

“Membership for the future”

Status quo vs. Reality

The Rotary website is a great resource for membership ideas, but it is essential to not limit membership drives to cookie cutter ideas. We live in a society that is challenged by three major generational gaps, it is important that membership committees plan for a method that will cater to the personalities and minds of every person qualified to become Rotarians.

The diversity of Rotary today proves that synergy can take place no matter the age, race, religion or world views of a person. In order keep the Rotary Ideals moving forward we must learn not to be afraid to try new ways to recruit the younger generations. Rotary is not an “Old Man’s Club” but a way for us to serve the needs of our fellow man and joining this worldwide organization that truly exemplifies “Service Above Self”.

Recently I had the opportunity to read some eye-opening facts¹ regarding differences in generations, as we all know the categories are as follows:

- Baby Boomers (1946-1964)
- Generation X (1964-1979)
- Generation Y (1980-1994)

Some of the common distinctions such as views on “The Future”

The baby boomers said “The Future is ours”;

Gen X said “The Future Sucks”;

& finally Gen Y says “The Future might not happen”.

The most frightening facts for Generation Y were the statistics like the average Gen Y:

- will change jobs 9 times by the age of 25.
 - 2 out of 4 come from a single parent home.
 - 4 in 5 have working mothers.
 - More than 2% have one or both parents incarcerated.
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The point is we need to stay creative and not rely on membership materials that maybe several years old or out-dated, which will no longer get the attention of those who are truly different. Remember as the world has evolved so has society.

Baby boomers today have an age range of 60-42, Gen X 42-27 and Gen Y 26-12; it is clear that we have all generations in Rotary today or are soon to become Rotarians.

Build Rotary today by listening to younger members and train them to be leaders now, encourage your club to start an Interact Club. The lessons that we can learn now will continue the diversity and synergy that we have all enjoyed as Rotarians.

Other things to consider is the financial commitment suggested by clubs too expensive so that only the well established business person can afford them?

Will the older members be willing to share their Rotary Knowledge with the younger members? Are we willing to do things outside of the norm?

We must teach and we must be willing to learn. I have been a Rotarian for almost six years now; the experience though short has been one that I cherish and will pass on to my own children. The Rotary Club of Quail Point has considered these facts and our membership committee goals are to find future leaders for Rotary; those who will help grow with the club and help Rotary through another 100 years.

¹ Books referenced- *Managing Generation Why by Carolyn Martin & Bruce Tulgan

*Generation Why by Eric Chester

*Getting them to give a damn by Eric Chester