

# Membership Development Action Plan

To recruit and retain high quality Rotary club members, your membership development plan should have the following action steps:

1. Identify
2. Introduce
3. Invite
4. Induct
5. Inform and orient
6. Involve
7. Educate

## 1. Identify

Identify well-qualified members of your community to be members of your Rotary club. These individuals should be of strong character and have a commitment to service. This focus on quality will improve your club's membership retention.

## 2. Introduce

Introduce prospective members to Rotary by informing them about Rotary International's programs and your club's service efforts. Compile this information in a club profile that can be presented to visitors or inserted into copies of the *This Is Rotary* brochure and given to all visitors. A recent issue of *The Rotarian* or a Rotary regional magazine is also a good introduction to Rotary. A prospective member who has been introduced to Rotary by enthusiastic Rotarians and is informed about the club's projects before joining is more likely to become involved and remain active.

## 3. Invite

Invite a prospective member to become a club member with a personal visit from both the proposer and a member of the club's membership committee. This two-person visit provides the prospective member with a second contact in the club, one who brings additional Rotary knowledge and experience. Rotarians extending the invitation should know the personal interests and abilities of the prospective member in order to point out relevant club activities and projects.

## 4. Induct

Induct new members in a dignified and meaningful manner. Use the induction ceremony as an opportunity to explain the benefits and responsibilities of being a Rotarian. Your Rotary club should provide a new member with the following items:

- Rotary lapel pin
- Membership identification card
- Copy of the club bulletin
- District directory
- Latest district governor's monthly letter
- *The Rotarian* or Rotary regional magazine
- List of local clubs for make-up meetings
- Club name badge
- Club history
- Club banner

If possible, invite family members to attend. During the ceremony, offer new members the opportunity to give a five-minute talk about themselves, their businesses, and their families. The induction ceremony should leave new members feeling enthused about membership.

## 5. Inform and Orient

Inform new members about your club and RI by focusing on the following areas:

- Benefits of membership
- Responsibilities of membership
- Opportunities for service

Consider scheduling a formal orientation program in several sessions to enhance retention of information.

During the first six months, new members can expand their understanding of Rotary in these ways:

- Attending new member orientation meetings
- Reading two or more (preferably all) of the following RI publications:
  - *Rotary Basics* (595-EN)
  - *The ABCs of Rotary* (363-EN)
  - *This Is Rotary* (001-EN)
  - *What's Rotary?* (419-EN)
  - *The Rotary Foundation Quick Reference Guide* (219-EN)
- Visiting the Rotary E-Learning Center at [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)
- Attending one or more of the following club functions:
  - Club assembly
  - Board meeting
  - Committee meeting
- Completing one or more of the following tasks:
  - Give a classification talk at a club meeting.
  - Make up a meeting at another club.
  - Invite a guest to a club meeting or propose a new member.
- Attending one or more district meetings (listed in order of priority):
  - District conference
  - District assembly
  - District Rotary Foundation seminar
- Choosing a club committee on which to serve

See *New Member Orientation* (414-EN) for more ideas.

## 6. Involve

Involve new members in club committees, activities, fundraisers, board meetings, weekly club meetings, and social activities. An involved member will feel a part of the club and make Rotary a personal priority. Consider the following methods of getting members involved in club activities:

- Assign new members to a committee, or give them a weekly meeting assignment.
- Create special name badges for new members to wear for one year. Encourage other members to look for the badges and make an extra effort to talk with the new members.
- Assign a new member to be a greeter, take attendance, or introduce a new speaker.
- Have a new member serve as a delegate to the district conference to learn about the world of Rotary and the projects being done outside of your club. Some clubs assist the new member by paying part or all of the registration fees and costs of the conference. After the conference, ask the new member to give a report to the club.

- Introduce a “commencement” program, where all club members who join in the same Rotary year work together on a project.
- Encourage new members to experience the internationality of Rotary by attending the RI Convention; hosting a Group Study Exchange team member for a meal or other activity; hosting a Rotarian from another country in their home or inviting a business or professional non-Rotarian to apply for Group Study Exchange.
- Ask new members to find two or three other new members from among their peer group. When new members promote Rotary to their friends, they become stronger and more enthused about Rotary.

Many clubs find it wise to involve the new member’s sponsor during this process. The sponsor keeps close contact with the new Rotarian for the first six months or until the new member is truly involved in the club.

### **7. Educate**

Educate all club members so they have enough knowledge to take the initiative and become more active. Some members resign from their clubs because they feel uninformed.

Clubs should have a continuing Rotary education policy in place to keep existing members up-to-date on Rotary and the club. Such a program would include:

- Frequent communication of Rotary International and club news and information
- Four or more weekly club programs a year focused on continuing education
- Participation of club members in multidistrict meetings that address continuing education
- At least two club assemblies a year focused on education
- District-level seminars on continuing education
- Sharing of ideas and information on Rotary programs, projects, and activities at committee meetings
- Attendance of club members at meetings of other clubs

Refer to the *Membership Development Resource Guide* (417-EN) for more information on developing a membership development action plan.