

STRATEGIES FOR MEMBER EDUCATION

For Rotary to remain viable into the next century, we must constantly recruit and develop new Rotarians who embrace the high standards of service and ethics that have characterized Rotary from the start. There are three essential stages in the recruitment and development of Rotarians:

1. **Consideration and Selection** of qualified men and women
2. **Orientation and Education** of new Rotarians
3. **Continuing Education** for current Rotarians

Primary responsibility for educating new members belongs at the club level. The district membership chair is also a vital resource for new member education. An effective orientation program must include the following key elements:

- *Benefits* of membership
- *Responsibilities* of membership, and
- *Opportunities* for service

Clubs should take advantage of as many different information mediums as possible, including traditional paper documents, along with floppy disks, online services including the World Wide Web and e-mail, and faxback capabilities.

The following pages describe specific recommendations and appropriate reference material for each stage of recruitment and development of Rotarians.

ORIENTATION AND EDUCATION

In order to provide the warm welcome essential for all new members, clubs are encouraged to develop programs such as STAR (Special Training for Action in Rotary). A general outline of this highly effective orientation program appears on page 5.

In addition, all new members should be given a checklist outlining the many opportunities for gaining knowledge about Rotary and becoming involved in club activities. A sample checklist, "Welcome to Rotary," can be found on the last page of this publication. The mentor should deliver the checklist to the new member within one week of induction and provide guidance on completing each step.

New member orientation should also include several opportunities for feedback on a wide range of issues, including the process and results of the orientation program itself. Effective feedback includes a mechanism for reporting comments to the club president, the governor's group representative, and the district governor as appropriate.

Consider periodic meetings between new members and the governor's group representative, along with new member forums (facilitated by the President's representative) at the district conference.

Consider scheduling the formal orientation programs in three sessions to enhance retention of information. Each session should cover one of three key areas:

- Rotary Policies and Procedures
- Opportunities for Service
- History and Traditions of Rotary International

If you are using the STAR program, these topics could be addressed in individual committee meetings.

Rotary Policies and Procedures

1. How to propose a new member
2. Make-ups
3. Club structure
4. Club meetings
 - regular meetings
 - committee meetings
 - club assemblies
 - board meetings
 - fellowship events
5. Attendance expectations
6. Finances (participation, contributions)
7. District structure

Resources

The following items should be reviewed with and given to the new member:

- *Getting Started in Rotary* (333)
- Club Membership Roster
- *How to Propose a New Member* (254)

Additional recommended resources to be included in the club library:

- *Standard Rotary Club Constitution* (012A)
- *Recommended Rotary Club Bylaws* (012B)

Opportunities for Service

(club, district and international)

1. Current club and district projects
2. RI programs
3. The Rotary Foundation programs
4. An inventory of interests. It is suggested that each new member consult with the mentor and choose a specific club committee in which he or she can become personally involved.

Resources

The following items should be reviewed with and given to the new member:

- *Opportunities for Service* (375)
- *You and Your Rotary Foundation* (171)
- District profile or fact sheet (including committee structure and projects)

Clubs are encouraged to find appropriate ways to involve the spouses of new members in orientation activities. New members should also be introduced to Rotarians who have been active in programs of mutual interest.

History and Traditions of Rotary International and the Local Club

1. Origin, growth and achievements of RI
2. Tradition of high ethical standards
3. History and achievements of local club
4. Spouse and family involvement

District governors should prepare and furnish to all clubs a district profile or fact sheet (including, but not limited to, the district committee structure and projects).

Resources

The following item should be reviewed with and given to the new member:

- *The ABCs of Rotary* (363)

Additional recommended resources to be available through the club library:

- *Rotary in an Hour* (512) audiotape
- *Introduction to Rotary* (449) videotape
- *Historical Review of Rotary* (334)
- *Rotary Basic Library* (990)

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Retaining good members is as critical to Rotary's long-term health as is the induction of new members. Your recruitment efforts will be more effective if your Club has a large number of experienced and informed Rotarians in its ranks.

Research has shown that a positive program of continuing education can help to increase a club's overall retention rate. Such a program would include some of the following components:

- Frequent communication of Rotary news and information
- At least four club programs a year focused on continuing education
- Attendance at multi-district meetings that address continuing education
- At least two informational club assemblies a year
- Personal involvement of Rotarians in club and district projects and activities, particularly those that require hands-on action
- District-level seminars on continuing education
- Stimulating and efficiently run weekly meetings that keep members interested in Rotary
- Promotion of fellowship and enjoyable activities within the club
- Sharing of ideas and information on Rotary programs, projects, and activities at regular committee and fireside meetings
- Attendance at meetings of other clubs

Resources

All clubs are urged to establish and maintain a club library of current RI materials. Following is a minimum suggested list of resources that should be available to all Rotarians through their club library:

- *Catalog* (019)
- *Introduction to Rotary* - (449)
14-minute videotape
- *Take a Look at Rotary* - (867)
6-minute videotape
- *Rotary in an Hour* - (512) audiotape
- *Rotary Basic Library* (990)
- *My Road to Rotary* (922)
- *Selections from My Road to Rotary* (923)
- *Manual of Procedure* (035)
- *Official Directory* (007)
- *The Rotary Foundation Handbook* (300)
- *Rotary Fact Park* (267), which includes the following:
 - Rotary Facts (PR-12)
 - Rotary Facts and Figures at a Glance (PR-18)
 - The Rotary Foundation (PR-13)
 - PolioPlus (PR-32)
 - Rotary History (PR-50)
 - Ambassadorial Scholars (PR-58)
 - Rotary and Peace (PR-66)

Other fact sheets are available by contacting the Public Information Department at the World Headquarters.

STAR (SPECIAL TRAINING FOR ACTION IN ROTARY)

The STAR Program was developed by the Rotary Club of El Paso, Texas, USA, in 1976. It has proven to be a very effective tool for creating a better informed membership and preparing members for club leadership positions. Clubs are encouraged to adopt similar programs to promote a more involved and knowledgeable membership.

Because there is a complete annual turnover of new members, the program can be repeated every year. In addition to serving as a vehicle for Rotary information, the STAR breakfasts help new members get acquainted with each other and at least a few of the club's more experienced Rotarians. The friendly and informal atmosphere created by small group meetings leads to more questions and good discussions. In a large club, this can be a very helpful tool for promoting fellowship.

The following STAR guidelines can be adapted for use by your club:

- Each new member is placed on the STAR Committee and requested to complete a questionnaire and provide a photo. The new member's biographical sketch is then presented in the club's weekly bulletin. New members are distinguished by a red star pasted on their Rotary badge with a red ribbon attached, and experienced members are requested to sit with them at club meeting and become acquainted.
- Within two weeks of joining Rotary, all STAR members are visited personally in their place of business by the chairperson and/or co-chairperson of the STAR Committee.
- Hour-long STAR breakfast meetings are held once a month except in December. All new members are expected to attend these meetings for one year. No attendance credit for a club meeting is granted as it is a committee meeting.
- The STAR Committee is made up of the chairperson (usually a past district governor or past president), co-chairperson (the immediate past president of the club), and three or four other members who are past presidents, the president-elect, and a few continuing STAR members, if they request to stay.
- ALL club members are invited to attend at any time to update themselves on Rotary information and to meet the new members. In addition, members of any other clubs in the city or district are welcome to attend.
- Typical programs feature a welcome to first-time attendees; recognition of new STAR graduates; announcements of upcoming club and district activity and events; and the meeting program followed by questions and answers. Program topics include each of the four Avenues of Service; attendance; club history; The Rotary Foundation, and the programs of Rotary International. Programs are presented by directors or the committee chairperson responsible for the topic being covered.

- The new members of the STAR Committee are given the responsibility of organizing the “Holiday Luncheon” in December.
- Make-up meetings are held once a month immediately after the regular Rotary Luncheon.
- The STAR Committee chairperson publishes a monthly report in the weekly club bulletin.