



Your Club Leadership Plan

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

FIRST: The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

SECOND: High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

THIRD: The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;

FOURTH: The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

Avenues of Service

Club Service
Vocational Service
Community Service
International Service
New Generations Service

Your Rotary Club

What is your club like? Is it fun and energetic? Does it stand out and make you proud? Does it have its own identity? Is it known for a signature activity? Are its members diverse? open to new ideas? involved? When you think about your club, is it everything you want it to be? This guide provides best practices of successful Rotary clubs that can help your club become a more vibrant one.

Rotary's History of Service

The Object of Rotary and the Avenues of Service capture the spirit of service that has long defined Rotary. Today, Rotary clubs carry on the tradition of service by meeting the needs of their members and community and by staying relevant, flexible, and innovative for their members and community — each club in its own way. The tradition of service can take many forms. How will your club continue this tradition? Will your club take advantage of its autonomy to reach its fullest potential?

This is the 2010 edition of *Be a Vibrant Club: Your Club Leadership Plan* (245-EN; formerly titled *Club Leadership Plan*).

If you have questions or comments, submit them to:

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Best Practices

Strong clubs foster innovation and flexibility. This collection of best practices is intended to strengthen clubs — the first priority of the RI Strategic Plan — by motivating members to implement new ideas to increase the vitality of the club. Consider these as tips that can be tailored to make your club stronger.

These best practices include:

- Developing long-range goals that address the elements of an effective club
- Setting annual goals that support long-range goals
- Keeping all members involved and informed
- Communicating effectively with club members and district leaders
- Ensuring continuity in leadership from year to year
- Customizing the bylaws to reflect club operations
- Providing regular fellowship opportunities
- Actively involving all club members
- Offering regular, consistent training
- Assigning committees that support your club's operational needs, including: administration, membership, public relations, service projects, and The Rotary Foundation

Has your club evaluated its traditions and practices lately to determine whether they are contributing to your club's vitality?

Your club procedures may already incorporate these practices. As you read through the best practices in this guide, focus on ones your club could implement or improve.

Getting Started

Use this guide to evaluate your club's current practices and implement some of the recommended best practices to increase member involvement, community awareness, and club effectiveness. Assessing your club and considering new ways of running it is no easy task, but it is well worth the time and effort of every member. Consider having a daylong retreat or a series of meetings six months before the start of the new Rotary year to discuss how your club will implement these best practices. Consider holding these meetings in a new location to foster member creativity and give all members a chance to voice their opinions. Involving all members illustrates that the club is the responsibility of all members and demonstrates the goal to have a club of leaders who are committed to service and the club's future. Club members will be invigorated and committed to making your club outstanding.

Going forward, review these practices with your members annually to ensure they continue to meet the club's goals and reflect the club's identity. Ask district leaders, particularly your assistant governor, for help as you implement and review your practices as needed throughout the year.

The *Strategic Planning Guide* can help your club start a plan to becoming stronger, more effective, and more vibrant.

As you read through each best practice, you will see the following icons:



Questions to consider



Ideas to try



Resources on
www.rotary.org

Develop long-range goals that address the elements of an effective club.

All members of the club should be involved in setting long-range goals. These goals should cover the next three to five Rotary years and address the elements of an effective club: membership, service projects, The Rotary Foundation, and leadership development. They should also include strategies that build room for flexibility and innovation and plans for promoting your club's successes in each element. As your club evolves, these goals should be updated.



Devote a month of club meetings to developing a strategic plan using the *Strategic Planning Guide*. Spend the first meeting analyzing your club's strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities and risks from your community; the second on your vision statement; the third on your major goals; and the fourth on your action plan.

Schedule a club retreat to review the current strategic plan to evaluate and update our goals.



What is our club's vision statement?

How can our club's strategic plan be improved?

Which members are involved in managing long-range goals?



Strategic Planning Guide

Use the *Planning Guide for Effective Rotary Clubs* to set annual goals that align with your club's long-range goals.

Annual goals help you reach your long-range goals over time. The planning guide helps you assess the current state of your club and set annual goals. These goals move the club toward your long-range goals that capitalize on your strengths and address areas of weakness. The guide should function as a working document that can be updated as needed.



Ask club committees to propose annual goals.

Conduct a community needs assessment before setting annual goals.



Planning Guide for Effective Rotary Clubs
(relevant sections can be found in the following manuals)

Club President's Manual

Club Secretary's Manual

Club Treasurer's Manual

Club Administration, Membership, Public Relations, Service Projects, Rotary Foundation Committee Manuals



How do we determine our annual goals?

How do we involve all members?

How often do our club leaders review the planning guide?

Conduct club assemblies that involve members in the planning process and keep them informed of Rotary activities.

Club assemblies help all club members stay current and feel included in club activities. Many clubs use assemblies as an opportunity for all members to discuss decisions that affect the club and for committees to report on their activities.



How will our assemblies solicit input from club members?

What topics will our club address in this year's assemblies?

Who from the district can we invite to our assemblies?

How often will we hold assemblies?



Hold assemblies during regular club meetings.

Hold a quarterly assembly for soliciting innovative ideas from all members.



Club meeting and assembly information

(www.rotary.org → Members → Running a club → Administration → Rotary club meetings)

Ensure clear communication between club leaders, club members, and district leaders.

Club leaders should work together to develop a plan for communicating with each other, club members, and district leaders. In your communication plan, outline who will communicate with whom, what method will be used, and when.



Who is responsible for informing members and district leaders of our club's activities?

How do we share information?

Which social networking sites do we use?

What information do we go to our district website for?



Include a 10-minute open forum at the end of a club meeting once a month during which club members are encouraged to present new ideas or a topic for discussion.

Update your club website on a weekly or monthly basis. Share this responsibility with a group of members or all members, based on their role.

For members who are not regular Internet users, partner them with someone in the club who can help them navigate the club website and social networking sites, or provide printouts as appropriate.



Best Web Design Practices

(www.rotary.org /graphics → Best Web design practices)

Provide for continuity in leadership to ensure development of future leaders.

Because Rotary club leadership changes annually, every club needs a continual supply of potential leaders; those leaders must work together from year to year. There are many ways to achieve continuity, including making appointments for multiple years; having a current, incoming, and past chair on all committees; and having the current club president work closely with the president-elect, president-nominee, and immediate past president.



How do we ensure that we

have enough candidates to assume new club positions this year?

How does our club coordinate the management of projects that last more than one year?

What position should someone hold before becoming president?



Distribute a list of

offices with descriptions of responsibilities to all members.

Conduct “on the job training” for incoming club officers at least one month before taking office.

Organize a leadership development program to prepare interested members for leadership roles.

Assign new members a mentor who is a past president or current club officer.



Leadership Development: Your

Guide to Starting a Program

Club President's Manual

Club Secretary's Manual

Club Treasurer's Manual

Club Administration, Membership, Public Relations, Service Projects, Rotary Foundation Committee Manuals

Amend club bylaws to reflect the club committee structure and roles and responsibilities of club leaders.

Modify the Recommended Rotary Club Bylaws from RI to reflect your club's operations. Your club's bylaws provide guidelines for managing the club. The Recommended Rotary Club Bylaws are intended to be flexible to meet the individual needs of each club. Take and adapt them to meet your club's unique identity. Over time, as your club's practices evolve, revisit your bylaws and revise them to reflect new practices and procedures.



Which club operations have changed in the last year?

Are there any procedural changes we'd like to “test run”?

When was the last time we reviewed or amended our club bylaws?

Are our club bylaws easily accessible for club members?



Ask members to review your bylaws and offer suggested changes at a scheduled club meeting.

Consider running club board-approved pilot tests of new club procedures to see if they work before amending your bylaws.



Recommended Rotary Club Bylaws

Standard Rotary Club Constitution

Provide opportunities to develop stronger relationships among fellow club members.

Members who enjoy Rotary will feel more involved. Strong club relationships will also support your club's service efforts.



Do our weekly club meetings include time for networking and social interaction?

Do our club activities include family members?

How is our club using district or Rotary International events and groups to enhance relationships?



Hold monthly social events to help club members get to know each other in a different setting.

Conduct annual surveys to find out what kinds of social events members would like to attend and days of the week and times that are convenient.

Designate one club meeting every month or quarter for networking with other members to learn more about each other's profession.

Make your service projects fun to further develop relationships among members.



Rotary Fellowships Handbook

Convention registration at
www.rotary.org/convention

Ensure that every member is active in a club project or function.

Club involvement teaches members about Rotary and helps retain them as active members of the club. Active members feel ownership of and dedication to their club's projects.



In what ways does our club get members involved in club projects?

How often do we ask members what they want from the club or what they like and what they would like to change?

How do we ensure that all members voice their opinions?

Are our club's projects diverse?



Ask members to help in an area that interests them rather than waiting for them to volunteer.

Conduct a member interest survey, and use the results to plan projects and activities and to develop weekly programs.

Have your weekly meeting be a service project rather than a presentation.



Communities in Action

Club Assessment Tools

ProjectLINK (www.rotary.org/projectlink)



What is our club's process for orienting new members?

How many of our club members are involved at the district level?

How does our club develop the leadership skills of our members?

Develop a comprehensive training plan.

Training is crucial for developing future leaders and ensuring that current club officers are well informed about Rotary, capable of leading the club, and providing better Rotary service. A comprehensive training plan ensures that these areas are addressed:

- Club leaders attend district training meetings.
- Orientation for new members is provided consistently and regularly.
- Ongoing educational opportunities are available for current members.
- A leadership skills development program is available for all members.



Appoint a club trainer or training committee to oversee the training plan for your club.

Conduct a leadership skills assessment to see what skills your members would like to learn.



New Members information (www.rotary.org → Members → New members)

Training information (www.rotary.org → Members → Training)

New Member Orientation

Leadership Development: Your Guide to Starting a Program

Leadership Development Training Cycle

Assign committees that support your club's needs.

These committees include:

- Club administration
- Membership
- Public relations
- Service projects
- The Rotary Foundation

Appoint other committees as needed to support club goals. Whichever structure you choose, a committee should serve an advisory role that encourages member involvement and club action.



What committees does our club have?

How can we improve our current club structure?

How do our committees coordinate their work?



Small clubs: Consider how you can combine the work of committees.

Large clubs: Consider having additional committees to get all members involved and maximize your service potential. Have a committee to plan each service project or for your club's signature activity.

Consider a completely new committee structure for your club.



Club Committee Structure

(www.rotary.org → Members → Running a club → Administration → Rotary club committees)

Club Administration, Membership, Public Relations, Service Projects, Rotary Foundation Committee Manuals