



Central Area Leadership Summit Straight Talk Table Responses October 25, 2014

Roundtable discussions from the 2014 Leadership Summit centered on key areas in which Central Area Links could strengthen and build the membership of Links Incorporated. Input was invaluable and generated the following ideas:

Enhanced Marketing & Outreach Efforts

Chapters could increase the visibility and perceived value of Linkdom. Outreach is a great way to reach potential candidates, involve families, and support causes that align with Link's core values. As the characteristics of a Link are defined, events can be held to introduce others to Linkdom. In an effort to promote Links, each member should be asked, encouraged and expected to nominate excellent candidates. Some ways to boost marketing and outreach efforts include finding ways to:

- Enhance social media presence via networks such as LinkedIn.
- Collaborate with young professional groups, business organizations and corporations.
- Host mixers that give the community and prospective members the opportunity to participate in service learning projects.
- Host and engage women via "T-Talk"
- Seek out potential candidates in local black media and other similar outlets.

Creative Financing Options

Chapters could consider modifying the existing financial structure of Links to ensure sustainability and growth. Some ways to offset financial concerns include considering ways to:

- Modify the existing membership costs.
- Offer payment plans and scholarships for women with young children.
- Take advantage of Fundraising opportunities.
- Scale to age membership and initiation fees (i.e. members under the age of 35 and alumnae members will have a lower fee level).
- Offer limited time/fire sale for payment of dues.



Purposeful Programming

Chapter programs that carry a broad range of possibilities, such as events and activities that attract new members, are family friendly, and impactful can be far reaching. Links can make great strides by focusing on ways to:

- Create and maintain a network of young professionals.
- Create and maintain a mentoring program in each city.
- Support African-American women in business.

Internal Communications

Chapters can upgrade and utilize all resources related to communications; static and media. Chapters can consider creating opportunities for members to easily and readily interact with one another. Chapters can work to:

- Enhance and expand communication capabilities and related efforts.
- Improve and maintain TRUST among members.

Chapter Operations

Chapters should continue to increase in size and capacity to ensure the health of the organization. Modifications can be made that strategically convey the need for recruitment and retention. Chapters can consider the following options:

- Increase training on the induction process of new members.
- Promote and emphasize a more transparent process.
- Eliminate chapter-level restrictions and obstacles concerning membership.
- Increase retention efforts (i.e. attendance waivers for extenuating circumstances, relationship building activities).
- Implement flexibility and alternative ways to attend meetings (i.e. Skype, video conferencing).
- Create a five-year membership plan (including SWOT, goals, and specific outcomes).
- Focus members on the importance of chapter growth and development.
- Recognize and utilize the contributions and resources of alumni members so they continue to remain a source of insight and information for potential members.



Strategic Collaborations

Chapters can proactively search for opportunities to increase chapter visibility and membership. It will prove beneficial to increase opportunities to:

- Collaborate with professionals, organizations, and companies.
- Partner with groups that promote, enhance, and empower girls and women.