**ROTARY INFORMATION EVENT**

**STEPS FOR RUNNING A ROTARY INFORMATION EVENT (YASS METHOD)**

The following system has been tested by several Rotary clubs and works if **followed exactly**, no shortcuts.

1. **SET A DATE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP NIGHT**

It’s important you do this first because you have a deadline to get things done and a goal to reach.

1. **TALK TO MEMBERS AND GET THEM THINKING OF PEOPLE TO INVITE.**

* The members don’t need to know the people well but just know them well enough to be sure they would suit ROTARY
* They also need to know their correct name and home address; home addresses are more personal.

Suggestions: Neighbours, tradespersons, local professionals, co-workers etc.

1. **CREATE A DATABASE TO MANAGE GUEST INFORMATION**

* Include invitee names, addresses, contact details;
* Make sure you update when the letter is sent, reply received and any comments, especially people who make contact but can’t come;
* Maintain progress status of invitee

1. **WRITE A PERSONALLY ADDRESSED LETTER TO EACH PERSON**

* The letter must be on Club letterhead;
  + Use the Brand Centre in My Rotary to get the logo correct
* The President personally signs the letter;
* Posted in a hand-written envelope – unusual, so catches interest;
* Send out two weeks before the event;
* Suggest indicating it is only a one-hour event;
* Don’t make the letter too long

1. **MAINTAIN THE DATABASE**

* Make sure people who reply ‘No’ are retained on the database - the fact they have replied shows they are interested but not at this stage;
* If you get ‘returned’ invites – follow up with the member who provided the name and address to confirm correct postal address and re-send;

1. **EVENT PREPARATION**

* THIS IS NOT A MEETING – this is an information event about Rotary, not some cause;
* DO NOT HAVE A GUEST SPEAKER;
* Event duration is one hour
* Keep the event casual with finger food – NOT A SIT-DOWN MEAL;
* Have a very good MC who welcomes everyone and keeps the event flowing;
* Create a running sheet to keep the event to time.
* Arrange Rotary signage and book district materials if required
* If you have a screen have the Rotary logo and the club name up on it;
* Have guest name tags printed out and ready with reception so guests know they are expected.
* Prepare the club information handout and the club members sharing stories
* All members should wear their club name badge and Rotary-branded clothing so they are distinguishable in the crowd
* Use members to
  + Act as ‘greeters’ bringing guests to reception to get their name tag and details
  + Be on reception to give guests’ their name tag and update the database, particularly with any details not recorded
  + Serve the food platters, which encourages chatter
  + Manage the bar
  + Mix and mingle showing how Rotary is fun while doing good for the community.

1. **EVENT IN ACTION**

* THIS IS NOT A MEETING
* DO NOT HAVE A GUEST SPEAKER – this is an information event about Rotary, not some cause.
* 20 minutes mix and mingle / 20 minutes of Rotary Stories / 20 minutes chatting after.
* Keep the event casual
* Have four or five members tell their Rotary Story
  + Maximum of 3-5 minutes
  + Have a mix of ages and genders if possible
  + Use the stories to illustrate Rotary without making it sound like hard work.
* Make sure you have chosen members who tell a story well and have a good story to tell
* This is not a run down on projects the club does or the money it makes but lots of stories to which guests may relate;

For example:

* + Funny happenings when undertaking your first project;
  + Experiences visiting other clubs when travelling for work/holiday;
  + The joy of having an exchange student staying with you;
  + The club looking after a ROMAC family;
  + What the Rotarians get out of Rotary etc
  + **MUST NOT BE LONGER THAN 5 Mins.**
* End with a 1 to 2-minute Rotary video from My Rotary

**DO NOT ASK IF THEY WOULD LIKE TO JOIN ROTARY AT THE EVENT**

This is an informal, information event where each party is getting to know each other, de-mystify Rotary, discover expectations and what Rotary offers. We don’t want to look desperate!

1. **EVENT TAKE AWAY**

* At the end of the event, thank the guests for coming;
* Give guests information about Rotary and your club to take away
* Use the template in the Brand Centre to create a club brochure using club photos, wording from Rotary Website and get it printed professionally

1. **FOLLOW UP**

* Each guest should be followed up the next day, by phone, and asked if they enjoyed the event
* Ask them if they would like to attend a club event next week (meeting, social event, project)
* DO NOT ASK IF THEY WOULD LIKE TO JOIN ROTARY JUST YET – you don’t want to look desperate!

1. **NEXT CONNECTIONS**

* The potential members should be asked to three meetings as a guest.
  + The first to see how a normal meeting runs.
  + The second is for the club Membership Lead to connect and arrange a catch up outside of Rotary to gauge interest, discuss costs and requirements of Rotary.

Membership Application form may be completed at club meeting or in 1on1 meeting

The board considers the candidate’s application to Rotary and advises members.

* + At the third meeting just enjoy the meeting and possible Induction.

Other connections during this period may also be at social events or projects

1. **INDUCTION**

This should be done as soon as possible either at the third meeting or no later than five weeks after the information event.

Welcome Kits are available from the district – go to [rotarydistrict9910.org](http://www.rotarydistrict9910.org/) / For Rotarians / Club Development **or** [rdusupplies.com.au](https://rdusupplies.com.au/)

Make it special - invite the new member’s family and or friends

**POINTS TO NOTE**

* Have a small organising committee – possibly the President, definitely Membership Lead and one or two others organising the event.
* Plan each step of the event. It’s all in the detail
* Have a budget to ensure all costs are covered.
* Make sure the finger food is easy to eat and covers all diets, such as vegetarian, gluten-free, dairy-free.
* Provide a wide variety of drinks - alcohol and non-alcohol.
* Make sure all members have a job at the event and understand their role.
* Use My Rotary’s Brand Center to ensure your Rotary branding is current, especially your letterhead
* Make a brochure with Brand Center’s template using photos from your club or use photos on My Rotary and wording from [www.rotary.org](file:///C:\Users\User\Dropbox\ROTARY%20(elainemead.rotary@gmail.com)\Rotary%20-%20Membership%202021-xxxx\YASS\www.rotary.org).
* Have all the information you need for candidates ready **before** the event
* Make sure the event runs smoothly. You are selling brand Rotary.
* **Follow Up** – make sure this is done. Delegate if need be
* Make sure the candidate knows the costs and time involved, don’t sugarcoat it
* In the months following the event make sure the club programme is engaging - good speakers, projects, social events - to which you can invite the potential members.

**MAINTAIN DATABASE**

* Make sure people who say no are retained on the database - the fact they have replied shows they are interested but not at this stage.
* Update the information from what you have learned about the attendees on the night and in any follow up calls.
* Could also add further columns for invites and attendance at follow up meetings/projects and final induction
* Ensure the information is relevant for the next event