

Arranging a Rotary meeting that will keep your current members engaged and coming back is daunting, but planning a meeting that will be interesting enough to attract new members is overwhelming!! Now multiply that by 52 and it's enough to send even the most seasoned Program Chair straight to the wine cellar. But it needn't be that difficult! All it takes is organization and a calendar. Don't look at it as 52 meetings. Take the calendar and subtract out the standard meetings that EVERY Rotary club SHOULD have then add in the programs you want to have, and just like that, your year is planned!

Here are the SIX types of meetings EVERY Club SHOULD have

- 1) Fellowship (6 per year, or every other month)
- 2) Community
  - a) Seniors
  - b) Foster Kids
  - c) HS Coaches
  - d) Boy/Girl Scouts – host a pop up cookie sale at your meeting
- 3) Fun
  - a) Holiday Party
  - b) Demotion/Promotion Dinner - Demote the old Board and swear in the new Board
- 4) Business
  - a) Vocational Tours of local companies (2 each year) - to understand what they contribute to the community
  - b) Invite local business leaders to speak to your club about recent innovations and technology in their industry
  - c) Host a networking (speed dating) luncheon for local businesses during your meeting
- 5) Rotary
  - a) Governors Visit
  - b) Polio Plus
  - c) Rotary Foundation
  - d) 4-Way Test (explained in detail)
  - e) Exchange student presentation
  - f) Club assemblies (at least 4 per year)
  - g) Shelter Box/Disaster Aid
  - h) Speech Contest
  - i) Dictionaries
  - j) RYLA speaker
- 6) Government
  - a) County Supervisor
  - b) Chief of Police
  - c) County/Parish Sheriff
  - d) Congressional Rep

- e) City Mayor
- f) Water Board Representative

If you're still with me that's 32 meetings in the books. You only need to plan speakers for 20 meetings. If your Club goes dark for the holidays subtract the 3 weeks with Thanksgiving, Christmas, & New Years, now you're down to only 17 meetings to plan a program and find a speaker. Here are some ideas that think outside the box. And below that, you will find ideas your club can incorporate into your meetings that create a sense of camaraderie and friendship.

#### FRESH Meeting Ideas

1. [Rise Against Hunger Meal Packing Day](#)
2. Rotary at Work day - in the spring, get out and clean graffiti off walls or pick up trash on the road in front of your meeting place
3. Have a Meeting at each others' place of work, order pizza (just like the original Rotarians)
4. Ask businesses in the community if you can commandeer their Conference room to host lunch for their employees and make it a celebration of Rotary's community services. **BRAG!!** And attract new recruits!
5. Pop up Coffee shop - First day of School create a pop up coffee shop (an awning, a couple of card tables and chairs, some coffee in a hot thermos and pre-packaged pastries) near the school and promote it on social media and in the drop off line. Invite Moms and Dads for free coffee and Bake Sale. It's the first day of school they will have lots to talk about and you can tell them all about Rotary too. What better way to get the attention of young families??
6. Evening meetings - attract all those potential members who cannot make a meeting during business hours.
7. Mystery trip - plan a meeting around a mystery trip to somewhere outside your community. A ballpark, tailgate party, unusual restaurant, park, museum, theatre, picnic, scenic drive to see the bluebonnets, stargazing at a planetarium or if several members have telescopes have a star party. Invite neighbors, family, friends, co-workers, and any potential members you can think of!
8. Invite Pastors from local churches to come to a specific meeting to hear about the local food closet or pertinent topic. Ask one of them to deliver the speech.
9. On Veterans Day bring an Active duty or retired veteran to lunch and ask one of them to be your keynote speaker.
10. Zoom Meeting with an international club, easy to do right now!
11. Invite High School Juniors & Seniors to come to a meeting and make connections for summer jobs. Ask them to speak about their college dreams and summer schemes.
12. Instead of your regular lunch meeting, Host an ice cream social for seniors in your community Senior Center.

13. Visit another club, Steal their Rotary Bell and hold it hostage, send a ransom letter, ask for a visiting delegation of Bell Retrieving Rotarians to visit your club, maybe even ask for a ransom of a 20 pound bag of Halloween candy for your local trunk or treat event.
14. Hold a birthday party (with cake & candles) for your mayor, police chief, fire chief, local hero. Send invitations to potential members, or others in the community.
15. Honor Teacher of the year with awards at your meeting
16. Honor the local Business that best reflects the 4-Way test at a special meeting
17. New member orientation, explain all the nuances of Rotary and let your new members ask questions
18. Celebrate World Polio Day the week of October 24 (special celebration this year- Africa is Polio FREE!!!)
19. Celebrate your President's birthday or Rotary anniversary.
20. Speed Networking—Meet other Professionals in your town -like speed dating for professional contacts. Set up a night where you invite professionals from your town to join your members in a "SpeedNetworking" experience.
21. Reunion Meeting - invite every past Rotarian on your DACdb/Clubrunner roster.
22. February 23rd: Rotary's Birthday - Have a birthday theme and decorations for the meeting, or just a cake.

Rotary Club meeting traditions with a purpose:

- 1) Wheel Spins - it's your chance to brag about whatever you want as long as you spin the wheel and pay the fine.
  - a) Requires a wheel of fortune type mechanism with various fine amounts up to \$20 with ONE Rotary Wheel at the top. When spun the person pays the fine that the wheel stops on and if it hits the Rotary wheel the person collects \$5.00 from every member present and donates that money to the Rotary Foundation in his/her name. This tradition goes a long way in helping with the Foundation EREY account.
- 2) Each new President should have a Presidential project or goal. What is your purpose for the year?
- 3) Door Greeter to welcome every Rotarian & guest to the meetings
- 4) Give visitors a membership interest kit that includes a Rotary Magazine
- 5) Steal the Rotary Bell from your own President and hold it hostage for ransom, send a ransom note and make demands. Make him/her pay a ransom such as standing in front of your meeting place an hour before your meeting with a sign inviting the public to be his guest at your meeting. Or ask for one million dollars in \$100,000 Dollar Bars candy ;) use your imagination!!
- 6) **Don't discourage, members from promoting their professional life**

- a) Schedule 3 minute-long vocational talks for members to share about their business during a meeting
- b) Invite speakers to talk about innovations in business and technology
- c) Hold club networking events
- d) Encourage newer members to share trends in their line of work

Above all have fun promoting each other and remember that healthy local businesses build the economy and make funds for community service possible. We are business people with a heart for service.

## Examples of Attraction Strategies

- Give all speakers and guests a club brochure (use the Brand Center).
- Invite Rotaractors and young professionals to participate in socials and projects.
- Implement new membership types.
- Have member brainstorm 1-2 people to invite within the next month.
- Host an “open house” to showcase service projects.
- Develop a Membership competition.
- Adopt “pay as you go” meal plan.
- Live stream on Facebook the speaker.
- Have one meeting per month be a social or service project.
- Develop a Satellite Club.

## Examples of Engagement Strategies

For all members:

- Develop a Satellite Club.
- Appoint a Greeter.
- Design a flexible club meeting schedule.
- Give the Membership Satisfaction Survey to all club members
- Make sure every member has some role to play.
- Recognize members’ achievements and celebratory occasions.

For the New Members:

- Create club Orientation program.
- Assign each member to a committee.
- Use the Red Badge New Member program.
- Provide leadership development opportunities for young members.