Membership Skills Checklist

You can use this checklist to carry out a skills audit and identify what you already have available in your organization. Not all of these skills will be necessary until your membership program reaches a certain size. When it does reach a certain size, it might be worth exploring automating some of these tasks.

✦✦✦ Critical Skill  ✦✦ Important Skill  ✦ Nice-to-have Skill

Revenue, Marketing, and Sales

☐ Growth strategy ✦✦✦
Design and execute membership drives, experiment with new formats to attract members, set revenue and membership growth goals

☐ Digital marketing practices & techniques ✦✦✦
Email marketing, social media marketing, content partnerships

☐ E-commerce management & customer service ✦✦✦
Benefits fulfillment, credit card processing, chasing lapsed members, processing cancellations and refunds

☐ Experience with database management* ✦✦
Benefits fulfillment, credit card processing, chasing lapsed members, processing cancellations and refunds
(*This may become a critical skill as your membership program matures)

☐ Business development ✦✦
Business modeling: Business model generation, building revenue and cost projections, checking revenue and cost assumptions

☐ Branding ✦✦
Establish brand strategy, identity, and messaging

☐ PR and communications strategy ✦
Secure other media coverage of your most impactful journalism
Research, Data, and Analytics

☐ Experience with analytics/metrics measurement ✦✦✦
Track key performance metrics, identify data trends, create metrics reports, assess campaign successes and failures, identify best practices accordingly, report back to stakeholders

☐ Product development and testing ✦✦✦
Audience research: Designing and administering surveys and focus groups, interpreting audience data for audience segments and audience needs.
A test-and-learn mindset: data-led decision making, A/B testing, user testing

Engagement

☐ Community management ✦✦✦
Respond to member queries, solicit member input, organize member surveys, moderate member discussion

☐ Newsletter strategy* ✦✦✦
Design newsletter products, write and format emails, evaluate newsletter performance
("If newsletters are not a core component of your editorial and audience development strategy, then this is not a critical skill")

☐ Social media strategy ✦✦✦
Use social media platforms to engage existing members and reach new audiences

☐ Comfortable being the face/voice of the organization ✦✦
Ability to command the room, do deep listening, and facilitate conversation
Vulnerability; willingness to own up to mistakes

☐ Events planning/organizing* ✦
Planning flow of activities, sourcing speakers, coordinating venues
("This is an Important skill if you have an events-heavy membership strategy")

☐ Collaborative/cooperative decision-making experience ✦
Organizing consultations, polls, and votes
Editorial

Focused on membership-concerned editorial activities, not core activities.

☑ Excellent written communication ★★★
   Writing copy for newsletters, social, and onsite member appeals

☑ Effective external communication ★★★
   Ability to effectively communicate your organization’s mission, the impact of membership/what it means to be member-supported, engagement initiatives (crowdsourcing, crafting callouts, drawing knowledge from members, inviting participation), and the results of those initiatives (including key decisions)

☑ Effective internal communication ★★★
   Ability to effectively communicate with editorial about revenue activities/campaigns, member feedback, and analytics information