

Understanding How to Propose a New Member

One of the most important tasks a club must undertake each year is to bring in new members. While proposing a new member seems simple, the process does have some specific rules and limitations which can sometimes be misunderstood.

You need to help prospective members understand what Rotary is all about. Copies of *Rotary Basics* (595-EN) *This is Rotary* (001-EN), and *What's Rotary?* (419-EN) are excellent tools at your disposal. .

If you now have an eager prospect, begin the process using “How to Propose a New Member” (254-EN). Review the Rotary qualifications for membership:

- a person of good character with a good business, professional, or community reputation
- A current or former professional, proprietor, executive, manager, or community leader
- A person committed to service with a record of personal involvement
- A Rotary Foundation alumnus (GSE member, Peace Scholar, etc.)

If you feel the member meets these standards, complete Part A of the Membership Proposal Form, and return it to your club Secretary for submission to the Club's board.

Remember: Do not inform the prospective member of the proposal until AFTER the board approves it. The board may ask for a bio, resume or CV. Resist that during this phase of the process because that does not tell you whether a person is of good character with a good business, professional, or community reputation.

Also be sure to follow the RI Bylaws which prohibit clubs from limiting membership on the basis of gender, race, color, creed, national origin, or sexual orientation or does not allow any condition of membership not specifically prescribed by the RI constitution or bylaws.

Classifications are no longer rigid (an official Rotary classification list does not exist) and can reflect the many types of professions in your community. Make up your own list using your local phone book, chambers of commerce, or other business directories.

Once the board has approved the candidate, the proposed member completes and signs Part B of the proposal form and returns it to the club secretary. When that is completed, the proposed member's name and classification is announced to the club. Technically, club members have seven days to consider and file objections although this time frame may vary depending on individual club practices. If no objections are received, the proposed member pays the admission fee and becomes a Rotarian.

Following these guidelines will help you bring qualified members into your club. You should find the process easy and feel proud that you have been instrumental in the growth of your club, your district and Rotary International.