



A Joint Project of over 400 Rotary Districts worldwide

2025-27

FACULTY—PART I

About Your RLI Program. The Rotary Leadership Institute (RLI) is a multi-district, grassroots leadership development program of member districts organized into regional divisions throughout the world. It was recommended by the R.I. Board of Directors and strongly endorsed by the Council on Legislation at three of their triennial meetings. RLI conducts a series of quality leadership development courses for potential club officers and all other club members, including those who have recently joined a Rotary Club. The courses emphasize both leadership skills and knowledge of Rotary around the world. All course sessions are completely interactive. RLI believes that leadership education has a positive impact on membership retention by creating enthusiasm and furthering engagement for Rotary. For more information on RLI, see our web site at www.rotaryleadershipinstitute.org

The RLI Recommended Curriculum. RLI recommends a curriculum and provides outlines and faculty materials to all its divisions. The curriculum has been continually revised and upgraded over the years. Because of the growth of RLI, it is expected that major revisions will be recommended every four years in order to give divisions a sufficient opportunity to orient their faculty members and to provide translations where necessary. Important changes in Rotary are provided annually to all divisions. All curriculum materials and available translations are posted on the RLI materials web site at www.rotaryleadershipinstitute.org

The RLI Curriculum Committee. RLI has assembled an international committee of professional curriculum writers to review our material. The material is also reviewed by volunteers from Divisions around the world and then translated. We welcome volunteers for any of these committees! Please contact newsletter@rotaryleadershipinstitute.org

2025-2027 RLI Curriculum Committee

The Rotary Leadership Institute (RLI) is a multi-district leadership and Rotary development program using discussion-based facilitation in small groups to engage Rotarians and strengthen clubs.

RLI is a recommended program of Rotary International, but is not an official program of Rotary International.

Our Mission: The Rotary Leadership Institute is a grassroots, multi-district leadership development program whose mission is to strengthen Rotary clubs through quality leadership education.

COURSE MATERIALS



MY LEADERSHIP IN ROTARY

4

As a Rotarian, I am, by definition, a leader. Join us as we explore the characteristics of leadership, motivational techniques, and leadership styles. How do I best lead?



MY ROTARY WORLD

8

As a Rotarian, I am part of a worldwide organization of like-minded people. Take some time to truly understand the purpose and structure of Rotary. Can these resources help me?



ETHICS AND VOCATIONAL SERVICE

15

I am ethical, recognize and promote ethics in others, and seek opportunities to serve through my vocation. You can see that I am a Rotarian.



FOUNDATION 1 – OUR FOUNDATION

20

I am “doing good” in my local community and around the world. Learn about the basic goals and programs of our Foundation. I am a force for good in the world!



ENGAGING MEMBERS

26

I make my club and Rotary stronger by my active participation. Engaged club members have fun, make friends, and effectively serve. This is why I joined Rotary!



CREATING SERVICE PROJECTS

37

I am a vital part of a worldwide service organization of business, professional and community leaders meeting needs in communities. I can build, run and promote service.

COURSE EVALUATION

My Leadership in Rotary



As a Rotarian, I am, by definition, a leader.

Good leadership requires thought, planning, preparation, responsibility, and a willingness to try something new, not being bound by the past, and the confidence to take risks.

RLI believes that while there are certain innate qualities a person brings to leadership, that leadership can be taught in the sense that a person can improve their leadership skills.

Session Goals:

Explore the Characteristics of Leadership

Review Leadership Styles

Examine how your leadership style relates to other leaders in your club and to the needs of your Rotary Club

Resources (downloadable from our website or use the links)

- The Basics for Effective Leadership Are Really Pretty Basic PDF
- 12 Leadership Essentials for the 21st Century PDF
- How to be an Effective Leader (Master Class)
[How to Be an Effective Leader: 8 Styles of Leadership - 2023 - MasterClass](#)
- Situational Leadership Model (Hersey & Blanchard)
<https://www.toolshero.com/leadership/situational-leadership-hersey-blanchard/>

All PDF materials are available at www.rotaryleadershipinstitute.org

Session Prep

The activities in this session work best with a whiteboard or a flip chart and post-it notes so you can reorganize them easily. (If you don't have a whiteboard or post-it notes, just record the characteristics clearly on the flip chart.) Read through the Leadership styles in advance to ensure you understand each style and can handle the discussion on each one. Do not show favoritism for one style over another – all styles are valid. We are focusing on only these 5 styles, there are other styles outside the scope of this session. Encourage participants to continue to learn outside of this session.

Review the session goals with the participants at the start of your session.

Session Activities

1. What are the characteristics of good leadership?
Collect input from everyone, record on a flip chart. Post it notes work even better!
2. Which are the most important?
Allow participants to prioritize. If using Post it notes, move them physically.
3. Which are the most important for business?
4. Which are the most important for Rotary or a volunteer organization?
5. Why are they different?
6. If all Rotarians are leaders, does our personal leadership matter?

Transition: Let's take a minute to think about our personal styles. Here are 5 general styles we have probably all come across:

Participative: seeks to involve other people

Situational: changes leadership style according to situational factors

Transactional: works through hierarchical structures and systems of reward

Transformational: leads through inspiration, sharing energy and enthusiasm

Servant: serves others rather than being served.

Take a moment to discuss each of these leadership styles. Ensure you get feedback from the participants on each style. Make sure everyone understands. Most important – there are no “wrong” styles on this list!

1. Which one(s) are you most comfortable with?
2. Which ones are most important to leadership in Rotary?
3. Should you use the same style all the time? Why? (Or why not?)
4. Which ones are most visible in your club?
5. Think about a successful President in your club (without identifying that person) and tell us how their success is related to their leadership style.
6. Which type of leadership do you think would be most successful in your club?
7. How can you apply this information in your club or to yourself?

Summary:

- Leadership is a learned skill and a personal choice.
- Leadership requires thought, planning, preparation, and a willingness to try something new.
- Leading volunteers can be different than leading employees.

In Part II under team building, we will develop further qualities and characteristics of volunteer leadership.

Additional Leadership Resources

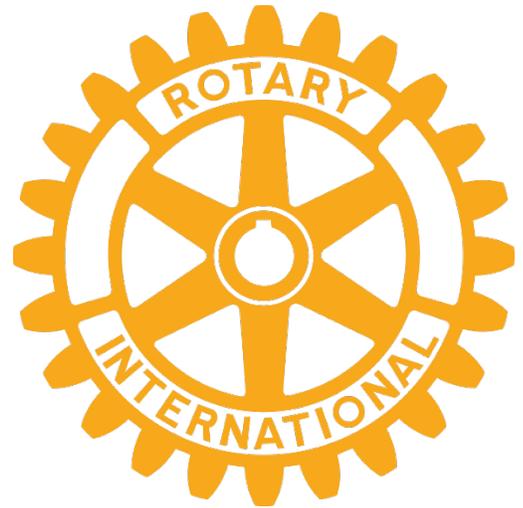
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/sallypercy/2022/06/27/leave-your-ego-at-the-door--what-nordic-leaders-can-teach-us/?sh=58ca187f9ba5>

<https://www.norden.org/en/news/nordic-leadership-what-makes-it-so-special>

<https://www.cec-managers.org/scandinavian-leadership/>

My Rotary World

I am a vital part of a worldwide organization of like-minded people.



Session Goals:

Review the purpose of Rotary.
Learn about Rotary's organizational structure.
Understand the Vision and Strategic Priorities.

Resources (use the links)

- RI Action Plan
<https://my.rotary.org/en/learning-reference/about-rotary/action-plan>
<https://my.rotary.org/document/action-plan-flyer>
- The Object of Rotary Connect for Good
<https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/document/576>
- Rotary Basics
<https://my.rotary.org/en/document/rotary-basics>
- Rotary Governance Documents <https://my.rotary.org/en/learning-reference/about-rotary/governance-documents>
- Rotary Global History Fellowship (RGHF)
<https://rghf.org/>

All PDF materials are available at www.rotaryleadershipinstitute.org

Session Prep

Have a flip chart or whiteboard available. During the True or False session, be careful to maintain each participant's dignity. When someone guesses wrong, simply ask, "Who agrees?" Then redirect to a person with a different opinion. Ensure you understand the roles of the District, Zone, and RI completely!

Session Activities

8. Why did you join Rotary?

Attain a good cross-section of answers

9. What does Rotary believe in? (core values & Object of Rotary)

10. How does this connect with why you joined Rotary?

Compare how their goals match Rotary's goals

Transition: It sounds like we all want the same thing! Let's take a look at how Rotary is structured and how it works.

1. How is Rotary structured? *Refer to the Organizational Structure handout. Be sure they realize that the club and members are the heart of Rotary. Note that the Rotary Foundation is separate from RI!*
2. Why does Rotary have this structure? *To provide assistance to the clubs & members.*
3. How can these people help you and your club? *Review the Help at Every Level handout and the duties of the positions in relation to the clubs.*
4. How does the Rotary Foundation support the core values of RI?

Introduce the True / False game. Use a flip chart to record "duties" at each level. Be prepared to lead discussion after each question.

True or False!

1. My club is autonomous. MOSTLY TRUE
What does your club have to do to remain a club? (*pay dues and allow the district Governor to speak*)
What is the purpose of a club? What does it do?
2. My dues are used only for the benefit of my club. FALSE
Where does your money go? (*District & RI*) *Some clubs add club dues to the invoice – that money stays with the club.*
3. I am a Rotarian. I belong to Rotary International. FALSE (*the club belongs to Rotary International. The member belongs to the club.*)
4. The District exists to provide support for our club. TRUE
What does the district do for the clubs?
5. The Assistant Governor that visits our club is next in line to be the District Governor. MAYBE (*some AGs do become DGs*)
What is the role of the AG?
6. I can access information about my District online. MAYBE
Does your district have a website? Does your zone?
7. I am just a member. There isn't much on the RI website that is of value to me. FALSE
Who has been to the website?
What did you find there? (*training in the Learning Center, reports*)
8. Zone tells the district what to do. FALSE
What does Zone do? (*support districts with resources*)
RI uses Zones to organize elections of Directors and RI officers
9. Rotary International tells the district what to do. MOSTLY FALSE
What does RI do? (*provides guidance & resources*)
10. When we are finished with this session. I will know everything about Rotary! PROBABLY FALSE

Transition: Ok, if we don't know everything now. Where can we find the answers we want?

Review websites starting with www.rotary.org include district websites, club websites, databases (clubrunner, dacdb, etc.), and RLI websites.

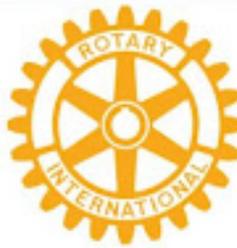
Wrap up the session by asking how they could use this information in their clubs.

Summary:

- The structure of Rotary serves the clubs and Rotarians.
- The Object of Rotary gives us all purpose.
- Support is available from all levels of Rotary.

ROTARY

Rotary



Object of Rotary

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:

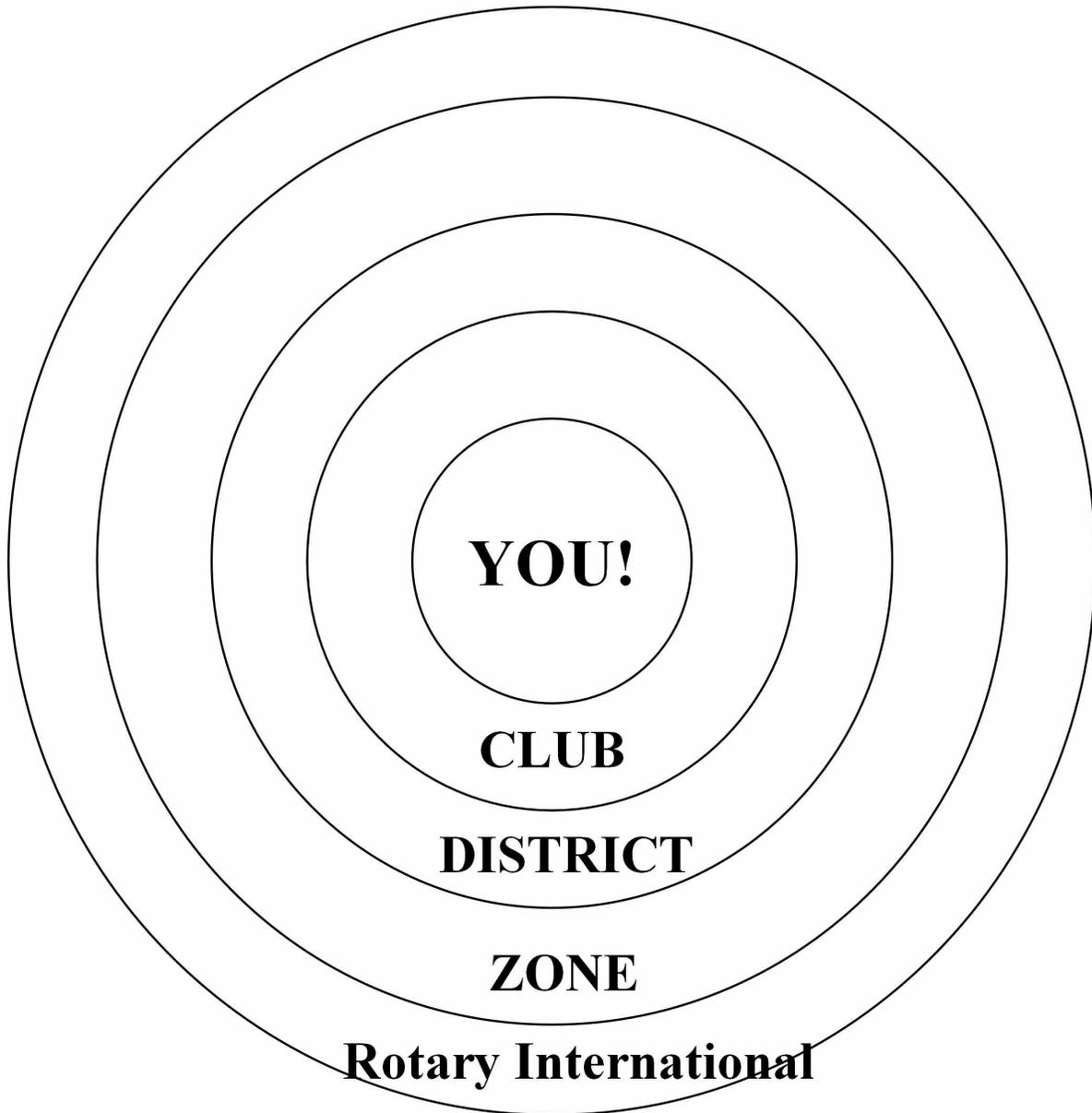
- I. The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;*
- II. High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to service society;*
- III. The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;*
- IV. The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.*

INTERNATIONAL

ROTARY
INTERNATIONAL

ROTARY
INTERNATIONAL

Rotary Organizational Structure



**The
Rotary
Foundation**

Help at Every Level!

District

- Governor
- Assistant Governor
- District Rotary Foundation Chair
- District Public Image Director
- District Membership Director
- Other District Chairs!

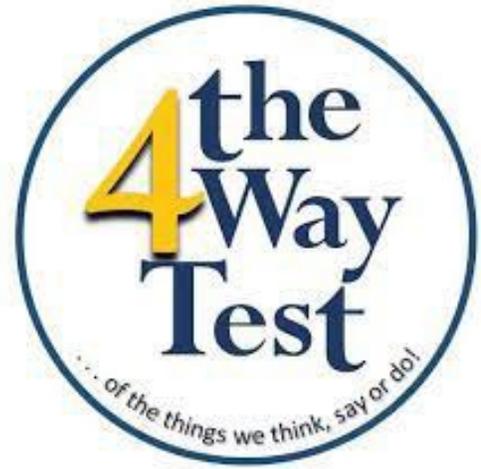
Zone

- Director
- Assistant Rotary Coordinator
- Regional Rotary Foundation Coordinator
- Rotary Public Image Coordinator
- End Polio Now Coordinator
- Endowment and Major Gifts Advisers

Rotary International

- President
- General Secretary – John Hewko
- Learning Center - online at www.rotary.org
- Rotary Foundation Team
- Branding Team
- Council on Legislation (COL) and Council on Resolutions (COR)
- Rotary Governance Documents - online at www.rotary.org
 - Rotary Constitution (updated by COL)
 - Rotary International ByLaws (updated by COL)
 - Standard Rotary Club Constitution (updated by COL)
 - Recommended Rotary Club ByLaws (changed by the club)
 - Rotary Code of Policies (updated after every RI board meeting)
 - Rotary Foundation Code of Policies (updated after every TRF board meeting)
 - Rotaract Club Constitution (updated by COL)
 - Recommended Rotaract Club ByLaws (changed by the club)
 - Manual of Procedures (updated by COL)

Ethics & Vocational Service



I am ethical. I recognize and promote ethics in others and seek opportunities to serve through my vocation.

Session Goals:

- Examine the concept of Vocational Service and why it is important to Rotary Clubs
- Reflect on whether Rotarians can affect business ethics and how.
- Discuss how Rotary's Guiding Principles relate to our clubs and our lives

Resources (available on our website or use the links)

- The Four Way Test Means Business PDF
- A Creative Look at the Four Way Test
<https://rotaryserviceblog.org/2019/02/27/a-creative-look-at-the-four-way-test/>
- *A Century of Service*, David Forward, published by Rotary International 2003 (book, can be purchased at Amazon & other locations)
- Rotary DEI Code of Conduct PDF

All PDF materials are available at www.rotaryleadershipinstitute.org

Session Prep

Review all resources and be familiar with Rotary history.

History tip: at the first meeting, each member did a “vocational talk” just like we do today! They only allowed one person from each profession or line of business and only if the other members could vouch for their integrity. (*A Century of Service* by David Forward, pg 27)

Define “DEI” as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Session Activities

1. Why is vocational service important? Or is it?
2. What role did vocational service play in the founding of Rotary?
3. Why do we have classifications?
4. What are the advantages? Disadvantages?
5. How does your club apply the classification program?
6. How do ethics apply to our vocations?
7. How does Rotary define ethics? *Review the Guiding Principles of Rotary.*
8. Why are ethics important? Or are they?
9. How does being a Rotarian affect your business practices? Or does it?
10. How do ethics impact diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)?
11. Can Rotarians impact the ethics of their community? How?
12. What kind of vocational service does your club do? (*reference the Vocational Service Ideas attachment if needed*)

Summary:

- Vocational Service is one of the major motivations for the founding of Rotary – to use our vocational and professional skills to benefit society.
- Clubs should make a point of utilizing the individual skills of its members in planning and executing its projects.
- Rotarians should be proactive in promoting and exercising the principles of the Object of Rotary and the guiding principles.

Guiding Principles of Rotary

The Object of Rotary

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.

Rotary Code of Conduct

As a Rotarian, I will:

1. Act with integrity and high ethical standards in my personal and professional life.
2. Deal fairly with others and treat them and their occupations with respect.
3. Use my professional skills through Rotary to mentor young people, help those with special needs, and improve people's quality of life in my community and in the world.
4. Avoid behavior that reflects adversely on Rotary or other Rotarians.
5. Help maintain a harassment-free environment in Rotary meetings, events, and activities; report any suspected harassment; and help ensure non-retaliation to those individuals that report harassment.

The Four-Way Test

From the earliest days of the organization, Rotarians were concerned with promoting high ethical standards in their professional lives. One of the world's most widely printed and quoted statements of business ethics is The Four-Way Test, which was created in 1932 by Rotarian Herbert J. Taylor (who later served as RI president) when he was asked to take charge of a company that was facing bankruptcy.

This 24-word test for employees to follow in their business and professional lives became the guide for sales, production, advertising, and all relations with dealers and customers, and the survival of the company is credited to this simple philosophy. Adopted by Rotary in 1943, The Four-Way Test has been translated into more than a hundred languages and published in thousands of ways. It asks the following four questions:

"Of the things we think, say or do:

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?"**

Note: the 4 Way Test is not part of the RI Bylaws

The Five Avenues of Service

Based on the Object of Rotary, Rotary's Philosophical cornerstone and foundation of club activity:

Club Service focuses on making clubs strong. A thriving club is anchored by strong relationships and an active membership development plan.

Vocational Service calls on every Rotarian to work with integrity and contribute their expertise to the problems and needs of society.

Community Service encourages every Rotarian to find ways to improve the quality of life for people in their communities and to serve the public interest

International Service exemplifies our global reach in promoting peace and understanding. We support this service avenue by sponsoring or volunteering on international projects, seeking partners abroad, and more.

Youth Service recognizes the importance of empowering youth and young professionals through leadership development programs such as Interact, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, and Rotary Youth Exchange.

Rotary Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) code of conduct (2021)

Rotary International's Board approved a new [DEI code of conduct](#) that reflects our core values. It provides a supportive framework for how Rotary members can create and maintain an environment that is collaborative, positive, and healthy for everyone.

The DEI code of conduct asks Rotary members to:

- Use respectful language
- Be supportive
- Foster a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Celebrate diversity

Although free expression is important, what we say and how we behave matter. Rotary does not tolerate speech or behavior that promotes bias, discrimination, prejudice, or hatred because of age, ethnicity, race, color, disabilities, religion, socioeconomic status, culture, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

All Rotary leaders, from club presidents and district governors to directors and trustees, are expected to apply the DEI code of conduct uniformly by taking responsibility for how their words and actions may affect others.

Vocational Service Ideas

1. Advancing high ethical standards in the workplace
 - a. In hiring, training, and review procedures, include discussion and emphasis of honesty, accountability, fairness, and respect.
 - b. In internal communications, praise and encourage exemplary behavior on and off the job.
 - c. In relations with customers, vendors, and business associates, communicate and demonstrate your personal commitment to high ethical standards.
2. The classification principle
 - a. Classification talks to promote vocational awareness in your club.
 - b. Classification talks may also serve as a starting point for initiating club projects that help young people and the unemployed develop marketable skills.
 - c. Organizing tours of members' workplaces is another way to recognize the value of each member's vocation.
 - d. Schedule an occasional meeting in a member's place of employment.
 - e. Invite young people to special vocational meetings.
3. Promote Rotary's commitment to high ethical standards
 - a. Post The Four-Way Test on a prominent billboard in your community.
 - b. Display The Four-Way Test and/or the Declaration of Rotarians in Businesses and Professions in your office or work space and talk about it.
 - c. "Walk the talk" by ensuring that your actions in the workplace, community, and family demonstrate a personal commitment to high ethical standards.
 - d. Sponsor a Four Way Test essay contest.
 - e. Sponsor a joint "character literacy" project for young children.
 - f. Conduct a RYLA event with special emphasis on ethics.
 - g. Organize a discussion or group workshop on maintaining high ethical standards in the workplace and consider inviting local non-Rotarian business leaders to attend.
4. Recognize and promote the value of all useful occupations
 - a. Make classification talks and business tours part of your club's program.
 - b. Join or form a Rotary Fellowship related to your vocation.
 - c. Sponsor a career day for Rotarians to bring young people to their businesses.
 - d. Support professional development
 - e. Encourage members to take leadership roles in business associations.
 - f. Sponsor a seminar for small business entrepreneurs.
 - g. Hold informal professional networking events where members can meet other local professionals and introduce them to Rotary.
 - h. Start a career counseling program geared towards equipping unemployed or underemployed adults with the skills they need to compete in the job market.
5. Volunteer your vocation
 - a. Mentor a young person.
 - b. Use Rotary Showcase to identify a project in need of your specialized vocational skills.

Foundation 1: Our Foundation



I am Doing Good in my local community and around the world.

Session Goals:

- Understand the basic goals of our Rotary Foundation.
- Discuss the importance and value of having a foundation.
- Review and understand the Areas of Focus.
- Examine how you, as a Rotarian, can work with the Foundation.

Resources (use the links)

- The Rotary Foundation Reference Guide 219 <https://my-cms.rotary.org/en/document/rotary-foundation-reference-guide>
- Charity Navigator website: <https://www.charitynavigator.org/ein/363245072>
- Rotary.org Learning Center

All PDF materials are available at www.rotaryleadershipinstitute.org

Session Prep

This session is about the individual Rotarian's experience with the Foundation.

That means it is a general introduction to the Foundation and then covers giving and recognition. Future RLI sessions cover funds, grants, etc. As a discussion leader for RLI, you are talking about the Rotary Foundation in general terms – refer all specific process questions to the District Rotary Foundation Team (things like grant questions, DDF procedures, recognition events, approvals, etc). Wear your Rotary Foundation pins or bring a picture of the different pins.

Session Activities

13. What do you know about the Rotary Foundation? *Use whiteboard, no corrections yet.*
14. Why do we have a Rotary Foundation? *Remember, it is independent of Rotary International.*
15. What is the Mission of the Rotary Foundation? *The Rotary Foundation helps Rotary members to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace by improving health, providing quality education, improving the environment, and alleviating poverty.*
16. How does the Foundation achieve its mission?
17. What kind of projects have received Foundation funding in your club?

We will talk about the different kinds of grants later in the RLI program. You can also learn more about grants by going to rotary.org and by talking to your District Foundation team!

18. Who decides what kind of projects are done? *Rotarians! Review Areas of Focus*
19. Where does the money for the Foundation come from? *Anyone can donate! Rotarians, non-Rotarians, and businesses. Review Charity*

Navigator. We rated 100% 1 December 2024. We have been rated 4 stars for 16 years so far.

20. Why should you give to the Foundation? *They provide matching money for global grants and it allows you to pool your money with Rotary clubs around the world to do bigger projects.*

21. What are the different ways you can support the Foundation? *Use the flip chart and ask them to explain each type of giving. Fill in the blanks for any they miss or do not understand.*

a. Annual Fund

- i. Sustaining Member – gives \$100 per year
- ii. Paul Harris Fellow - \$1000, cumulative
- iii. Paul Harris Society – commitment to give \$1000 per year
- iv. Major Donor - \$10,000, cumulative
- v. Arch Klumph Society - \$250,000, cumulative

b. Polio Plus or Rotary Peace Fellows

- i. Paul Harris Fellow - \$1000, cumulative
- ii. Major Donor - \$10,000, cumulative
- iii. Arch Klumph Society - \$250,000, cumulative

c. Endowment Fund

- i. Benefactor – leave any amount in your will
- ii. Bequest Society – leave at least \$10,000 in your will

d. Club Recognition

- i. EREY – Every Rotarian Every Year: Every Rotarian gives at least \$25 during the year and total club giving averages \$100 per member. Earned annually, club gets a banner.
- ii. 100% Foundation Giving – every member gives at least \$100 during the year. Earned Annually, club gets a banner.
- iii. 100% Paul Harris Fellow Club – every member is a Paul Harris Fellow. Is only earned one time, the club gets a banner.
- iv. Top 3 Per Capita – the three clubs in the district with the highest average giving per member (per capita) are recognized with a banner.

Transition:

Let's look back at our list of things we know about the Foundation (refer to the flip chart from the first question). Is there anything we want to change about what is on this list? (discuss)

How about one last question: What is the motto of the Rotary Foundation? *Doing Good in the World.*

Summary:

- The Rotary Foundation gives you the power to make big changes in the world!

The screenshot shows the Charity Navigator profile for The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International. The page includes a navigation bar with "Sign in", "Nonprofit Resources", and "Support Charity Navigator". The main header features the Charity Navigator logo, a search bar, and links to "Discover Charities", "Donor Basics", and "About Us".

The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International

100%
Four-Star Charity

Rating Information
Great

This charity's score is 100%, earning it a Four-Star rating. If this organization aligns with your passions and values, you can give with confidence.

Organization Details:

- Is this your nonprofit? (question mark icon)
- 501(c)(3) organization (checkmark icon)
- Donations are tax-deductible (checkmark icon)
- Website: <https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/rotary-foundation>
- Address: 14280 Collections Center Drive, 1560 Sherman Avenue, Chicago IL 60693
- Phone: 847-866-3000

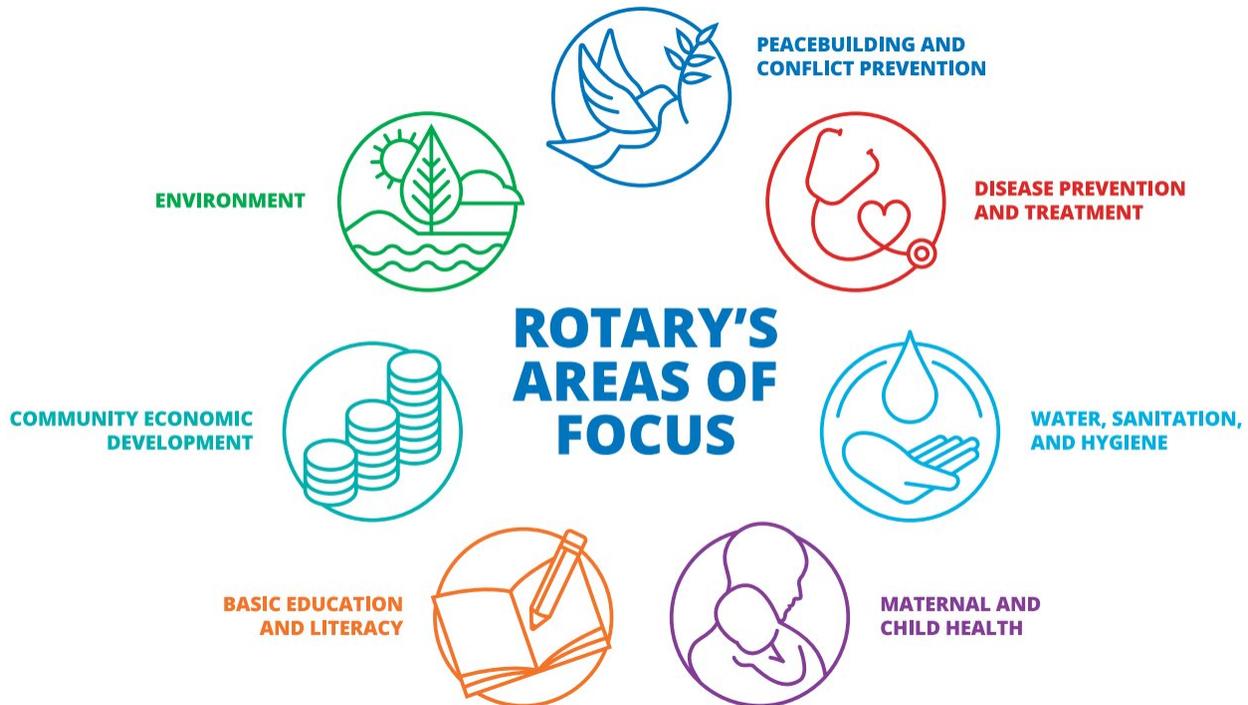
Organization Mission: The Rotary Foundation's mission is to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace. Rotary Foundation grants promote peace, fight disease, provide clean water an ... ([More](#))

Performance Metrics:

- Impact & Results
- Accountability & Finance
- Culture & Community
- Leadership & Adaptability

Buttons: DONATE, Favorite

Rotary's Seven Areas of Focus



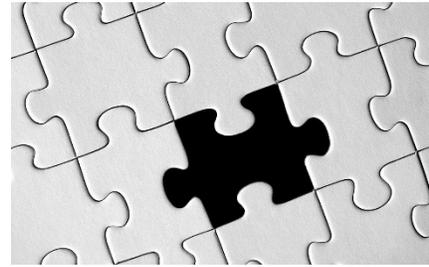
The Motto of The Rotary Foundation

DOING GOOD IN THE
WORLD

The Mission of The Rotary Foundation

THE ROTARY FOUNDATION HELPS ROTARY MEMBERS TO ADVANCE WORLD UNDERSTANDING, GOODWILL, AND PEACE BY IMPROVING HEALTH, PROVIDING QUALITY EDUCATION, IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT, AND ALLEVIATING POVERTY.

Engaging Members



I make my club and Rotary stronger by my active participation.

Session Goals:

- Review why people are attracted to and join Rotary
- Learn the factors that retain members in Rotary
- Discuss the importance of participation

Resources (download from our website or use the links)

- Rotary Club Models PDF
- Expanded Membership Satisfaction Survey:
<http://my.rotary.org/en/document/enhancing-club-experience-member-satisfaction-survey>
- Creating Your Membership Development Plan
<https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/document/strengthening-your-membership-creating-your-membership-development-plan>
- Club Assessment Tools
<https://my.rotary.org/en/document/membership-assessment-tools>
- Membership Page at www.rotary.org
- Learning Center at www.rotary.org
- Rotary Fellowships <https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/more-fellowships>

All PDF materials are available at www.rotaryleadershipinstitute.org

Session Prep

Be sure you are familiar with the various club types, including Satellite and Passport. Understand Community Corps. Review the new relationship Rotaract has with Rotary as well. Review the results of the Siegel & Gale survey from 2014 (Note: Siegel & Gale is a research company hired by Rotary International to compile this information). All information in italics are points for you to bring up if the participants don't.

Introduction – treat as a discussion, no curriculum for participants

22. What do people want from Rotary? (Why did you join?) *Review from 1.1 Generally, the answers come down to Fellowship, Service, and Networking*
23. What was orientation like?
24. When did you feel like you really belonged? *Answers to this will likely tie back to Fellowship, Service, or Networking.*

Transition: tie their answers to engagement. Maybe you felt you belonged when you worked on a project with the club OR when you attended your first social OR when you got a referral from a fellow member....

Session Activities

25. What is member engagement?
- Why does it matter for you as a member?
 - How can you tell if the members are engaged?
26. Why do people stay in Rotary? *Record answers on the flip chart.*
- Because we deliver what they want!*
 - Generally, the answers come down to the same things: Fellowship, Service, and Networking.*
27. How can we meet these needs? Break the group into 3 groups. Each group will discuss and report on one topic: Fellowship, Service, Networking.
- Fellowship – what can we do? How do we create a sense of belonging?
 - Socials*
 - Caring Hands committee (may have another name) – recognition of birthdays/ anniversaries; ensuring when people are sick, their club reaches out, etc.*
 - Happy Dollars / Nags and Brags – go around the room allowing members to pay a dollar to brag on something good (or two dollars to nag about something bad)*

- b. Service – how can we ensure our service is meaningful?
 - i. *Provide a variety of service opportunities focused on different parts of the community/world*
 - ii. *Ensure there are a variety of ways to be involved to suit the different skill sets of members (time, talent, and treasure)*
- c. Networking – how can we do this?
 - i. *Rotary Means Business*
 - ii. *Mentoring (in club and outside)*
 - iii. *Business seminars*
 - iv. *Business speakers*

Have each group report their suggestions.

- d. What about Education!
 - i. *Brainstorm opportunities for education – district conference, district training seminar, Rotary Learning Center, Rotary newsletters, Rotary Action Groups (RAGs), Fellowships, and RLI*
 - ii. *Study done in Sunshine Division showed members who attended RLI were 50% more likely to stay in Rotary*

28. Could club meeting times or club structure have an impact? How?

- a. Times
 - i. *Breakfast club*
 - ii. *Evening club – no meal, meet at 4 and then go home*
 - iii. *Brunch club – no meal, just donuts!*
- b. Structures *Review PDF of Rotary Club Models*
 - i. *Satellite club*
 - ii. *Passport club*
 - iii. *Hybrid club*
 - iv. *Community Corps*

29. What role could technology play in engaging members?

30. How does your club encourage diversity and inclusion? *Does your club look like your community?*

31. Where can you go for help with Membership? *Rotary Learning Center, Zone, District Leadership, review resources*

32. What is your take home from this session?

Summary:

- The more your members know and get involved, the stronger your club will be.

siegel + gale – Why Join Rotary?



siegel + gale – Why Stay in Rotary?



Membership Satisfaction Survey

(3 pages)

This survey is intended for use by the club. All club members should complete it to help assess member satisfaction with club activities and projects. Please return your completed form as directed by the club secretary. All responses are confidential.

Do you feel welcome in our Rotary club? Yes No

If no, why not? (check all that apply)

Compared to me, other members are (check all that apply):

Older Younger Different gender Different ethnicity Other _____

Club members haven't made an effort to interact with me.

Other _____

Do you feel comfortable sharing concerns with club leaders? Yes No

If no, why not? (check all that apply)

Club leaders have so many responsibilities; I don't want to burden them.

Club leaders have their own agenda and aren't interested in other ideas.

I haven't been a member long enough to feel comfortable approaching club leaders.

I don't want to be perceived as a complainer.

Other _____

How would you rate the level of our club's involvement in the following types of activities?

	Excellent	Adequate	Insufficient	Not Aware
Membership development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member orientation and education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local service projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International service projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Club public relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Rotary Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fellowship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Have you participated in club projects and activities? Yes No

If yes, how did you become involved? I volunteered I was asked

If no, why not? _____

Please indicate your involvement in the following types of activities:

	Currently Involved	Would Like to Be Involved
Membership development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member orientation and education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local service projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International service projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Club public relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Rotary Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fellowship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How would you rate your level of satisfaction with your participation in club activities and projects?

Very satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied

If dissatisfied, why? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of quality service projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personality conflicts | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of support from other members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient family involvement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal time conflicts | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

How would you rate the following costs associated with membership in our club?

	Excessive	Reasonable
Club dues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weekly meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Club fines/assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voluntary contributions to service projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voluntary contributions to The Rotary Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Excellent	Adequate	Insufficient
Amount of Rotary content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Program organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time for fellowship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Convenient	Inconvenient	
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggested location: _____
Meeting time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggested time: _____

Which aspects of our meeting place do you find unsatisfactory? (check all that apply)

- Service
- Décor/atmosphere
- Meal quality
- Meal cost
- Parking availability
- Other _____

Which of the following changes would improve our club meetings? (check all that apply)

- Better speakers
- Increased variety of program topics
- More involvement of family
- More service opportunities
- More focus on fellowship
- Increased emphasis on vocational information
- Better time management
- More leadership opportunities

How would you rate the amount of our club’s fellowship activities?

- Too many
- Right amount
- Too few

How would you rate the amount of Rotary information provided through our club Web site/newsletter?

- Excessive
- Adequate
- Insufficient

Which of the following words would you use to describe our club web site / newsletter?

(check all that apply)

- Interesting
- Useful
- Informative
- Boring
- Limited
- Uninformative

Is there anything else you’d like to see changed? _____

What response does your spouse/partner/family have to your involvement in Rotary? (check all that apply)

- Feel proud of my involvement
- Wants to know more/be involved
- Wants to meet/interact with other Rotary spouses/ partners/families
- Would be interested in becoming a member
- Other _____
- Thinks Rotary takes too much of my time
- Thinks Rotary is too expensive

Engagement Ideas: Delivering Value – Keeping Rotarians

The Issue: Of all the members who leave Rotary, only about 7% leave for involuntary reasons (death, relocation, etc.) Most of the folks who leave have been members for less than 3 years.

The Fix: Find ideas to engage, especially your newer members, who likely joined to serve their community, network, and make new friends.

Our Ideas:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Buddy System | Partner newer members with more experienced members to act as mentors and help them adapt to your club atmosphere and “learn the ropes”. |
| RLI Posse | Consider having your club cover the cost of sending new members to RLI. |
| Fun Committee | Put new members on a committee devoted to holding fun activities for everyone! Maybe a group visit to a local attraction, concert, or play. Maybe it is a new fun event during the meetings. |
| Adopt A Class | Partner members with local elementary schools to conduct reading, mentoring, or other activities. |
| Rotary Minute | Have every member share a 1-minute talk about themselves. It could be their “Rotary Aha” moment or a “get to know you” moment. |
| Interact | Start an Interact group or get involved with your existing club! |
| Party Planning | Put together a committee to arrange social events outside of the regular club meetings. |
| Vocational Minute | Have every member give a short presentation on their vocation or information about their vocational field. |

Your Ideas:

Twelve Point Plan for Member Engagement

- 1) Set up a Member Services Committee
- 2) Measure & Examine Club's History of Engagement and Member Retention Rate
- 3) Provide Pre-Induction Orientation Program
- 4) Greet – Assign a Job – Introduce –
- 5) Develop a Mentor & Education Program
- 6) Conduct a Reception for New Members
- 7) Log New Member Activities the first year
- 8) After Year One- Recognize & Interview
- 9) Advocate New Member Opportunities
- 10) Provide Networking & Professional Development Opportunities
- 11) Spot Danger Signs and Remedy Engagement Problems
- 12) Be Innovative – Highlight the Reasons We Stay in Rotary

Thinking Outside the Box—Perk Up Club Meetings!

1. Have Rotarian's connections run a meeting—spouses, partners, or children.
2. Switch club president with a nearby club and have that president conduct your meeting.
3. Change the room layout—completely.
4. Reverse the order of the regular agenda.
5. Invite a new member to organize a meeting.
6. Bring in a professional coach to run a meeting.
7. Invite past presidents who have left the club to come back and reflect on the changes in Rotary over the years.
8. Cancel your regular meeting and ask members to attend another club in the area to see how that club operates and bring back ideas.
9. Use a Rotary Learning Center video for your meeting.
10. Change the meeting time.
11. Focus on vocational development with members relating how their businesses started and the challenges they faced.
12. Create a promotional document to give to speakers before they arrive so they know what to expect at your club meeting (and for marketing).
13. Visit local businesses instead of a formal meeting.
14. Have a “pocket presentation” ready in case the scheduled presenter doesn't show up. It could be a video, a club member who is ready, or a quick project.
15. Develop a “speed-networking” event for members and invite your community.
16. Celebrate something in your community—arts event, team championship, or local school successes.
17. Have a social instead of a regular meeting.
18. Attend a community event as a group – sporting, museum, art gallery, or play.
19. Have a trivia contest.
20. Discuss the Rotary monthly theme.

CLUB EXPERIENCE MATTERS THE MOST

Recent Rotary research confirms that the single most important factor in member satisfaction is the club experience.

1 Meeting enjoyment — When members have fun, and feel that they are included and belong

2 Confidence in club leadership — When members feel that they have input in the club, their club leaders are open to their ideas, and when they trust the leaders to make good decisions for the club

3 Personal growth opportunities — When members feel that their club and Rotary offer ways for them to develop skills and to grow

4 Connections — When members feel that they've formed valuable relationships through Rotary

5 Meaningful service — When members feel that the service their club does makes a difference in the world and in their community

WHAT MAKES UP THE CLUB EXPERIENCE?

Using our [Membership Assessment Tools](#) guide, which includes the [Member Satisfaction Survey](#), can help you craft an experience that reflects your members' interests and needs.



Creating Service Projects



I am a vital part of a worldwide service organization meeting needs in communities.

Session Goals:

- Identify the qualities of a good service project
- Relate the culture of your club to meeting the needs of your community
- Explore effective strategies and best practices for creating and leading successful service projects in your club.

Resources

- Community Assessment Tools
<https://my-cms.rotary.org/en/document/community-assessment-tools>
- The Rotary Foundation's 7 Areas of Focus
<https://www.rotary.org/en/our-causes>
- Tips for a Successful Project
<https://www.rotary.org/en/tips-successful-rotary-project>
- Lead Your Club Service Projects Committee
<https://my-cms.rotary.org/en/document/lead-your-club-service-projects-committee>
- Rotary Community Corps
<https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/rotary-community-corps>
- Toxic Charity
<https://www.luptoncenter.org/toxic-charity-holistic-overview/>
- John Kotter's 8 steps to leading change
<https://www.kotterinc.com/methodology/8-steps/>

All PDF materials are available at www.rotaryleadershipinstitute.org

Session Prep:

Review the materials. Have markers and either flip charts or a dry-erase board for the group project work.

Session Topics

- 1) What is a service project? *Discussion*
- 2) Why do they matter? *Note: after discussion, reference the first service project in Rotary. A “comfort station” in 1907, Chicago, Illinois, USA.*

Transition: Let’s talk about how we identify the best projects for us...

- 3) What is the best way to find a project? How did you find your last project?
Talk to community leaders, do a community assessment (review the tool – what other questions could you ask?) Do you do the same thing every year?
 - a) Why this approach? *(review Toxic Charity) Projects must come from the recipients/beneficiaries to be effective. Consider ethics.*

Transition: Once you find a project, how do you get the club on board?

- 4) How do you present the project to your club? What steps could you use?
(refer to the attachment: John Kotter’s Eight Steps to Leading Change after discussion)
 - Validate the need.
 - Establish buy-in
 - Gain support of club members and the community
 - Time, costs, level of involvement, and size of project are important
 - How does the project fit in with other club activities?
 - What role does ethics play in planning and execution?

5) Develop a “business plan” for a service project.

Facilitator Note: Divide the class into groups of 3-5 participants. Using the service project ideas on Insert SP-2, ask all of the groups to create a business plan to be shared with the entire class. You may ask all small groups to prepare the business plan for the same service project, or you may ask one group to work on Project A, one to work on Project B, etc. Alternatively, ask each group to develop details for a different element of the project (e.g., determining need, obtaining funding, etc.). Ask each group to designate a reporter to report back to the entire class. The use of easel pad sheets is recommended.

The following questions should be asked after all groups have reported.

6) How will you evaluate the success or lack of success of your project? What are your benchmarks?

Possibilities: Survey the beneficiaries, survey club members who participated in the project, maintain records of number of users, consider whether budget was adequate, consider hurdles that were not anticipated, etc.

7) What new ideas did you try to include? How could you make it “bigger, better, bolder?”

Examples: (1) A club might partner with another Rotary club, a Rotaract or Interact club, another district, or another non-Rotarian organization in the community, such as a government agency, church, or other non-profit group to duplicate the project or make it bigger. (2) A club might expand its service “footprint” to include more beneficiaries or a related group of beneficiaries. (3) A club might expand into related areas based on project success, such as expanding a school literacy project to include mentors for children, child nutrition education, or actual meals served at the school.

- 8) What options do we have for fundraising?
- a) Discuss the differences between a community service project and a purely fundraising event. Can the two be combined?
 - b) How can a fundraising event also be a membership event for Rotary?
Telling the story of your project can attract like-minded people to your club.
 - c) What are some of the best fundraising events you have been involved with or have heard of?

SUMMARY

Good Rotary Service projects require:

- Meeting a community identified need today
- Creativity
- Sustainability
- Risk taking
- New ideas
- Keeping prior projects only if they are still needed

Service Project A

Rotarians and community leaders have been concerned that there are not enough recreational facilities and activities for teenagers in the community. With little to do and no place to “hang out,” teenagers have been gathering at the shopping mall or the town square, sometimes getting into trouble and harassing older people and other teens.

A team of Rotarians visited the Mayor, who agreed that more recreational facilities and activities are needed for teenagers, but the town budget cannot pay for a youth center, etc. The Mayor did say that the town has a vacant lot that could be donated or used for some purpose. It also has a vacant two-room school building that could possibly be repaired and used for teen activities; however, it has not been used for several years and is not in very good condition.

Service Project B

Members of your club have talked to the head of the local welfare department about possible projects, and she told them of an elderly couple who were largely confined to their home because they couldn’t navigate the 6 steps to the front of their home. They also had trouble climbing the steps to their bedroom and often ended up sleeping on a couch or even on the floor. The head of the welfare department asked if Rotary could help the couple.

Service Project C

Members of your club have talked with the principal and some teachers and guidance counselors at an elementary school in town to learn the major issues for the students. Unfortunately, there are a lot of problems, but the educators believe that the most significant issue is that some third graders are far behind in reading skills, and some can’t read at all. What can your Rotary club do to help third graders become better readers?

Service Project D

Members of your club are concerned about the impact of mowing roadside hedgerows on the environment and local wildlife. There is also great concern about the water quality of the local stream. After talking with local politicians, you have found they are supportive, but have no specific plans. What can your Rotary club do to address these problems?

Service Project E

You have become aware that many elderly people in your local community live in loneliness either by living alone in their homes or by living in a nursing home. Many of the older people want to be participants in society but have no arenas to participate on.

At the same time, there are several young people in your local community who have little to do and are walking rootless around in the local community. How can you as a Rotary club contribute to young and old people finding common meeting arenas where the old ones can participate, and the young ones can find meaningful activities?

Service Project F

In recent years, many young people have gathered in the city on public holidays and have been obviously influenced by alcohol and other drugs. Several are 16 years of age or younger and are not allowed to drink or buy alcohol.

On the last public holiday, many young people gathered in the city center and the police warned against a negative youth culture and called for more sober adult role models in the city center on these days.

How can you, as a Rotary, take part in preventing a negative development in the city center and how can you get more elderly people on board?

Service Project G

Many youngsters do not know what they are going to study when they have finish secondary school and are unsure of what courses they should choose on high school.

Many Rotarians have long professional experience from many different professions and can tell young people about their experiences from professional life.

A secondary school has contacted your local Rotary Club to organize a career day where young people can get advice on which education they can choose to achieve their goals.

Decide how your Rotary club can organize a career day in collaboration with the secondary school.

Service Project Questions

- Can a Rotary club do anything to help?
- If so, what can Rotarians do “hands on” to help?
- How much funding is required? Fundraising?
- How can the project be designed? What is needed?
- Will the project generate good publicity for the club?
- Can the members be “sold” on the project?
- Is this a one-year project or a continuing project?
- What other community resources are available or what other organizations should be involved?
- What are the steps necessary to move forward?

*“The time we take to
serve those who need us
can be the turning point,
not
only in their lives but also in
our own.”*

*1980-81 RI Pres. Rolf Klarich
— Take Time to Serve
THE ROTARIAN, July 1980*

John Kotter's Eight Steps to Leading Change

<https://www.kotterinc.com/methodology/8-steps/>

1. Create a sense of urgency

Inspire people to act – with passion and purpose – to achieve a bold, aspirational opportunity. Build momentum that excites people to pursue a compelling (and clear) vision of the future... together.

2. Build a Guiding Coalition

A volunteer network needs a coalition of committed people – born of its own ranks – to guide it, coordinate it, and communicate its activities.

3. Form a Strategic Vision

Clarify how the future will be different from the past and get buy-in for how you can make that future a reality through initiatives linked directly to the vision.

4. Enlist a Volunteer “Army”

Large-scale change can only occur when massive numbers of people rally around a common opportunity. At an individual level, they must *want to* actively contribute. Collectively, they must be unified in the pursuit of achieving the goal together.

5. Enable Action by Removing Barriers

Remove the obstacles that slow things down or create roadblocks to progress. Clear the way for people to innovate, work more nimbly across silos, and generate impact quickly.

6. Generate Short-Term Wins

Wins are the molecules of results. They must be recognized, collected, and communicated – early and often – to track progress and energize volunteers to persist.

7. Sustain Acceleration

“The way that you can guarantee success in a difficult change... is to not skip any of the steps or the learnings.”

8. Institute Change

Articulate the connections between new behaviors and organizational success, making sure they continue until they become strong enough to replace old habits. Evaluate systems and processes to ensure management practices reinforce the new behaviors, mindsets, and ways of working you invested in.

Toxic Charity by Robert Lupton A Synopsis

Toxic Charity the Book

Toxic Charity was a book that Bob Lupton published in 2011. At the time of its publication, Bob Lupton and his wife Peggy had lived and worked in Atlanta for nearly 40 years. The organization Bob founded, which was initially called Family Consultation Services, was working to revitalize neighborhoods in Atlanta that had been deeply affected by systemic injustice.

Living alongside neighbors in Atlanta, Bob started to notice the ways many charity programs were unhelpful at best and at worst downright degrading. At the same time, he knew that everyone coming to his neighborhood to do charity had their hearts in the right place. Many of them truly wanted to help. They simply had no idea what they were doing was harmful. Bob wrote Toxic Charity to illustrate the reality of what was going on for his mostly white, mostly middle and upper class, mostly educated, and overwhelmingly Christian peers. He wanted them to see the true effects of their charity and offer them a new model.

What is Toxic Charity

At its core, Toxic Charity is trying to address chronic ongoing poverty through one-way crisis relief. Common charity models like toy giveaways, school supply handouts, food pantries, and the like are examples of short-term fixes focused on transferring resources. The issues they address tend to be much broader, larger, and more systemic. As a result, one-way charity rarely solves the underlying issue, but results in a cycle of continual one-way giving and receiving.

Unfortunately, Toxic charity can end up reinforcing assumptions about givers and receivers, namely the idea that receivers core issue is that they “lack” items or resources and “need” someone to provide them. This paradigm can bolster deeper biases, like the idea that low-income people don’t know how to manage money or don’t work hard enough.

Toxic Charity can get even more dangerous when a “giver” or program has little geographic or relational tie to the people they’re giving to. Commuting into a neighborhood to give hand-outs can make it more difficult to form relationships based on dignity and trust.

Common Toxic Charity Mistakes

We talk to Change-Makers who really want to make a difference every day. Here are a few common Toxic Charity mistakes:

Only Focusing on Resource Transfer

Sometimes it can be tempting to try to transfer resources, only in a slightly more dignifying way. For example, we’ve encountered Change-Makers who realized that handing out Christmas presents to children can be really embarrassing for parents — it’s toxic charity. The next step they take is hosting a Christmas store where parents can come and select toys for their kids, wrap them, and give them to their children. This is an absolutely improved model, and it’s one

we use ourselves every year for Pride for Parents! What's key is that we know the toy store won't solve material needs. Resource transfer can be a healthy ecosystem and a way for organizations to engage, but it is not in itself the solution we are pursuing. This toy store isn't the only way we come alongside a neighborhood here in Historic South Atlanta.

Shifting to Development without Relationships

Proximity, or being emotionally, physically, and geographically integrated with the neighborhood where you want to work is absolutely essential. Change moves at the speed of trust. Trust is impossible without building neighborhood relationships. Relationships are shallow without time spent listening, learning, and seeking to understand. Yes, it can feel slow, and we know it can be tempting at times to change the systemic realities of a place without investing in relationships. Unfortunately, working on a systemic level without collaborating with neighbors can look like doing development *to* people without their consent. Building new roads or businesses can be great, but if they're completed without community buy-in, they will rarely make a difference and can even cause harm.

Locating Toxicity in Neighbors

We all have biases. Interrogating them is critical to being a trustworthy partner. One common error we've seen is change-makers trying to change their models without changing their own hearts. We have seen some people try to make change while still viewing their neighbors or neighborhoods as deficient. We've had tough conversations with some people who come to the conclusion that Toxic Charity is toxic because recipients are greedy or lazy. These biases will get in the way of trust and true partnership. Beliefs like these also tend to ignore local history and the realities of systemic injustice. We encourage everyone to examine their internal biases and to examine the histories of systemic injustice. We're all part of systems that oppress some and give others an advantage. We're all also un-learning prejudices and assumptions we have. It's a journey!