Key resources for membership include the *Membership Development Resource Guide* (417) and Club Assessment Tools, an online supplement for analyzing club membership trends.

Your club’s ability to serve the community, support The Rotary Foundation, and develop future leaders is directly related to the level of enthusiasm and engagement of your members.

**Responsibilities**

As president-elect, you have the following membership development responsibilities:

- Appointing and meeting with your club membership committee
- Assessing the current state of your club’s membership, and reviewing your club’s long-range membership goals
- Setting your club’s annual membership goals, which support your club’s long-range goals, using the Planning Guide for Effective Rotary Clubs, and aligning your annual membership growth and retention goals to the district’s goals
• Identifying and implementing innovative and creative strategies to recruit and retain club members
• Promoting club and district membership education and training for all stages of membership, including prospective, new and current member education
• Seeking opportunities to sponsor a new club in your area

One of the three priorities of the RI Strategic Plan is to support and strengthen clubs. Rotary clubs are encouraged to
• Foster club innovation and flexibility
• Balance activities in a variety of service
• Promote membership diversity
• Improve member recruitment and retention
• Develop leaders
• Start new clubs
• Have an updated strategic plan

Club Membership Committee

The club membership committee is essential to implementing the club’s membership development plan. Its main role is to successfully recruit, retain, and educate club members. Your club may amend its bylaws to reflect the specific responsibilities of your membership committee, adding subcommittees as needed. See appendix 9 for sample committee structures. Membership committee members should coordinate efforts with members of the other club committees to maximize membership growth opportunities.

Appoint Rotarians to the membership committee who have strong connections to a cross-section of the community and are interested in improving the membership experience for the club’s members. Members of this committee should enjoy working with people and have a thorough knowledge of Rotary.

Check in with the membership committee regularly to determine what new strategies are needed to achieve your membership goals.

Your membership committee has these responsibilities:
• Achieving club membership goals for the coming year using the Planning Guide for Effective Rotary Clubs
• Educating and training club members about the importance of recruiting and keeping members
• Conducting classification surveys to ensure that club member occupations and businesses reflect current business and community trends
• Developing a membership action plan for increased member engagement, that includes surveying members and initiating changes in response to member feedback
• Conducting club assessments to ensure membership development and retention efforts are effective and successful
• Developing an action plan for the club to act as a sponsor club for a potential new club in the community

Assessing Your Club

As president-elect, you’ll work closely with your club’s membership committee to assess the current state of your club and plan membership goals using the Planning Guide for Effective Rotary Clubs (appendix 2) and other membership assessment tools available in Club Assessment Tools at www.rotary.org. To understand your club’s membership trends:
• Review your club’s long-range membership goals.
• Review your club’s five-year membership profile and trends (club retention statistics, number of new members, number of new members who continue with the club, whether your club represents the demographic of the community).
• Complete a classification survey as early in the year as possible to identify unfilled professions represented in the community.
• Consult with your district governor, assistant governor, district membership chair, or Rotary coordinator, as appropriate.
• Promote participation in the district membership seminar.

Once you’ve assessed your club’s membership history and trends and drafted membership goals, you should develop an action plan for recruiting and keeping members.

Diversity

Your club’s membership should accurately reflect your business community in terms of profession, age, gender, and ethnicity. One way to ensure diversity in your club is to conduct regular classification surveys and membership diversity assessments. Having a diverse membership in your club expands the range of experience and knowledge available for your service efforts, and reaches out to all populations in your community.

RI policy prohibits limitations on membership in Rotary clubs based on gender, race, color, creed, or national origin. Refer to RI Bylaws Article 4.070 for more information.

Recruiting Members

New members bring important benefits to the club, such as fresh ideas and energy, increased capacity to serve your community, and future leaders to ensure the long-term continuity of clubs.

To encourage your club members to invite new members, work with your membership committee in these ways:
• Develop a club brochure and distribute it to prospective members throughout the community.
• Promote your club and its events to friends and families using social networking sites.
• Recruit members who reflect the diversity of each club’s community.
• Work toward implementing innovative new projects that spark interest in the community.
• Reach out to former participants of New Generations programs.

Responsibilities
As club president, you have these recruitment responsibilities:
• Leading by example, personally recruiting a new member and encouraging each member of the club to do the same
• Appointing active, knowledgeable membership committee members
• Setting ambitious but attainable membership recruitment goals
• Conducting a club assembly on the importance of successful recruiting strategies
• Encouraging full representation of the diversity of the community
• Encouraging club members to discuss Rotary and its goals with friends, family, and colleagues and to invite qualified candidates to join Rotary
• Promoting community awareness of your club and its activities
• Recognizing club members for sponsoring new members

Keeping Members
Keeping members is as crucial as recruiting new ones. To increase and sustain your club’s membership, find out why former members decided to leave the club. Current members who are dedicated, active, and motivated will make your club more fun and are also more likely to attract and keep new members.

Use Club Assessment Tools to identify your club’s retention strengths and weaknesses, and then work with the membership committee to implement strategies for addressing them.

Responsibilities
As club president, you have these responsibilities for ensuring your club keeps members:
• Regularly assessing your club environment to ensure that it’s relevant to club members and the community
• Modernizing your club policies and procedures, making them flexible to address the needs of current working professionals
• Providing diverse opportunities for club members to get involved in club committees and service projects, networking, and leadership development
• Making continuing education and training a regular club activity

Visit the Membership Development Best Practices Exchange at www.rotary.org to view membership efforts that have worked in other clubs.
• Coordinating efforts among your club’s membership, public relations, and service projects committees to enhance membership retention efforts
• Including local and international Rotary information in club meetings
• Recognizing existing members for their contributions to club projects and activities

Every member of your club should play an active role in introducing and welcoming new members to the club. Assign a mentor to each new member to ease their transition into the club.

**Sponsoring New Clubs**

Be aware of the possibilities for sponsoring a new club in your area, such as a group of committed Rotarians who’d like to meet at a different time or day, or a group of active and engaged community members who can’t meet at your club’s prescribed day and time.

If your club sponsors a new Rotary club, be sure to assign members the following responsibilities:

• Assisting the special representative in planning and organizing the administrative processes of the new club
• Helping to organize the new club’s programs and projects
• Reporting to the district governor as requested during the club’s first year
• Serving as a mentor to the new club for at least two years after its admission to membership in RI

For more information, contact your district governor, district membership committee, or district extension committee.
Call to Action

What will you do to engage your members?

What will you do this year to make your club fun?

How can your club become innovative and flexible?

What are your personal goals for your club’s members?