



BE A VIBRANT CLUB

NORTH AMERICA

YOUR CLUB LEADERSHIP PLAN

Rotary





MEET OUR VIBRANT CLUB

Like many Rotary clubs in the United States, the Rotary Club of Rochester, Minnesota, struggled with a decline in meeting attendance and member engagement. Many of our younger working members struggled to balance the demands of career and family with a desire to serve. In addition, businesses and corporations are no longer as eager to pay membership costs, so expenses associated with Rotary have become personal expenses.

We started with a strategic planning session to improve our club's public image, increase membership, and boost member participation and attendance. As a result, we made several changes to become more innovative and flexible while maintaining our values of service, global reach, community, fun, and friendship.

HOW WE DID IT

We rewrote our values statement.

The updated language — which calls us “a service club of inspired individuals whose contributions improve lives in communities locally and worldwide” — unified our members, inspired prospective members, and generated interest in our community work.

We introduced creative meeting formats.

Our club provides innovative and flexible, cost-free meeting options:

Speed networking. This helps our members build relationships and rapport.

Service first Thursdays. On the first Thursday of each month, we meet at the public library to clean books and prepare and inventory multimedia materials.

1905 meetings. Our 1905 meetings honor the early days of Rotary tradition. Like the first Rotarians, we meet in small groups. Members can participate remotely by meeting at designated locations closer to their workplaces. We use Facebook Live to tune in simultaneously to our club president for the first half of the meeting. For the second half, we break into small groups to discuss a video presentation on the theme of the month.

The varied formats increased member engagement in a way that wasn't possible with traditional meetings alone. Even former Rotarians started to re-engage. While our weekly attendance may be around 60 members per meeting, our real-time Facebook Live videos that broadcast our 1905 meetings and traditional meetings have generated over a thousand views.

Our experience has taught us that it is possible to make changes in the spirit of innovation and flexibility yet maintain Rotary values. We discovered that there are many fun ways to serve and promote fellowship with Rotarians.

We relaxed attendance guidelines.

While we are committed to making our meetings more accessible to working members, we also wanted to continue regular meetings, because they foster the fellowship and camaraderie that our members enjoy. We revised guidelines to require only 50 percent attendance at the weekly meetings. Missed meetings can be made up at other Rotary meetings or by participating in a service activity.



START YOUR CLUB ON A PATH TO VIBRANCY

Vibrant clubs engage their members, conduct meaningful projects, and try new ideas. List the new ideas your club wants to try, and create a plan to increase community interest and attract more members.

As you develop your plan, use these tips and ideas, and let your club evolve.

Decide what you'd like your club to be like in three to five years.

- Plan an annual visioning session, and use the **Rotary Club Health Check** to identify your club's strengths and areas that need improvement.
- Use the **Strategic Planning Guide** to set long-term goals.

Hold club meetings that keep members engaged and informed.

- Conduct the **Member Satisfaction Survey** to find out what your members like and don't like about your club, and create a plan for implementing changes.
- **Vary your meeting format** to include a mix of traditional and online meetings, service projects, and social gatherings.

Prepare members for future roles to smooth leadership transitions.

- Ensure continuity by making appointments for multiple years, having a current, incoming, and past chair on each committee.
- Conduct on-the-job training for incoming club officers, and have job descriptions for each officer.

Develop strong relationships within your club.

- Find suggestions in **Introducing New Members to Rotary**.
- Sit with different people at each meeting.

Coach new and continuing members in leading.

- Appoint a club training committee to oversee training for members.
- Use the **Leadership in Action guide on starting a program** to develop members' leadership skills.

Decide on your annual goals, and enter them into Rotary Club Central.

- Focus on something your club is good at, and make it something your club is great at.
- Update committees once a month on your goal progress.

Communicate openly in your club.

- Share information at club meetings, on your club website, and through social media, and check regularly to see how members are feeling.
- Use the templates and resources in the Rotary **Brand Center** to create your club brochures and newsletters.

Adapt your club's bylaws to reflect the way the club works.

- Involve your members when you review your club's bylaws every year.
- Edit the **Recommended Rotary Club Bylaws** template to reflect new practices and procedures.

Make sure all members are involved in activities that genuinely interest them.

- Conduct a member-interest survey, and use the results to plan projects, activities, and engaging meetings.
- Get new members involved early by learning their interests and giving them a role in the club.

Create practical committees for your club.

- Small clubs: Consider how you can combine the work of committees.
- Large clubs: Create additional committees to get all members involved.