

The Rotary Club of Greater Gainesville

Speaker Guidelines

It is the practice of our Rotary Club to have all members take their turn to obtain a speaker for our meetings. These guidelines are offered to help members in procuring an appropriate speaker.

1. **Scheduling.** A schedule of assigned dates is provided for the year. If a member has a conflict with a date, it is his/her responsibility to exchange dates with another member and to inform the Program Chair(s) of the exchange. If the member is having difficulty in finding a speaker, the Program Chair(s) should be notified AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so suggestions and alternatives can be developed. It will be the responsibility of the member to contact the suggested speaker.

2. **Choose** a speaker with a topic of informational, educational, motivational or entertainment value that will be of general interest to all club members.

3. **Controversial Topics or Volatile Issues** that could arouse anger and division among members should be avoided. Consider our Five Way Test when considering speakers and topics:

- Is it the TRUTH?
- Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?
- Is it Fun?

4. **Repetition or Topic Sameness.** As a rule, look for a speaker we haven't heard before with a fresh topic. On occasion, considering the topic presented, members may wish to hear additional information on the topic. An affirmative vote by the members to hear additional content on the subject at a future meeting will suffice.

5. **Political/Religious Topics.** Rotary International is a non-political and non-religious organization. As a matter of policy, Rotary Clubs do not take positions on public questions including political or religious issues. Speakers representing religious or charitable organizations such as schools, shelters, social service agencies, etc. may be considered, so long as they speak about their charitable work and do not seek funding nor advocate a political or religious position.

6. **Product or Service Promotion.** Advise company representatives who are invited to speak they should not use the Rotary podium to promote their products or services.

7. **Political Candidates.** It is acceptable to have current political office holders speak when the format is simply a report on issues that face the community. Candidates for public office should not be invited to speak at a meeting that is less than 120 days before an election. If the Board of Directors deems that hearing from candidates is of sufficient value, then all candidates for the office must be invited either to speak at the same meeting in a candidate forum, or individually in successive weeks.

8. Non-Profit Organizations. Speakers from non-profit organizations that impact our community, the nation, or our world may be considered, but not to provide a platform for fund-raising. Requests for funding are not allowed. However, requests for financial support may be made by applying for a grant from the Rotary Foundation.

9. Potential Member. Special effort should be made to identify speakers who might be considered potential members of the Rotary Club of Greater Gainesville. Consideration should be given to the organization they represent, the job title/classification they hold, the community in which they reside, and other organizations to which they might belong.

9. Notification. Once you have chosen a speaker, immediately inform the Club's Secretary and the Program Chair so appropriate notice can be posted to the Club's website and included in the Club's Newsletter.

10. Technical Arrangements. If the speaker requires media support, Zoom access, or other audio/visual or technical support, make sure that the meeting venue can provide that support and that those club members responsible for supporting online meetings and providing media support are notified.

12. Introduction. A brief bio, resume and photo that can be used to introduce the speaker should be requested.

13. Confirm. Be sure to confirm with the speaker the date and location of their speaking engagement at least one week before they are scheduled.

14. Gratitude. A day or two following their talk, communicate your gratitude (phone, email, text, in person, letter) for speaking. This is especially important if the speaker is a potential prospect for membership in the club. If the speaker is considered a good prospect for membership, the name and contact information should be forwarded to the Chair of the Membership Committee for follow-up.

15. Questions. Any questions about the suitability of a speaker, requests for finding a speaker, or supporting a presentation should be addressed to the Program Chair(s).