

Member Engagement

This space will be largely open discussion with some recommended member engagement ideas. This space will offer a few discussion prompts and resources for your co-op to continue the discussion.

Definitions & Expectations

What are some of the ways that members engage in your co-op?

Ways Members Engage

- ★ Electing the board
- ★ House / floor meetings
- ★ Dining / cooking
- ★ Social events
- ★ Educational events
- ★ Officer / labor / elected positions

Where do you express member expectations?

Do you create community agreements? Do you have unspoken agreements or unofficial expectations of members? Are there formal times when your co-op creates or communicates these expectations?

Tools for transparency

- ★ Public facing member time / labor requirements (website, room postings, etc)
- ★ Community agreements
- ★ Physical postings around the house / buildings

COVID Impact

Is your co-op trying to reach new levels of engagement or return to pre-COVID levels of engagement? Have your definitions of “good engagement” changed through the past year?

Has your co-op found positive engagement experiences that were created due to the impact of COVID?

What extra work has been created this year due to COVID?

How has your co-op absorbed extra labor due to the pandemic? Has this labor been absorbed equitably?

Have there been activities or events that have been deprioritized or skipped this year due to either lack of capacity or lack of ability to do them safely?

Measuring engagement

- ★ Meeting attendance (Getting over quorum)
- ★ Filled elected positions and contested elections
- ★ Noticing “invisible” labor (labor chores not on the list, butifucation,)
- ★ Planning informal social events that help with co-op cohesion
- ★ Personal contributions to common spaces (personal vitamix in the shared kitchen, personal guitar in common room etc.)

Negative Engagement Experiences

What discourages new people from participating?

What discourages people from continuing to participate?

Negative reinforcement examples

- ★ Meetings without any positive agenda items
- ★ Meetings that do not ask members for input (members are there for quorum not participation)
- ★ Meetings that consistently go way over time
- ★ Anti-cooperative facilitation
- ★ Unclear expectations
- ★ Lack of resources or training material
- ★ Inaccessible resources and spaces
- ★ Lack of support

Has your co-op adopted any positive engagement tools as a response to forms of negative engagement or concerns raised in meeting spaces?



Preventative practices

- ★ New member orientation, ensuring members are aware of their responsibilities and letting them know how they can be more involved
- ★ Exit surveys for elected positions and outgoing members
- ★ Term limits and staggered terms
- ★ Co-officer positions (delegating more work or having more people working on projects)
- ★ Education around meeting facilitation, anti- oppression and conflict resolution
- ★ Regular skill training (food and safety / fair housing / meeting facilitation)
- ★ Removing barriers to engagement (cost, training, location)

Positive Engagement Experiences

How do you recognize or celebrate the time and energy members commit to the co-op?

Who is engaged right now? Why? What keeps people engaged?

Are members enthusiastic about engaging with the co-op?

Examples of encouragement

- ★ Co-op traditions
- ★ Shared food
- ★ Labor credits
- ★ Kudos (community recognition)
- ★ Improved quality of life (a well cared for space)
- ★ Signage around the co-op (educational, resource guides, safety tips etc.)
- ★ Interactive decor (fridge poetry, chalk wall, white board art)

What are currently your most effective strategies to engage members?