

Vocational Service in Action



Learn about
Vocational Service and
how to incorporate
it into your personal
and professional life
through Rotary

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Vocational Service is one way that members and participants can serve at Rotary. It involves using our professional skills and expertise to serve the community, promote ethical practices, and inspire others.

Vocational Service encourages us to:

- Adhere to high ethical standards in our professional and personal lives, inspiring others through our words and actions
- Recognize the value of all skills and occupations
- Bring our ideal of Doing Good in the World to our jobs
- Use our occupations to improve and empower communities
- Help others develop skills and explore new career opportunities and interests

Vocational Service can also take place virtually through:

- Mentoring and sharing skills online
- Taking part in remote professional development
- Engaging in digital collaborations
- Sharing knowledge internationally



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To thrive in a rapidly changing world, Rotary needs to evolve. Our Action Plan gives us a clear path for the future. The Vocational Service of Rotarians and Rotaractors is deeply connected to our Action Plan and is a key part of advancing our priorities:

Increase our impact. By using our expertise, we can design projects with a broader reach, build more effective community partnerships, have measurable outcomes, and make positive and lasting change. We also gain new skills and perspectives by working with members and participants who offer their expertise through service.

Expand our reach. By leveraging our networks, we can connect with new partners and audiences.

Enhance participant engagement. By mentoring members, nurturing future leaders, acquiring new knowledge and skills, and participating more actively through our talents, we take part in enriching, more meaningful experiences. Engagement helps retain members and strengthens people's commitment to Rotary's ideals.

Increase our ability to adapt. Members with different professions, backgrounds, and knowledge bring innovative ideas and perspectives to their clubs, service projects, and programs.



Integrity and Rotary's standards

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Rotary emphasizes integrity and high ethical standards for its members. The Four-Way Test, a code of conduct for members, and our commitment to foster a culture of belonging for everyone who engages with us reflect our values and guide our behavior at work and in our personal lives.

THE FOUR-WAY TEST

The Four-Way Test is an essential standard by which we measure ethical behavior.

Of the things we think, say or do:

- 1) Is it the TRUTH?
- 2) Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- 3) Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- 4) Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?



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OUR CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

This framework for ethical behavior emphasizes the core values of fellowship, integrity, diversity, service, and leadership.

All members (Rotarians and Rotaractors) are expected to:

1. Act with integrity and high ethical standards in their personal and professional lives.
2. Deal fairly with others and treat them with respect, which includes adhering to Rotary's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Code of Conduct by using respectful language, being supportive, fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment, and celebrating diversity.
3. Use their professional skills through Rotary to improve people's quality of life in their own communities and elsewhere in the world.
4. Avoid behavior that reflects adversely on Rotary or other Rotary members.
5. Follow all codes of conduct for any Rotary-related event.

As we engage in Vocational Service — whether we're using our expertise to serve communities or applying Rotary's values to our personal and professional lives — The Four-Way Test and the code of conduct for members can guide our decisions and foster empathy, respect, trust, collaboration, and a commitment to the greater good.



Advancing high ethical standards in the workplace

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As leaders in our businesses and professions, we can advance high standards by serving as positive examples in our places of work and in our community and recognizing the ethical practices of local businesses.

Here are a few specific ways we can integrate ethics into our daily work:

- Promote and practice honesty, accountability, fairness, integrity, and respect in all interactions with employees, colleagues, vendors, and clients.
- Acknowledge, encourage, and share colleagues' exemplary behavior.
- Promote socially and environmentally responsible practices in our businesses and organizations.
- Implement digital ethics guidelines, including data privacy and cybersecurity practices.
- Develop protocols to respond ethically to crisis situations or business disruptions.
- Cultivate cultural sensitivity and understanding, embracing diversity in the workplace and fostering an inclusive environment for all.

Vocational Service Month

January is designated as Vocational Service Month, and it's a great time to think about how your club or district implements this. Use the ideas in this guide to get started or expand your service.



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Examples:

- A Rotaract club in the Philippines advocates for youths with disabilities, and club members work with the young people to develop life skills aimed at increasing their independence. Club members have also recorded podcasts about the rights of people with disabilities and the challenges they face to raise awareness and educate people.
- A Rotary member in the United States who is the founder and chief executive of a game development company co-created a game that promotes media literacy, helping 11- to 13-year-olds critically assess news and information on social media. The game's approach was inspired partly by The Four-Way Test.
- Members of a Rotary club in Japan partnered with a nonprofit to offer Japanese-language classes, educational lectures, and internships to foreign youths in their city. The goal was to help the young people adapt to Japanese culture and explore career opportunities.



TAKE ACTION

- Use The Four-Way Test, the code of conduct for members, and Rotary's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to discuss ethical standards with others in your club or district.
- Organize a workshop or interactive activity to present challenging situations and discuss ethical resolutions.
- Recognize those who do good by honoring businesses or professionals who demonstrate high ethical standards.
- Lead mentorship sessions or professional seminars that promote ethical leadership and decision-making as well as workplace integrity.

Serving through skills or occupations

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Founded as a business networking group, Rotary brings together leaders across occupations to exchange ideas, develop relationships, and improve society. We are committed to professional development and advancing our skills, as well as having a positive, long-lasting effect on communities locally and globally.

Here are some ways you can serve through your skills or occupation:

- Host networking events, workshops or mentorship programs that use your expertise to empower others and serve community needs.
- Support young people in their educational and career goals through programs like [Interact](#) and [RYLA](#), where they develop into leaders.
- Help community members strengthen their leadership skills while using their professional expertise by collaborating on jointly designed service projects through [Rotary Community Corps](#).
- Start or support a project that uses your area of expertise to make a difference in your community.
- Join a Rotary group related to your occupation and share your knowledge. Through your [district resource network](#), a [Rotary Action Group](#), or [The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers](#), you can use your professional skills to help clubs improve their projects.
- Join a vocational [Rotary Fellowship](#) to explore your professional interests with others and learn about projects or activities you can support.
- Participate in a vocational [Rotary Friendship Exchange](#) and organize activities that allow participants to experience a new culture while exploring professional opportunities.
- Support vocational training through a [Rotary Foundation grant](#). Vocational training increases people's knowledge and expands their skills, which helps communities sustain the impact of a project.

Add your professional background to your My Rotary profile:

1. Sign in to My Rotary and select **My Account** in the upper right. Then choose **My Profile**.
2. Scroll down to **Professional Experience** and choose **EDIT** on the right.
3. A screen will appear where you can add your professional experience. You can also choose who can find this information.

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Examples:

- Rotary members in Turkey and Belgium organize reciprocal vocational Rotary Friendship Exchanges for young professionals to learn about the tourism industry. Clubs in both countries arrange educational opportunities in the hospitality sector, and club members host participants in their homes.
- Members of the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group, who work in many related professions, partnered with the World Wildlife Fund India, the Indian government (including the water department), and more than 80 Rotary clubs in District 3203 to restore the Bhavani River.
- As part of a global grant-funded project, a team of U.S. nurses traveled to Moldova to train nursing faculty on curriculum development and instructional methods. They also taught hospital staff new ways to improve clinical care. Moldovan nurses visited the U.S. to learn about contemporary nursing practices, nursing education, and nurses' roles in public health.



TAKE ACTION

- If you have technical expertise in one of Rotary's areas of focus or in planning, implementing, or evaluating projects, contact your district international service chair. You can become part of a [district resource network](#) that helps clubs develop more effective projects. Connect with your district chair through the district directory or by contacting district leaders.
- If your expertise aligns with one of the Rotary Action Groups, contact the group and get involved. These international teams of Rotary and Rotaract members and friends use their skills and experience to help clubs design more sustainable and meaningful service projects.
- If you're a Rotary or Rotaract member with at least two years of professional experience in Rotary's areas of focus or financial auditing, apply to join [The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers](#). Use your expertise to help members strengthen their grant applications, implementation plans, and monitoring and evaluation activities.

Additional Vocational Services resources

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Rotary Service in Action blog

Find stories about members engaging in Vocational Service, including examples of successful projects, discussions about ethical dilemmas, suggestions for the best practices, and what people learned. Subscribe to make sure you get all the updates.

Rotary's Service Project Center

Visit this hub for all Rotary service projects to discover and share Vocational Service ideas, explore projects to support, or find partners.

Questions?

Contact the Rotary Service and Engagement team: rotary.service@rotary.org

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Last updated: 2025

