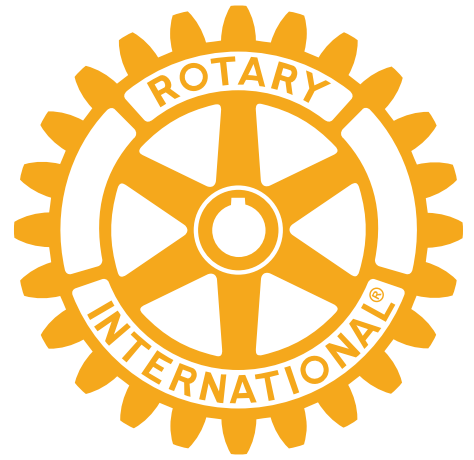
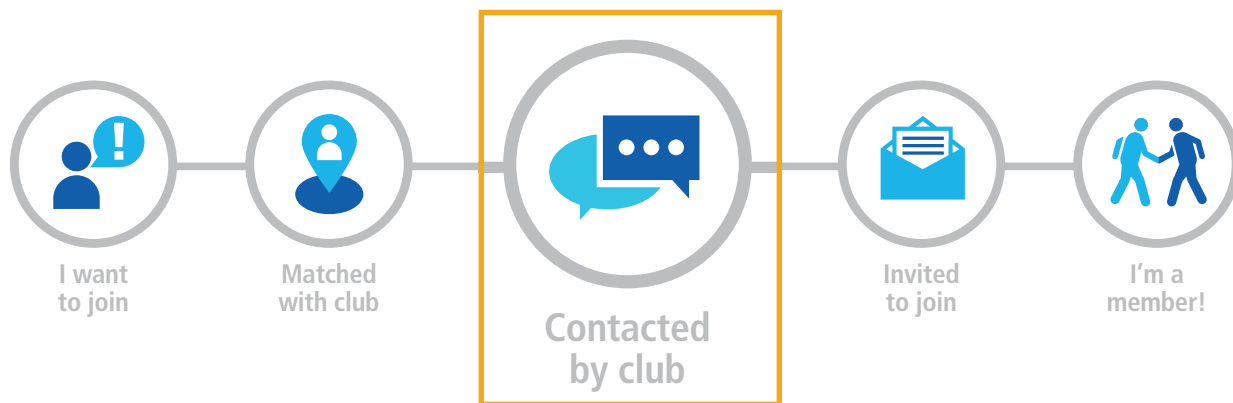


CREATING A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS



When your club is vibrant, innovative, and making a difference in your community, it will attract prospective members. Bringing in new, qualified members diversifies your club and increases its impact. Because this may be the first contact a prospective member has with a club, be sure to make it a positive one.

A PROSPECTIVE MEMBER'S PATH TO MEMBERSHIP



YOUR PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Prospective members can include any of the following:

- A qualified person proposed by one of your club's members (see **Proposing New Members**)
- Someone who approached your club (perhaps having found it through **Club Finder**)
- Someone identified by your club (see **Finding New Members: A Prospective Member Exercise**)
- A candidate who expressed interest through Rotary.org's **Join** page*
- A former Rotarian who is interested in rejoining*
- A current Rotarian who wants to change clubs*
- A qualified person referred by a Rotarian from another club*

*You'll learn about some prospective members through online membership leads. You can track these leads by updating their status on the **Manage Membership Leads** page.

However you learn about prospective members, it's important to take the time to meet with them so you can get to know them and determine whether they are a good fit for your club. Meeting with them also allows you to introduce them to your club so they can decide whether it offers what they are looking for.

Because people can become members of a Rotary club only if invited, the process of admitting new members involves thoughtful planning and deliberation, but also timely response and tact. Whether or not prospects become members of your club, their experience of Rotary should be positive. You can offer a positive experience to all prospective members by following the tips in this guide.

MEET WITH PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Has your club established a process for following up with prospective members? Designate a member to connect with prospective members to talk about their interests and your club. During this conversation:

- Get to know the prospective members. Explain what Rotary is to you and the benefits of membership, such as the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others, develop skills that can be useful in your career, and form lasting friendships.
- Tell the prospective members about your club, what to expect at meetings, and the service projects the club has planned. With their interests in mind, explain how your club can help them pursue their passions.
- Be candid about your club's financial obligations and participation expectations or requirements.
- Be sure to keep this meeting friendly and somewhat brief, so you don't overwhelm prospective members. You can give them a **prospective member brochure** from Rotary International and a **club brochure** that includes details about your club's meetings and activities.

Find more resources for prospective members at www.rotary.org/membership.

Some clubs have larger-scale information sessions that are open to members of the community. For these sessions, or any event, consider showing a Rotary video and giving a presentation about discovering Rotary. The session should still cover what Rotary offers and the benefits of joining your club, but getting to know the prospective members may require one-on-one follow-up.

If you learned about the prospective member through an online membership lead, you can admit them directly using their Rotary ID number on the **Manage Membership Leads** page.



DETERMINE FIT

After your meeting, discuss what you learned about the prospective member with your club membership committee and board to determine whether the prospect is a good fit for the club. Keep an open mind about the person's qualifications, and remember that diversity is one of Rotary's core values. Members who have different perspectives and backgrounds bring fresh ideas and new approaches.

Offering prospective members a positive experience engages them from the start and leaves them with a good impression of your club and Rotary. Having a protocol for engaging prospective members — whether or not they become members — helps create that experience.

ENGAGE

Track online membership leads at this stage by selecting one of the following options in your **Manage Membership Leads** page:

- Club reviewed inquiry
- Club contacted candidate
- Club assigned candidate to a club officer
- Candidate attended meetings

A GOOD FIT

If the prospective members are found to be a good fit and you want to move forward:

- Invite them to attend a meeting or two as guests. Consider covering the meal charges, if applicable, as a courtesy.
- Invite them to a social or service event.
- Introduce them to other members of your club.
- Answer any questions they may have.
- Extend an invitation to join your club, if appropriate.
- Add the new members to your club membership list.
See **How to Add a Member**.
- Celebrate their new membership with the whole club.
- Assign mentors to engage new members right away.
- Provide a series of in-depth new member orientation sessions.
See **Introducing New Members to Rotary: An Orientation Guide**.

ADMIT

Track online membership leads at this stage by selecting one of the following options in your **Manage Membership Leads** page:

- Club proposed candidate for membership
- Club admitted candidate

NOT A GOOD FIT

If your club determines that a prospect is not a good fit, with luck, he or she will realize that, too. You may feel that the prospect is not ready to join. Explain the qualifications your club expects of members and offer the prospect ideas for acquiring the needed skills or experience. Whatever the reason may be, having a personal conversation to let the person know is the courteous thing to do.

There are a number of reasons membership doesn't work out. You can maintain relationships with candidates who aren't yet ready to join by inviting them to participate in service projects and social events so they can continue to support your club in the community.

And you can suggest alternatives:

- **Refer them** to another club that may be a better fit if the problem is your club's meeting time or place or financial obligations, or if they are interested in other types of activities and projects. Every club is unique — some even meet exclusively online — so consider this possibility.
- Consider starting a satellite club if you have a group of prospects, or current members, whose needs or wants differ from the rest of your club's.
- If the prospective member is under the age of 30 and not ready to join a Rotary club, refer them to a Rotaract club.

For online membership leads, be sure to update the status of the lead to reflect what the result was. The gold boxes above list the status options available. When you update a lead's status, you automatically inform your district and RI of what's happening with the leads they forwarded to your club, and you also immediately update your club's membership reports.

DISMISS

Track online membership leads at this stage by selecting one of the following options in your **Manage Membership Leads** page:

- Candidate sent back to district for reassignment
- Club determined candidate was not interested in Rotary
- Club assigned candidate to a youth program
- Club rejected the inquiry

For more information about online membership leads, see **Connect to Membership Leads** and **How to Manage Membership Leads: for Clubs**.