

# DIVERSIFYING YOUR CLUB



Diversifying your club is not just about including a mix of people. It's also about working well together.

Diversity refers to inclusion of people from many groups. It is a source of innovation, as well as one of Rotary's core values. Having members with different backgrounds and viewpoints gives your club a broader understanding of the community, its problems, and possible solutions. Strive to have a group of members who offer the club diverse skills, talents, and experiences. If your club includes different ethnicities, ages, and cultures, as well as a good gender balance, it will have greater capacity to serve your community and communities around the world. Equally important is creating a culture of inclusion, where these differences are respected, supported, and valued.

## OUTCOME

Conduct this diversity assessment and act on its results to:

- Raise your members' awareness of the diversity in your community
- Build member support for increasing diversity
- Diversify your club to better represent the working professionals in your community

## GETTING ORGANIZED

Dedicate time in a series of club meetings to conducting each step of your member diversity assessment. Choose a facilitator (the membership committee chair, a committee member, or the club president) who is comfortable talking about diversity and passionate about the need for greater diversity in your club. Or, consider inviting a diversity and inclusion leader to talk to your club. This activity should involve all club members so that they all have a stake in the process. Greater inclusion will increase awareness and support for future action.

## GETTING STARTED

Ready to start? Here's how.

### Step 1: Discuss the benefits of having a diverse membership

Discuss the benefits of diversity with your club. Recognize and celebrate past successes, if appropriate. For example, highlight a service project or other club accomplishment that has been achieved through having members with diverse professional skills. Discuss your club's representation of professional field or classification, gender, age, ethnicity, and culture, and set goals.



Note: Each of the steps can take a week or longer. When planning your assessment, be sure to allow enough time.

## Step 2: Collect information

Recap the diversity discussion from step 1 and reiterate the positive effects of having a more diverse membership.

Distribute the Member Diversity Worksheet. Split club members into four groups and instruct each group that they are to gather information from one of the following sources on their own time between this meeting and the next, completing what they can of the worksheet:

- **Group 1:** Get data on the demographics of the community from a local business association, such as the chamber of commerce
- **Group 2:** Gather information about the community's cultural and demographic composition from the local tourism bureau
- **Group 3:** Get socioeconomic statistics from local economic development experts or city government departments
- **Group 4:** Get the most recent census results, which may include information on the age, gender, and ethnic makeup of the area's residents and review them

## Step 3: Discuss the findings within the groups

The following week, ask groups to meet to discuss their assignments, share what they completed on their worksheets, and compile their findings. Then have each group choose a spokesperson who will present its findings to the club at a future meeting.

## Step 4: Report the results and discuss their implications

Have each group spend about five minutes presenting its findings at a club meeting. Facilitate a discussion about the reports and their relevance.

Does your Rotary club's membership reflect:

- The ages of the professional population in the community?
- The gender composition of the working professionals in the community?
- The ethnic and cultural diversity of the community?

## Step 5: Develop a member diversity action plan

Find strategies to reach out to specific groups found to be under-represented in your club. Document your plan and assign tasks to those on the membership committee, or ask other club members to help. Monitor progress toward your diversity goals and continually update club members.

### Interested in doing other assessments?

[Representing Your Community's Professions: A Classification Assessment](#)

[Finding New Club Members: A Prospective Member Exercise](#)

[Improving Your Member Retention: Retention Assessment and Analysis](#)

[Enhancing the Club Experience: Member Satisfaction Survey](#)

[Understanding Why Members Leave: Exit Survey](#)



# MEMBER DIVERSITY WORKSHEET

1. What sources did you consult in your search for data on your community's demographic composition?
2. What data did you find on:  
Age:  
  
Gender:  
  
Ethnic background:
3. Do these data correspond to the current composition of working professionals in your community? Explain your evidence.
4. What fact or statistic did you find most interesting?
5. What surprised you most?
6. What surprised you least?
7. Are any demographic groups underrepresented in the club?
8. What can the club do to better represent working professionals in the community?
9. How can your findings be integrated into an action plan for membership development?

# REPRESENTING YOUR COMMUNITY'S PROFESSIONS



In Rotary, members' classifications refer to their occupations, professional expertise, and training. Rotary clubs aim to include members from a number of classifications because bringing together professionals from different fields and industries increases a club's capacity to serve its community as well as giving its members an opportunity to learn more about others in the community. To maximize your impact, strive for professional diversity that represents the professions held in your community. Because business activities and terminology vary from community to community, Rotary doesn't maintain a comprehensive list of classifications. Be open to nontraditional professions that bring new skills and perspectives to your club.

## OUTCOME

Conduct this classification assessment and act on its results to:

- **Grow and diversify your club's membership.**  
You will clearly see which professions are represented in your club and what skills and expertise it's missing. Each gap you identify presents an opportunity to target your recruitment efforts.
- **Make the best use of members' expertise and skills.**  
Your club's collective knowledge and talent can help it make a more significant impact in your community. Once you recognize the expertise and skills your members have acquired through their professions, you'll be better able to use them to the club's advantage. Recognizing members for their unique talents will yield a number of benefits, too. When members' professional skills are put to good use:
  - Retention rates are higher, because members feel useful and valued
  - Clubs are better equipped to conduct successful service projects
  - Members are motivated to excel
  - Members have more opportunities to grow professionally and network
  - Clubs are more attractive to prospective members

## GETTING ORGANIZED

To conduct a successful classification assessment, you'll need a dedicated group of members. It could be your membership committee, or you can organize a classification assessment team.

# GETTING STARTED

Ready to start? Here's how.

## Step 1: Gather member data

Have all club members complete the Occupation and Professional Expertise Survey on page 1.4. You can ask them to take it during a club meeting or turn it into an online survey that they can complete in their own time. Explain the purpose of the classification assessment and make sure that members understand the benefits of having a good mix of professions represented in your club.

## Step 2: Evaluate the data

Analyze the completed Occupation and Professional Expertise Surveys and fill in the Classification Audit on page 1.6 with the professions of your club's members.

## Step 3: Collect data on your community

Gather data about the professional makeup of your community. You can research local employment statistics online or ask your chamber of commerce or another local business association for information.

Next, fill in the Classification Audit table with the top five professions in your community, along with the percentage of community members in those professions.

## Step 4: Analyze the data

Use the results of the Classification Audit to determine which professions should be added to your club to achieve a balanced membership. Finally, answer questions on the Classification Worksheet on page 1.7.

## Step 5: Present the results

Present your results and recommended actions at a club meeting, including:

- How seeking members from underrepresented classifications can guide your efforts to identify potential members
- How the skills you've discovered among your current members can be used to strengthen your club and enhance service projects

Get member input on your recommended actions, gather consensus, and adjust your action plan accordingly.

## Step 6: Take action

The final step is to take action based on your results. Identify qualified prospective members according to the gaps you found in your club's classifications. Ask current members to fill club roles or apply their skills to service projects to maximize the club's impact.



Note: Each of the steps can take a week or longer. When planning your assessment, be sure to allow enough time. Steps 3 and 4 could take 1-2 weeks.

### Interested in other assessments?

[Diversifying Your Club: A Member Diversity Assessment](#)

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# OCCUPATION AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE SURVEY (FROM STEP 1)

1. What is your current profession? If retired, give your most recent profession.
  
2. Have you had other professions, or do you have other expertise that's not related to your current profession?
  
3. In what industry do you work? (For example, food industry, publishing, etc.)
  
4. Do you have experience or expertise in the following areas? If so, please briefly explain.
  - A. Leadership roles
  
  - B. Training / teaching
  
  - C. Mentoring
  
  - D. Website design or management
  
  - E. Social media (blogging, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)
  
  - F. Research or survey design
  
  - G. Fundraising
  
  - H. Public relations or marketing
  
  - I. Project management
  
  - J. Strategic planning
  
  - K. Other experience, expertise, or skills

# CLASSIFICATION AUDIT

Professions represented in the club	Number of members in that profession	Percentage of membership
1. _____	_____	%
2. _____	_____	%
3. _____	_____	%
4. _____	_____	%
5. _____	_____	%
6. _____	_____	%
7. _____	_____	%
8. _____	_____	%
9. _____	_____	%
10. _____	_____	%
11. _____	_____	%
12. _____	_____	%

Top professions in the community	Percentage of community (if available)
1. _____	%
2. _____	%
3. _____	%
4. _____	%
5. _____	%





# ACTION PLAN

Use your findings to create an action plan that addresses your club's professional diversity.

Action	Person responsible	Time frame	Resources needed