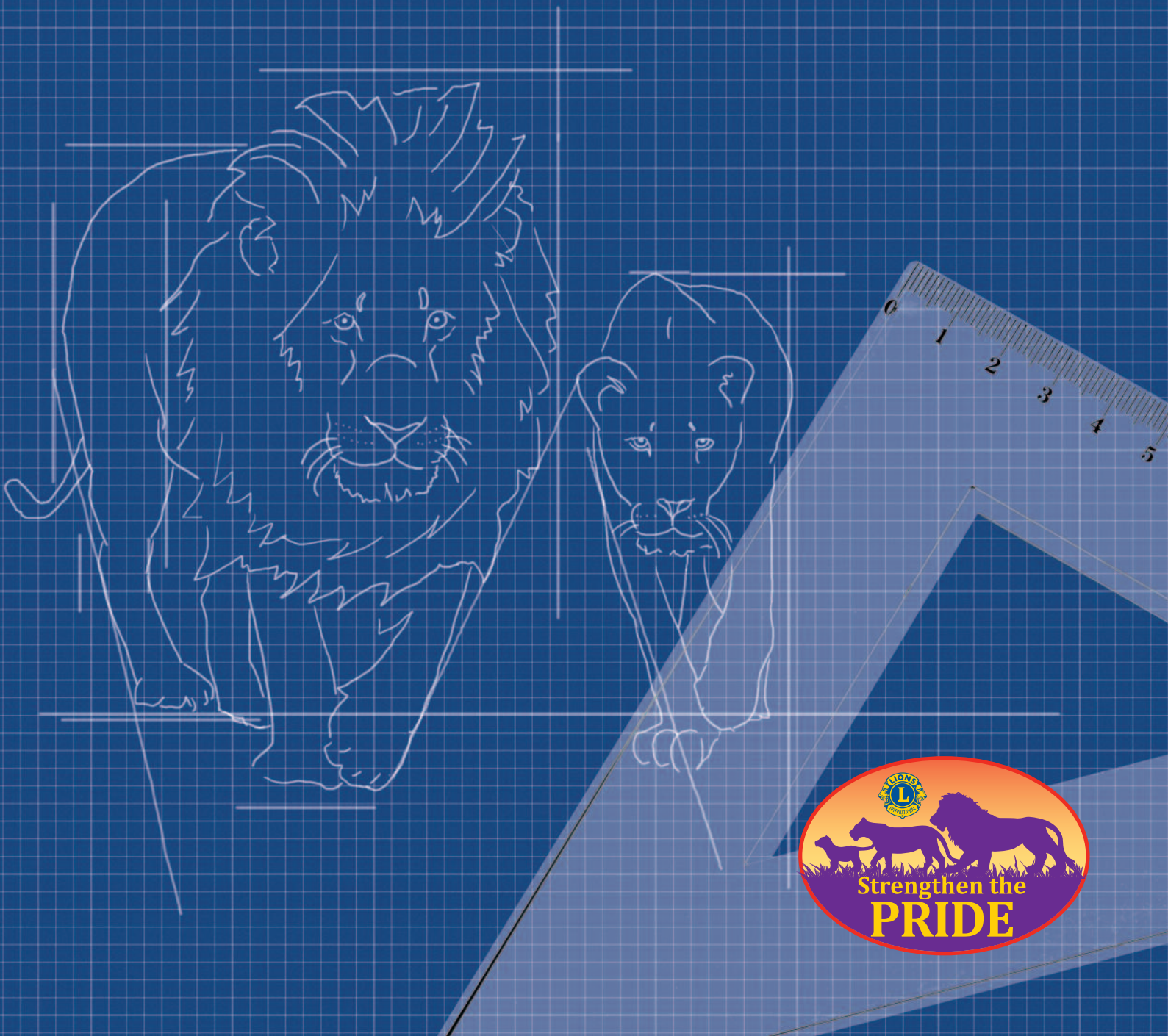




Lions Clubs International

# BLUEPRINT FOR A STRONGER CLUB



STRENGTHEN THE PRIDE

# BLUEPRINT FOR A STRONGER CLUB

It's no secret. The most effective Lions clubs regularly identify ways to expand their humanitarian service impact, develop leaders, and meet club members' needs and expectations. In short, they take care to ensure they continually bring value to the community and to club members.

Like any worthwhile project, it is important to develop and implement a plan or a "blueprint" to guide your actions. The plan may change over time as new needs arise and opportunities are identified, but following a well thought out plan is critical to club success.

This guide was designed to be a tool for a club, and its members. It provides a simple process for drawing up your own *Blueprint for a Stronger Club* with an emphasis on four core dimensions: club operations, service, leadership development and membership. Your club may choose to include additional aspects, but these four are essential as we strengthen our clubs and **Strengthen the Pride**.

You may be familiar with the [Club Excellence Process](#), or CEP, a valuable tool designed to assist clubs in pursuit of excellence. The CEP begins with a workshop, facilitated by someone from the club itself or someone from the district, that brings members together to analyze what the club is today and to determine what it will be in the future. The CEP complements your *Blueprint for a Stronger Club*, as it takes club planning to the next level – it is an ongoing, longer term process. The CEP can enhance your chances of earning the [Club Excellence Award](#) by assisting you with the process of analysis and helping you to effectively prioritize future action.

Whether you choose to use the CEP or not, it is important that you take action to strengthen your club, and it all starts with a plan! Listen to members, assess what they desire and draw up the *Blueprint for a Stronger Club*. Here's how:





## THE STEPS

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The *Blueprint for a Stronger Club* is the end result of three simple steps:

**1. ASSESS** your club's current status with respect to the four core dimensions. Perhaps your club is doing things in the current manner because 'they have always been done this way'. Perhaps your club is doing everything well, meeting the needs of its community and its members. Or, perhaps your club is "going through the motions", meeting community needs with service projects to which members don't feel a genuine connection. Without a genuine, personal connection to the types of service the club provides, members may not realize the full value of their club membership.

Whatever the outcome of the assessment, it never hurts to take stock of things from time to time. Take advantage of the various resources available, and, most importantly, invite not only club leaders, but club members to share their perceptions about the club. This is the best way to get an accurate assessment.

Consider the following:

### Club Operations

- Are meetings effectively planned and managed?
- Is decision making fair and transparent?
- Are club gatherings and events lively and of interest to members?
- Do members regularly attend and participate in club functions?
- Are financial obligations consistently met?
- Does the club operate according to the LCI Code of Ethics?
- Do you need to reconsider the format of club meetings?

### Service

- Are the club's service projects relevant to current community needs?
- Are club members genuinely interested and personally connected with the type of service the club provides?
- Are members enthusiastic and actively involved in the service provided by the club?
- Can the club's service impact be enhanced?
- Is club leadership receptive to members' ideas for new service ideas?
- Does the club have a "signature project"?
- Are new members invited to participate on project teams?
- Are service activities and impact publicized?

## THE STEPS

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### Leadership Development

- Are club members made aware of and encouraged to take part in leadership development opportunities?
- Are responsibilities of club leadership positions shared with members?
- Do club officers participate in training for their position?
- Do officers and members attend zone or region meetings and training offered at district conventions?
- Are trained members offered the opportunity to serve in leadership positions?
- Are new members provided effective orientation?
- Are experienced leaders mentoring new leaders?

### Membership

- Are opportunities to expand club membership regularly identified and pursued?
- Does our club reflect the changing composition of the community?
- Are members informed about club issues and events?
- Does the club have a newsletter? Is a new format needed?
- Is the club active on social media?
- Are members invited to share their ideas and feedback – so they know their input is valued?
- Does the club conduct meaningful inductions?
- Are the efforts of members appropriately recognized?

**2. ESTABLISH GOALS** based on the findings of your assessment. A quality blueprint will include strategic goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic goals to be achieved during 2014-2015, and longer term goals. Why not join in the building excitement of our centennial by establishing goals to be achieved by 2017? Consider planning a goal-setting event, where all club members can contribute to developing priorities and establishing goals. This is the first step in building alignment and generating enthusiasm throughout the club for accomplishing those goals.

It is recommended that you complete the online [Goal Setting Course](#) on Lions Learning Center to familiarize yourself with the concepts of effective goal setting and action planning. Use the Blueprint for a Stronger Club Goal Statement Form to record the specific goals that your club will pursue to enhance its value to the community and to club members.

Once you've established your goals, prioritize them in terms of importance, urgency, and potential consequences if the goal is not achieved. Then you will be ready for Step 3.

## THE STEPS

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**3. DEVELOP YOUR BLUEPRINT FOR A STRONGER CLUB** outlining the steps you will take to achieve your goals. To simplify this process, start by completing a simple [Planning Process Worksheet](#) for each of your goals. This will help to clarify the tasks, possible obstacles and potential solutions, and resources you may need. After this has been completed, you will be well-prepared to develop your plan.

Your *Blueprint for a Stronger Club* will put each goal into specific actionable steps. In addition, it will outline what goal is being pursued (goal statement), how it will be achieved (action steps), when each step will be completed, who will be responsible for the step, and how you can determine each step has been completed. The [Action Plan Worksheet](#) is a tool you can use as you develop a plan to achieve each goal. Together, the plans for each goal comprise your *Blueprint for a Stronger Club*.

In addition to your club members themselves, LCI offers a variety of resources and tools to assist you as you ASSESS your club's status, ESTABLISH GOALS, and DEVELOP YOUR *BLUEPRINT FOR A STRONGER CLUB*: You will find links below

### ASSESS

[Club Health Assessment](#)

[How Are Your Ratings?](#)

[Community Needs Assessment](#)

[Planning Projects](#)

[Global Service Action Campaigns](#)

[100 Simple Service Ideas](#)

[Club Excellence Process](#)

[LCI Code of Ethics](#)

[Lions Public Relations Guide](#)

[Your Club, Your Way!, Customizing Your Club Meeting](#)

### ESTABLISH GOALS

[Goal Setting On-Line Course](#)

[Blueprint for a Stronger Club Goal Statement Form](#)

[Club Excellence Award criteria](#)

[LCI website](#)

### DEVELOP YOUR BLUEPRINT FOR A STRONGER CLUB

[Blueprint for a Stronger Club Planning Process Worksheet](#)

[Blueprint for a Stronger Club Action Plan Worksheet](#)

[Club Excellence Process \(CEP\)](#)

[Leadership Resource Center](#)

[LCI website](#)



Share the goals you established when developing your *Blueprint for a Stronger Club* and motivate other clubs to follow suit. Complete your plan by using our on-line forms. Outstanding and unique plans will be shared with clubs around the world. Applicants will receive an attractive auto-generated certificate.

Click here to complete your plan and receive your certificate!

If you have any questions or require any assistance, please email Lions Clubs International at: [English language@lionsclubs.org](mailto:Englishlanguage@lionsclubs.org)

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## **PUTTING YOUR BLUEPRINT INTO ACTION**

Congratulations on creating your *Blueprint for a Stronger Club*. Your investment in developing a clearly defined plan based on your club members' assessment of the club's status and value to the community and to the members themselves will be well worth the effort, as long as this plan is implemented!

Be sure to share your Blueprint with all club members so that they are aware of what the club wants to achieve, along with their role in achieving club goals. Remain committed to your plan, taking consistent action to move closer to your goals.

Again, it is very important to the health and vibrancy of any club that its members really feel connected to the club's humanitarian service projects – if you foster just that, your *Blueprint for a Stronger Club* will do more than you hope.

It is also critical to evaluate your plan on a regular basis. As circumstances change, your plan may require revision. The creation of the initial Blueprint is just the beginning. Keep it alive and relevant by measuring progress and gathering feedback from club members on a routine basis. This is how you will realize your desired results.

In addition, to achieve success, it is vital that subsequent club officer teams assess needs, measure progress and update the Blueprint as necessary. The questions you originally considered related to the four key dimensions of club operations, service, leadership development and membership, will serve as a guide in the evaluation process.

Your *Blueprint for a Stronger Club* provides a road map to achieving greater levels of value in terms of the community and in terms of member satisfaction. The three simple steps provide a practical approach to enhance what is working, to phase out what no longer works, and to implement new initiatives. By creating a well-founded *Blueprint for a Stronger Club*, committing yourself to its implementation, regularly revisiting the plan, assessing needs and refining action steps, you will enable your club to achieve both its short and long term goals.

**Strengthen your club and Strengthen the Pride!**



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