

[New Rules, New Opportunities for Growth](#) [Membership Matching Game on Rotary International’s Innovative Approach to Membership](#)

[A Problem \(One Size Does Not Fit All\) and Its Solution \(Flexibility in Membership\)](#)

Membership in Rotary has declined in many parts of the world for 30 years. Traditional rules for clubs – weekly meetings, attendance requirements, classifications – and the cost of membership have limited who is able or willing to join. We need new approaches to grow Rotary. In 2016, Rotary International (RI) gave clubs more flexibility in how they manage membership (to learn more, [click here](#)). Formats for clubs and categories of membership were expanded, with clubs required to have only two meetings per month. Membership growth is goal #1 for RI 2019-20 President Mark Maloney. This note summarizes some of the main changes adopted by RI and suggests a game to be played in clubs.

[Various Types of Clubs May Appeal to Different Individuals](#)

- 1) **Traditional clubs** are for professionals and aspiring leaders who meet regularly for service, connections, and personal growth. These clubs appeal to people looking for connections, service opportunities, and traditions.
- 2) **Satellite clubs** attract members who want a different or more affordable experience, or who want to bring Rotary to communities not able to support a stand-alone traditional club. These clubs need **only 8 members** and are sponsored by an existing club, but they can have their own meetings, projects, bylaws, and board. A satellite club can help expand your club in a large corporation/organization or reach an adjacent community.
- 3) **E-clubs** meet online and appeal to people who travel frequently or whose schedule makes it difficult to meet in person (all clubs can meet in person, online, or using a combination of both using Skype, Zoom, or FaceTime).
- 4) **Passport clubs** allow members to attend other clubs’ meetings apart from attending a specified number of meetings in their own club – this works for frequent travelers and those enjoying meeting lots of new people.
- 5) **Corporate clubs** are mostly made up of people working for the same employer.
- 6) **Cause-based clubs** are passionate about a particular cause and focus their service efforts in that area.
- 7) **Rotaract clubs** are, well, Rotaract clubs, but Rotaractors can now also become members of Rotary.

[Various Types of Memberships May Attract New Members](#)

Clubs are free to use different membership types or to design their own membership type to attract new members.

- A. **Corporate memberships** allow clubs to offer attractive membership packages to employees of an organization – with one membership potentially used by several employees, this can reduce costs and time commitments.
- B. **Family memberships** can help reduce costs for spouses, children, or even parents – while all Rotarians pay RI and district dues, club dues may be reduced as an incentive. To learn more, google Rotary Family Memberships.
- C. **Associate and/or youth memberships** can be defined in many ways. Many clubs reduce dues for those under 35 years of age or another threshold. Some clubs use lower cost associate memberships during a trial period to attract prospective members. As long as RI and district dues are paid, there is flexibility in membership types.

[To help your members learn about the new rules, allocate 10 minutes of a meeting to a simple and fun matching game.](#) Explain briefly the various types of clubs and memberships, and then have the enclosed 2-pager distributed to tables so that your members can play the match game in small groups. The game can be completed in 10 minutes, but you can allocate more time for a club discussion after the game. [Hint on question 1: All clubs are Rotary clubs.]

Want to learn more about how to grow your club’s membership or create new and innovative clubs?
 Contact D7620 Membership Chair Quentin Wodon (rotarianeconomist@gmail.com)
 or co-Chair Jennifer (Jennie) Coppit (jcoppit@frederickymca.org).

Membership Matching Game on Rotary's New Rules and New Opportunities for Growth

Question 1: Which of these five clubs meet the criteria to be considered Rotary clubs?

- Moonlight Village meets every first Friday at 6 p.m. to socialize. Members sometimes bring families or friends. Every third Thursday they meet to discuss their current project. If they do not have a project, they discuss needs in the community they could address, and ideas members have for solving them. Sometimes their Thursday meeting is canceled if they are working on their service project. They never have formal meetings with speakers or meals. Members attend when they can or want to, but no one tracks attendance.
- Bay City meets online every other Wednesday at noon. Many of their members travel or live far away, but this does not stop them from participating and even leading the club. Club leaders take turns leading the meeting virtually. A handful of members live near each other and meet in person to log on to the virtual meetings.
- Willow Tree has only 10 traditional members. However, they also have five corporate members and three family members, all with varying membership experiences. Family members are welcome, and members sometimes bring colleagues and friends when extra hands are needed. The corporate members rotate representing their company at the club meetings to expose new people to Rotary. Together they do good work in their small town.
- Fox Trail Art Institute is made entirely of staff from the Art Institute. Because of this, they can meet during lunch on Wednesdays. The members all share the same professional industry, but are diverse in their work expertise and seniority, age, gender, ethnic backgrounds, and perspectives.
- Young Blood has 40 members, all under 35. The president is 29 years old and their youngest member is 19. None of the members are in senior management positions and many are just starting out in their careers. They come from a diverse array of professions and backgrounds. They have a lot of fun, try out different leadership roles, learn new skills, and use their collective passion and subject matter expertise to address community issues.

Circle the clubs that meet basic requirements: Moonlight Village; Bay City; Willow Tree; Fox Trail Art; Young Blood.

Question 2: Which prospective member might be interested by which club?

- Hi, I am Angela. I recently graduated from university and moved to the area for work. I joined our club two months ago because I want to meet people and I have heard that Rotary is a respectable organization that can help you develop as a professional, but it is not what I expected. We eat breakfast, the president speaks, they play some games, and then we all sing a song. The other members enjoy the meetings, but I feel like I do not belong. It is hard to see how becoming a member will help me in my career.
- Hi, I am Claudia. I am a working mom with a busy schedule. I want to give back to my community and meet people outside my workplace with different perspectives. I have visited a club but have not seen any project planning or service efforts. It is not a good use of my time if I am not participating in service. My family is important to me and I cannot justify spending more time away from my kids unless it is about working on a service project that improves the community that we live in.
- Hi, I am Daniel. I have seen many Rotary projects that transformed communities. The school I attended was built by a Rotary club and had all the latest technology. Now I am a successful business owner, and I would love to be a part of Rotary and have a positive impact on others. I would also like to expose my younger employees to Rotary and help them see how they can use their skill sets outside of the workplace to make a difference.
- Hi, I am Sophia. I retired recently and took a trip to South America. On the flight back, I was talking with a Rotarian who is interested in other places and cultures. He told me about the good work that Rotary does around the world. I went to Rotary.org and was really impressed by how much Rotary's work complements my personal values. While I plan to travel a lot during my retirement, I would love to be a member of Rotary somehow and get more involved.
- Hi, I am Seth. I just started working at the Art Institute. I am currently in an administrative position but feel like I could do so much more and that I have a lot to offer. I am creative and love learning and helping others learn, but I am a bit shy. I am very reliable and hope to eventually get promoted into another role at the Art Institute.

So, which is it? Propose a match!

	Angela	Claudia	Daniel	Sophia	Seth
Moonlight Village					
Bay City					
Willow Tree					
Fox Trail Art					
Young Blood					

Question 3: What could you do to address common membership concerns?

I am Jane. I am 39 years old and I have been a member of my Rotary club for almost two years. My boss recommended I join to meet more people and network. The first meeting I attended, everyone was welcoming and chatted with me to get to know me. But now that I have been a member for a while, it seems like everyone has their circle of friends within the club, and I do not seem to belong to any of them. Everyone sits in the same seats, and the meetings are predictable. We always recite The Four-Way Test, have a meal, and listen to a speaker. I am not sure why I am still a member.

Action:

I am Pablo and I have been a member for eight years. I served as club membership chair last year and was excited about the new meeting format options. However, my fellow board members did not share my enthusiasm and the president made sure that changes were not made. A handful of people rotate in and out of leadership positions and maintain the club the way it is. It is frustrating for those of us who want to try new things. Maybe it is time for me to leave.

Action:

My name is Rajesh and I joined my local Rotary club after reading about the work Rotary is doing to eradicate polio. I wanted to be a part of that and apply my expertise to the fight against this disease. I wanted to improve the quality of life for others by joining the ranks of Rotarians. But my club is not involved in polio eradication, or in any other service project for that matter. They meet and eat breakfast once a week and hold an annual barbeque in the park. That is about it. Where is the service? I thought this was a humanitarian organization. I am thinking of joining another organization whose members are more involved in the initiatives.

Action:

My name is Walter and I just retired. I am looking to make new connections and to do something meaningful with my time. I joined Rotary a few months ago because I thought it would be the perfect way to achieve those two goals. The only thing is, I just became a grandfather and I plan to spend time with my new grandson who lives out of town. The club is really strict and is making me feel bad for missing some meetings. They even said I had to attend a meeting nearby my grandson to make them up. I just want to enjoy my time with my family, not feel guilty for visiting them! We are volunteers. Nothing comes before family for me. I do not understand why my club cannot be more flexible!

Action:

My name is Evelyn and I have been a member for almost four years. I really love my Rotary club, but I got a new job and can no longer make the noon meetings. I also have some friends who I think would make great members, but the noon meeting time does not work for them either. I have asked some other members in the club whether they would be open to meeting in the evenings and a few of them said they could meet any time. There are others, though, who feel strongly about keeping a weekly noon meeting. Unfortunately, I will have to leave the club, since I cannot attend the meetings.

Action: