



Mentoring New Members in Rotary*

Mentoring a new member in Rotary is a process by which an experienced Rotarian provides ongoing support and special fellowship to a new member and can be a very effective way to help a new member become acclimated to his or her club. The one-on-one connection with a mentor can provide guidance and assurance to a new member who might otherwise feel overwhelmed or isolated. The mentoring process should begin as soon as possible following a new member's induction and last from six months (minimum) to a year.

Qualities of a Rotary Mentor

A mentor:

- has a high level of knowledge and interest in his or her club and in Rotary,
- is willing and able to devote time and energy to help a new member, and
- gives the gift of time and guidance to a new Rotarian.

Responsibilities of a Mentor

A mentor will have many responsibilities that may vary from club to club but should include as a minimum:

- being available to answer questions and provide guidance,
- ensuring the new member understands club policy & procedures, including rules and expectations,
- explaining the mandate and organization of club committees,
- acting as an informal host at club events by introducing the new member to other club members and ensuring that the new member feels comfortable, and
- monitoring the new member's attendance, comfort level and involvement in the club through periodic personal meetings.

Additional responsibilities may include but are not limited to:

- conducting an inventory of interests to determine the topics that interest the new member, and using this information to suggest specific committees to join or projects in which to get involved (for a sample inventory of interests, see RI's *New Member Orientation* (414-EN) publication),
- offering to accompany the new member on a make-up if he or she must miss a regular meeting,
- providing additional reading or viewing materials to help expand the new member's knowledge of your club and Rotary International,
- informing the new member about special meetings and events, such as club assemblies, District Conferences and Club Leadership Training, and offering to attend one or more of these events with the new member, and
- ensuring the Bulletin editor has a photo and bio on the new member for inclusion in an edition published shortly after the new member's induction.

The key element of any mentoring program is the continuous support that the mentor provides to the new member. A strong mentoring program is an effective complement to any club's new member orientation program.

* Adapted from material developed by the Rotary Club of Waterloo; the Zone 33 Membership Newsletter – Vol. 2, Issue 6, December 2005; and the RI New Member Orientation Guide for Clubs (414-EN).