

INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS

Informational meetings are held for prospective Rotarians to find out more about Rotary, the benefits of membership, and what Rotary clubs can do for their communities. Consider holding several over a period of time to familiarize prospective members with Rotary.

+ MARKETING YOUR INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Consider these additional tips for the informational meeting:

- Create your marketing team and ask it to meet regularly to review progress, discuss ideas, and implement plans.
- Create and regularly update a list of top community and business leaders' names. Use this list to target individuals you want in the club.
- See if your district has any **prospective member leads** submitted online.
- Generate buzz and excitement about joining Rotary by displaying posters in many prominent business windows and reception areas. Use social media for promotion.
- Use as many volunteers as possible to distribute cards, posters, and personal letters to businesses, shops, professions, local government, university, college, schools, etc. (A marketing rule of thumb is 1 percent return on distribution. For attendance of 30, distribute at least 3,000 leaflets.)
- Consider creating a website or PowerPoint presentation with a message about membership benefits and the club's potential impact on the community.

+ PREPARING TO HOST AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING

- Identify the list of invitees and special guests/speakers.
- Prepare the agenda, including the purpose of the meeting, which is to educate people about Rotary and explain the benefits of membership.
- Confirm with speakers as needed.
- Ensure presentations are ready and equipment is working before the meeting.
- Ensure venue is arranged for the meeting.
- Ensure banner and other promotional material is in place before meeting starts.
- Prepare handouts with the meeting agenda for all attendees.
- Assign someone to take notes during the meeting.

+ BEST PRACTICES FOR INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS

- Make it professional. You are marketing Rotary.
- Provide light refreshments (possibly sponsored by your venue).
- Network and create a list of at least 10 names that show an interest in meeting again.
- Give all attendees a packet of **Rotary information**.

SAMPLE INFORMATIONAL MEETING AGENDAS

The new club adviser works with a team of interested prospective or current Rotarians to organize and preside at the meeting. These informational meetings often take place over two to three months.

Basic education agenda

- Ask attendees to introduce themselves and state their business, profession, or community interest. Recognize former Rotarians and those who plan to be members of the new club.
- Deliver two or three short light-hearted presentations on the benefits of being a Rotary member, what Rotary can do for the attendees, what Rotary does for others. Emphasize the international aspect of Rotary (i.e., the value proposition of being a Rotarian).
- Provide a very brief overview (focusing less on education and more on information):
 - Types of service opportunities available to Rotarians
 - The Rotary Foundation and its programs
 - Rotary's core values, Rotary's mission and other guiding principles
 - 50 percent attendance requirement (12 hours of service or a mix of meetings and service)
 - Where members can make-up meetings, either locally or through an e-club
 - Need for a diverse membership and the members' responsibility to bring in new members
 - Club, district, and Rotary financial obligations
- Allow time for participants to get to know each other and you. Even just asking participants to meet one new person sitting next to them is enough to start. Some clubs use a roll-call to help introduce and remind attendees of participant names.

- Announce the date and time of the next meeting. Ask everyone to bring a friend.
- Continue with marketing efforts and state the date of the next meeting.

Targeted in-depth information agenda

- Hold a discussion about club goals and objectives, including the types of community or international service the potential members want to get involved in. Consider scheduling a time for the club to review **Be a Vibrant Club**, which is customized for specific regions.
- Invite speakers from your sponsor club to talk about their Rotary experience and the value of membership.
- Provide an overview of:
 - Rotary's efforts to eradicate polio and successes to date (our No. 1 service priority)
 - Each member's responsibility toward attracting and engaging members (based on your skills)
 - Rotary classifications (encourage recruitment from non-represented areas)
- Continue to:
 - Build fellowship by allowing time for participants to get to know each other better
 - Recruit and market the proposed club

If the organizing group has the required minimum of 20 charter members, announce that the next meeting will be the organizational meeting. An organizational meeting is held when the group is ready to elect club officers and begin planning its first service project and fellowship event. Refer to **Organizational Meetings** for more details.