

# Questions asked of DGE Peter Ward following his opening presentation

## Asked and answered

1. **How do we promote the District when you say you are 'not interested in/not a huge supporter' of District driven Projects?**

Specifically referring to external requests to drive support for a project by all clubs in the district. Disseminate information to clubs and allow clubs to make their own decisions about involvement or otherwise. Approximately 20-30 request come through each year.

2. **How do we involve families more in Rotary and Rotary events?**

- Club responsibility
- Through projects and events
- Involve partners, kids and grandkids
- Foster networks
- One suggestion (from the floor) was District Family fun day to say 'thank you' to families.

3. **What is your personal approach as DG to clubs?**

- Official visits to each club
- Interaction with clubs (presidents and members) as and when opportunities present themselves

4. **How do you get around the reluctance of clubs to accept District?**

- It is our collective responsibility as a District Team to build credibility (consider the 'elevator speech' – see below)
- Find ways as individuals to build that credibility
- Build relationships, listen to clubs and do what you say you will.
- Takes time but it can improve with each interaction

5. **What's our 'elevator speech' to promote how and where District adds value?**

- "Work in progress"
- Directors - Develop good relationships with the rep in the clubs and provide consistent information, show we are working as a team and that our messages provide a common thread of available support and guidance. RI has information on this topic
- AGs – act as a conduit between clubs and the DG. Build rapport through communication channels (visits. Phone calls emails, informal catch-ups), identify where support or guidance is required and consider how this might best be provided.

6. **How do we make Rotary more 'visible' and promote/publicise our involvement and successes? How can Rotary be memorable to non-Rotarians?**

- PR is our most neglected area – utilise your club PR person effectively. Seek advice from Director PR and Media
- We need to work together and not as silos – every community event is a PR exercise. Planning for every club event should include:
  - Risk assessment
  - Public relations / media / promotion plan

- Specific actions to maximise membership opportunities (finding potential new members and addressing membership retention)
- High viz vests (branded with 'Ask me about Rotary')
- Adequate promotion pre and post events (see information from World Café results) using all media options including Facebook – which is external facing promotion.

## Others Questions

### District

- **How can we connect all clubs in the District and develop club cohesion?**

- Being in front of the clubs and sharing news
- Promoting attendance at district events, zone meetings
- Give clubs reasons to connect
- Encourage occasional multi club events, dinners, social activities
- Meet the needs of clubs
- Being relevant and assisting clubs navigate change

- **Is it possible to have more consistency and continuity in the club make-up of District Zones?**

Ideally yes, I'd suggest we are still to find the best compromise but hopefully getting closer.

- **How can we get cluster clubs to work together rather than be overprotective of 'their own territory'?**

- Run good zone / cluster meetings, open communication
- Share success examples / stories of other clubs
- Clubs have to see the benefits to them – identify what that might be and demonstrate how it might be met
- Strategically link clubs – e.g. maybe engaging one or two members of another club because of specific skills or experience, identify where a club might be struggling and identify how another club might assist.
- Needs to be addressed with thought and tact, work relationships behind the scenes

### Club

- **What is your point of view on "delegation of duties"?**

- Need more detail for context of the question in order to answer (happy to be contacted directly)
- At a high level we are volunteers so we can agree to share work but not delegate with any authority. Can't delegate accountability.

## Membership

- **Despite various strategies to attract/ retain and engage members our numbers are declining. Some clubs have been successful in attracting new members. How can we formalise a tested process. Is visioning the answer??**

- Visioning can certainly assist
- There is no “magic bullet”
- Attracting and retaining members is a process – find where the talents of your members lie and position them in the process appropriately. Some members are good at getting names, some are good at inviting people to meetings, some are good at hosting visitors, some at follow up, some at looking after member welfare, etc. Every stage of the process has to be effective.
- Clubs successful in attracting members generally have some common elements in place:
  - They ask people
  - They are positive, enthusiastic and welcoming
  - They have fun
  - They run good meetings
  - They have active projects
- My message to you is maybe worry less about finding new members and more about asking people outside the club to assist in your projects – if you are active in ways people want to participate in, you’ll get members
- **Membership retention is more difficult than recruitment. While engagement is a simple answer has any one or any club a successful structure for engagement?**  
 Addressing retention has to come down to identifying why the members leave and addressing the issue. Other than health or relocation people leave either due to conflict or their needs (the reason they joined) are not being met. Regular club “health checks” would assist provided again issues identified are addressed. Retention has to be a proactive activity within the club, should be on the agenda for every board meeting.

## District Assembly

- **How can we make District Assembly relevant and meaningful so that those who should attend, do?**  
 The district team (you) can and will determine that. Hopefully you’ve seen from the team training we are aiming high with our training, we want you to take your ideas forward into PETs and building from there into District Assembly. Particularly relevant for the avenues of service directors. Your suggestions and contributions into Christine’s team will play a big part.
- **How do make attendance an imperative for those who have attended multiple times in the past, believe they know it all and will learn nothing new and still be inclusive of those who are new to the Club roles?**
  - You are the promoters, it will rely on your enthusiasm
  - We are aiming for a lively, relevant and challenging PETs event so they then encourage their incoming boards to attend District Assembly.
  - One of our challenges is to change from ‘one direction’ training to a group contribution training style – we need and want input from everyone in the room - there is so much experience we can all learn from those “that believe they know it all”. Everyone can contribute and learn at the same time.