

MEMBERSHIP SUCCESS STORIES – FALL TRAINING 2015

South Metro Minneapolis Evenings Rotary Club 33% Membership Growth in Past 3 Years

Marisa Baer – President, 2015-16

I think the main thing to attribute to our growth is the fact that we are already established as a young professional club. We meet in the evenings, with a happy hour prior to the meeting, so that really sets the vibe for our group.

We have been very lucky in that our web presence has brought in a lot of our new members. Our website and Facebook page both keep us in sight to those just moving to the cities and looking for networking opportunities.

Staying active with a variety of volunteer and social gatherings is what has kept our current members engaged. Our club likes to get their hands dirty and is eager to give back to the community!

Minnetonka Rotary Club 13% Membership Growth in Past 3 Years and +8 for last year

Lenny Newman – President, 2015-16

The way our club responds to guests. We make our guests feel very welcome. Very welcoming club. Meet and introduce. Including prospective members and speakers.

Club and members tend to sell themselves. Two recent new members were in early to mid-40s. They both said “What do I need to do to join?”, before they were asked to join.

Club is friendly and gives recognition to guests.

Average age is mid-50s to low 60s. Generally speaking members have been healthy. Have not lost members to poor health or death.

New members have a high level of awareness of getting involved. Someone takes them under their wing. Get them involved sooner rather than later.

Currently up to 47 or 48 members.

Lenny wore his Rotary pin on his sport coat to a business meeting. Someone asked him if he was in Rotary. Lenny said yes. The man said I grew up in a Rotary family and have been looking for a Rotary club. The man visited and joined Rotary.

Edina Morningside Rotary Club
22% Membership Growth in Past 3 Years

Rob Laughlin – Past President

Here are my thoughts regarding our overall success at growing the club:

1. Be “relevant” to all club members - We all have a lot of choices regarding where we spend & invest our time. In order to insure our club remains relevant to our members we conducted a visioning exercise in 2012. This past year we updated the results by conducting a survey of all members (which was put together and administered by one of our college interns). We had a couple of primary outcome objectives of this survey: give all current members a voice in what they want and expect from club membership and provide next year’s leadership team with a summary of results which they will use to influence how we run the club and spend time & resources.
2. Encourage member engagement, especially new members – Last year we started a “new member” service project concept. The idea was to empower and engage new members in a service project where they were the primary stakeholders. Our Pres Elect facilitated the project – the new members lead and ran the project. We are doing this again this year. We also are working hard to promote leadership opportunities on committees or the Club Board within the first two years. Where we have done this we have increased retention rates.
3. Weekly Programs – quality programs are a plus and were rated as a relevant item in our survey. I think we generally do a good job here.
4. Website & Social Media – while there is always room for improvement this is significant. Many of our younger members found us via these sites. I think we do a nice job keeping the website fresh. New info is posted weekly.
5. Have fun – Our club culture is pretty loose. While we are well organized, we try and keep things light in the meetings. While we stay on point, we take time to get to know each other and celebrate each other’s gifts. Heather is doing a great job with this.
6. Encourage family participation – spouses and kids are encouraged to join us for breakfast and/or other events. The more engaged the family is – the more likely a club member will be engaged.
7. Newer members are bringing in other new members – this is huge. Referrals and networking of newer members is the holy grail of increasing membership. I wish I had a patent on how this works... I think all of the above contribute to this.

Heather Haen Anderson - President, 2015-2016

Per our club visioning that Rob mentioned, our club goal is to be at 75 members by 2017. My goal for the year is to increase our membership to 72.

I also give credit to a couple of members who have been doing a great job of recruiting. Mary Brindle, Alan Goltzman and our PE Tom Gump, among others. John Sorteberg has done an outstanding behind-the-scenes job,

For my part, I have been in contact with new members within 30 days of induction to get them onto a committee.

John Sorteberg – Membership Co-Chair

Here are a couple of blocking and tackling points that I would add to what you say:

- Have the sponsoring Rotarian team up with Membership to personally invite the candidates to any and all meetings they can to really find out about the club’s culture and membership.
- Send each prospect an outline on Rotary’s mission and purpose; the individual club’s schedule; membership requirements, responsibilities and the process to become a member and 2-3 members’ contact info in case they have any questions.
- Call or talk to the prospective members after each meeting to get their feedback and see if they have any questions. Follow-up any questions or requests that they may have as quickly as possible.
- Be aware of their concerns and time table for commitment.
- Do not be pushy, but once they show a desire for commitment...get the on boarding process done as quickly as the club’s bylaws allow. Do not let this get stretched out.
- The induction should be serious, fun and welcoming.
- Get one or two members to be mentors to the new member.