

New Membership Ideas

Within President-elect Ray's "Top Ten New Ideas for Clubs and Districts", he encourages clubs and districts to adopt new membership approaches to help with recruitment and retention. Below are some ideas to consider.

STAR (Special Training for Action in Rotary)

The STAR program was developed by the Rotary Club of El Paso, Texas, USA, in 1976. It is a method that can be used to involve and engage new members while preparing members for club leadership positions. Clubs are encouraged to adopt similar programs with a goal of promoting member retention through involvement, information and education. Since new members enter into a club on a consistent basis, the program can be repeated every year, or as often as needed. In addition to serving as a vehicle for Rotary information, the STAR breakfasts help new members get acquainted with each other as well as becoming familiar with a few of the club's more experienced Rotarians. This is an opportunity to establish a small group atmosphere and foster an inclusive and inviting setting by catering to questions and discussions. In a large club, this can be a very effective tool for promoting fellowship.

The following STAR guidelines can be adapted for use by your club:

- Each new member is placed on the STAR Committee and requested to complete a questionnaire of their interests and skills and provide a photo. The new member's biographical sketch is then presented in the club's weekly bulletin. New members are distinguished by a red star pasted on their Rotary badge with a red ribbon attached, and experienced members are encouraged to sit with them at club meetings and become acquainted.
- Hour-long STAR breakfast meetings are held once a month. All new members are encouraged to attend these meetings for one year.
- The STAR Committee is made up of past club and district leaders.
- All club members are invited to attend at any time to update themselves on Rotary information and to meet the new members. In addition, members of any other clubs in the district are welcome to attend.
- Typical meetings may feature a welcome to first-time attendees, recognition of new STAR graduates, announcements of upcoming club and district activities and events. Program topics could include each of the four Avenues of Service, club history, club community and international service projects, club foundation projects, The Rotary Foundation and the programs of Rotary International. Programs could be presented by directors or committee chairs responsible for the topic being covered.