

Vocational Service



5 AVENUES *of* SERVICE

RIBI Guide

For Club Vocational Service Committee Chairman

Rotary
Great Britain & Ireland



Our skills

The skills we all bring to Rotary are critical and pivotal to our success. Our skill sets are unique, both to individual Rotarians and to Rotary as a whole, and they don't just depend upon our professional backgrounds. We have developed skills through our hobbies and interests, our other community commitments, our general life experiences, and our time in Rotary:

- We use our skills to develop (ethical) projects and we share those skills with our fellow Rotarians

This is what makes Rotary different – this is our unique selling point (USP).

This is Vocational Service, and providing Vocational Service means that the other Avenues of Service can exist – the trunk feeds the branches and the branches bear the fruit, ie projects.

Our skills and how we apply them are our greatest asset, and the roots of this organisation have been strengthened by a plethora of diverse and expert skills. But we are not making the most of this asset.

- We are not fully utilising the skills of our fellow members
- We are not drawing on the skills that new members bring to Rotary
- We are not going outside Rotary to pull in additional skills that will improve/enhance what we do
- We are not encouraging fellow members to develop new skills

When we do, we are giving vocational service

Applying our skills

So, how can we give great vocational service? Here's an example:

Your Club meets in a very tired community centre, seriously in need of a major overhaul. Not only do you not want to meet there any more, but its condition has precluded the pre-school group from meeting there – Ofsted condemned it.

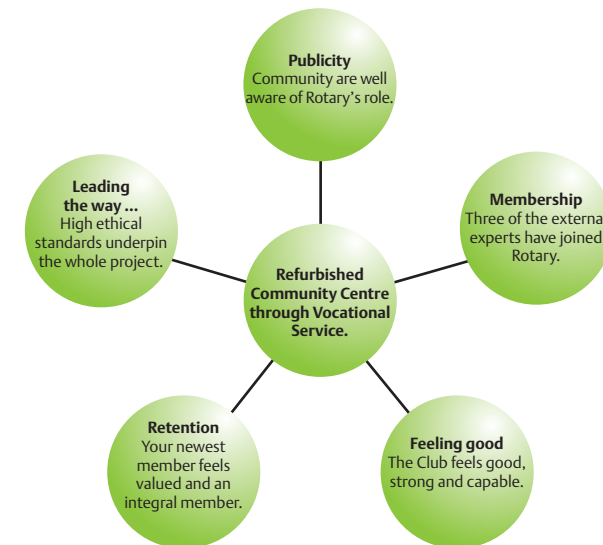
You pool the skills you have amongst your membership: quantity surveying, building contracting, electrical, financial, procurement, hotel management, civil engineering, project management, public relations, negotiation and carpentry. You don't discover these skills just by looking at your list of classifications – you find out by asking members what they can do!

You put together a workable project plan that will comply with Ofsted regulations, for a budget of £210,000 (less than 50% of the original estimate made by the County Council). This budget is kept low because some of the crucial skills have been volunteered by your members, eg architecture, project management, contract management and labouring. You then discover that your newest member has public sector funding experience, so you put him to work. By virtue of this expertise, your project group's skills and experience, and Rotary's general standing in the community you persuade the Council to provide funding of £230,000. No digging into your own pockets and no tin rattling.

You discover you are missing certain skills that, if volunteered, would keep the costs down even further, so you go out to your members' network and bring in two or three other specialists who are happy to contribute their free time.

When you complete the project, under budget, and on time, there is a grand opening with lots of publicity. The pre-school group has a healthy and safe home, the community has a very usable centre and you have a very pleasant meeting venue.

What's the spin off?



This a real example of what one Rotary Club has achieved.



The Rotary Wreckers of Fordingbridge take a break from their work on the community centre

More vocational service means ... better projects

By fully utilising our skills we can develop larger, more innovative and more sustainable projects, that are clearly identifiable as Rotary projects. We don't have to rely on raising funds for other organisations and watch them take the credit. Like a force multiplier, our skills add value to projects, at little or no cost. Lack of exciting and interesting projects is one of the three main reasons why members leave Rotary.

which enables better Publicity ...

The practical involvement of club members in projects provides a wider opportunity for media interest. For example, action photographs and comments from beneficiaries are much more powerful than cheque presentations.

and promotes Membership ...

- Non-Rotarians, drawn into our projects because we need their skills are already Rotary volunteers and potential new members
- More attractive publicity will attract more potential members
- Encouraging someone to join Rotary because we value and need their skills is a powerful persuader
- Encouraging someone to join Rotary because we are happy to pass on our skills to others is also a powerful persuader

and supports Retention

Being involved keeps us all more interested in what we are doing. And being valued for our input into the success of a project makes us more determined to make the project a success. Experiencing "Rotary" rather than watching from the sidelines is what makes us Rotarians and keeps us in Rotary.

and better personal development ...

Using our skills to develop those of other Rotarians, particularly new members, in areas such as leadership, project management, chairing meetings and committees, giving presentations, public speaking and using social media, whilst giving everyone the opportunity to apply these skills also ...

supports Retention ... we gain more skills

encourages Membership ... we follow through on our offer to potential members that they will develop and enhance professional skills

strengthens Clubs ... enhanced skills increase the confidence to take on more responsibility

What could you do?

- Find out what skills exist amongst your membership, particularly amongst any new members
- Consider projects that make full use of these skills.
- Look at where there might be gaps and bring in some external skills to support your project

Here are some other proven projects:

- Careers information for young people
- Teaching prison inmates
- Adult literacy
- Running seminars on business ethics
- Employment/careers advice for the unemployed

Aspects of Rotary that affect our vocational service

High ethical standards are at the centre of Rotary. In a world in which it is sometimes difficult to establish who sets the standards for ethics in business and society, Rotary has well established standards:

The Four-way Test

1. Is it the **TRUTH**?
2. Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
3. Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
4. Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

The Object of Rotary

To encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

1. The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;
2. 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;
3. The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;
4. The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

Rotary Code of Conduct

As a Rotarian I will:

1. Exemplify the core value of integrity in all behaviours and activities.
2. Use my vocational experience and talents to serve in Rotary.
3. Conduct all of my personal, business, and professional affairs ethically, encouraging and fostering high ethical standards as an example to others.
4. Be fair in all dealings with others and treat them with the respect due to them as fellow human beings.
5. Promote recognition and respect for all occupations which are useful to society.
6. Offer my vocational talents: to provide opportunities for young people, to work for the relief of the special needs of others, and to improve the quality of life in my community.
7. Honour the trust that Rotary and fellow Rotarians provide and not do anything that will bring disfavour or reflect adversely on Rotary or fellow Rotarians.
8. Not seek from a fellow Rotarian a privilege or advantage not normally accorded others in a business or professional relationship.

Responsibilities of the club Vocational Service Chairman or Officer

Below are some examples that the activities that might be undertaken by the club member who is responsible for the promotion of Vocational Service (applying our skills):

1. To develop and maintain a list of members' skills and experience.
2. To encourage members to apply their skills to the development of projects.
3. To work with other committee chairmen and officers to ensure that the application of members' skills is an integral part of all projects.
4. To ensure that potential new members have an appreciation of the value that Rotary puts on the application of their skills to benefit others, and what skills they might bring to Rotary.
5. To ensure that potential new members have an appreciation of the ethical standards that Rotary strives to maintain.
6. To ensure that the induction of new members includes a discussion about the new member's skills and how they might be applied for the development and innovation of club projects.
7. To ensure that all Rotarians have an opportunity to develop and improve their skills by leading on all issues of training and development within the club.
8. To attend District Assembly, District Council and relevant Group or District seminars.
9. To maintain good contact with your District Vocational Chairman or Officer, invite him/her to talk to the club, and make him/her aware of any ideas and initiatives that the club are pursuing.
10. Coordinate the club's entry for the RIBI Len Smith Vocational Service Cup.
11. Each October observe Vocational Service month.

Useful links

RI Website www.rotary.org/ridocuments/en_pdf/255en.pdf
RIBI Committee www.ribi.org/committees/vocational-service



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