

District Training Bulletin 10

The future starts today, not tomorrow.
Pope John Paul II

I've been determined to get this bulletin out before the festive season is upon us.

Firstly, a reminder that the next District Forum will be on Saturday January 25th at Manor Church of England Academy, York. An agenda will be sent out shortly.

This bulletin covers 3 things:

- Membership retention
- Looking for project managers
- Upcoming training sessions

1. Membership retention

There has been much talk in the past 12 months about the critical need to increase our membership. Lots of memos, articles, presentations at District meetings about North Star, Corporate membership, trying out new things and so on.

However, we must never forget about retaining the members we have, so I'm going to cover this specific area. A scary statistic is that of new members joining, **we lose 48% of them after 2 years**. That's more or less half of new joiners. Some will have joined with the wrong expectations, but the majority will not be getting the Rotary experience they want. So if we could retain more members in addition to bringing in new people, then the membership data would be looking a lot more healthy, so here are some food for thought tips you may like to discuss at a club meeting. It is not an exhaustive list – just food for thought.

- A good starting point from a club perspective would be to conduct a health check survey amongst your members to see if there are any areas of dissatisfaction that could be addressed, anything you could be doing differently to engage members. You can find details of the health checks [HERE](#)
- So what makes up the “club experience”?
 1. Meeting enjoyment — When members have fun, and feel that they are included and belong
 2. Confidence in club leadership — When members feel that they have input in the club, their club leaders are open to their ideas, and when they trust the leaders to make good decisions for the club.
 3. Personal growth opportunities — When members feel that their club and Rotary offer ways for them to develop skills and to grow.
 4. Connections — When members feel that they’ve formed valuable relationships through Rotary.
 5. Meaningful service - When members feel that the service their club does makes a difference in the world and in their community.
- There are already several articles in the Knowledge Library about membership retention: (click on the links)
 - [Understand why members leave](#)
 - [Improving your member retention](#)
 - [Enhancing the club experience](#)
 - [What makes a good club](#)
 - [Designing your club experience](#)
 - [Engaging and keeping members](#)
- The “obvious” things:
 - Engage with current members
 - Make new members welcome
 - Create an inclusive club culture
 - Strengthen your club

- Stay up-to-date
- Have a good range of projects and refresh these regularly

- Engaging someone in Rotary means making an effort to keep them interested. You can engage fellow members through conversation, by introducing them to someone new, or by getting them involved in an activity or role. Members who are engaged are more likely to have a positive experience — and to stay with Rotary.
- Making a strong connection with new members will help inspire them to become active, longtime members.
- Rotary offers many opportunities for members to get involved in what interests them, and not just at the club level. Discussing these opportunities with new members during their orientation and reminding them about these options periodically is something all club leaders can do.
- Making the meetings worthwhile. Your members are volunteering their time to be part of the club and make a difference. They have lots of choices for fun ways to volunteer, and meetings that follow the same format every time can become dull. To make sure your members believe that the club meeting is a good use of their time, try activities that appeal to people's differing interests and that keep the meetings lively and interesting.
 - One way to get members involved during club meetings is to make the gatherings interactive, so that all members get to talk and even move around. For example, have everyone find someone they don't know well or haven't talked to in a while and find out three new things about them. This can often make members feel more comfortable with each other. If your club meets virtually, you can use breakout rooms to converse in smaller groups.
 - Community Updates. Because your club works to address issues in your community, consider allotting time during some meetings for members to talk about what's happening

in the community that they are excited or worried about, or to let people know about upcoming events. Members may enjoy learning more about each other and the community, and the discussion could inspire ideas for new projects.

- Learn together. Gaining new knowledge — through a TED Talk, a podcast, a book club, or some other way — can be a meaningful method of self-improvement and can deepen the connections people feel with each other. Your club can share educational resources on topics like leadership and diversity, equity, and inclusion, and then dedicate some time for members to discuss their thoughts.
- The more variety your club meetings offer, the more attractive the experience is to many groups of people.
- Inspiring Action. The No. 1 reason people join Rotary is to make a difference in their community or around the world. Your members will feel proud and involved when your club carries out meaningful service projects.
- Assess the need. Focusing on projects that meet real needs means you can make the biggest impact in a community.
- Assess members skills. Knowing what people are good at can help you plan activities to use their skills in a meaningful way and give them a sense of pride, achievement and contribution.
- Build partnerships. Collaborating with other clubs and working with local companies or non-profits expands your resources and increases impact.
- Building personal connections. Making connections is one of the top reasons people join Rotary, and the No. 1 reason that they stay. Members can develop friendships and connect in so many ways, and it's important that clubs facilitate this by incorporating activities and opportunities for members to get to know one another and have fun together.
- Sometimes meeting agendas are so full that there isn't time to socialise. Members may want more time to talk so they

can get to know one another. Consider adding 15-30 minutes to your club meeting just for socialising.

- Seek a volunteer to plan regular social gatherings separate from club meetings. Consider asking someone who has been less engaged, because it may be an opportunity for them to plan activities they're interested in, learn new skills, and get more involved.
- Connecting beyond the club. Rotarians can make connections through Rotary beyond their clubs to broaden their networks even more. Such as: Rotary Friendship Exchange; Rotary Fellowships - Encourage members to be part of the international community of Rotary by joining a professional, hobby, or culture-focused fellowship; Rotary Action Groups - encourage members to use their professional expertise on an international scale by joining an action group that aligns with their vocation.
- Consider greater flexibility in your club. Click [HERE](#) to find out more.

If all else fails...

If you have done your level best to retain a member and they still want to leave, try to keep them as a Rotarian. Perhaps there is another club nearby that could better meet their needs? Perhaps they could transfer to be a direct member to give them more flexibility? Don't let them walk away from Rotary forever.

2. Looking for project managers

Most Rotarians love to roll up their sleeves and get involved in projects. Having a great range of projects that people can be involved in is going to become increasingly important. There is a new exciting initiative that will be launched at the next District Forum, however at this early stage we are looking for volunteer project managers. This is to manage the process, not necessarily the actual projects – though you could if you

wanted to. If you would like to find out more without any commitment at this stage, please contact me and I'll send you further details. My contact details are at the end of this bulletin

3. Upcoming training sessions

Grants. There will be a training session on Wednesday 12th March at 7.00pm by zoom. Registration details will be sent out in the New Year.

How to use CANVA. Canva is a free-to-use online graphic design tool. Use it to create social media posts, presentations, posters, videos, flyers and much more. We'll be using an outside consultant to talk you through how to use this invaluable tool. A date has yet to be confirmed but will be Spring next year.

As always, if there are any specific areas of training / learning you would like me to organise, then please just drop me an email.

Thanks

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DKL <https://www.1040knowledge.net>