

Rotary DISTRICT
5220

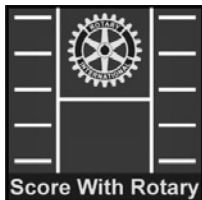


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We're on the
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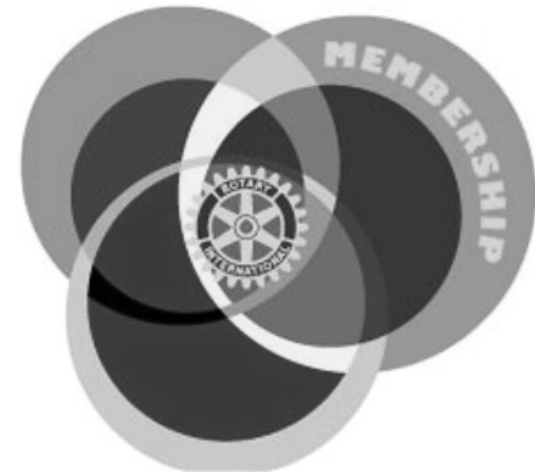
How To Retain Rotary Members

- Maintain control of the food—Rotarians slip away quickly when the food isn't good.
- Keep the meetings exciting—If it is not fun they will find it easier to continue what they are doing at home or work rather than attend a meeting—especially for a breakfast club.
- Get everybody engaged in Rotary—people who don't have a Rotary task to concentrate on can slip away without even being noticed.
- Follow up with absentees—if nobody missed them why should they worry about coming back.
- Put new people in charge—don't always round up the usual suspects.

ROTARY DISTRICT 5220



Hold On To What You've Got!



When we talk about membership goals it is important to keep the proportions in mind. The biggest proportion of membership isn't recruiting new members – it is retaining those you already have. Whether you work hard at it or not, it is likely that outside influences will make you lose some members. The fewer you lose, the fewer you need just to stay even. Growth isn't even measured until you offset the losses. All phases of membership are important to the organization, but the order of overall impact is Retention, then Recruitment, and then Extension. For that reason, we focus here on keeping the members you already have. Ultimately, when you have done all of the things that improve retention, you'll find that recruitment becomes much easier too – it's then a matter of getting the prospect through the door more than of keeping them once they get there. What we are presenting here isn't just about the job of the membership committee – it is about the job of all club leaders and the effect on membership.

You had better hold on to what you've got!

- a. It's easier to hold on to one member that already belongs than it is to bring one new member through the door.
- b. Members stay when they are engaged in club and district activities.
- c. All leaders need to be addressing their Avenue of Service activity with a concern for the effect on membership. Give everybody a job – one that will maximize the likelihood of his or her enjoyable involvement.
 - i. Club Service
 1. Remember Rule #1 – Have Fun! Dry, dull meetings don't promote the kind of fellowship that makes people come back week after week.

1. Encourage Rotarians to give to the Rotary Foundation every year. Show them how their contribution to Rotary will do a lot of good throughout the world. Help them connect themselves to the Foundations good works.
2. Honor those that give. Make a special ceremony of presenting a Paul Harris Fellowship to a member. Invite their family. Select a presenter who will be significant to both the member and the club – pick a distinguished Rotarian, a local community leader, or family member to present the ribbon, medallion and lapel button. Acknowledge other Paul Harris Fellows and Multiple Paul Harris Fellows attending the ceremony. Reinforce the honor of their prior gift and encourage their continued participation.
3. Teach Rotarians about the educational opportunities the Foundation promotes— Ambassadorial Scholarships, Peace & Conflict Resolution Scholarships and Group Study Exchange Teams.
4. Assure that club members understand the range of humanitarian services supported worldwide through various grants.
5. Promote the PolioPlus program—the twenty year quest for Rotary that is helping completely eradicate this dread disease from the face of the earth.

Remember Rule #1

Have Fun!

- and encourage their participation. If only the youth leaders know what the kids are doing it doesn't do much to engage the rest of the club in the sponsorship.
2. If you don't sponsor one or more youth clubs, consider doing so. It's another venue to serve and to keep Rotarians engaged.
 3. Sponsor candidates for RYLA/Camp Royal. Select a committee to interview the candidates to get more Rotarians involved. Don't pick all of the usual suspects.
 4. Sponsor scholarships for children in your community. Again, get a lot of Rotarians involved in a committee to evaluate the candidates.
 5. Youth Exchange programs offer a lot of opportunities to help Rotarians connect with their club. Hosting doesn't need to be limited to those families that have children at home to send in exchange. Both long and short term exchanges are begging for participants. More people would join in if they had better information.
 6. Hold a speech contest in your community. Only the high school contestants can progress to the district contest, but clubs can hold middle school and elementary school contests as well. Have the winners give their speech at the club and invite the parents. That's some of the fun that will bring them back week after week.
 7. Do joint projects with the youth groups that you sponsor. Invite them as guests to your meetings. Contribute to their club in return for their service at club social events and fundraisers.
- vi. Foundation Service

2. Good food brings people back – poor food doesn't have much of a draw. If people are unhappy with the food – pay attention and make a change in the menu or the provider.
3. Use scheduled greeters to make current members as well as guests feel welcome. Pick people who smile a lot.
4. Allow some time for members and guests to visit with each other. Get out from behind the podium and shake hands with people.
5. A weekly bulletin that people look for, enjoy, and take home to family is an asset to the club
6. Variety and quality in programs is a must – it amounts to as much as half of the meeting time.
7. Fundraising events that involve all or most club members help keep people engaged.
8. Maintaining historical information about the club and sharing it with the members helps them connect the continuous value of Rotary with the current activities.
9. Family of Rotary functions help bring members together with their families instead of taking the members time away from their families. Extend invitations to events, send greetings for significant occasions, encourage sharing of Rotary information, principles, and opportunities.
10. Maintaining a club website not only makes Rotary information convenient to club members, it also makes it immediately available to family members, including those who live far away, and to

- prospects for future membership. Rotarians stay in Rotary when they feel good about being there, and when they get encouragement from their support group. When they send a web page link to a friend, relative or colleague to show them about their activities, they increase the likelihood of positive support.
11. People love to see pictures of themselves. Taking lots of pictures is easy, convenient, and with digital cameras, very inexpensive. Don't limit the photos to the dignitaries and the presentations – those are the people that will easily be retained. Snap pictures of the people you are in danger of losing. Show them that they are important too.
 12. Sing. You don't need to sing well to have fun. In fact most Rotarians aren't great singers, but they derive a great enjoyment from laughing at and with each other. When an occasional great singer emerges, that is fun too, and often quite a pleasant surprise.
 13. Hold periodic Club Assemblies to teach Rotarians about Rotary and to gather their input. Encourage members to enroll in the Leadership Academy to gain the knowledge that will deepen their attachment to the organization. Use weekly Rotary Minutes to maintain training between larger training events. Encourage all club members, not just officers and directors, to participate in training opportunities such as the Membership and Foundation seminars, the Mid-Year Assembly and Pre-PETS, and the District Assembly toward the end of the year. You can't expect people to stay around an organization they

- your club about the work involved, the reception of the local nationals that got the benefit, and the sense of reward that came from participation. If the program schedule is too full, get pictures – they tell a thousand words each!
7. Find a way to get every club member associated with an international project. Collect books to ship to a foreign country as an aid to literacy. Get hearing aids for deaf children who will otherwise be unable to attend school in their Third World country.
 8. Provide 100 somethings for Project 100. Challenge the members to participate in the decision on what to provide. Your members will feel more association with a product that is manufactured in your community.
 9. Support the incoming and outgoing GSE teams and plan events and club visits with them.
 10. Seek out and propose Ambassadorial Scholars and Peace & Conflict Resolution Scholars for Rotary Scholarships. Form an interview committee and include some of your marginalized members to participate.
 11. Support Rotaplast and show your Rotaplast banner at meetings. Reserve at least one program a year to keep members informed about the latest projects and show how their participation made a difference. Encourage members to actively participate – Rotaplast needs both medical and non-medical people to carry out their mission.
- v. Youth Service
1. Keep your members informed about Youthact, Interact and Rotaract activities

with common interests further cements the relationship with Rotary.

iv. International Service

1. Pick international projects that the club members can believe in. Consider the increased impact of projects where club members can “follow the money” and go to a foreign land to assist and observe the value of the club project. Think about how your own members returning from an international project will be even more convincing than a stranger who drops in for a one-week program.
2. Partner with the Vocational leaders of your club to personalize your international service. Think about the service your members provide and the products that they sell. How can those be used to benefit a distant community in need?
3. Partner with other clubs in your area or in the district to take on larger projects with more far reaching results expected such as we are doing with Project Hope.
4. Attend the World Community Service meetings at the Barnwood in Ripon. Learn from experienced hands in International Service. It is easier to get started with some guidance from those that know the ropes.
5. Partner with local businessmen and other non-profits for more meaningful projects. Provide funds for the shipment of needed medical equipment to distant hospitals. If you can't “follow the money” to deliver the equipment in person, then get some hands on experience and ownership of the project by assisting with preparing the materials for shipment.
6. When other area clubs do a project of interest invite their members to speak to

don't understand and believe in.

14. Give Awards to those who serve. Small trophies, plaques or framed certificates can go a long way toward making a Rotarian feel connected.
 15. Encourage the best speakers in your club to volunteer as part of the District Speakers Bureau.
 16. Encourage makeups at other clubs to broaden members understanding of Rotary, and to enhance the fellowship opportunities that come in your own club.
 17. Have an active Membership and Retention committee that develops ways to encourage recruitment. Talk about membership a lot. It is as important to keeping the current members engaged as it is to the recruitment of new members.
 18. Consider Extension. If your club has sufficient critical mass to sustain itself and your community would benefit by the development of a new club, your members who get actively involved in the development process will become more committed themselves.
 19. Hold an occasional joint meeting with one or more other clubs in your area. Encourage a broadened sense of what Rotary is, who it involves, and how it operates.
- ii. Community Service
1. Projects that involve all or most club members keep them engaged in Rotary.
 2. Some projects don't need participation of large groups of members, but still have broad value when the activities and the results are shared with all to vicariously include them.
 3. Projects for which the club writes checks are not long remembered, but those that

- involve active participation generate memories.
4. Do a great Centennial Project that involves hands-on member participation, multiple work days, and high public profile for the club and for participants. Invite the press.
 5. Promote literacy in your community in ways the members can enjoy and participate.
 6. Have your club take a leadership role in disaster relief (when needed) by providing goods and service to disaster victims. Don't wait for a one hundred year flood or a 10,000 acre forest fire. Check with the local police, fire and other public service agencies to identify smaller incidents that have been disastrous for neighborhoods, families, or individuals.
 7. Support the Rotary International Rose Parade float. Travel to Pasadena in January to participate. Consider building a float for a local parade that tells your Rotary story to a community.
 8. Develop a Rotary Community Corps. These can take on a wide variety of structures to bring Rotary opportunities to non-Rotarians. It is also a big attraction for the Rotarians that advise the RCC.
 9. Plan special Centennial Activities to share with the local community. While you educate the public about who we are and what we do, you'll be educating and reinforcing your own membership as well.
- iii. Vocational Service
1. When vocational speeches tell about the work a member does, how they trained and prepared themselves for that vocation, and what value the vocation brings to the world and the community, the atten-

- dees learn more about the functionality of other vocations. Vocational speeches are about vocations – not just an autobiography of the individual speaker who has been loaned the classification.
2. Vocational tours at member's place of work deepen the understanding of the subject vocation and related ones. They also keep things fresh by challenging the sameness of always meeting in the same place with an identical format.
 3. Rotary is intended to take a leadership role in championing high standards within each vocation. When we follow through it instills pride in the organization and its members – another key for retention.
 4. The opportunity to guide youth in preparing for vocations can have a powerful effect on the development of a community. Sharing through job-shadowing and career days gives the participants an immediate ownership of this Avenue of Service.
 5. Participate in the 4-Way Test Essay Contest. – It is another job for another Rotarian. It will deepen their knowledge of the 4-way test and its history, and it will keep them involved with kids – both good ways to stay interested in Rotary membership.
 6. Develop a local program to aid Disabled people find productive work. Partner with other organizations for the benefit of your community. The members that get involved with this project will be proud of their Rotary experience.
 7. Rotary Fellowships offer extended opportunities for members to become more involved in Rotary. Over eighty fellowships are available in recreational, vocational and world concerns. Gathering Rotarians