

COMMUNICATIONS

“Communications – the act of imparting or transmitting the exchange of information or ideas”

By our very life's vocations and avocations, Rotarians are leaders in their home, in their professions, and in their many “communities”. Rotarians are ones who go ahead – leading the way, worldwide, in education, health, sciences and cultural innovations through “service above self”. From a single water well for a small community in Africa to being a leading force in a National Immunization Day in India when 180 million children received the Polio vaccination in one day, we are there. Our National Immunization Day model is now being used by other agencies to tackle major health issues such as the pandemic flu and A.I.D.s.

But are we doing an adequate job of communicating what we are about?

Rotarians recognize that true leadership is realized by frequently seeing fellow Rotarians, hence the emphasis on attendance at weekly meetings. Whether you are the President of Rotary International or the newest Rotarian in the world, you are “Glenn”, “Karl”, “Bill” or “Pete” and not “Mr.”, “Mrs” or “Sir”. We all sit around the Rotary table as equals. In that way, we can lift our fellow Rotarians out of their everyday selves and unto a higher plain of achievement, performance and awareness. Rotarians obtain extraordinary results by instilling purpose in those endeavours.

So what does “leadership” have to do with “communications” and visa versa?

In any organization where the leadership changes annually, as Rotary does, some communication principles need to be built on while developing both skills:

- Develop a clear, concise statement of your activities and justify the actions towards those accomplishments
- In your “Rotary life”, at every conceivable opportunity, reaffirm, reassert and remind everyone of the principles of Rotary and the results of our efforts
- Effective visions can't be forced on the masses. Rather you must set them in motion by means of persuasion
- When you talk about your “vision”, don't shoot to high. Aim lower, so that the other Rotarians will understand and catch it. They are the ones you want to reach – at least they are the ones you need to reach
- When effecting renewal, call on the past, relate it to the present, and then use them both to provide a link to the future
- Understand that the process of renewal releases the critical human talent and energy necessary to assure success.

Rotary is a large organization with many facets. And it is difficult to understand. New, and often “old”, Rotarians are left to figure out on their own what is going on. Lack of good two-way communications is the start of a member's disenchantment, and ultimately, the loss of the member.

PDG Cam King District P.R. Chair, July 2006