



Guidelines for Interact Club Officers

Structure

Under the leadership of the Interact club president, the members of an Interact club plan fund-raising activities, service projects, and social events. It is the role of the Interact club's board of directors to review and approve those plans. The board of directors consists of all of the club officers (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) and an additional number of officers determined by the size of the club. The Interact club's board of directors is the governing body of the club and meets at least once a month. Club members in good standing may attend board meetings as observers, speaking only with permission of the board.

All club administrative matters should be conducted at board meetings, which should be held at least once a month. At the next club meeting, the board must make a full report on actions taken. The Rotarian advisor must attend all board meetings.

President

The president presides over all meetings of the club and the board of directors, appoints all standing and special committees (with board approval), and serves as a member of all committees. As the club leader, the president helps members to develop as leaders and works to ensure that the club's activities and service projects are successfully promoted and completed. The president should develop a talent for identifying members' skills and interests and put them to work in club projects.

Before taking office, the president should:

- Study the Interact Statement of Policy, Constitution, and By-Laws (Appendices A, B, and C).
- Meet with the current president to review the club's records and discuss its current activities.
- Meet with the new board of directors to review current activities and plan new ones.
- Decide which of the existing committees should be retained for the upcoming year, and think about any new committees that can be created.
- Appoint committee chairpersons based on qualifications and Interact experience (see Appendix J, The Interact Club Committee Appointment Worksheet) and discuss the new chairpersons' choices for committee members.

While in office, the president should:

- Conduct effective meetings by preparing a detailed agenda that includes what will be covered and for how long. Allow time for reports from officers and committee members.
- Pay attention to membership growth and development. Maintain a balance among age groups and keep current members' interest high by giving them plenty of opportunity to participate and voice their opinions.
- Be creative when planning the club's meeting programs and plan them well in advance. Vary the types of programs (speakers, panel discussions, trips, entertainment) to satisfy a wide range of interests.
- Avoid getting caught up in the details. Delegate responsibility to help other members develop their leadership skills.
- Actively communicate and collaborate with the Rotarian advisor, the faculty advisor, and the district Interact chairperson.

Vice-President

The vice-president presides over meetings when the president is absent, serves as a member of the board of directors, and may handle special assignments for the president. Before taking office and throughout the year, the vice-president should keep up to date on all of the club's goals and ongoing activities. The vice-presidency is not an automatic steppingstone to the presidency, but it serves as an excellent training ground for a future club leader.

Secretary

The secretary maintains all club records, including membership records, which are necessary for determining who is eligible to vote. These consist of: the membership activities record (Appendix I), the committee appointment worksheet (Appendix J), attendance records (Appendix G), record of dues payments (Appendix H), and each member's original application form (Appendix E).

The secretary also completes the Interact Incoming Officer Data Form (Appendix K) and the Interact Project Data Form (Appendix L) and submits them to Rotary International. The secretary must also take minutes at all meetings. Properly prepared minutes will:

- Reflect what was said at a meeting in a clear, concise manner.
- Report actions taken at a meeting without including details as to how decisions were reached.
- Cover the following points:
 - kind of meeting (e.g., board meeting, club meeting, committee meeting, etc.)
 - date

- time
- place
- presiding officer
- attendance
- approval and correction of last meeting’s minutes
- treasurer’s statement, in totals only
- summary of reports from officers and committees
- summary of actions taken and of the program
- announcements
- time of adjournment

Treasurer

The treasurer works with the secretary to maintain accurate financial records. The treasurer should be a responsible, detail-oriented person. The treasurer, who serves as the chairperson of the finance committee, collects membership dues (see Appendix H), deposits the dues and all proceeds from fund-raising projects, and handles most of the work of preparing and administering the budget. The treasurer also prepares a monthly report that shows the following:

- money on hand at the beginning and the end of the month
- receipts, with their source (dues, sale of items, etc.) clearly indicated
- payments, showing for what and to whom

A final report summing up the year’s operation should be given to the club and to the incoming treasurer. All of the treasurer’s reports form part of the club’s permanent record, which should be maintained by the club secretary.

Other officers

Along with the president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, an additional number of officers may be determined by the club for inclusion on the board of directors. This must be approved by the sponsoring Rotary club. Members of the board of directors should be familiar with the Interact constitutional documents (Appendices A, B, and C). The board is required to meet at least once a month and report at the following club meeting on any action taken. Board members should think of project ideas, encourage all members to participate, and delegate responsibilities. At the end of the year, the board makes an annual report that covers all major action of the year.

Form Committees

Each Interact club has four standing committees: the club committee, the finance committee, the service committee, and the international understanding committee. The president appoints the members of these committees, and the board must approve those appointments. Depending on the club’s size, the president may appoint other committees, such as membership, program planning, and public relations. The board must approve those appointments as well. Committees handle many of the club’s administrative and service responsibilities, but they may not take action without the approval of the membership.

Club Committee

This committee is responsible for attendance, membership, meeting programs, fellowship, and public relations. This committee comes up with ideas for the programs at club meetings, ways to recruit new members and keep current members, and methods for publicizing the club’s activities. The committee should maintain a historical record of the club, such as a scrapbook, that includes pictures and descriptions of the club’s activities.

Finance Committee

This committee decides how the club will fund its activities, always with an eye toward keeping dues low and making sure that the club remains self-supporting. Interactors raise money in a variety of ways, such as sales, events, or odd jobs. The committee also finds ways to solicit funds from businesses and organizations by offering something of value – perhaps services or recognition — in return.

Service Committee and International Understanding Committee

The Service Committee has one purpose: to initiate one project each year that benefits either the school or the community. The International Understanding Committee also has one purpose: to undertake one project each year that promotes international goodwill. For examples of successful projects carried out by Interact clubs, see Chapter 4.

Strong committee leadership

Interact committee chairpersons should consider these suggestions:

- Give everyone a job to do and keep track of assignments.
- Establish a set schedule of committee meetings for the year.
- Make sure all committee members are familiar with the club’s constitutional documents and the club’s organization and goals.
- When you call a meeting, notify the committee members in writing, giving the date, time, place, and subject of the meeting.

- Prepare an agenda for the meeting and stick to it.
- Contact members scheduled to make reports at the meeting and ask if they need any help preparing their reports.
- Ask members for their opinions.
- Keep meetings short and to the point.
- Keep accurate records but avoid unnecessary paperwork.

Conduct Effective Meetings

Club meetings should be held at least twice a month at a time and place that suits the members (and the school for school-based clubs). This suggested format can help you hold productive meetings:

- Open the meeting with a pledge, anthem, or some other local custom.
- The president introduces guests and makes announcements and reminders.
- The secretary, treasurer, and committee chairs make any relevant reports.
- Introduce new members.
- Present the meeting program.
- Close with thanks to the speakers or others who have participated.
- Adjourn the meeting.

Recruit and Retain Members

The success of an Interact club depends on the commitment and hard work of its members. When recruiting new members, seek out those with special interests and abilities who would be enthusiastic about the social and service opportunities Interact provides. The following suggestions can help you build a strong, committed membership:

- Set membership goals and encourage all club members to work to meet them.
- Challenge members to bring in one new Interactor every six months.
- Give out an award to the member who recruits the most new members.
- Organize a special event to attract new members. Explain the purpose of Interact, and show pictures of your club's activities.
- Publicize your club's activities in the school paper and in the community.
- Ask experienced Interactors to "adopt" new members and make them feel welcome.
- Assign committee responsibilities to veteran members. This will let them know they're important to the club.
- Monitor attendance. Make sure everyone attends at least 60 percent of the meetings.
- Maintain a good balance among age levels and a good balance among males and females if the club is co-educational.
- Get feedback from the members on the types of meeting programs they would like to see.

Develop a Strong Service Program

Carrying out interesting and creative service projects is a key element of an Interact club's success. Each year, Interact clubs conduct two service projects — one that benefits the school or the community, and one that promotes international understanding. See Chapter 4 for a description of successful projects conducted by other clubs. Also consult Chapter 6 for information on Rotary International's community and international program resources.

School or community projects

School or community projects cover a wide scope, so it is helpful to focus your efforts. Think of the following questions when planning your service activities:

- What services does our school/community need?
- What other community organizations could use our Interact club's assistance?
- Can we collaborate with our sponsoring Rotary club or local Rotaract club on their service efforts?
- What types of community service projects fit within our club's budget?

School and community project ideas:

- Hold a blood drive.
- Collect books for a school, library, or literacy program.
- Raise awareness of drug or alcohol abuse, HIV/AIDS, or other health issues.
- Participate in a clean-up program at a park or other public place.
- Raise funds to buy equipment or books for your school.
- Host a holiday party for disadvantaged youth or residents of a nursing home.

International projects

International projects often involve an exchange of correspondence or visits between members of Interact clubs in different countries. Establish ongoing correspondence with a club before planning an exchange or a visit. Correspondence can include an exchange of photos or yearbooks, a joint meeting conducted on the telephone, or a regular exchange of e-mail or letters.

There are three ways to contact a foreign club:

1. Consult the Interact Correspondence Exchange List. Sent by RI to Interact clubs each September, this list includes contact information for Interact clubs that have indicated an interest in corresponding and exchanging with other clubs.
2. Contact district Interact chairpersons in other countries. Your sponsoring club's president has a list of all of the district Interact chairpersons around the world.
3. Search the World Wide Web for the home pages of Interact clubs.

Other ideas for international projects:

- Collect money or goods to send to needy people in another country.
- Conduct a service project in a neighboring country.
- Involve exchange students in your club's activities.
- Support a project on the RI World Community Service Projects Exchange listing
- Hold an international festival to increase your school's awareness of different cultures.

Carry Out Effective Fund-Raising Activities

Interact clubs are self-financed and dues should be kept low, so the best way to finance club service projects and other activities is through fund-raising activities. The basic rule to remember when raising funds is that you must offer something of value in return.

When holding a fund-raiser:

- Set realistic goals based on how much financial support you'll need and how much money you can raise. Remember that some projects may be expensive to conduct but will also raise more than enough money to cover the costs.
- Draw upon the resources you have at hand. If your members can sing or act, consider putting on a show. Other ideas include a car wash or a bake sale.
- Involve all members of the club.
- Promote the project through the local media, including the school newspaper. Invite a reporter to attend. Immediately after the event, send action photographs and a brief report of your project to the local media and to RI.

Maintain Good Communication

Keeping in touch with people who have an interest in your activities is a good way to help keep your Interact club thriving. You have three basic lines of communication: a newsletter for your members and your sponsoring club, the forms that you complete and send to RI, and publicity through the local media.

The club newsletter

The club newsletter should be designed to provide information about your club to all interested parties, including club members, the school newspaper, your sponsoring Rotary club, the district Interact committee, the local media, and RI. When creating a newsletter remember to include the following:

- Information about proposed, ongoing, and recently completed service projects and fund-raising efforts
- News from RI that pertains to Interact
- Reports from your club's officers, committee members, and directors
- A synopsis of each meeting
- Information about your sponsoring Rotary club's activities that would be of interest to your club

Be sure to include in every issue the name and address of your club, its meeting time and place, the name of the sponsoring Rotary club, and your Rotary district number.

World Wide Web

Interact Club of Rosario National High School website address is <http://rccepz.org/interact/rnhs>. A Web site can serve as an effective tool for sharing information about your club with your sponsoring club, other Interact clubs, and your community. It can also include links to your sponsoring Rotary club's Web site (<http://rccepz.org>) and the Web site of RI (www.rotary.org).

Forms to be sent to RI

The Interact Incoming Officer Data Form (Appendix K) and the Interact Project Data Form (Appendix L) should be completed and returned to the Community Programs section at RI World Headquarters. These reports are essential for RI Interact records and also provide material for use in various RI publications.

Public Relations

Your club and its projects are likely to receive more support if the community knows about them. A good image in the community can also help your club recruit new members and contributes to an accurate, positive image of Interact and Rotary. Publicize your club's activities in the local and school newspapers and other media. The public relations committee of your sponsoring Rotary club should be able to provide lists of local media contacts.

Make sure that someone is taking action pictures at all of your club's events. Send pictures and information about the events to the district Interact chairperson for use in the district Interact newsletter and to the district governor for inclusion in the monthly letter to Rotary clubs in the district. Also send the pictures and information to the Community Programs section at RI World Headquarters for use in various RI publications.

Sample Interact news release

CONTACT: (Name, address, and telephone number of the Interact club president or Rotarian advisor of the Interact club)

Interact club to collect supplies for needy Mexican village

(City, State, Date) — Members of the Interact Club of (*name*) will be collecting toys, clothing, blankets and other essentials to provide to residents of the village of Cerro Azul, Mexico.

Cerro Azul, a hillside community near Tecate, is made up of families who live in small shacks or sheds without furniture, electricity or running water. The residents' primary source of income is brickmaking, but they have no kilns, so bricks must be sun-dried in a field. A sudden rainstorm can destroy a family's entire livelihood.

Donations may be left in bags at a drop-off center at the school. Members of the Interact club will prepare the collected goods for shipping next month.

Interact is a Rotary-sponsored service club for young people age 14-18, with more than 150,000 members in more than 6,500 clubs in 100 countries and geographical areas. The worldwide program was launched by Rotary International in 1962. The Interact Club of (*name*) is sponsored by the Rotary Club of (*name*).

Rotary International is a global network of 29,000 clubs in 161 countries and geographical areas. It consists of more than 1.2 million professional men and women who, as civic leaders, volunteer to improve the quality of life in their home and world communities. Rotary clubs support programs that address today's most critical issues, including violence, drug abuse, AIDS, hunger, the environment, illiteracy, youth development and international understanding.

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