

## **Member Retention**

### **“Give ‘Em a Reason to Stay”**

Precept: Only recruit folks with a heart for service. Without this basic tenet, you will lose them at some point despite your best efforts. Likewise, those who have lost their zest for Rotary or service, let go.

Entertain – This isn't your father's Rotary. Today all service clubs compete with longer work hours and complex and busy lives. People will only remain engaged with things they either A. Strongly, ethically believe in, or B. Things they derive entertainment from.

BE BOTH!

- Sergeant-at-arms should be more MC than sergeant. Select one that is irreverent, outgoing and humorous. If you find a good one, keep them until it gets stale.
- Give members the freedom to have fun. Encourage laughter and poke fun where appropriate.
- Get the first laugh early in the meeting.
- Get speakers that use multi-media presentations.
- Leave them laughing. End meetings whenever possible on a high note. Some meetings will have heavy content but the President and Sergeant-at-Arms should be careful to spin the positive. Humor can ease the tension.

Stay Young.

- Try to make your club younger every year. Young Rotarians bring energy.
- Younger members often have more time to commit than those in late 30s through 50s.

Avoid Cliques.

- Make a point to get folks to move around where they sit. This is “Rotary” after all. You can even make a game of it.

Get Buy-In.

- Make sure members understand and appreciate where the club is headed.
- There is a reason why we sit on our wallets. Be cautious on any financial obligations being imposed on members.

Club Socials.

- Get Rotarian families involved: canoe trip, wine tasting, softball, picnics etc.

No R.I.B.O. (Rotarians in Body Only).

- We want engaged partners, not warm bodies.
- Don't wait for volunteers; call them if need be. Get new members involved immediately.
- Keep track of who hasn't been involved in any activities and get something for them to become engaged with.

Step Away From the Well.

- Some members will naturally step up repeatedly. Avoid burning out the same 15% of the club for all big projects. 10 years of 50% efforts are better than 2 years of 100% (that result in a burned-out Rotarian).