

Membership Workshop – District 7910

Case Study

Fact Pattern for Fictional Rotary Club in Hopkinton MA

Club Profile

- Club is 30 years old; currently has 13 members; was as high as 30 members 15 years ago.
- Members age range is 40 – 70; 4 retirees, 1 CPA, 2 real estate, 1 banker, 2 insurance, 1 clergy, 1 lawyer, 1 contractor. Most members have been Rotarians 10 or more years
- Club is 30 years old – 3 of the retirees are charter members.
- Several members have recycled through the officer positions a few times.
- Hopkinton has one annual fund raiser (a turkey shoot auction event) which supports a couple scholarships, a veterans recognition breakfast and water stand for the annual marathon runners.
- Annual dues are \$150 not including meals.
- They have no Facebook page, website or club brochure.
- There have been no fellowship events for the past few years.
- The club meets on Tuesday mornings at a local diner. Speakers are a rare occurrence.
- Members have discussed Visioning and the development of long term objectives but have not reached any conclusions.
- The members recognize the need for an increase in membership but have been unsuccessful. They have brought in a few members during the past few years but most have resigned after 1 or 2 years. Membership has steadily waned over the past 10-15 years.
- A few members attended RLI several years ago, four members have Paul Harris awards but the club is very low in foundation giving.
- There seems to be little interest in district activities.
- The more senior members like the club as it is and do not want to change anything. A few of the younger, less senior members recognize the need for change but are having difficulty defining and justifying it.

Town Profile

- The population of Hopkinton has increased from 10,000 in 1995 to 16,000 in 2014.
- The median income is high at about \$75,000.
- There are six churches, one mosque and a Korean church.
- The population is overwhelmingly white middle class.
- There are several corporate businesses located in the area.
- New home building is active as many people move into the area.
- Hopkinton is most famous as the starting point of the annual Boston marathon.
- Hopkinton has a town meeting form of government, fire and police departments, a library, Elem, middle and high schools.

Community Needs

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- Annual marathon organizers need considerable help and assistance.
- There are several needy families and two nursing homes in the area.
- There is the possibility of Interact clubs at the middle and high schools.
- Scholarship needs are always present.
- Several veteran families live in town.
- A local YMCA hosts several children from poor families.

Objective for the Rotary Club of Hopkinton

- Significantly improve morale, fellowship and Rotary spirit.
- Increase membership from 13 to 30 during the next three years.

Given

- The members have met and reached a consensus about a membership objective.
- They agreed to increase their level from 13 to 30 in 3 years, including attrition of 10% per year.
- They have not determined the types of members they want or need.
- They need help developing an action plan, a process for contacting, integrating and engaging members and a long term retention plan.

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Tasks

Session I Questions and Notes

- Define the first steps the club must take to prepare for a membership improvement action plan.
 - Meeting venue, meals, dues?
 - *The diner is a poor venue for the meetings. The venue is important to facilitate the meeting events.*
 - Agenda, speakers?
 - *Meetings need to be interesting and engaging to the members and prospects.*
 - *How often should the club meet? Some said weekly and anything less is a slippery slope. Others said two meetings a month. Some suggested four meetings a month, each being a different meeting type: Week 1 could be a legacy meeting with a speaker, Week2 could be a service project, like cooking*

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lunch at a soup kitchen, Week3 could be a community meeting, Week 4 could be a fun social evening.

- Visioning and Club Objectives?
 - *District visioning is a valuable tool available to help clubs get consensus on club objectives.*
- Public Relations, social media, brochures?
 - *Clubs need to have a social media presence, in not a full blown strategy. This would include a web site and a Facebook page.*
 - *The club needs to be visible in the community with service projects and Fund Raisers, as well as in the local papers and news outlets.*
 - *Working with the National Honor Society can yield a partner to generate interesting service projects and families that have potential members.*
 - *Find an intern from a community college to work on the web page and Facebook page.*
- What are the community needs the members would like to satisfy?
 - *The community has a list of needs. Rotary and Rotarians should be able to organize fund raisers and service projects to address those needs.*

Session II Questions and Notes

- Define the types of members Hopkinton should target.
 - What classifications should the Hopkinton Club search for?
 - *Government and public organizations would seem to be an obvious target. Fill in missing classifications. Clergy is another type of member. Doctors and Dentists too. Mortgage brokers and bankers.*
 - What types of members do they want and need?
 - *In general, they need younger members that want to provide service to the community.*
 - *Corporate memberships should be investigated.*

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- What sort of members should be brought in at the early stages?
 - *Members that lower the average age and diversify the membership.*
 - *Empty nesters?*
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- Define the sources of potential members.
 - How can the club begin to research the sources of potential members?
 - *Look at other organizations in the community. Ask the District for hel.*
 - Where will they get the names of folks?
 - *Lists from community organizations, phone directories, etc.*
 - How will the rank order the names?
 - *Names could be ranked by the desired demographics.*
- Develop a target list of potential members.
 - *What is the glue for Rotary? Service? Fund Raising?*

Session III Questions and Notes

- Develop a strategy for contacting potential members.
 - *Invite potential members to meetings through email and phone calls. Hold service events like STOP HUNGER NOW to develop a list of service minded individuals in the community.*
 - *Chamber of Commerce – Maybe join?*
- What is the rate the club should plan on bringing in new members?
 - *Probably only a few each year to start. Member retention is as important as recruiting new members. Members need to be engaged in projects and club activities and duties to help make them feel like they belong.*

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- How do they phase in changes to their club structure and activities?
 - *Carefully*
- Develop a process to introduce, approve, induct, welcome, engage, educate and develop new members.
 - *Educate, engage and bond with new members*
- Develop a long term retention plan.

Session IV

- Present a five minute summary of the highlights of your membership plan.
 - *How do we go beyond the standard District and RI tools and breakthrough the death spiral on membership in the US?*
 - *Flash mobs can be spontaneous, fun and productive. Why not Rotary?*