

Check List for a Quality Club Mentor Program

Recruiting Newly Licensed Hams

1. After an exam session, have the VE teams provide a list of applicants to your club officers and membership coordinators that contains email addresses and/or phone numbers for the purpose of having a club member or an Elmer contact them. Respect the applicant's privacy and offer them the option of remaining anonymous. Passing this duty to motivated club officers helps reduce the burden on already over-worked VE teams.
2. Check the New Amateur (NEAM) website regularly for new or upgraded hams in your area and extend an invitation to them.
<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/NEAM/>
Access to the above link is limited to club officials who are registered with the ARRL. If you are not able to access the link, have your club President try. Otherwise, you may need to update your information with the ARRL F&ES club database.
3. Have a greeter at your club meetings. This person should be a friendly individual able to approach newcomers and extend a hand of friendship. This person does not need to be the most technical person in your group, but they need to have some good people skills.
4. Have a prepared packet for visitors and guests to your meeting that would include a contact person, membership application, and a list of some activities such as on air nets or upcoming license classes and VE sessions. The packet could also contain some operating aids like ARRL band plans, WAS map, etc. Of course you want to include ARRL membership information downloadable from the web.

Recruiting Mentors

1. Clubs need to look no further than their own members for mentors to help new hams learn the basics so that they may get on the air and become mainstream Amateur Radio operators.
2. Some qualifications for a mentor are that they should be personable and willing to commit the time and energy necessary to help the new ham, have an ability to explain topics in simple terms, be able to direct the new ham to resources that will help them better understand the topic.
3. Mentors for more specific topics such as DXing, contesting, VHF UHF & microwave operation, etc. can be sourced from the specialty clubs in the area. People that are passionate about their own particular part of the hobby are eager to tell what they know.

Have a Plan

1. *Establish ground rules.*

Mentors and hams should establish when and where and what activities will be performed. Specify when telephone calls should be allowed.

2. *Get a commitment.*

There should be an expected level of commitment that should be respectful of all parties involved. If both parties agree to be an active part of the mentor process then there won't be a waste of anyone's time.

3. *Establish goals and objectives. i.e.*

- Main objective: By the next VE session we expect to be prepared for the upgrade exam.
- Goal: Complete two chapters of the study guide per week.
- Goal: Learn all Morse code Characters by second week.
- Goals and objectives should be realistic and attainable.

4. *Solicit Feedback.*

Good honest feedback from both people will keep the program on target and let both of you meet your objectives.

5. *Reinforce*

Feedback is two-way so don't forget to offer constructive feedback as well as a lot of positive reinforcement.

Support

1. The club should be supportive of the mentor program by recognizing the accomplishments of the new hams and the successes of mentors. Introduce new hams at meetings. Present awards; the new ham with a certificate of achievement, mentors with a certificate of appreciation.
2. Mentors act as a team and share resources.
3. "Specialists" can share the generalities of their specialty with other mentors enabling them to handle the basic areas of that topic and allowing the specialist to field the more in depth discussions.
4. Clubs can incorporate portions of the mentor program into their monthly meetings by having some hands on programs or open discussions.
5. The ARRL can offer support to your program.