

Membership Development Minutes

1. Fellow Rotarians:

The success of Rotary, as a service organization has been established by our predecessors. The lives of millions of people across the planet have been changed for the better due to our efforts. Still the continued success of our enterprise is in our hands because only by recruiting new members, will Rotary clubs be able to continue to provide scholarships, projects for clean water, and helping people old and young. It is therefore incumbent upon each of us to bring prospective members as guests to our meetings. In our travels this week, let each of us pay special attention to identifying people who would make great Rotarians and invite them to visit our club.

As Rotarians, one of our jobs, perhaps the most important job, is to help recruit new members. New members keep our club interesting and enthusiastic. They could help us carry on the work which we have established to help our community. In addition, they provide additional eyes to help us identify compelling community needs. New members mean new friends and greater enjoyment for all. Accordingly, let us, this week, seek out and find those first rate people who are busy and successful and invite them to a meeting of our Rotary Club. In this way, our club will be able to continue to serve our local and world communities.

Each week, in our membership development minute, we are asked to invite prospective members to our meetings. But who shall we ask? Everyone seems so busy and unavailable to join our club. First, let us consider people from occupations we do not have represented in our club. At the present time, we do not have any **(fill in three occupations not represented in your club)**. Let us make an effort this week to identify people from these professions so that we can truly say that we are trying to have a club that includes at least one person from each worthy occupation in our community.

Why is membership growth important for Rotary?

- Membership growth increases Rotary's capacity for service.
- New Rotarians bring fresh ideas, new interests, and increased energy to clubs.
- More members increase the volume of support for The Rotary Foundation.
- Diversity in membership ensures that the club is relevant to the entire community.
- Service-minded individuals are given the opportunity to help their communities through Rotary.
- More members create a larger network for both local and international fellowship.
- New and younger members ensure the future of Rotary and its work.

So, in our travels this week, let each of us make an extra effort to invite a prospective member to visit our club.

As active and eagerly participating Rotarians, each of us wants to help in the Membership recruitment efforts of our club. But who should we ask? Everyone seems to be so busy. In our daily lives, business or professions, in our churches and synagogues, in our avocations, our own friends and relatives, there are people who should be Rotarians. Of all these people that we encounter every day, let us select one to invite to visit our next meeting of the Rotary. Next week and every week, let's have a number of prospective Rotarians present. It is our hope that each member who is listening to this message today will make a real effort to bring a prospective member as a guest next week.

While we regularly meet with qualified people who would be great Rotarians, , some of them don't live or work in our community or anywhere near our community. That should not stop us from inviting them to visit a club that is convenient for them. It is so easy to do that. Just visit the website www.rotary.org and click on how to join and enter their information. Someone will contact them. If the person is in our district, you can do the same at our district website www.rotary7450.org. How does that help our Rotary club, you may ask? That's easy...what "goes around, comes around." If there is increased cooperation, our club will benefit.

Wow, we are reading all of these Membership development minutes. Shouldn't we be considering quality and not quantity? Actually we are looking for quality *and* quantity. People should be qualified as Rotarians. They should be business owners, managers, executives, professionals or community leaders. They should be able to share time, talent and treasure. That is who we should be looking for. We also need quantity. Without a sufficient number of new members, our club cannot thrive and properly serve our local and world communities. So this year, let us endeavor to invite and recruit prospective members every week who will help our club serve.

Of all the challenges involving Membership recruitment at a Rotary Club, the most difficult one is who to ask? People used to say, invite people who look like you. There is nothing wrong with that. If you are an active contributing Rotarian, we sure could use another “you.” However it is also important to invite people who don’t look or sound at all like you. Rotary is an International service organization. Rotarians come in both genders, every nationality, religious persuasion, race creed and sexual orientation. We are an all star team of every group. That is how we are so effective. This week, when you are on your way, be sure to pay special attention to people are not like you and invite them to visit our club next week.

While we have often asked to bring prospective members to our meetings, when was the last time we asked you to bring a prospective member to help with one of our service projects? Service projects are an excellent time to invite someone. In addition to the extra pair of hands, good people will appreciate knowing that the Rotary club is so much more than a meal club. Try to think of every Rotary Club activity as an opportunity to invite a prospective member. So for our next service project, please be sure to bring a prospective member with you.

We are all needed to invite a prospective member to the Rotary Club. Sometimes we just need an idea to get us to do so. Why not allow your next week’s program to give you an idea to think of someone to invite. For example, if the club is hosting the GSE team from the Phillipines, you could use that as an opportunity to invite someone from the Phillipines. If a person is into healthy living, a speaker on nutrition or exercise would be a great opportunity to invite them. If a person has students at a particular school, if you are having an Interact program from that school, that is a good opportunity to invite them. Many clubs invite candidates of both parties to different meetings. That is a good opportunity to invite your friends who are interested in politics. Whatever inspires you to invite a prospective member to a meeting, it is important that you do so.

Recruiting members is not hard to do if you are open to new ideas about it. Sometimes people are trying to get more involved in the community. When new members of the Chamber of Commerce come to a business card exchange, they are trying to get involved in the community and may be open to visiting the Rotary club. Similarly, announcements of new businesses or professional practices are a great opportunity to visit and invite them to our club. People who tell you they are trying to get more business by advertising are also excellent prospects. Keep an eye out for new neighbors or new members of your Church or synagogue. If all members keep their eyes open and regularly invite guests, we would never have a membership problem.

Today I have good news and bad news about our membership recruitment efforts. The good news is that the people in this room know lots of people who are qualified and would make great members. The bad news is that we haven't invited them yet. If you did an internet search for membership recruitment ideas for Rotary clubs, you would find dozens of ideas on lots of websites and web logs. Despite all that, the very best way to recruit a member for the club is when a current member invites someone that they know. Our projects and our community will be significantly improved if our Rotary Club recruits a number of new members. Be a part of that solution by bringing a guest to our meeting next week.