



# COMMUNITY SURVEY GUIDE

**PURPOSE:** To provide a step-by-step tool that helps clubs gather data about community needs from people in the know, and to help the club's service impact, partnership opportunities and possibilities for expansion.

**AUDIENCE:** Board members and general membership. Club coach, where applicable.

**FREQUENCY:** Annual — or any time the club has experienced significant changes in its membership, service interests or community needs.

## STEP 1: CREATE CONTACT LISTS

Brainstorm to identify community members who could provide the most useful information. To make sure your list is demographically diverse, consider:

- Club partners and other groups with which the club has a relationship.
- Community leaders.
- Government and non-governmental organization officials.
- Public safety officials.
- School administrators.
- Service Leadership Programs' faculty advisors and students.
- Chamber of Commerce or other local business association leaders.
- Librarians.
- Members of the local media.
- Hospital directors and public health organizations.
- Members of faith-based organizations.
- Key business owners.
- Representatives of other organizations serving children.



## STEP 2: IDENTIFY TEAM MEMBERS

Ask members if they have personal connections to any of the community contacts. If so, assign them to interview those contacts. Consider conducting interviews in teams of two to ensure detailed notes are taken.

## STEP 3: SCHEDULE & CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

- Determine which team members will contact which people or groups and the time frame in which interviews should be completed. Interviews can take place in person, via video/online chat, phone or email.
- Attempt to schedule a 30-minute meeting with the community contacts/groups.
- Research people by using social media or websites to help direct your conversation.
- Make sure you have the most updated Kiwanis International application and information to give them (whether in person or by email.)
- A scheduled meeting is preferred, but if an impromptu opportunity presents itself, keep it under 10 minutes, and reschedule a time for more in-depth discussion.
- At the interview, reintroduce yourself and remind them what you hope to gain from the meeting. Assure them that all questions are optional, and they can take as much time as they wish to answer.
- Whatever interview format you use, be prepared. Keep the meeting focused. Capture responses in one place, whether in a notepad or on tablet or laptop.
- For specific questions customized for some selected professions, use the **listening tour** resource.





## INTERVIEW TIPS

**Introducing yourself** (on the phone if setting an appointment, or in-person for impromptu meetings)

*"Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I belong to the Kiwanis Club of \_\_\_\_\_. It's good to meet you. Our club does projects like \_\_\_\_\_, and we would like to expand our service. Would you have a few minutes to give me your opinion of some of the current needs in our community? Or can we schedule a time to talk in the near future?"*

**Closing the interview**

*"Thank you for your time. We really appreciate it. If you think of any additional needs that we didn't talk about, please call me. Our club meets... We'd love for you to join us."*

**Be sure to offer a Kiwanis invitation or some type of contact information!**

## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

You don't have to ask all of the questions below — but we encourage you use this list to create the survey that works for your club and its community.

1. What do you think our community does well? What do you like best?
2. What would make our community a better place to live, work and play?
3. What are some unmet needs of children in our community? What should concern us most?
4. Which organizations or groups are working to make our community better? Which are improving children's lives?
5. What is your wish list for our community?
6. How do you see yourself getting more involved in improving the community?
7. What are the greatest barriers to community involvement for you personally (if applicable) or for community members?
8. What would get people excited about volunteering in the community?
9. Who are the most respected and influential people and organizations here?
10. Who else should we talk to about how we can help the community?
11. Do you have any needs that our club can assist with?
12. What, if anything, is currently being done to address those needs?
13. What are the most important events that take place in our community?
14. Do you have any questions, comments or final thoughts?

## STEP 4: DEBRIEF & REFLECT

After completing community interviews, make time for a debriefing session. Collect the input from the interviews and use a membership committee meeting to discuss ideas for potential new service projects or fundraisers, partnerships or sponsorships and even new members.

### Questions to keep in mind:

- Was any information obtained that suggests need(s) for club action?
- Did members hear any of the same community needs? Which seemed to be the top priority?
- Does the club have the interest and financial means to pursue new projects? (Take a look at **Evaluate your impact** for ideas on weighing the costs and benefits of potential and current projects.)
- Was there feedback about past Kiwanis service that should be addressed?

- How might the club help resolve frequently noted community concerns?
- Is there an upcoming service project to which you can invite individuals?
- What people or organizations could you create relationships with? (Look at **Develop partnerships** for more ideas about sponsorships and partnerships.)



If some issues warrant further discussion between community leaders and organizations, consider using the resource for **conduct an open forum** with a cross-section of influencers.

## STEP 5: MOVE FORWARD

Based on the needs and the ideas you've generated, use the other Achieving Club Excellence tools to create a more impactful future for your club and your community.





# COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

CONTACT NAME

TITLE

INTERVIEW DATE

Community events that club members should attend: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Community needs and service opportunities: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Media and marketing ideas: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Fundraising ideas: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other people and/or organizations to contact: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Feedback about our Kiwanis club: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional thoughts and comments from the contact: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

