

# Chapter Challenge

*Will you join the challenge?*

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## **Chapter Challenge #1: Contact New Members**

On the PTG Review page of the Journal, new PTG members, new RPTs and international members are listed by region and chapter each month.

The challenge: During a chapter meeting, send a postcard or letter to someone on this list. Signing cards and addressing envelopes takes only 15-20 minutes. Two PTG chapters are already sending cards to every new member and new RPT. Total cost to the chapter is about \$200 per year, depending on how many cards and envelopes you mail each month.

## **Chapter Challenge #2: Schools**

Many piano technicians tune for local school systems.

The challenge: Contact a local school music department about speaking to students about how a piano works, tuning basics and piano maintenance. Leave PTG material for their review.

## **Chapter Challenge #3: Journal Article Review**

Not everyone reads the entire Journal cover to cover.

The challenge: Create a chapter meeting around reviewing a Journal article. Announce the article one month in advance to give chapter members time to read it. Read the entire article during the meeting and discuss it.

## **Chapter Challenge #4: Virtual Chapter Guests**

Technology offers new ways to stay connected.

The challenge: Use Skype or another forum to invite a virtual guest to your monthly meeting. It can be a distant chapter member, another chapter member, or even your regional vice president. All you need is a laptop and internet connection. An inexpensive camera attachment makes it easy to provide close-up views.

## **Chapter Challenge #5: Support the PTG Foundation**

The Piano Technicians Guild Foundation (PTGF) is a non-profit that relies on private contributions. It maintains the Jack Wyatt Museum and the Steve Jellen Library at the Home Office in Kansas City, KS. It awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a music teacher who is a member of the Music Teachers National Association and who uses a Registered Piano Technician for regular piano care. It also offers scholarships each year to PTG Associate members planning to take the RPT exams during the current year's PTG convention. It provides financial support for PTG members victimized by natural disasters.

The challenge: Modify your chapter bylaws or policies to include an annual pledge of at least \$100 to PTGF. Notify the Foundation board of directors of your chapter's intentions so they can better plan to respond to requests for disaster relief. Email: [contact@ptgf.org](mailto:contact@ptgf.org). Go to [ptgf.org](http://ptgf.org) for more information about the Foundation. They will make donating easy.

## **Chapter Challenge #6: Tuning in Front of Peers**

Tuning pianos is a solitary profession. It's easy to become comfortably numb to growth.

The challenge: Start your chapter meeting with a tuning exercise. For example: Everyone tunes a unison, an octave, and a pure fifth. Beginners tune only a unison. No criticism is allowed because the purpose of this exercise is to create an atmosphere of trust. Clap after every performance as a demonstration of support.

## **Chapter Challenge #7: Parts Identification**

Everyone knows what to call a jack, but what do you call the thing-a-ma-jig beside the trap lever arm where the pedal rods go?

The challenge: Purchase the publication *Piano Parts and their Functions*, illustrated by James E. Campbell and compiled by Merle H. Mason, available at the PTG store. During a chapter meeting, point to parts on a piano and have members name them. There are enough illustrations in this book for more than one meeting. For the ultimate challenge, take pictures of the parts and make flash cards.

## **Chapter Challenge #8: Make More Music**

Music is the focal point of our work, except when we have chapter meetings.

The challenge: At the beginning or end of each chapter meeting, play music. Bring other instruments you play and play music together. It's a refreshing reminder of why we love our work. For newer members, it can help level the playing field — the least experienced member may be the best musician.

## **Chapter Challenge #9: Share a Simple, Useful Tool**

In our business, tools are a universal language.

The challenge: During a chapter meeting, make 12 simple, useful tools any technician can use, then ship them to another chapter in your region. Choose a neighboring chapter, a chapter that has a similar philosophy, or one with which you share friends.

Examples of tool choices:

- Key-dip blocks with your chapter name on them
- Single-needle voicing tools with needles glued into hammer shanks
- String-lifting hooks made from bass strings
- Gentle clamps made from slices of PVC pipe
- Key bushing depth gauges made from hammer shanks, as shown in the TT&T section of the Journal.

## **Chapter Challenge #10: Adopt a Technician or a Chapter**

Not all chapters adopt new members equally. Some have older members on the verge of retirement, while others have younger members eager to develop new talent.

The challenge: Seek out and adopt either a single PTG member or an entire chapter. Decide how you can help each other and create a plan to do so. Allow the plan to develop into a life of its own.

# **Chapter Challenge #11: Member Teaching and Training**

Those who teach learn twice.

The challenge: Use the first 30 minutes of your chapter meeting for member training. Have a chapter member teach the class. Make the topic reasonably difficult but within the skill level of the teacher. Teaching accelerates learning and develops leaders.

