

Habits of Highly Effective Presidents

Be a Team Player

Identify your board members and committee chairs. Make sure to personally contact each person, confirm that they will join your team, and work together to establish responsibilities and goals for your presidential year. If someone has already been serving in a role, allow them the opportunity to continue or take a break. Successful volunteer teams have easy on and off ramps. This is also a great opportunity to engage new people in the leadership of the club.

Plan Ahead

Your plan can be as simple or bold as you like; just have one. Everyone from your leadership team to a brand-new Rotarian is going to want to engage with your leadership. What are you going to accomplish in your year? Will you add any new programs or projects? Will you maintain existing programs? There are no rules here. Decide what you would like to accomplish and cast that vision as you build your team. Rotarians love to help. Let them help you! And remember, it's even okay to change the plan as long as you communicate.

Show Me the Money

No plan survives without funding. As your presidential year approaches, make sure that you understand the health of your club's finances. How is your budget set? Are there any opportunities to change the budget? How will you continue to raise funds? Are there any opportunities to increase your budget? Are your club members aware of the financial health of the club? These are also great topics to discuss with your counterparts in other clubs.

Water Your Plants...

Every new member is a potential leader in your club. How will they engage with the group? What opportunities exist for them to serve the club? Can you create clear paths to leadership positions? Start with your board seats and consider what skills and experience would be ideal; create chair positions that do parts of that. Those chairs

will both support your board members and become natural nominees when the board needs to change. As you grow these future leaders, be sure to publicly acknowledge their accomplishments and responsibilities. You can never underestimate the power of recognition and “thank you.”

...But Don't Drown Them

Every existing leader in your club is a potential former member. It is easy to fall into the trap of asking the same people to help; they always say yes anyway. Until they are no longer there. A great leader recognizes when the team needs help and helps to facilitate that. Does your leadership team know that they can take a break? Do they fear that no one will do the job if they take a break? How can you engage other members to share some of the load? How can you raise new leaders to allow an off-ramp for the current team? What happens if someone's life changes in a way that they can no longer serve? Having a way to address these situations before they occur is critical; dealing with it under stress can literally break a club.

Yak Yak Yak

Talk about Rotary. Talk about your vision. Talk about your club. You cannot say it too many times. Let everyone see your energy and passion. Not everyone is an extrovert. That is not what we mean here. What this is actually about is communicating with your club and your community. Do you have social media? Is someone updating it regularly? Do you have opportunities to engage with your community? Are you looking for opportunities to connect Rotary with the public? Are you the right person to talk about Rotary (it's okay if you're not)? If not, who is? Find that person in your club and refer back to the previous habits!