

The key to Expansion, our Experience in Iceland

We want to share with you why and how we started two new chapters in Iceland last year and one more four years ago. Also try to answer the Q's why, who and how for Expansion.

Why?

- we have to keep going as a society
- have impact on educational matters in the country
- opportunities for more women
- there are women who want to join
- strengthen the organization with numbers and get more fees

Who?

- Diversity. Different jobs within the educational field
- Age range. Chapters not too "old" and not too "young"
- Capacity. Women who have shown capacity, who have given something and have much to contribute.

How?

The procedure has to be carried out with care. It is difficult to give a model, one has to take into consideration the culture of each country BUT we have to have **elegance**, **ambition** and **professionalism**.

I want to share with you one way to do it, i.e. how we did it in Iceland, I want to think up loud and discuss this matter with you.

- No. 1 Very important is to do our homework, and give it time. Choose well who is in the Expansion Committee, select women who know lot of women in the community and in different fields of education.
- No. 2 Collect a long list of names and remember 25% may say no. Make sure of diversity, age range etc.
- No. 3 Call, personally, all the women on the list and introduce the Society, ask of interest and if they would like some material of information to be sent to them. Tell them why they were chosen, that we had heard about them, make clear that the person is special. Ask them for an e-mail address to send more material.
- No. 4 When you see that a chapter is going to be formed, mail a charter form to the Society.
- No. 5 Give the women time, - not too long - and send them an e-mail and find out the interest and have them confirm interest.
- No. 6 Schedule a meeting within a reasonable period. Make sure that you have more names than you need to start a chapter.
- No. 7 The introduction meeting has to be closed, i.e. it is held only with the candidates, Expansion Committee and a future mentor. This is the most important link in the chain and has to be well planned. The meeting gives an example of what meetings are like in the Society.
Talk about why they have been chosen. Start with a candle and reading of the purposes. Have a list of what projects are going on. Ask them to sign in if they want to join before they leave this meeting. If they want to think they can but have to let you know within a certain time. It is important that they see the warmth, friendship and professionalism in the Society.
- No. 8 Have the initiation within a month after the introductory meeting. Invite other members to join in at this meeting. Have the State President join in at the ceremony. Give it dignity and make it professional by having a lecture on an interesting subject. Have the chapter board and Chapter president ready and a Mentor.

A mentor works with the board and the chapter president, informs, guides, is there when she is needed. This we have done three times in Iceland and it has been very successful.

Another matter is how to keep the chapters alive and active and we have had to inject life into some of the chapters again and again. It is an ongoing process, but that is another story.