being a Chamber Member?
 Yes No

Appendix C

Personal Calls and Visits

Begin with a simple introduction such as, “Since the Chamber offers so many programs for businesses, tell me a little about your business.” Follow with questions such as, “How long have you been in business?” “What are the issues that face your business today?” “How many employees do you have?” “How are you currently developing new customers?” “What are your expectations of the business organizations that you belong to?”

We don’t expect you to have the answers to all questions. If someone asks you a question that you cannot answer, explain that you will find out and call them back or will have a member of the Chamber staff contact them.

The purpose of your visit is to help members become better acquainted with the benefits of membership, to better acquaint yourself with the businesses in Lenoir County, and to help the Chamber better understand the needs of its members.

Although you are visiting the members as a volunteer of the Chamber, it is appropriate to mention your business. Many times members ask questions and want to learn more about your business, too. Ambassadors often find one of the nice rewards of their volunteer work is good business contacts.

Complete the Chamber Member Follow Up Sheet, either during the visit or afterwards and return to the Chamber at your next Ambassador meeting. If you feel that any visit requires an immediate follow up by staff, please call us as soon as you can after the visit. We want to nip any problems in the bud!!!

Appendix D

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I get started? Appointment or Drop-in?

Each visit is different. Generally, it's best to make a brief phone call, explaining your role as an Ambassador and setting up a convenient appointment. This way you will be sure your member has set aside time just for you. If you are having difficulty making phone contact, a drop-in visit is usually acceptable.

Remember your name tag.

How long does a visit last?

Again, it varies. Some members are eager to learn about the Chamber and have many questions. These visits are fun because the members are curious and may want to get involved. Others may not be as interested and the visit will be much shorter. Meetings generally last anywhere from 10 minutes to no longer than one-half hour.

What information do I cover during the visit?

The purpose of your visit is to orient members and help them become involved with the Chamber. It's always helpful to ask about goals and areas of interest at the beginning of the meeting.

What important things should I always try to cover at the visits?

In addition to addressing those areas, in which the member expressed a specific interest, you should try to cover the following: (Use the Chamber Member Follow Up Sheet as a guide)

- **Thank them** for their continued support of this community. By supporting the Chamber and its mission, we all continue to work on improving the economic environment of Lenoir County area and the quality of life for the area's citizens.
- **The Chamber's Website**, www.kinstonchamber.com- the guide to goods and services of Lenoir County are found under the Business Directory. Find out if they have created their page in the on-line directory. Point out the best place to see "What's happening" in the Lenoir County area can be found under the Community Calendar (point out the features). Other sections to mention are the Hot Jobs and Hot Deals
- **How to connect to other Businesses.** The best form of advertising is word of mouth and the Chamber offers events such as Business After

Hours (BAH) in the evening and Business Before Hours (BBH) in the morning –to give our members every opportunity to make business contacts.

I understand that my visit as an Ambassador is not intended to be a sales call, but I can leave my business card?

YES!! During introductions, it's appropriate to make a brief statement about your business. Many times members ask questions and want to learn about your business too. Ambassadors often find one of the nice rewards of their volunteer work is good business contacts.

How much time do I have to complete the visit?

You should complete the visit and turn in the contact sheet at the next Ambassador meeting. For time sensitive issues contact the Chamber immediately at 252.527.1131 and ask for Kay Johnson. It is important to the Chamber that our information is as accurate as possible.

What should I do if I can't get in touch with the member?

After making three attempts, if you can't get in touch with the member by phone or in person, return the Chamber Follow Up Sheet with the company's name at the next Ambassador meeting.

Appendix E

Nine Tips for Building Your Business at Networking Events

By Cynthia D'Amour



Networking is either a business owner's most valuable marketing tool, or biggest waste of time. Here are nine tips to help you get the most for your time and money.

1. Do not act desperate for business.

You're at a social event. People want to talk to upbeat confident people. You won't attract any business if you act desperate.

2. Stay focused on building your business.

Enjoy yourself, but remember why you are there. Pay attention to who you meet and what they say.

3. Mingle, don't sell.

This is a time to start some relationships and learn information that can be followed up on. Keep it light. Don't try to do major business deals—save that for later.

4. Know that you are being scanned.

People like to know who they are doing business with. Treat everyone with respect and a positive attitude. This is not a time to air dirty laundry.

5. Set goals for each event.

Decide before you arrive at an event how many people you will talk to and what information you hope to learn. You'll be amazed at how much more information you'll learn with prior planning.

6. Be prepared to follow up.

Send a "Nice to Meet You" note to everyone that you talk to. Keep them short and handwritten. Include your business card. It takes most people 6-8 exposures to remember and trust you. This speeds up the process.

7. Be an interesting person to talk to.

Do your homework. Plan some casual topics for you to bring up that you like to talk about. Being prepared will also help to build your confidence.

8. Have some good leading questions to ask others.

People love to talk about themselves. A great conversation starter is to ask what they like to do when they're not at work. Many deals are done on a golf course.

9. Listen with both of your ears for opportunities.

Pay attention to conversations for problems that you can solve. Follow up with the solution during business hours.

With these tips in mind, you can make an event a valuable networking experience!