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## *Emerging Ideas for Club Membership Growth*

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The classic definition of community is associated with a physical “place”, hence many of our service clubs are branded with a ‘place’ such as *Jamestown* Rotary. But emerging generations of Americans now define community by their affinities: the *gay* community or the *tech* community. The **digital life has ended traditional mass communication and replaced it with an ancient human social unit.** These are groupings of people founded on shared ideas and values.

### **Prioritize Time Over Treasure**

The speed of American life has picked up. While we are not working that much more than previous generations, we are spending vastly more time in what might be called ‘structured leisure activities’. Thus, **time is more prized than talent or treasure.** So, what will attract potential members is not so much our mission, but **how we can add to the quality of their lives?** Their time is precious! So, how can we adapt in order to make ourselves more welcoming to this emerging America?

### **Build An Informal Atmosphere**

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the format of our club outdated?
- Is the weekly lunch a productive format?
- Are the rituals in our meetings making sense to younger Americans?

Many try to side step or ignore these impediments rather than deal with them. One of the most powerful forces of human nature is “status quo.” But many Americans now connect on-line reducing or eliminating the time investment of a weekly meeting in order to network. We must identify and remove obstacles. Is the structure of our club meetings an obstacle to involvement? One thing is abundantly clear, what emerging generations want in physical meetings is for the environment to be **fundamentally social, conversational and less formal.**

## An Example:

Introducing *ModestoFLEX* Rotary in District 5220:

Meeting formats: Meet Ups and Service Projects

The Purpose of *ModestoFLEX* Rotary is to establish a cutting edge flexible Rotary Club that emphasizes **FAMILY, FELLOWSHIP**, and a **HANDS-ON** approach to the five avenues of Rotary service. Currently with 30 members, here is its mission statement on its Facebook page

*“What we’re about*

*Rotary is where neighbors, friends, and problem-solvers share ideas and take action to transform their local communities and the world.*

*Club activities, social events, and volunteer projects offer networking opportunities that build personal and professional connections and enhance leadership development.*

*Do you want to be a part of the problem-solvers tackling Homelessness in Modesto? Are you passionate about arts education and supporting the arts ?*

*Are you passionate about quality early childhood education or financial literacy for all?*

*Or do you simply have a different passion to share with Rotary, where our multiplier effect can create a lasting change?*

*Most importantly, would you like to know how to achieve all this with your family and without a hefty time commitment?*

*Then join us at ModestoFLEX Rotary.”*