

Rotary District 9510



Membership and Diversity

← For further information on all Membership Resources scan the QR code

Dannielle Camporeale *District 9510 Membership Chair* membership@rotary9510.org or 0416 730 678



Hello everyone and welcome to the new year. With **August being Membership Month**, I thought it a good idea to raise the changing face of membership. Gone are the days when we were required to attend a minimum number of meetings.

Rotary International itself has recognised that meeting attendance is not the only way members can serve Rotary. Often when we hear the term “membership” it invokes images of membership campaigns and collecting new members from the community.

The thing that is most commonly overlooked is that **membership overarches the entire member experience**, from the time they attend their first Rotary event through the duration of their membership. What our statistics show is that, in general, we do not have significant issues in attracting new members. **Moreover we have issues in retaining them.**

While membership retention can seem difficult, it doesn't have to be. Many of the most effective strategies involve tools and insights that we already have at our disposal, and it's just a matter of refocusing our efforts on what's happening inside our clubs instead of worrying about the members we haven't reached yet. If our current members are not enjoying their Rotary experience and having their needs met within their clubs it creates a culture of unrest.

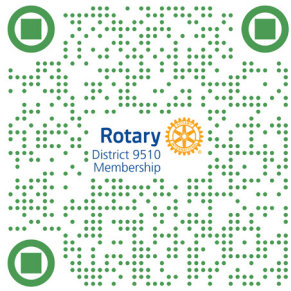
This is not the environment we want to be bringing new members into. Imagine you're a new potential member attending an event for the first time and you are hearing people making negative comments about their experience in Rotary. *This does not create an attractive environment for people to want to join.*

Change begins from within. If our club culture is not one of respect, positivity and excitement for our current members, how can we expect new members to want to be part of that. I have received feedback from current and past members and have personal experiences of bullying, harassment and inappropriate conduct within clubs. This creates unrest and negativity.

A wise woman once told me **“The behaviour you walk past is the behaviour you choose to accept”**. The problem that appears to exist is that when these behaviours are addressed it is often the victim who is vilified for raising their concerns.



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We need to ensure that our clubs create a space of safety for members to be able to express concerns without fear of retribution.

We should all be free to appropriately express our thoughts and view in a respectful way and that they be received in a respectful way. As a humanitarian organisation we should be compassionate and caring for those who choose to volunteer, not just for those we aide.

The Rotary International website has many tools available, free of charge, for clubs to access to create an environment of respect, encouragement and value. The 4 Way Test is not just something to be recited at meetings. It is about fellowship, empathy, accountability and trust. **The Four-Way Test is Rotary's unique approach and process to address conflicts, solve problems and make decisions to achieve desired outcomes, not just in the aide we provide but in the way we address our members.**

Having a **positive club culture creates an inviting space for current members to stay** and new members to join.

With Membership Month upon us, perhaps this may be a good time for some reflection of where are clubs are current and where we want to be in the future.

Dannielle