

The ABC's of a Community Needs Assessment



Rotary

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V1.6

Learnings

- Discover the fundamentals of how to develop and execute a Community Needs Assessment.
- Understand that a Rotary Club's service projects should be based on what the community needs, not what the club wants to give it.



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2

Why should you bother to do a Community Needs Assessment?

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It Will Help You:

- Identify and focus on the community needs
- Develop community relationships
- Provide hands-on service opportunities for your Rotary Club members
- Improve the lives of those individuals, families, seniors and children in your community who are “living in need”
- Promote the benefits and value of Rotary in the community

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Steps

1. Introduce the “Needs Assessment” to Club Board
2. Select a Committee
3. Develop a Cover Letter and Questionnaire
4. Decide Who to Contact in the Community
5. Survey the Community Contacts
6. Analyze the Survey Results
7. Share the Results for Possible Action
8. Follow-up with Participants - Begin Taking Action



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5

Introduce Assessment to Club Board

Explain how the assessment will help the club identify and focus on projects, programs and services that are needed in the community



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6

Select a Committee

- Discuss importance of conducting the community needs assessment at a club meeting
- Select a task force committee to lead the assessment



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7

Develop a Cover Letter and Questionnaire

- Use the following examples
or
- Create your own to address specific needs of the community



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8

Develop a Cover Letter

(Date)

Dear (Name),

The Rotary Club of (Club Name) is conducting a survey of community service needs within (Name of Community). Our goal is to clearly identify humanitarian services, which we, as a service club, could possibly assist in providing. We hope you will help us identify opportunities within our community.

By completing the attached questionnaire, you will help us determine needs and areas of concern. Please feel free to comment on any community service needs or projects which you feel would benefit the individuals, families, seniors and children within our community. We also encourage you to forward a copy of this survey to any other person whose comments you believe would be helpful to our survey.



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9

Develop a Cover Letter

Please return the completed questionnaire on or before MM/DD/YYYY. After we have compiled our data, a representative of our Rotary Club will provide you with a summary of what we learned from the assessment and how we might work together. In the meantime, if you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (phone number and/or email address). I would be happy to hear from you. Thank you for your participation.


Sincerely,
(Signature of Rotarian)
(Typed Name of Rotarian)
(Rotarian Title)
Rotary Club of (Club Name)
(Rotary Club Web Site URL) (Facebook) (Twitter)
(Phone Number)
(Email Address)



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10

Develop a Questionnaire

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Community Needs Assessment Questionnaire


Name: _____ Date: _____
 Organization: _____ Job Position: _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____

Identifying Your Community Needs

- Briefly describe a specific need(s) within the community. Does the need(s) require people, funding, materials, etc.? For the need(s), identify the timeframe of action and is the need one-time or ongoing.

Identifying Community Support Projects OUTSIDE Your Community

- What type of community services (projects, programs, resources, etc.) that are related to the above need(s) have you seen or heard about in other communities? Were they successful?

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Develop a Questionnaire

Area Organizations


- Are there organizations within the community currently providing projects/programs/services that your need(s) may connect with through a possible partnership?

- What role do you see Rotary Clubs having in providing programs and services in the community?

Additional Comments (Use back of form or attachment if needed):

Please return completed questionnaire on or before MM/DD/YYYY to:

Your Name _____
 Rotary Club of _____
 Street Address _____
 City, State ZIP _____

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Decide Who to Contact in the Community

- Determine who can best evaluate the needs of your community
 - Consider the town’s web site for ideas
 - Contact the Chamber of Commerce
 - Speak with other communities
 - Consider Rotary’s Six Areas of Focus



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13

Decide Who to Contact in the Community

- Rotary’s Six Areas of Focus
 - Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution
 - Disease Prevention and Treatment
 - Water and Sanitation
 - Maternal and Child Health
 - Basic Education and Literacy
 - Economic and Community Development



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14

Decide Who to Contact in the Community

Some Suggestions

Principals/Teachers	Ambulance Service
Libraries/Universities	Police/Fire Fighters
Environmental Services	Sr. Citizen Groups
Parks & Rec Coordinators	Doctors/Nurses
Hospital Administrators	Social Workers
School Counselors	Student Leaders
Churches/Synagogues	Local Food Shelf



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15

Survey the Community Contacts

- Contact targeted people with the questionnaire
- Number of people contacted depends of the size of the community
- Remember, follow-up contact may be necessary
- Use method that best fits each contact:



E-mail



In Person



Phone



US Mail



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16

Analyze the Survey Results

- Group common areas of need that may exist within the community
- Group the needs into one-time events and ongoing activities
- Identify the scope of each need (funding, materials, people skills)
- Identify the timing of each need
- Identify reasonably foreseeable risks and hurdles associated with each need(s)



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17

Share the Results for Possible Action

- Share results at a Board of Directors meeting then at a club meeting
- Identify specific community needs that meet your club's Mission and Vision, finances and member skills
- Determine if current club services or programs meet the communities need(s), or if new projects/programs would need developed
- Consider any reasonably foreseeable risks and hurdles associated with each need(s)



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18

Share the Results for Possible Action

- Determine if one of the community needs would be appropriate for a District Grant
- Determine if one of the community needs would be appropriate for a Global Grant (Your club is Host Partner)
- Decide if other organizations or Rotary Clubs could be possible collaborative partners
- Rank order the (proposed) project(s) that present the most significant and urgent need



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19

Share the Results for Possible Action

- Contact the identified organization chosen for an in-depth evaluation of the (proposed) project
- Utilize “Service Project” techniques to verify adequate funding, materials, people from...
 - Your club
 - Several clubs
 - Your area
 - Your district
 - Community and/or international partner



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20

Follow Up with Survey Participants and Begin Taking Action

- Let the chosen organization know the (proposed) project has been accepted and begin work
- Send message to all respondents thanking them for participating in the survey
- Indicate how their input helped the club define programs/projects to better serve the community



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21

Closing

- If this information was valuable, please let other clubs know. This program can be presented for them at their club meeting.
- If you have additional questions after you leave, please contact me . . .

PDG Bill Gormont 585-227-9760
bill@billgormont.com

Questions and Answers (*Time Permitting*)



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22