

Rotary International District 9810 “Our Club – Our Future”

What is Our Club –Our Future?

In many districts around the Rotary World the ‘Club Visioning’ program has been adopted with much evidence of success. In D9810 in 2008-09 a series of club visioning workshops were conducted and much was learned from the experience. As a result, we have made some changes to the program.

We wanted to ensure that we retain those parts of the program that proved to be the most effective. We also wanted to add something to the workshop programs that would allow for more creativity and more original ideas to be generated. Our aim is to help clubs create a new and dynamic vision, together with a strategic plan that would serve them well into the future.

What is vision?

“If you come to a fork in the road, take it.”

Yogi Berra

“If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else.

Yogi Berra

Well, that's one (or two...?) ways to think about the future. But maybe not what we want for our business, our personal goals, or indeed – our Rotary Club!

Some of the definitions of a vision include:

- The description of how we want to be...
- A shared view to guide our action
- A foundation upon which to build our long and short term plans.

It's hard to imagine a well-managed professional organisation not having a really clear idea where they are headed and what they would ideally like to achieve.

“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.”

Joel A. Barker

“Your successful past will block your visions of the future.”

Joel A. Barker

Why do we need to create a ‘vision’ for each Rotary Club?

All Rotary Clubs are different – just ask your members!

Creating a future vision specific to YOUR club personalizes what you plan for the future. The ‘Our Club – Our Future’ visioning workshop will help a Rotary Club design its own VISION, and then sets out the steps necessary to achieve that vision.

The result is not some blanket, all-purpose, one-size-fits-all vision decided by the Rotary District or by Rotary International. Instead, it is a vision designed and endorsed by the Club's own members. This vision will help to ensure consensus, continuity and consistency in your Club's leadership and programming, to set the stage for future progress.

Is this just a membership drive exercise?

Of course it is – but only in part! Imagine a young professional coming to your club as a prospective member, and asking the question, “What are your plans for the next few years?”

You would certainly need at least a brief and concise description of what the club stood for and what the future might look like! If that wasn't in place you would certainly lose the interest of the potential member.

In itself this is not a ‘membership drive initiative’. It was designed to help clubs develop a sense of direction and the structure necessary to achieve the specific club's goals. It is an exercise which strengthens the club and a byproduct of this will hopefully be an increase in membership.

Are clubs required to do this?

No, there is no requirement that clubs conduct an ‘Our Club – Our Future’ workshop.

Who will conduct the session?

Fellow Rotarians who are interested in seeing individual clubs grow will facilitate the program. They are experienced volunteers that have been involved as Rotary leaders and trainers. They include experienced facilitators and are all knowledgeable about Rotary at local, district, and international levels. They have all been trained in facilitating the ‘Our Club – Our Future’ workshops.

Why is the session being conducted?

Your Rotary Club decided to schedule the session because of its commitment to the planning principles promoted in the **Club Leadership Plan (CLP)** announced at the 2005 Rotary International Convention. The first CLP recommendation is that each local Club develops a vision and a long-range plan to ensure continuity and consistency among leadership and programming and set the stage for future progress.

In particular the process will remove the need to re-invent the wheel at every club changeover!

‘Our Club – Our Future’ workshop sessions will provide your club with a medium for easier and more effective overview and the evaluation of YOUR future direction, aspirations and will set the foundations for the preparation of your long term plan.

Who should participate from my Rotary Club?

The session is intended for all interested Rotarians in your club – from your newest members to your most mature! The breadth and depth of the facilitation exercise is ensured when Club leaders and its opinion-makers participate. Participants will often represent current or past roles as president, director, and committee chair. Attendance is expected from present board members, the current president, president-elect, president-elect nominee, immediate past president, and at least a couple of other past-presidents, together with as many members as possible. Their collective involvement is essential.

What should I expect from the session?

Each session will be tailored to suit your particular club's needs, but as a general guide:

The session will start at around 6:00 pm with a light meal provided by your Rotary club if required.

You should expect the session to last about three hours.
The location will be specified by your club's 'Our Club – Our Future' coordinator.
The program opens with a brief presentation that describes visioning and strategic planning for Rotary at multiple levels – International, district, and local.

The facilitators will then...

- Introduce an exercise designed to create a clear vision or picture of your ideal future, both as a member and for the club.
- Facilitate sharing your views and ideas about the future with others and recording them
- Introduce some creative thinking tools and techniques to help establish what might be needed to reach this vision of the future. You and your fellow Rotarians will “see” and envision your future Club in terms of membership, club attributes, special projects, fundraising, and the like.
- Help you organise your ideas into a set of categories helpful in prioritizing your Club's planning focus and post them around the meeting room.
- Introduce you to a structured prioritisation method enabling Club members to develop consensus around and commit to take action on the most important areas to achieve the desired Club future.

The facilitation concludes when specific assignments of responsibility for next steps are identified and, including a preliminary determination of what needs to be done, by whom, and by when.

What is expected of me as a participant?

The facilitation team anticipates you will come with an open mind and ready to be fully engaged in a productive, creative session to define the future of your club. That includes our hope you will share your views, hopes, and expectations in a thoughtful way.

How will we know the vision facilitation was successful?

There are at least three measures of success:

An immediate measure of progress will be the members' pledge and willingness to move the planning processes from a nice-to-do concept to meaningful growth programs for the Club, its members, and its community.

The second is that the output from this session is woven into the annual plans of the incoming and succeeding Presidents. It will be reflected in the continuity and consistency of programming and leadership in your Club.

Finally, the long-term mark of accomplishment will be at the end of three years when your Club advances from *where it is* to *where it wants to be*.

You are invited to book a session for your club.

Contact your District 9810 'Our Club – Our Future' workshop coordinator Ken Wall – kenwall@abcdreams.org.au, to discuss the process, benefits and the logistics we need to put in place in order to conduct the workshop.

“Rotary is not an organisation for retrospection. It is rather one whose worth and purpose lie in future activity rather than past performance.”

Paul Harris, Founder of Rotary International