

MEMBERSHIP



Rotarians have been extolling the virtues of wearing a Rotary pin on RI's official LinkedIn group. Pins come in many designs, including this one from vendor Russell-Hampton. See a full list of [official RI licensed vendors](#). *Photo courtesy of Russell-Hampton*



Past RI President Bob Barth once said that a Rotary pin should say this about the wearer: 'You can rely on me, I am dependable, I am reliable, I give more than I take, and I am available.' What better reason to wear it at all time."

RETENTION cues to watch for!

Your District Leadership Training Assembly is planned for March 31 and April 1 in Victoria. ALL club leaders are strongly encouraged to attend - see District website at www.rotary5020.org

"Our greatest challenge in Rotary is better to understand what type of expectations new members of Rotary have. We need to take the time and analyze what attracts new members and what keeps them in Rotary. One of the foremost needs of new members is a strong desire to feel that they are spending their time wisely."

LOW ATTENDANCE:

Review attendance at least quarterly. Contact members when attendance dips – problems with health? Feeling under appreciated? Poor programs? Not involved? **SHOW THE CLUB CARES!**

NEGATIVITY:

Troubling because it's potentially contagious. May still attend meetings but cause others to leave. For example a member advocacy a project of some kind may become disengaged if others aren't interested. **ENCOURAGE THEM, HELP THEM** – perhaps in partnership with another Rotary Club.

LACK OF INTEREST:

It is important to involve members in activities **BASED ON THEIR OWN INTERESTS**. Encourage an accountant to work as Treasurer, or someone who works for a 'not for profit' to lead the Fundraising Committee. When members are contributing to something they are passionate about, the outcome is better projects and happier members.

FINANCIAL ISSUES:

Many younger members today leave because they find the financial burden of membership too high. **LOOK FOR WAYS** to prevent those with a Rotary heart but a small pocketbook to stay. **BE CONSCIOUS** of costs, consider monthly or reduced dues payments for younger members.



WHY DO THEY LEAVE? from: ClubRunner Quarterly Newsletter

Whether it's a high profile company, an established conglomerate or a local club, everybody has a hard time keeping their best and brightest to stay. We often have those amazing members who volunteer a majority of their time towards club activities and have invested a lot of their time and energy towards the success of the club. These members join various committees, become executives and handle anything from menial to the most complex tasks. As a result, they become important to the club and to the rest of the club members. Sometimes, a simple acknowledgement isn't enough and it becomes difficult to retain members. However, in order to retain members, we have to understand why members choose to leave in the first place.

1. **Lack of Open-Mindedness:** Everyone wants to be heard and have their ideas acknowledged. When members begin to feel that the decision makers of the club often waive their ideas aside in order to follow through with an already set strategy, they begin to feel undervalued. As such, they slowly begin to lose interest in the club and its activities. As a solution, always try to incorporate the best parts of their suggestions. New suggestions can only improve your current strategy and help you achieve your goals.
2. **Vision/Mission:** Look at your club's current mission statement. What is your club's vision for the future? Is it exciting? Is it something your members are proud to share? Do all members even know what it is? A mission statement really defines what your club is about and your vision defines the future of your club. Who came up with the mission statement and vision? Chances are, when your club members choose what it is they want to achieve as a club, they'll work towards making it a success because they'll believe in it.
3. **Exciting Tasks & Projects:** When we look at the business world, there are hardly any companies that have people follow up with employees asking if they're enjoying their current project or whether they're interested in another project or task. Essentially, these are 'nice-to-have' conversations but hardly ever take place, once a year at best during performance reviews. Similarly, this is something that should be implemented by clubs. A simple question like this can make members feel very appreciated and looked after. Everybody is driven by the opportunity to excel and participate in something big, which will make an impact on their company, life or even club. Why not implement an annual 'check-in' for members to see how their membership is going and what can be done to improve their experience?
4. **Team Dynamic:** Does everyone in your club get along with one another? How is your team dynamic? When everyone gets along and are on friendly terms with one another, you can be sure that they look forward to club meetings and events because they enjoy each other's company. If there's a bad seed that causes friction with more than one member, deal with them! You may think that they do so much for the club and you would hate to lose them, but think about how many members you turn off by letting them get away with bad behaviour. Ensure your team dynamic is strong. To do so, plan events that revolve around building your team dynamic, and find ways to allow members other than the usual leaders play a role. After all, a strong team equals success!
5. **Trust & Shifting Priorities:** When members promise to fulfill a goal or have a task completed, trust that they will deliver on their promise. You've got to give them enough time to complete the task at hand, instead of reassigning it to someone else. For example, if you've issued a challenge to a group of members to fundraise and collect a certain amount of money by a certain date, believe they will do so. If you see that they won't reach their goal by the set date, offer them advice and help rather than enlisting another group to complete the task. If members feel as if their club supports their initiatives, they'll attempt to do more for the club. Otherwise, they will get the impression that the club isn't interested in their efforts at all.
6. **Authority:** Although you cannot exactly 'tell' your club members what to do and how to participate, the board can still outline club expectations from all members. Anyone who is part of an organization, knows there are guidelines to follow and will appreciate suggestions and observations made on becoming active members.

Everyone wants to feel valued. When people join clubs or an organization, they do so to be part of something and to contribute towards something. When they feel that their participation or efforts are not acknowledged, they begin to feel as though the organization they want to be part of doesn't appreciate them. As a result, they feel that leaving the club would be a better option.

Adapted from Forbes Article - 'Top Ten Reasons Why Large Companies Fail to Keep Their Best Talent'.

FROM January's ROTARIAN Magazine - President Banerjee's letter:

"... and, once people join us, do we welcome them properly, involve them enough? Do we make them part of the Rotary family quickly enough? The figures tell us that while enough new individuals join Rotary every year and everywhere, too many exit Rotary on an ongoing basis. What unfulfilled hope do they leave with? What expectations are we not meeting? Can we do more, and better?"

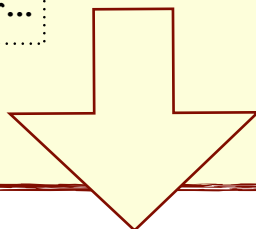


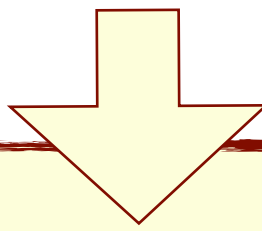
Let's face it - attracting members to join a service organization is not an easy task. In fact, oftentimes, we see that even though the majority of people are aware of Rotary, only a few know what Rotarians actually do. The prospective members that we try and recruit are often our friends, colleagues or family members. These are people that are easy to recruit because you share a personal relationship with them and can easily explain the work of Rotarians to them.

The question then arises, how do we attract those outside of our personal radar to Rotary? How do we attract the younger generation to become Rotarians? Essentially, it is about publicity.

- **Take Advantage of Social Media** - Your social media channels (i.e.: Facebook, Twitter, etc) can help you
 - reach a wider audience. Promote your events, accomplishments and club or District pictures on social media channels and drive traffic back to your website, where visitors can read more about the wonderful things your club does. This idea is - you always want to be where your audience is, so that you can easily communicate with them.
- **Make it a Media Event** - Invite your local newspaper journalist to cover your next Rotary event or simply inquire about having an article published about your current project. By promoting your club through a local media outlet, you can share more information about your Rotary club to members of your own community. By doing so, you generate interest about Rotary among those who you may have never reached otherwise.
- **Host an Open House** - Invite members of your local community to a lively membership night! Play some ice-breaker games so prospective members and members of your club can socialize. Invite a prominent community member to give a short talk on a hot topic. Have some marketing collaterals ready to give out at this event that consist of information about your club, activities and Rotary. This way, prospective members have something conclusive to take away and read. Invite all prospective members at the membership night to attend your next regular club meeting so they can get a feel of what the dynamic of the club is like. **Those who are really interested will attend and you'll have an opportunity to formally invite them to join the club.**
- **Get Involved in Local Events** - By being where your audience is, you have the potential to reach an array of potential members. Consider participating in local events such as the local community picnic. Your club can set up a booth and either sell items (e.g. lemonade) or can simply open a stand to collect donations for a specific charity. Not only is this a great way to fundraise but it will also give you the opportunity to meet and greet with potential members who if interested can sign up for your newsletter and take some collateral with them to learn more about your club.

... Another article from the January edition of the ClubRunner Newsletter...





- **Create Partnerships** - Think of your club as a brand. When businesses want to reach a wider audience, they often form partnerships with other companies, also known as co-branding. Similarly, you can form an alliance with another club or an organization that you regularly deal with, whereby you can consider 'joint venture co-branding'. You can then work with the organization to come up with a way to market your club effectively. For example, if you partner with a local school, sports team or even charity, you can consider donating a percentage of membership dues you receive from new members back to the organization. Find a specific project or cause that fits the goals of both organizations for maximum success, and use each organization's strengths to pull it through. For instance, you may have the man power to source volunteers but the partner organization may have the broad reach of a wide audience. This concept would not only give your club that added publicity of a larger event, but would essentially be your marketing strategy to entice prospective members to join.
- There are many ways we can attract new members or at least generate interest about Rotary. To generate interest, we have to spread awareness amongst our audience by utilizing the channels they use. Essentially, we always want to be where our audience is. By targeting people outside of our personal radar, we have the opportunity to reach a wider audience, which if done effectively, can help clubs reach their membership goals sooner.

How can Rotary stay relevant to its younger members? WATCH:

www.rotary.org/en/mediaandnews/Multimedia/RotaryMinute/Pages/ridefault.aspx



We don't have a choice on whether we DO social media, the question is how we'll DO it!

Your Membership Committee is seeking a younger Rotarian or Rotaractor to be part of the team - advising on Social Media and the interests of and appropriate approaches for younger folk...

Contact Chairman Michael please.



Younger, female professionals are an under-represented demographic within Rotary - and represent a great opportunity for club vitality and growth.

GO FIND THEM and ASK, armed with your club's value proposition!

5020 Council agrees to collect turnover statistics:

Effective July 1 2012, clubs will be asked to regularly report to their AG's statistics relating to membership turnover (or 'churn') Not only will this be useful to District officers in monitoring membership losses via the back-door it will highlight potential challenges AND OPPORTUNITIES for clubs. The rationale:

- Rotary membership, generally and within our own District, has remained pretty much constant over the past seven or eight years - up a little here, down a little there, but generally little changed. So, what's wrong? Well, the problem is that over that same time period, we have inducted the same number of people into Rotary - and because the total remains essentially static, it means that we have also lost that many! It's akin to trying to fill a bucket with water that has a hole in the bottom that lets water out at the same rate as we try to fill it. This has also resulted in a rather meagre 40% of us being members for more than 3 years.
- The business world refers to this leakage as 'churn'. The statistic is followed closely because it's recognized that (other things being equal) it is many times cheaper to retain an existing employee or customer, than it is to find, recruit and educate a new one. Further, it is recognized that a high churn factor leads to a significant loss of corporate knowledge and experience, having a clear negative influence on profits or progress. These principles slip into our Rotary world easily, yet have a higher impact on the human condition. It becomes harder for us to progress our goals, and we do less good in the world than we could.
- Yet, there is another danger in allowing churn to go unaddressed and that is the downside impact the outflow has on those remaining. It becomes almost self-generating as disappointment or disillusion takes hold and the level of caring, enthusiasm and commitment fall away.

If not already doing so, Membership Chairs and other club officers should begin focusing on these data now. Monitor the number of members leaving (and understand why) as well as those joining - do not take satisfaction in net increases alone!



Your membership Committee plans to experiment with on-line educational/training discussion sessions of approx 60 mins., using GoTo Meeting facilities from Citrix Inc. This means you will soon be able to attend workshops from the comfort of your own home. You need a computer with speakers and microphone (preferably a headset, for clarity and noise elimination). A webcam, while optional, will enable you to be seen by other participants. You will be asked to download a small software applet to join a session. **MORE LATER** - Meanwhile, please let us know what (membership related) subject areas you would like addressed.

Your District Membership Team

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