

# Club Builder



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

**We all want younger members. Here's some ideas.**

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## Making Rotary Younger

At one of our recent District membership workshops a question was posed – “Why do we want to focus so much on attracting younger members?” After all, it’s the people in their 40s and 50s who have established themselves in their careers, have developed leadership skills, and potentially have more financial resources. And, it’s the retirees who have more time and are looking for something meaningful to do in their retirement.

We certainly need to be focusing our attraction efforts on these two groups. But, we also need to be finding those 20 and 30-somethings. It’s this group that brings a new level of energy and plenty of new ideas to the club. And, they want to work, they want to serve. If we don’t provide that opportunity in Rotary, they’ll find it elsewhere.

So how do we go about doing it? Well, we need to be thinking differently. We need to look at ourselves as a younger person would see us. We need to constantly be conducting a club assessment. And then we need to make systematic, maybe wholesale changes.

Best in Rotary,

Terry L. Reed  
District Membership Chair

## Events

### Membership Webinar

Coming in January

### Former Rotarians

Ask them to come back to the club. They left for a specific reason. Maybe their situation has changed and the time may be right to return to Rotary.

**Wear your Rotary pin ...  
... everyday.**

**Coming in December**

Great Ways to Engage New Members

## Some Ideas for Attracting Younger Members to Your Club

**Tell stories to make an impact** - These are experience-driven people. Their mantra – don't tell me it is right; show me that it works. All the Rotary statistics won't do. You need to show them what will have an impact. That's the way to inspire them to join Rotary.

You must get very good at telling the Rotary story. Your stories and experience will inspire them.

**Easing into Rotary** - Rather than asking a young person to make a full-time commitment to join your club, maybe you should allow them to ease into Rotary. Have them join in on a club project. Maybe have them work on a fundraiser with you.

**Immediate Impact** - Younger members want to make an immediate impact. They don't want to wait for a period of time like a year or two before being asked to do something significant.

**Early Decision Making** - They also want to be involved in club decision-making much earlier than the predecessor generation did. This younger generation is ready to make a difference from the very beginning. So you need to put them to work or they won't stay.

**Waiving Fees** - Consider waiving certain fees or expenses for the first year or two. Younger members are more apprehensive about committing to all of the financial obligations of club membership. Once they become involved in your club and dedicated to Rotary's mission, they may be more willing and able to pay the full amount.

## Our New Website

To attract new members you need to be fired up about Rotary. And you need to be able to tell the Rotary stories.

Check out our new Rotary International website. It is sure to get you excited about our organization, and you'll read about some great stories of Rotarians doing some amazing things. [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)

## Your Meeting Place

Sometimes you just may have to find a new place to hold your weekly meetings. It may be the spark needed to attract some fresh faces.

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## Try These Things on Younger Members

Emphasize that they will be treated no differently than older members.

Bring in members as a group, 5 or 6 at a time.

Put the new member on a committee immediately.

Encourage them to bring up new ideas. Assure them that they will be taken seriously.

Make sure they get to know every club member.

Ask them to lead a project or fundraiser in the first few months of membership.

## ... Ideas

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**Meetings must be efficient and productive** - Younger members, who often have competing priorities, are more interested in attending meetings that are conducted efficiently. Also, make sure your club has an appropriate balance of meetings and hands-on projects and activities.

**Recruit “up-and-comers.”** - Managers who are on their way to becoming important business and professional leaders are often interested in the networking and professional development benefits of Rotary. Getting them invested in Rotary while young can help ensure their dedication to Rotary when they reach top-level management, executive status, or ownership positions.

**Be open to the new ideas of younger members** - Maintaining the status quo in your club may bore and discourage them. Younger members will be more likely to stay in your club if their opinions are valued and appreciated – and if they aren’t treated like junior members.



**New Logo** Rotary International has introduced a new logo for our organization. Note that the traditional wheel remains the same, but in a single color. And the word “Rotary” was added in dark blue. You can find various versions of the logo, including full color, B/W, and with and without the word Rotary on the Rotary website. Use the logo on your club’s literature and Rotary gear.

## Alternatives to the Weekly Meeting

We usually think of using our weekly meetings for introducing prospective members to Rotary.

Why not invite a prospect to a fundraiser or to help out with a project. Is one of your service projects serving meals at a shelter? Wouldn’t that be a great way to show people what we do. Get them to help out.

## Makeups

Don’t just encourage new members to do a makeup at another club. Invite them to accompany you as you do a makeup.

## Club Website

Your club’s website is your shop window to the world. Keep it fresh. Have someone update the site continuously.

## Get Serious About Membership

Here’s a way to put some real emphasis on your club’s membership efforts. At one of the recent District Membership Workshops, Greg McGovern from the Harleysville Rotary Club said that they assign the Immediate Past President as their Membership Chair. Imagine how much last year’s club president knows about your club and Rotary, and how serious that person will be about building membership.