



How to make clubs stronger and revive moribund clubs

June 2012

Introduction

There are many reasons why a club may become vulnerable and needs strengthening; some of the more common reasons are:

- Club has less than 16 members
- Average age of members is over 70 years old
- Nobody will take on the role of president
- Single gender
- A club lacks drive and positive direction

So how do we make clubs stronger and less vulnerable?

One proven way to rekindle the spirit of Rotary within a club is first to assemble a small task force of enthusiastic and positively minded members to review the health and well being of the club, identify strengths and weaknesses and set in train the palliative measures required to reinvigorate and strengthen the club. The RI document "Club Assessment Tool" available from the RI website will be a valuable guide.

All aspects of Club Service should be addressed by the task force:

- Is the venue good and adequate, with the right setting, enjoyable meals at affordable prices (if required) and providing a good place for fellowship?
- Is the meeting time right for the majority of members who work?
- Are meetings a pleasant occasion, well organised with good speakers?
- Is there a range of projects and Rotary service activities for members to engage in?
- Is there a good spirit and good fellowship within the club?
- Is there a good social programme for members and their spouses/partners?
- Would visitors find a pleasant welcome and an enjoyable occasion?
- Would a potential Rotarian guest feel they would like to join the club?

The prime objective of the task force is to turn the club around, revitalise the membership and their commitment to service.

Truly moribund clubs are stagnant, they have lost their direction and there is little purpose to their Rotary lives. They will die unless some positive steps are taken to revive them. It might mean thorough root and branch reforms to re-establish the club on a sounder footing and to rekindle the Rotary spirit before any recruitment campaign gets under way.

Small Clubs

Some clubs, though small in membership numbers, enjoy good Rotary spirit and maintain a healthy programme of Rotary service activities as well as a good on-going social programme for members.

Nevertheless such clubs need to address the issues of membership before numbers decline further, creating a new member recruitment strategy.

A membership task force should be established to identify all of the business persons, professionals, charity and community workers and other persons known in the local community who have achieved something. Each club member should be involved to encourage family members and friends to become members of the club.

The focus should be an Information (or Interest) Meeting where the clubs achievements and goals can be presented along with the big picture of what Rotary International has achieved on the world stage, as well as Rotary in Britain & Ireland. Guests should be invited to join and contact maintained with each of them to ensure they are eventually inducted into the club.

It may be necessary to repeat this every six months until the number of club members is out of the danger zone

Club membership must never disappear from the club agenda

Resources

Club Assessment Tool from www.rotary.org

Useful contacts

District Membership, Development & Retention Chairman – details in District Handbook/Directory.

RIBI Membership, Development & Retention Committee – details in RIBI Directory.

RI Zone Co-ordinators – details in the RIBI Directory