

Grow Rotary Through New Ideas

1. Make membership your club's #1 internal priority
2. Survey members to find out what they want to stop, start, continue, and *act* on findings
3. Create an online application that made it very easy to fill out all the information required.
4. Ask yourself, is it fair and will it build goodwill and better friendship?
5. Get involved and spread the news about Rotary's good work.
6. Create a list of all the great things your club does.
7. Create and keep a list of potential members.
8. Be willing to change.
9. Harness the Power of Emails to Market Rotary.
10. Look to young Rotarians for fresh ideas and perspectives.
11. Talk about Rotary wherever you go.
12. Make a list of club member's responsibilities.
13. Celebrate when you get a new member.
14. Emphasize Service. Bonus—Do something and have FUN.
15. Ask someone to bring a guest to meetings.
16. Get potential members at a service project, event, or meeting. Get them in the door.
17. Appeal to local volunteers.
18. Advertise in newspapers & cable TV.
19. Have a clear club goal & a strategic plan.
20. Letters or personal contact with local businesses.
21. Place customized bookmarks in library book.
22. Have public meetings at malls, outdoors, etc.
23. Have a booth at malls, fairs, festivals, etc.
24. Place pamphlets in doctors' offices, hospitals, cafeterias, libraries, etc.
25. Host an Open House.
26. Hold a club assembly only on membership.
27. Give the membership chair one minute at every club meeting.
28. Make the membership chair a club director.
29. Put together guest information packets.
30. Invite family members to join.
31. Send letters to people in the news with an invitation to visit the club.
32. Print club business cards with club meeting location and time.
33. Distribute extra copies of The Rotarian magazine in waiting rooms, etc.
34. Hold high-profile meetings.
35. Hold wine and cheese receptions for prospective members.
36. Ask for help from Assistant Rotary Coordinator and Innovative Club Advocates.
37. Have a special guest day.
38. Send club members to a district membership seminar.
39. Make prospective members feel important.
40. Honor outstanding community members with awards.
41. Don't take age into consideration.

42. Make some meetings social events.
43. Build a club website.
44. Use group email to promote your club.
45. Put posters in public areas.
46. Ask corporations and employers to sponsor or subsidize membership.
47. Have a reward program for those who bring in new members.
48. Create more fun.
49. Give money-back guarantee—if after 3 months a new member does not want to be a club member, return their fees.
50. Invite the media to cover well-known speakers.
51. Use word of mouth.
52. Network with coworkers, friends, and family.
53. Follow up with guests.
54. Place a colored dot on the watch of every member to remind them to bring a guest.
55. Lead by example—how many members have you recruited?
56. Have members give talks at other organizations.
57. Provide guests with free meals.
58. Look for members in ethnic groups not represented in your club.
59. Provide brochures for new employee packets in members companies.
60. Advertise at sports events.
61. Ask the district for help.
62. Hold joint meetings with other groups.
63. Share your club experience with others.
64. Take part in community events.
65. Write letters to the newspaper about the campaigns your club is working on.
66. If a prospect can't attend your meeting due to time, suggest another club.
67. Publicize club successes, elections, events, in local newspapers.
68. Circulate the club newsletter widely.
69. Design a club brochure.
70. Hold recruiting events with two or more clubs.
71. Form/join a speakers' bureau.
72. Wear your club's pin.
73. Mention your club at meetings of other organizations during announcements.
74. Send a newsletter to guests.
75. When asked about your leadership skills & career success, tell them about your club.
76. Ask the AG to attend a board meeting to talk about membership.
77. Ask every member to submit 3 prospects to the membership chair.
78. Give every member a club decal or bumper stickers for their car.
79. Give testimonials about your club while guests are at the meeting.
80. Repeatedly invite prospective members.
81. Practice selling your club at club meetings—have a one-minute elevator speech ready.
82. Conduct a Membership Satisfaction Survey.
83. The club president asks three club members as a personal favor for each recruit one new

member.

84. Contact women's business associations.
85. Have members constantly promote and rave about your club.
86. Meet at a suitable location.
87. Assign every member to a 5-person recruitment team—each team brings in a new member every six months.
88. Develop a strategic plan membership is a year-round priority and needs to be planned.
89. Have incentives for recruitment.
90. Have a large poster that lists all the members who have sponsored a new member in the past year.
91. Display a thermometer showing progress towards the club goal.
92. Use billboards at bus stops and roadsides.
93. Membership Strategies for Rotary clubs to recruit and keep members.
94. Use a "Who do you know?" handout at a Club Assembly.
95. Provide a variety of service projects—both local and international.
96. Have engaging and fun social events.
97. Host professional development opportunities.
98. Offer leadership development opportunities, including our partnership with Toastmasters.
99. Connect seasoned veterans with younger professionals in mentoring relationships.
100. Provide networking opportunities beyond your club and.
101. Make our events easy to bring the entire family to.
102. Allow time for people to fill it out and then ask them to invite 10 of those people to a Rotary Information Hour Classification/Profession Gap Analysis.
103. Secure a list of local businesses and professions from the Chamber of Commerce and/or other sources.
104. Identify businesses and professions that ought to have someone in Rotary.
105. Members of cause-based clubs can do far more than write a check.
106. Members seek opportunities for growth by looking outward and not inward.
107. Celebrate when you get a new member.
108. Be vibrant.
109. Always greet members with warmth and interest.
110. Treat members with the respect you would like to get.
111. A regularly scheduled "Rotary Information Hour" once a quarter or once a month. The "intentional" part of this is that it is a standing event on the club calendar, and email or phone reminds members to bring their prospective members. Not just to a meeting whenever you think of it, but to a regularly scheduled date, time, and place.
112. Present the list at a Club Assembly and ask which members know someone at each and who will invite them to an upcoming Rotary Information Hour.
113. Have your club president ask each member to bring a prospect to a Rotary Information an in-person conversation over breakfast, lunch, coffee, or telephone conversation. Takes the anonymity out of the ask. "Can I count on you doing this, not only for the club, but also for me?"
114. Drip Marketing" — Create a central prospect list, including email addresses, and use the

mail list feature in Club Runner to send your club's weekly agendas, E-Bulletins or newsletter at least once or twice a month to your entire prospect list. Regularly reminding prospects of your club's projects impact and fellowship, so when the time is right for the prospect to join a community service organization, your club is their first choice. Be sure and include "Response" information so they know how to contact you.

115. Take advantage of flexibilities such as a Corporate Membership category, allowing multiple people from a company to become Rotarians, with one being the "Corporate Active" member and the others "Corporate Associates".

116. Create Satellite club (s) for groups of members that have a different need or focus from the standard club. (4) Get creative. Put actions in place that apply to your club. Consider things like family memberships.

117. Create a New Member Orientation program and process to engage members immediately in your club. Early engagement is the key success factor in retention.

118. To follow up your New Member Orientation, use the New Member Scavenger Hunt for a fun way to get members engaged in learning more about Rotary and about your club.

119. Upgrade the Club Experience — Clubs have proven that the club experience (including great programs) is what attracts and keeps members. Programs need to be informative, educational, and inspirational.

120. Mentorship — Create a mentorship plan to assign an experienced member to work with a new member. Mentors help new members get acquainted and engaged with existing members.

121. Meaningful Service Projects — The bottom line of engaging and keeping members is for the club to do meaningful service projects of its own (not just fundraising to write checks). Hands-on, shoulder-to-shoulder service work is where members get to know and bond with each other.

122. Encourage club members to strive to get inducted into the Rotary Membership Society for New Member Sponsors. It has created a high level of enthusiasm for bringing new members into our organization and forming new and innovative Rotary and Rotaract clubs.

123. Know why people join Rotary A great starting point is to review the research we already have for why people join Rotary. Data from Rotary International's last global survey shows that most respondents said they joined Rotary or Rotaract for local community service and friendship. Respondents also listed personal growth, professional development, and professional connections as important reasons for joining. It's good to make sure your club can provide these things, and that you advertise them to prospective members you have to Ask! This might seem obvious. But you know what, if you don't tell them about Rotary AND ask them to join, most people won't. The survey showed that over 85% of new members found out about their clubs because a Rotary member invited them. Don't miss out on the opportunity. Ask your family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and other acquaintances to come to a meeting or event, and then follow up on any interest with an invitation to join. Why I love "Each One, Bring One!" I find the "Each One, Bring One" initiative of Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta to be brilliant because it focuses on what we can do to grow Rotary now—attract new members.

His initiative clarifies that it's not just the responsibility of a membership committee of a few people, but every member's responsibility. Rotary's value proposition for individuals. As noted above, we need to be very clear to prospective members about what value we offer them, and then deliver on the promise. The survey results suggest we need to.

124. Rotary's value proposition for new clubs is sometimes the best way to meet prospective members' needs is to gather enough people with similar ideas to form the core of a new club. The value proposition we can share with them is the ability to join others who share a passion to create lasting change. Why start a new nonprofit venture when you can take advantage of all of Rotary's resources, its long track record of financial stewardship, and its expertise in planning sustainable service projects? The Rotary Foundation provides grant support. Rotary Action Groups and Rotary Technical Cadres provide technical support.

125. Set a goal of attracting more women and young professionals so you don't look like "the old guy's club." Put female members and younger members in charge of projects that increased their visibility in the community and make them ambassadors to attract other prospective members. When people see you have young professionals and women in your club, it will attract more. The prospective members will see the value of what you are doing.

126. Organized service projects that build awareness of the club and help attract people who want to do service work. You can ring the Salvation Army Bell and get high participation from members and their families. During the bell ringing, you might have several people come up and ask how they can join Rotary because they want to be part of something like you're doing. The Salvation Army is a noble cause because they help so many people in need and most of the funds go to the needy vs administration/overhead. And everyone who rings the bell tells you it is a very rewarding personal experience. Many bring their children to take part so they can witness the "giving by others."

127. Tell your story on social media so non-Rotarians can see what you are doing to support your community. They want to be part of a successful team and will join. When you have service projects, take pictures, and encourage people to volunteer. This gets the name of Rotary in front of people as it's "the best kept secret" as Rotarians say.

128. Each week do a profile story on a member so people can see who is in Rotary and something about the person.

129. Post on Facebook every time you have a club meeting where we talk about the speakers or recognize people.

130. Provided meeting options. Meeting in person (except for December and January) with the option of attending by Zoom if you could not attend in person. Follow health department guidelines and post them the day before the meeting so Rotarians know what to expect.

131. Embraced diversity. It brings increased energy and new ideas. If you have projects that are very appealing, it helps you attract members from different age groups, genders, ethnicities, religions, gender preferences, and disabilities.

132. Ask members to develop a smooth, easy-to-deliver club elevator speech with follow-up talking points and can recite their story in a fluid, natural manner.

133. Ensure meetings are professionally run and offer quality content that is relevant and adds

value to all in the room.

134. Create a simple brochure You've peaked someone's interest in Rotary and now they've asked for more information. Produce a single panel, two-sided brochure with information configured into a sales format. Including action photos of members doing local or international projects as an asset. Use a card stock for durability. Fits easily into a jacket pocket or a purse.

135. Publish an electronic newsletter. It's free! Collect emails from volunteers, visitors, guests, speakers, suppliers, and others your club is in contact with throughout the year. Send them email blasts for service projects, special meetings, or events. Must be light and positive in tone.

136. Telephone a Thank You. People will be surprised and honored when a Rotary club calls and thanked them for their participation. They will feel valued, and they did something significant.

137. Develop an Impact Poster. You can produce a poster using a child or family that has benefited from your club's support. Include a logo and simple message like, "We made a difference in this child's life. You can too."

138. Create Rotary signs! Include website address and contact information. Place in libraries, hotels, restaurants, Chamber of Commerce buildings and other places where professionals gather.

139. Organize a LinkedIn Blitz. Challenge members to identify 10-15 professionals in your community. Ask them to send personal connect requests. When the identified people respond, along with a sentence about who you are professionally, mention in your thank you that you are a Rotarian and would like to invite them to a meeting. Sponsor a Kid's Event Sponsor a kid's event where the emphasis is on entertainment. Have members attend wearing Rotary branded shirts for easy identification. Ask them to pass out your simple brochure or impact poster to parents after the event and invite them to call for more information. When you are kind to people's children, people remember.

140. Launch a club blog. Challenge project leaders to write a 500 to 600-word story about their projects. Challenge them to include photos. Promote each post through your other social media channels, electronic newsletters, news releases and to potential members as examples of your club's service projects.

141. Challenge club members to take many photos that tell stories about international and local projects they are involved in. Use them everywhere and use them often. You can send links to online collections, use them in your club's meeting PowerPoint, send them to local media along with a news release about the project, and use them repeatedly on your social media channels.

142. Public Relations—Media Let the media know about special speakers or projects. Rotary has the human-interest stories that media are looking for. Always remember! It is the people centered difference making stories that command attention.

143. Recruiting new Rotary members is not really selling. It's matching up potential members with what he or she wants in a club.

144. Create a list of all the great things about your club. The point is not just growing your club but boosting Rotary's capacity to make a difference around the world.

145. List your star members, the advantages of your meeting location, how many members you have, the kinds of projects and events you host, and so on. The list can serve as a template when emailing or letter to a potential member. Tailor any correspondence so it addresses the specific interests and wants of any potential member. For instance, if someone is interested in international work, your email or letter should focus on that.

146. Keep a list of potential members. It doesn't matter if it's a paper list or if it's kept on the desktop of your computer. Either way, it makes you think about those people who might be a fit for your club. Discuss the list at board meetings—not just the concept of bringing in new members, but the specific names and who's going to contact them and when. And don't overlook some obvious suspects, such as members' spouses, Youth Exchange host parents—"they already have a taste of what Rotary is about"—and even former members. Sometimes people need to leave for a reason and then later they have more time and just have to be asked to come back."

147. Know your club's strengths. Most things are strengths if you target the right audience. If you meet in the morning, you're probably a good fit for someone working 9 to 5. Meet at noon and you're more likely to appeal to retirees or parents of schoolchildren.

148. You must make potential members feel wanted. You can make a poster of the individuals after they've been voted in, and we put it in the room's front at our next meeting.

149. Be persistent. It will take over one or two requests to get someone to attend a meeting. Keep asking.

150. Make your club so welcoming that it takes a potential member a while to get used to it. Balloons, posters, streamers—it all helps. It really works.

151. If someone complains about Rotary, listen and see what you can do to correct the situation. None of us are perfect. We all can display poor judgment. If you find you've made a mistake or offended someone, apologize as soon as possible. Not only will your action be good for Rotary, but you will gain respect.

152. Appoint a Membership Chairperson for your club to help you be successful.

153. Know your club's strengths. Friendship, Service Above Self, projects, Club Strategic Plan, inclusion, volunteerism, Personal Growth, Leadership Development, "fun", Family Programs, Development of Ethics, Cultural Awareness, the opportunities to serve.

154. Use a Recruiting Strategy and keep a list of potential future Rotarians. Hold a club assembly meeting for membership recruiting and planning. Provide an opportunity for club members to brainstorm and make a list of potential people that they would like to recruit and sign as members. It doesn't matter if it's a paper list or if it's kept on a computer—it just makes you think about those people and others that may be a fit for your club. Post the list where it can be referred to by members to keep updated on who has been recruited for the club. Refer to it continuously as membership recruitment should be the Club's top priority. You must continue to "ASK" and follow-up.

155. Create a Recruiting Folder that lists all the great things about your club. List your major projects, the advantages of the time and place where your club meets, how many members are presently in the club, etc. include an email/letter that is welcoming and will meet the wants of any potential new member.

156. List potential areas of responsibilities. Potential members will want to know how they can

fit in and what opportunities there are for serving.

157. Be persistent. There will be times it takes literally a dozen requests to get someone to a meeting. Keep "ASKING". They may come to a meeting, or tell you they can't join now because they are too busy, or they aren't interested in joining at the moment. These are all fine answers as long as you keep track of them and keep in touch. How many times did you have to be asked? (It was over a course of eight years for me.

158. Talk about Rotary wherever you go. At church, temple, work, neighborhood gatherings, family gatherings, parties, etc. You'll be amazed at how easy it is after you practice for a while.

159. Make sure you have a Positive Public Relations Plan.

160. Realize there is no finish-line. Even if you are at the size that your club wants to be, there are always reasons people leave. And new insights always benefit a club. You're growing or you're dying. Recruiting new members is a continuous process.

161. Have a general assembly at least once per month or quarter. These really work. Try them out.

162. Organize teams. Organize teams of 4 or 5 club members. The goal of each team is to recruit one new member within 3 or 4 months. Each team needs one member who is active in the community, one knowledgeable about Rotary and one who is prepared to make cold calls to sell Rotary.

163. Go public. Ask one or two members to work on a public relations campaign, sending news releases about your club to local newspapers, radio and TV stations or put up a billboard or use truck ads to promote Rotary. Include a contact phone number, e-mail address or website.

164. Feature great programs. Once you get guests to a meeting, make sure they like what they see. Organize interesting club meeting programs that will make those guests want to come back for more.

165. Educate members. The more your members know about Rotary, the better they will sell Rotary to prospective members. Make sure your club meetings feature regular Rotary education segments. One program every month should be on a Rotary topic.

166. Start a speaker's bureau. Just as outside speakers promote their causes to your club, your members can visit other organizations and talk about how they are helping the community, eradicating polio, and sending over 7,000 Youth Exchange Students around the world. While they're speaking, they can hand out club your club brochure.

167. Contact old friends. Pull out some of your club's old membership rosters and circle the names of those who have left the club. Give those members a call. Their situations may have changed since they left, and they may be ready to return to your club. If they cannot rejoin, ask them for the names of some people they think would make outstanding members.

168. Make the most of your service projects. Every time your club conducts a service project (which is hopefully often); promote Rotary to those you're serving. If your club invites the parents of scholarship winners or outgoing Youth Exchange Students to club meetings, give them information on Rotary and encourage them to join. If your club contributes to a local charity, ask the staff members to visit your club.

169. Knock on doors. Round up a few of your members on a weekday morning and visit stores and businesses in your community, especially those near your meeting place. Drop off a club brochure or newsletter and invite the owners or managers of those businesses to an upcoming meeting.

170. Set up shop. Does your city or town have community fairs or trade shows? If so, consider renting a booth and handing out information on Rotary. Set up a television and VCR and play the "This is Rotary" video available from RI. A good video is worth several thousand words.

171. Learn from others. Scan your district bulletin and other publications for news of clubs that have recently grown. Pay those clubs a visit and find out how they increased their membership. Observe how they handle their meetings and welcome guests to the group. Also, attend the district conference, district assembly, district leadership seminar and ensure your club is well represented at the district membership seminar.

172. Sing your praises. Don't be bashful about your involvement in Rotary. Whether at work or at play, talk up Rotary to those around you. You never know when you might strike a responsive chord with someone just waiting to get involved. Always wear your Rotary pin.

173. Increase your circulation. Does your club send a bulletin to members before every meeting? Why not increase its circulation? Send copies to prospective members, to media professionals and to former members. Add a personal note on each, inviting the recipient to attend the next meeting.

174. Recognize recruiters. When a member successfully recruits a member, publicly thank and recognize him or her for a job well done. Do something special to show that member (and everyone else) just how important it is to bring in new members. You could ask both the recruiter and new member to sit at the head table, send a handwritten thank-you card to their home, and recognize their work in the club newsletter.

175. Roll out the welcome mat. Whenever guests come to a meeting, make them feel right at home. Encourage your members to introduce themselves and talk about the club. Many clubs assign one or two longtime members to accompany the prospect and make sure he or she gets a pleasant introduction to your Rotary Club. First impressions are important.

176. Use Rotary business cards. How many times a week do you hand out business cards? Hand out a Rotary card at the same time. Every time you hand out a card, you'll be introducing another person to Rotary. Include an invitation to attend your club on the back of the card with details of when and where your club meets.

177. Put prospects to work. If your club is planning an upcoming service project, ask several prospective members to get involved. Why wait until they join the club? Perhaps hands-on involvement in a service project may be just the thing to prod some excellent prospects into making a commitment to Rotary.

178. Plan a fun event. Not sure you want to put prospects to work before they join? Then how about organizing a party or other fun event? Invite as many prospective members as possible, along with all members and their spouses or significant others. While having a good time is the primary objective of the get together, you can also work in some Rotary education and even a soft-sell invitation to join. Just the fax Ask your members to round

up as many business cards from area firms as possible. (Most members probably have quite a collection in their desk drawers.) Come up with a friendly letter inviting the managers of these businesses to a free lunch at your next club meeting. Then, using the fax numbers from the cards, fax the letter to them and follow up the next day with a phone call.

179. Put your club on display. Are there any vacant storefronts on a nearby street or in a nearby shopping mall? If so, contact the owner and ask if your Rotary Club can use a front window to display a poster and other information on your Rotary Club. Provide the names and phone numbers of some club leaders who can be contacted for more information.

180. Prospect Identification (Lead Generation). Use the "Who do you know?" handout at a Club Assembly. Actually, allow time for people to fill it out (making it clear we're not leaving 'till everyone has some names written) and then ask them to invite 10 of those people to a Rotary Information Hour (remember the 10:3:1 rule).

181. Classification/Profession Gap Analysis — Secure a list of local businesses and professions from the Chamber of Commerce and/or list sources like Info USA or Zoom Info (available at your local library). Identify businesses and professions that ought to have someone in Rotary. Present the list at a Club Assembly and ask which members know someone at each and who will invite them to an upcoming Rotary Information Hour (#4 below). Club President asks each member to bring a prospect to a Rotary Information Hour (#4 below) or a service project — an eyeball-to-eyeball conversation over breakfast, lunch, coffee, alcoholic drink or a 2- way telephone conversation. Takes the anonymity out of the ask. "Can I count on you doing this not only for the club but for me too?"

182. Attracting Member. A regularly scheduled "Rotary Information Hour" once a quarter or once a month. The "intentional" part of this is that it's a standing event on the club calendar. Email or phone members to bring their prospective members. Not just to a meeting whenever you think of it, but to a regularly scheduled date, time, and place.

183. Drip Marketing — Create a central prospect list, including email addresses, and use the "Potential Member" feature in DaCdb or another email distribution mechanism (Vertical Response, Constant Contact or MailChimp), to send your club's E-Bulletin once or twice a month to your entire prospect list. Regularly reminding prospects of your club's brand makes you "Top of Mind" when the time is right for the prospect to join a community service organization. Be sure and include "Response" information so they know how to raise their hands when they're ready.

184. Assess your club experience and culture to ensure that it's inclusive, welcoming, and engaging, and make changes where needed. Atmosphere is everything.

185. Assess your club membership demographics, as well as community census data to identify demographics in your area, to identify who is not (or is under) represented in your club's membership. Once identified, plan to make meaningful connections with people to form relationships and discuss how membership in your club could be mutually beneficial. We can do this through one-on-one coffee meetings; maybe it's more formalized like creating a Rotary Community Corps.

186. Provide a variety of opportunities each month for current and prospective members to be involved—service projects (both hands-on opportunities, and tasks people could do from home if needed), social events or outings, tours of local businesses, networking times, professional development sessions or workshops, mentoring activities, fellowships for various hobbies, etc. The sky is the limit in terms of how we can connect within Rotary.

187. Talk to current, new, and prospective members about their skills and passions and what they want out of their membership and plan projects and activities around those interests.

188. Tell your club's story—People don't know what they don't see as they're scrolling on the internet! Be sure your club is posting regularly on social media, and that your club website is up to date (including your club's calendar!) with everything going on and how to be involved. Let's move beyond exhausting our own personal networks to find new members and make sure that our clubs are visible to all parts of our community that may not know what Rotary is.

189. Reach out to past participants of Rotary programs (Rotary Alumni) in your area and invite them to your club activities.

190. Build partnerships with other organizations, as well as other clubs in your area. The more knowledge and understanding of the good work your club does, the more interest will be generated.

191. Celebrate and recognize new members, sponsors, and member achievements.

192. If your club has big annual projects or events where non-members attend and volunteer, be sure to take time at the start of the event to talk about membership and how they can be active in your club year-round.

193. Make membership development a priority during your club activities. Membership is everyone's responsibility—not just the club membership chair and committees. Regularly emphasize the importance of growing your club to bring in new ideas, energy, perspectives, and skills/expertise.

194. Hold a prospective member event! Invite members of young professional's organizations, Business Networking International clubs, Toastmasters clubs, Membership Leads from RI, alumni of Rotary programs, are business owners and leaders, etc. Have time for socializing and networking and consider doing a service project as part of the event to show Rotary's impact. Be sure to have a clear call to action and follow up for participants so they know how to get involved again and/or join your club.