

PRACTICING FLEXIBILITY AND INNOVATION



RELEVANCE: Flexible and innovative clubs are more appealing to prospective members and help keep current members more engaged.

Learning objectives

At the end of this session, participants should be able to help clubs:

- Identify ways to make their club more flexible
- Understand the value of accommodating members' needs

Speaking points:

- Research shows that when clubs have more freedom on how they hold meetings, choose prospective members, and define engagement, they are more vibrant and able to grow.
- The 2016 Council on Legislation approved changes that give clubs more flexibility in when, where, and how they meet, and what types of membership they offer. Consider changes such as:
 - Rotaractors may be members of Rotaract and a Rotary club at the same time.
 - Clubs may choose to gather in person, meet online, or alternate between the two.
 - Clubs may offer different membership types and define those as they wish
 - Clubs can relax attendance policies and meet twice a month if they choose.
- Encourage clubs to take risks, explore ideas without restrictions, and not be afraid of failure.
- Clubs can use the Enhancing the Club Experience: Member Satisfaction Survey to learn what their members like and dislike about their club, then implement new practices that take these into account.

Discussion questions

- How many of you know clubs in your district that have made changes to be more flexible since COL? Are these clubs that were struggling before?
- How can the new flexible options help clubs that are struggling in your district?
- How can you help clubs in your district understand the value of accommodating members' needs with flexible options?
- Where can you go for information on club flexibility? (www.rotary.org/flexibility)

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Suggested Activity: Imagining the future

Ask participants to consider what their ideal club would look like if they could build one tomorrow. Then post six flip charts around the room, each with these questions:

- What new activities would you try?
- Which activities would you drop?
- How would you vary the format of your meetings?
- How often would your club meet? Would you meet in person, online, or both?
- What day and time would you meet?
- What types of membership would you offer?

Then, divide participants into six groups — one for each flip chart. Have each group write its ideas and go to the next chart. Allow 2-3 minutes for each group at each chart. Repeat until each group has answered all the questions.

Give the overall group 5 minutes to review all the content. Ask participants to write down their top three ideas to implement. As time allows, ask various participants to say what they will try.

Resources

- www.rotary.org/flexibility
- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Rotary's governance documents](#)
- [Start Guide for Alternate Membership Types \(includes sample bylaws\)](#)
- [Start Guide for Flexible Meeting Formats \(includes sample bylaws\)](#)
- [Club meeting flexibility and format \(video\)](#)
- [Membership types and attendance flexibility \(video\)](#)
- [Enhancing the Club Experience: Member Satisfaction Survey](#)