

The Road Ahead

Membership in the Time of COVID

Jennifer Cooke, 2020

**Origin
Story**

**Membership
Team**

**Identity
and
Values**

Connections

**Next
Steps**

**Part of
the
Whole**

What is Your Origin Story?

An origin story is a story that explains how a person became to be who he or she is.

Let's look at Spiderman -- a normal teenager named Peter Parks until he got bitten by a radioactive spider.

Every Sweet Adeline has an "origin story" relating to how they came to find barbershop music, join their chorus, and become a part of the international organization.

**Activity
Part 1**

**Activity
Part 2**

Part I



- Contemplate your Sweet Adelines Origin Story
 - How did you find Sweet Adelines?
 - What attracted you to the organization?
 - Why do you stay?

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**Activity
Part 1**

**Activity
Part 2**

Part 2

- Using the chat box, write 1 or 2 sentences that describe your origin story.
- Keep it as brief as possible, and focus on why you came, and why you stay.



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Who Are You?

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The fundamental beliefs of a person or organization.

MISSION Statement: Why You Exist

A statement describing the reason an organization or program exists.

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A statement describing clear and inspirational long-term change, resulting from your work.

Needs to . . .

- Be clear and simple

- Avoid elaborate language and buzz words

- Be easily explainable by and to others

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Mission

Vision

**Existing
Members**

**Potential
Members**

Writing a Mission Statement

- **Start with a story:** Imagine a real person making the decision to join your chapter. Why does she want to join? What drew her to your chorus? What will keep her coming back? This defines your TARGET MEMBER.
- **Define how your potential member's life will be better because of chapter membership:** Start your mission statement with the good you do for members and leadership.
- **Consider what your chapter does for the community:** Our chapter's positive impact on communities, through performances, education, or philanthropy are an integral back story for the mission statement.
- **Add what the chorus does for established members:** How have your members' lives been changed through chapter membership? Why do your members stay in the chorus?
- **Edit, polish, review, and revise:** Whatever you wrote for points 2 – 4 above, edit, streamline, and polish. Cut as much as you can that isn't unique to your chorus, and avoid buzzwords or jargon that isn't universal.

The Rich-Tone Chorus

Scenic City Chorus

Heart of Columbia Chorus



The Rich-Tone Chorus is a dynamic women's chorus with over 100 hard-working, fun-loving women who love to perform and have a great time doing it! Our mission is to entertain, educate and enrich lives through musical excellence while advancing the unique American art form of barbershop harmony.

The Rich-Tone Chorus is more than just an amazing show chorus. For some, it's a musical escape from the stress and problems of everyday life. For others, it's a place to socialize and meet interesting people while sharing the common bond of music. To many, it is a lifeline - a place to draw support and love from sisters in harmony.

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MISSION Statement

The Scenic City Chorus is a women's a cappella group dedicated to continually striving for musical excellence and personal growth within a fun, caring musical family, which regularly contributes to the community through performance, education, and service.

VISION Statement

The Scenic City Chorus aspires to be a well-recognized and respected a cappella performance entity that partners with other arts entities in the greater Chattanooga area. The chorus members enthusiastically educate and entertain others as they strive for musical excellence. They hold themselves, as a group and as individuals, to high standards which will foster growth and a bright future for each singer.

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Heart of Columbia Chorus



Heart of Columbia Chorus is a women's four-part harmony, a cappella show chorus chapter of Sweet Adelines International. We are committed to perfecting our barbershop style sound, building musicianship through music education, enhancing leadership skills, promoting self-esteem, building relationships, and serving the community.

Writing a Mission Statement

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Mission

Vision

**Existing
Members**

**Potential
Members**



Scenic City Chorus

Mission vs. Vision

- Your vision should align to your mission. Now that you know who you are and what you do, where do you see yourself in five to ten years?
- Your vision should be unique to your chapter and what you can provide. Do you see yourselves as educators? Performers? Competitors? All of the above?
- Keep the vision simple enough for people inside and outside the organization to understand.
- Your vision should be ambitious enough to be exciting but not so ambitious that it seems unachievable.



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MISSION

- ▶ What type of entity/program?
- ▶ Why do you exist?
- ▶ For whom do you do this work?
- ▶ Where do you work?

Example:

charity:water is a non-profit organization bringing clean, safe drinking water to people in developing nations.

VISION

- ▶ What needs to be changed?
- ▶ Why should the issue be addressed?
- ▶ What are the strengths and assets?
- ▶ What is your dream end-state?
- ▶ What would success look like?

Example:

HandsOn Network's vision is that one day, every person will discover his/her power to make a difference.



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An aerial photograph of a large stadium, likely the University of Michigan's Crisler Arena, is shown in a dark, muted color palette. A large teal circle is superimposed over the center of the image, containing white text and a bulleted list. A light brown, curved shape is visible on the left side of the image, partially overlapping the teal circle.

How Does This Apply to Existing Members?

- Chorus members are feeling isolated and disconnected to their fellow singers
 - Members may feel overwhelmed in trying to stay involved in chorus activities
 - Members may not know how to engage during COVID and seclusion
- The mission/vision can guide members into ways to connect and contribute
 - Break into manageable chunks
 - Invite members to identify areas of strength
 - Brainstorm ways to achieve manageable contributions for every member

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An aerial photograph of a road and surrounding landscape, with a large teal circle overlaid in the center. The circle contains text and a bulleted list. The background shows a road with white lane markings, a grassy area, and some buildings in the distance.

How Does This Apply to Potential Members?

- In order to attract members who stay, a chorus must have a good sense of identity
 - Potential members connect with the chorus culture
 - Expectations and reality mesh
- The mission/vision can guide potential members in how they will "click" with the chorus
 - Share the mission/vision early and often
 - Connect mission/vision with chorus expectations
 - Discuss how potential members see themselves as future members within the context of the mission/vision.

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Sweet Adelines
INTERNATIONAL

Mission Statement

Elevating women singers worldwide through education, performance, and competition in barbershop harmony and a cappella music.

- Provides a connection to singers all over the world.
- Access to education and resources
- Connection to chapters/choruses for the future.
- Events, publications, online resources

In the chat box, list more reasons it is beneficial for members to be connected to and aware of the international organization.

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Membership Team

In the chat box, list one or two qualities that you would look for in a membership team member.



**Team
Members**

Success

Responsibilities



- Team members should be proactive, knowledgeable of all aspects of the chorus, and good communicators, both online and in person.
- A variety of membership experience is desirable -- a newer member has the experience fresh in their mind, and a more experienced member knows all aspects of the chorus well.
- A team of 3-4 people is ideal: a greeter, a communicator, a "rookie" connection, and an organizer.

Membership Team

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**Team
Members**

Success

Responsibilities



Membership Team Responsibilities

- Guide guests through their first rehearsal
- Work with the director for voice placement and riser buddies
- Communicate with guests concerning audition process, cost, mission/vision
- Guide guests through audition process and communicate progress to music team and board
- Guide members through terminating membership and present all options for alternatives
- Work with director, music team, and board to innovate new membership initiatives
- Communicate possible membership issues with appropriate leaders within the chorus

Membership Team

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Success

Responsibilities



A Successful Membership Team

- Communicates well and often
- Proactively anticipates membership needs and provides workable solutions
- Sets expectations for chorus membership from the beginning
- Provides multiple options for exiting members to stay connected
- Inspires every member to be an ambassador for chapter membership
- Is connected at the regional and international levels, as well as chapter

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Tying It Together

- The chorus mission/vision creates chorus image, which attracts members who connect with the chorus values and identity.
- The mission/vision also sets expectations for incoming members
- Connection to the larger organization promotes a greater sense of community and added benefits
- A strong membership team generates a purposeful guest experience and sets the tone for potential members.
- All of these, working together, increase the likelihood of attracting potential members who are likely to become lifelong singers.

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Successful Choruses

- **Set Your Goal**
 - What are you trying to accomplish?
- **Define Your Measure of Success**
 - How will you know that you have met your goal?
- **Define Your Approach (MEMBERSHIP TEAM)**
 - Membership drive or year-round intake?
- **Identify Your Target Audience (MISSION)**
 - Who are you trying to attract? The more specific you are, the more focused your marketing can be.
- **Identify Your Point of Difference (MISSION/VISION)**
 - Why would your target audience want to join?
 - What benefit will they get?
- **Define Your Marketing Strategy**
 - Where does your target audience spend time?
 - Which social media channels do they use?
- **Define Your Budget**
 - How much money have you set aside for marketing and program expenses?

SMALL STEPS
ARE STILL
PROGRESS

- 
- Have a well-defined mission/vision, with goals and culture aligned.
 - Have a strong, well-informed membership team, focused on recruitment and retention
 - Have a structured plan for new members, that spans from their first visit through a specified period of time
 - Have flexible options to meet the needs of different members
 - Have a director that is dedicated to growing membership and connecting with everyone on the risers
 - Have a global view of membership and connection to the larger organization
 - Have an exit plan for members who need to leave the chapter

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