

10 Common Reasons/Causes of Attrition

Short-term Issues: Action Items

Poor Communications

Inadequate communication between the Rotary Club Leadership and its members can lead to disengagement and members feeling undervalued.

Action Steps

- Club leaders make personal phone calls to members they have not seen in 3-4 weeks.
- Send hand-written notes of appreciation via US Mail.
- Utilization of Family of Rotary Chair for member absentee...reach out with a door knock, or quick electronic communication.
- Re-assess your current communication model, if a member does not make it to a meeting do they still receive important updates?

Unmet Expectations

If the Club Leadership fails to meet the expectations set during the induction process, members may become disillusioned and choose to leave.

Action Steps

- Plan a casual sit-down chat with all new members added within the last 12-months and get their feedback on how their Rotary experience is going.
- Make your new member inductions a real celebration, not just a formality....make them feel excited and warmly welcomed.
- Assign a mentor to each new member, and after the first 3 months switch up mentors, as needed, so as to provide additional perspective.
- Do you have enough social events planned?
- As club leaders do we proceed with the understanding that we are there to 'serve' our members, or the other way around?

Lack of Value

Members may leave if they feel that they are not getting enough value or benefits from their membership.

Lack of Engagement

Members who do not feel actively engaged or involved in the club events may lose interest over time and decide to discontinue their membership.

Action Steps

- Conduct the survey (provided in the Membership Success Center) to find out where your club might not be delivering what your members want/need.
- Be open to new ideas from members wanting to start new programs.
- Make sure every member has some role to play so that just by their involvement they see value. Or ask them to serve on a committee.
- Find new ways to incorporate energy and fun into your regular meetings.
- Make sure members are fully aware of professional development opportunities in Rotary via the Learning Center, Rotary Leadership Institute, etc.

Action Steps

- Make an intentional effort to personally invite inactive members to the next club project/activity.
- Ask those members to mentor newer members or to share with the club their vocational and Rotary experience in a classification talk.
- Plan more social events, make them fun. Invite friends of Rotarians to the event (the focus is not on Rotary, but social interaction & fun).
- Ask unengaged member to do something at the next meeting, even if only a small task.

MEMBERSHIP ATTRITION

FINISHING STRONG

Long-term Issues: Action Items

Change in Financial Situation

Changes in personal financial circumstances can lead to members needing to cut back on expenses, including membership fees.

Action Steps

- One-on-one conversation with members who are considering leaving the club to see if the financial circumstances are short-term or long-term. Short term perhaps the club could front the membership fee until the person is back on their feet and repay the fees.
- Consider suggesting a leave of absence.
- Consider creating and maintaining a 'Family of Rotary' fund that can help a member with their dues for a short while in special circumstances.

Dissatisfaction with Services

Poor quality of services or programs provided by the club can result in members seeking out better alternatives elsewhere.

Action Steps

- Conduct a Survey of your club membership to learn more about their thoughts on the programs and services the club currently provides and ideas for improvement.
- Ask those members, rather than leaving the club, to be part of a committee to evaluate the services and programs to they are a part of the solution.

Competing Priorities

Members may have competing priorities in their personal or professional lives that take precedence over their involvement in the organization.

Action Steps

- E-clubs, Satellite clubs, and impact clubs are possible alternatives.
- Consider suggesting a leave of absence.
- Invest in creating leadership developmental opportunities so that Rotary is perceived with a higher value and priority in mind.
- Consider temporary change to 'honorary' membership.

Life Changes

Personal life changes such as moving to a new location, changing jobs, or starting a family can also contribute to members deciding to leave.

Action Steps

- Contact members and soon-to-be former members to share information about Rotary in their new location (also contact those clubs, & the membership chairpersons).
- If there is more than one Rotary club a city or county, ask if a different day or time would work better.
- E-clubs are always a good option.
- Leave of Absence, virtual attendance, stressing that Rotary has eased up on attendance requirements.

Leadership Changes

Changes in club leadership or direction of the board can impact members' confidence in the clubs future, leading to attrition.

Action Steps

- Conducting a club membership survey every new Rotary year is important to keep communications open with membership. A good communication plan can explain changes in leadership, meals, service projects, and programs and just keep up with the pulse of the club.
- At the next meeting, have every member anonymously write changes that they would like to seek in the club which would make them happy.
- Is there a District level role that might be of interest.

Membership Fees

Increases in membership fees without corresponding enhancements in benefits or services can lead to members opting out.

Action Steps

- If membership fees are a problem for a club maybe a change in how many times a club meets per month should be considered.
- Clearly explain the reason for the dues increase and the benefits coming with the increase.
- Consider tiered membership fee structures. Can food be made optional?