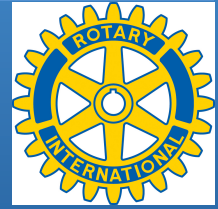


Club Builder



Tips, Ideas, and Success Stories for Attracting and Retaining Members

Creating the perfect experience for prospective members

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A Few Thoughts from Savannah

Karen and I have been spending a lot of time in Savannah, Georgia the past few months. As we have visited a variety of Rotary clubs in the Savannah area, we picked up some ideas on member retention.

Savannah Sunrise Rotary Club, as the name implies, meets for breakfast in a downtown hotel. Their buffet breakfast costs \$15. Check them out at www.savannahsunriserotary.org.

Here are several ideas from Savannah Sunrise that I thought were pretty interesting.

The club assigns mentors to new members. An interesting twist is that all mentors are Past Presidents. I think that's an idea worth trying.

Leadership Lehigh Valley and Leadership Berks have their participants work on a personal project. Well, at Savannah Sunrise, each new member is asked to develop a "Rookie Project". Example - as many of their members travel for business and pleasure, one project was to collect all the hotel mini shampoos and toiletries they bring home and donate them to a shelter. If a project is successful, then the club as a whole looks at it to see if it should be a club-wide project or fundraiser. Pretty interesting!

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Events

May 11, 2013
District Assembly
 DeSales University

We will be holding a Membership Session at our District Assembly.

Be sure to send your club's Membership Team to learn about club success stories in attracting new members and retaining your current members.

Coming in May

A report on what's been working in our District clubs this year
 E-mail your club's attraction and retention success stories to terry.reed731@gmail.com.

The Perfect Prospect Experience

In business it's known as the "Moment of Truth". That's the instant when the customer comes in contact with the company and forms or changes an impression of the company and its products.

Various instances could constitute a moment of truth – such as greeting the customer, handling customer queries or complaints, promoting special offers or giving discounts, and the closing of the interaction. The impression may not be reality, just an impression.

The president of SAS Airlines used to say, "When the customer sees coffee stains on the pull-down trays, they think we don't maintain our engines." That's the impression the traveler gains of the airline. That's the Moment of Truth!

What about the Moment of Truth in your Rotary club? What are the first impressions a potential new member has when he or she first comes in contact with your club? What will they think of Rotary? What will they think of your specific part of Rotary when they walk into your meeting? How about when they sit through your meeting? What impression is left when the prospect leaves that first meeting?

One of the most important aspects of attracting new members to your club is the first impression, the feeling after experiencing the first meeting or first Rotary-sponsored event that they attend.

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Losing Members

Why do members leave Rotary?

First, we bring in the wrong members.

In many cases, as soon as someone shows up at our doorstep, we invite them to join. That's like hiring every job applicant in a business environment.

Second, when we do bring in the right member, we don't give them a reason to stay.

We don't involve them and fail to make them feel a part of our organization. Rotarians who feel that they are a valuable part of the organization, who are contributing to our projects and who feel appreciated, do not leave.

A Job for Everyone

Every member in your club needs a job! That's everyone! There should be no exceptions to the rule. Don't allow your members to be casual, occasional Rotarians.

Make sure that there is at least one person in the club whose job it is to watch out for every member from a participation standpoint. Develop a system to track it. Review it once a month, and keep an eye out for those who are absent from regular involvement. Nobody can be left behind.

Involved, engaged Rotarians are the most effective Rotarians.

You may find that it is necessary to make individual assignments. If a member isn't participating on a regular basis, it's only a matter of time until meeting attendance will drop, and then the member will be on a slippery slope to leaving the club.

It's too hard to get new members into your club. Once members, we as club leaders allow them to leave because we were not looking out for their welfare as a Rotarian.

... Experience

(Continued from page 2)

If you want to attract quality Rotarians to your club, you need to create the “Perfect Customer Experience”. There are three important aspects to creating this experience.

First, put yourself in the prospective member’s world. What will they see, hear, and feel when they attend a club meeting? They may feel apprehensive about attending. Are they greeted in a friendly manner? Will they leave feeling inspired? Do they have a positive impression of Rotary? Did they learn something about the Rotary world? Will they feel that the time spent was worthwhile?

Next, you need to look at everything your club does. Do a club assessment. Take a close look at your communication tools – website, Facebook page, brochures, newsletters. Evaluate your meeting place and time. How do you do Rotary in your weekly meetings? Look at every aspect of your meetings – make meetings meaningful and fun. How do you follow up with prospects? Take a close look at your fundraisers and projects.

And finally, make the necessary changes to create an amazing customer experience. Imagine yourself as a prospect. How do you want to feel after you’ve experienced Rotary for the first time? Start this week!

...Savannah

(Continued from page 1)

At the Skidaway Island Rotary Club in Savannah they schedule three minute personal updates, sort of a mini Classification Talk. Each week one member is asked to provide a 2 to 3 minute update on their lives. This may include a new job or maybe something about their family, but most of the updates contain a short autobiography. It is especially interesting to hear the stories of the retired members.

I loved the story by a woman who grew up in DC next to the Chinese Embassy. She used to "sneak" over the wall and play in the garden around the Koi ponds. She later became involved in the Department. Another woman, retired as the US Counsel General in Ontario, Canada after a career in our State Department. These are great people with lots of interesting backgrounds. I think this would work for growing clubs to insure new members understand the wealth of experience the senior members have.

Best in Rotary,
Bill Jahn, Past District Governor 2011-12
Rotary Club of Bethlehem Morning Star

Share Club Builder with Your Members

Club Builder has been produced since July 2012. We hope that you’ve been sharing it with your club members. Please let them know that all past issues can be found on the District website.