

Rotary of Club of Concord

GUIDELINES FOR THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

1 Purpose of the Committee

The Committee Chair should be organizing speakers who will offer the Club members a topic of informational, educational, motivational or entertainment value, that will be of general interest to all club members.

Therefore, avoid repetition of topics. Look for speakers and topics which have not been presented to our club. Avoid a speaker who may have a personal agenda. An exception would be specific speakers or programs which were so well received by our club that the speaker was requested to return. Another exception would be annual updates from the city or school district, etc.

Also, when considering a potential program or speaker, please reflect upon the 4 Way Test and ask yourself if your speaker's presentation is the truth, or simply one person's opinion of the truth. Is the topic fair to all concerned? Will it build good will and better friendships? Will the presentation be beneficial to all concerned?

2 Committee issues – Logistics of Scheduling and of the Meeting.

If you do not know the speaker personally or have not heard the speaker's presentation prior to inviting the individual to our club, consider asking for references to allow you to obtain an evaluation of the quality of the presentation prior to scheduling the program at our club.

Inform all speakers of our meeting agenda: (a) when they should arrive; (b) when it is appropriate to meet and greet club members prior to 12:15PM; (c) when their program should begin and end; and (d) who besides the speaker might we expect to be joining us for lunch. Important, we only cover the cost of the speaker's meal, and **NOT** that of any other individuals who might be accompanying the speaker.

Inquire in advance about any audio-visual needs of the speaker.

If the Chair of the Committee determines, each member of the program committee will be assigned one month, for which that member is responsible for scheduling all weekly programs. You will be notified of any weeks when you will not be responsible for the program due to a club assembly or some other Rotary scheduling priority.

Once monthly assignments have been made, your program committee members will be solely responsible for all of the scheduling requirement during that assigned month. If you will not be in attendance to introduce a speaker during your month, you must make arrangements to have that obligation covered by another club member. If you cannot fill your month program

schedule, it is your responsibility to notify the other members of the program committee or the committee chair in advance of the open date, to allow for someone else to assist you in finding some program for that slot.

If the Chair of the Committee has a different methodology for scheduling speakers, the Chair should notify the President of the Club of how the Committee will be managed.

Time Allotment for the Speaker: the speaker has ½ hour to speak. If he or she wishes to entertain questions from the audience, he or she should allow for such time within the allotted ½ hour, or offer an email address for further contact or to stay after the meeting.

Only the speaker and one additional guest of the speaker will be seated for lunch at the head table and **only** the speaker's meal cost will be paid by the club.

When scheduling speakers, they should understand that last minute cancellations are not fair to all concerned, as that does not allow us to schedule an alternative speaker.

3 General Guidelines for Selection of Speakers

In general, always avoid highly controversial or volatile issues that could create an uneasy atmosphere during the presentation to our club.

Firstly, when considering any controversial potential speaker or programs, please discuss the program with the Chair of the Program Committee and especially with the President of the Club prior to scheduling the program, since these are the individuals who would ultimately be responsible for any presentation failing to meet our guidelines, as doing so may create an uncomfortable atmosphere.

If the program is a "hot-button" issue of the day, but which might be a welcomed program for our club, it might be best to offer two presenters to express views, pro and con regarding a particular topic. Since this might include two speakers sharing time in a single program, each expressing opposite point of views, it might be best to schedule the two speakers for two different weeks, allowing for a fair and balance presentation of both sides of the issue.

4 Guidelines regarding Religious or Political Speakers

In general, politics and religion are subjects about which most people hold strong, but often privately held opinions.

With regard to politics: Rotary is a non-political organization, which does not promote or support any particular political or religious philosophy. With respect to political programs, our club has voted to continue to allow candidates only for national (US President, US Congress) and state-wide offices (Governor) to speak at our club.

Exceptions will include the invitation of state and local officials presenting information on current topics of particular interest to the club, e. g. the City Manager, Commissioners of various state agencies, etc.

If applicable, any members of the press shall be instructed to position themselves around the periphery of the meeting room during the presentation. They shall not block the view of seated club members and they shall not be allowed to participate in the program by means of posing questions to the speaker. Political candidates should arrive, with adequate time, prior to the start time of our meeting, if they would like to meet and greet club members as they arrive.

When scheduling political candidates, please refer to our specific guidelines for political candidates and be certain the candidate understands and agrees to comply with our guidelines.

When scheduling political candidates, they should be informed that last minute cancellations are not fair to all concerned, as that does not allow us to schedule an alternative speaker. Candidates who must, for whatever reason, cancel with little or no advance warning, are unlikely to be rescheduled.

With regard to religious topics: Any program based upon a religious theme or presented by a representative of any religion, should be carefully vetted prior to being scheduled. Many religious organizations are associated with charitable projects around the world, which seek to accomplish humanitarian goals which are similar, if not identical, to those of Rotary International. When considering scheduling a speaker from any religious organization, therefore, the speaker should understand the limited scope of his or her presentation.

Again, when in doubt about the appropriateness of any potential speaker, please consult with the Chair of the Program Committee, and especially the President of the Club, prior to scheduling the speaker.

5 Guidelines regarding Non-Profits

Consider speakers from Non-Profits, only if they have a unique topic that is NOT a sales pitch for funding. Never allow funding requests unless the request has been formally approved in advance by the Board of Directors of the Club. Our club has voted overwhelmingly to have fewer speakers presenting on behalf of non-profit organizations. While we understand that non-profit organizations play an important role in our community and we welcome the opportunity to hear from them, our club also has voted that the non-profit should not be soliciting funds. It is very important that the presenter knows this club policy, prior to the program: that they must avoid a sales pitch for funding and in fact, in doing so, they may hurt their cause.

NOTE: There are some organizations/non-profits, which have a religious orientation, but also offer charitable outreach. In supporting the Salvation Army, by example, we are supporting its outreach, not its doctrine.

6 Guidelines regarding Product/Service Promotion

Avoid product or service promotion. Advise company representatives, whom you invite to speak, that they should deal with issues that affect their industry and the community and how they cope with them. They should not use the podium as a means of blatantly promoting their products or services.

SPECIAL NOTE: DURING FY 2020-2021, CLUB HAS AND WILL BE MEETING VIA ZOOM FOR THE NEAR FUTURE AND SOME OF THE LOGISTICS ABOVE REPRESENT MEETINGS AT A LUNCHEON VENUE. ALL COMMENTS ARE PRE-ZOOM.

Approved: Board of Directors
February 11, 2021