

6 Tips For Collecting Member Feedback

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Your members represent so much more than just your facility's earnings. They're the lifeblood of your gym's community. Still, many facilities don't yet have a robust strategy for capturing feedback from customers and members. There's a lot you can learn from your members to improve your facility—the opportunity is much larger than just fielding comments about routesetting.

[5.Life](#) collects all kinds of information from its members, says Program Manager Eli Collinson: members' impressions of their routesetting curve, if the number or topics of classes offered should change, and suggestions for areas of improvement. Building a member feedback loop that creates buy-in from members also means making your facility more member-friendly. Here's what you need to know.

1. Be Proactive

[Sender One](#) facilities collect feedback from its members "at least once a month," says Marketing Manager Crystal Tan, adding that they also have suggestion cards members can fill out anytime.

"We try to consolidate our surveys into one big survey for bigger-picture things, and then do spot checks with groups about their experiences throughout the year," Collinson says. "In 2020, we plan to use Net Promoter Score surveys to follow up with new customers and class participants after their visit or class."

2. Keep It Simple for Members—and for You

Collinson has had success collecting data with online tools (they use Microsoft forms). "Collecting the data digitally makes it easier to aggregate the feedback and see what percentage of respondents have similar feedback for us," he explains.

Online tools are great, but don't expect people to download anything or take a bunch of steps to answer your questions. "We have had trouble getting customer to use apps or similar systems for that feedback," Collinson says. "We want to avoid long surveys and too many surveys," adds Tan.

3. Allow for Anonymity

It can be tough to provide constructive feedback when your name is attached—especially in the early stages of building a member feedback loop, when members haven't yet learned they can trust that their feedback will be taken seriously. Make it as easy as possible for members to provide you with feedback.

"We have boxes at the front desk where people can leave anonymous notes," says Monica Aranda, Director of Member Services at [Touchstone Climbing & Fitness](#). "We also have anonymous text service at some gyms, and they can email us anytime through the website."

4. Acknowledge Feedback

Even when you receive feedback anonymously, it's possible to let your membership know you're addressing it. "We respond to members directly on the [suggestion] cards and publish them on our community board," Tan says. "Depending on the suggestion, we note if we're working on a solution, if the solution is happening, or if we cannot achieve what they want--and why." This technique has the added benefit of answering a question other members probably have.

When members submit feedback to Touchstone, "we contact them directly with a personal email or phone call," Aranda says.

5. Take Action—and Tell Members About It

Life fielded numerous comments about the difficulty of finding partners, so they implemented two new partner-finding systems. Tan can also recall tons of instances where Sender One acted on feedback—and members were thrilled. "At one of our facilities, we have time-restricted street parking, so someone suggested that we make a courtesy announcement to let people know when to move their cars," she explains. "Our main parking lot clears out around that time, so now we give customers a heads up through our PA system so they can quickly resume their climbing!"

6. Reward Member Engagement

For a while, Collinson noticed a trend of members complaining about dirty holds. "We suspect it's because brushing is not common practice in our community, so we're examining including a brush with a new membership signup to try and increase the number of people brushing holds on their chosen routes."

This can also mean rewarding existing members. "We usually raffle a month of free membership

for those that participate in the survey,” Collinson says, pointing out that it’s a relatively small cost for the facility, but is a strong motivator for members to participate.

About The Author



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ACTIVITIES FOR ADULT MEETUP PROGRAMS



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