

Selecting the Right People for Your Team

Selecting people is one of the your most important jobs of a Governor Elect or a Governor Nominee. As an incoming officer of Rotary, you will be asked to fill District level positions. In some districts, this could be 200, 300, or as many as 400 people. Understandably, these incoming officers are focused on accomplishing this task by early assignments, hold over assignments, assigning people they know, people they don't know, people they have heard about, and people who have been in that job for years.

However, if you truly understand and believe that the **single most critical important thing you can as a Governor is to select the right team of people in the right positions**, you know that the process needs to be a much more thoughtful, careful, rigorous effort than described above. All of this really involves Jim Collin's philosophy in *Good To Great* of getting the right people on your bus, keeping the wrong people off your bus and being sure to take the time to put the right people in the right seats.

The challenge is that most incoming officers do not have a strong understanding and knowledge of all Rotarians in the Districts. In addition to his or her first hand knowledge, they must rely on instinct, other people's opinions, and reputation to help make their selections

This discussion is about **finding the right fit** between the individual and the organization. The role of the District Governor and his/her team involves three areas;

1. **Attracting** and **selecting** the right people;
2. **Integrating** them into your team; and,
3. Continual **coaching** to achieve excellence.

As District Governor you are the person whose headache will be taken away if the right people are selected or made worse if the wrong people are selected—you have the most to gain or lose. Therefore, you are the person most motivated to do the best job of selecting the right staff.

The purpose of this document is to give the incoming District officers a better methodology for selecting a team, and to move this process away from a subjective effort to an objective process. Here are:

1. Three suggested steps to help you make that selection easier:

a. Attracting & Selecting the Right People:

You want to attract a “winner” and your message must be to clearly define the talent needed, recruit from the right sources, screen, assess, and interview effectively. Today's selection mistakes are tomorrow's turnovers- it's as simple as that. Selecting the right person is the job of the one individual who has the most to lose if the wrong person is selected—the district governor. Yet most district governors have not been trained in effective job analysis and in recruiting and interviewing techniques.

- I. Select the right people in the first place:
- II. Define the results you expect and the talent you need
- III. Ask the questions that require proof of talent
- IV. Give a realistic job preview.
- V. Select from within whenever possible.
- VI. Creatively expand your talent pool.

b. Integrating Them Into Your Team:

You then must get your new selects off to a great start. The organization must integrate new staff in such a way that they are made to feel welcomed, valued, prepared, and challenged.

Get them off to a great start:

- I. Give your new staff the “red carpet treatment.”
- II. Communicate how their work is vital to the district.
- III. Get commitment to a performance agreement.
- IV. Challenge early and often.
- V. Train for autonomy and initiative.

c. Coaching them...continually...to achieve excellence:

You need to coach and sustain commitment. It is the Governor who must be alert to constantly manage the “performance agreement”, recognize results, and facilitate staff advancement.

Coach to sustain commitment.

- I. Proactively management the performance agreement
- II. Recognize results
- III. Give the staff the tools to take charge of their careers.
- IV. Know when to keep and when to let go.
- V. Have more fun!

Seven Common Mistakes

As a DG (DGE or DGN), we recommend you make this a “selective process”. It is an honor to be chosen because the people you choose are part of a select team (and they know it!)

Understanding why we don’t always select the right people might help us avoid poor personnel selections. There are so many obstacles selecting the right people it is a wonder that we get it right as often as we do. Here are a few of the most common mistakes:

1. **Selecting for experience over talent.** Sometimes we select based on their experience and overlook talents. Selecting someone with less experience but stronger in talent and personality may lead to higher performance. Use questions during your interview that can uncover the true talents of the applicant.
2. **Selecting in a hurry.** “I need someone in here now” is a familiar refrain, but “warm body” selection frequently precedes short-tenure turnovers. You then must take more time to select someone else. Selecting in a hurry can slow things down. Take the time to do it right the first time. Sometimes we fail to write out an accurate job description and we cannot make a good select based on an inaccurate description of the job.
3. **Hiring by gut feeling alone.** There is nothing wrong with trusting your intuition, but good decisions of all kinds usually need to be balanced with some analysis. This means taking time to analyze the job and ask key questions. Again, you will need to slow down to do it right.
4. **The “Search for Superman” syndrome.** If you have way too many requirements for a position on your Rotary team, the list is so long that few human beings would possess all the needed talents, traits, and areas of knowledge. This results in a screening process that weeds out many applicants who might actually excel at the job.
5. **Hiring in your own image.** We are vulnerable to the human temptation to select those who are most like us. John Maxwell calls this the Law of Magnetism, which states that “...each of us carries around a mental list of what kind of people we would like to have in our organization. Who you get is not determined by what you want. It’s determined by who you are.” Good leaders know that one secret to success is to staff their weaknesses by selecting people unlike them so that way they can focus on their strength while others take care of matters that could otherwise be neglected.
6. **Selecting with no proof of performance.** Governors fail to ask applicants for examples of actual past behavior that gives evidence of the needed talents. Instead, they ask questions like, “What are your strengths?” They only call the references given by candidates instead of seeking out others for more objective input. They engage in friendly, superficial chats with candidates that fail to uncover relevant qualifications.
7. **Failing to describe the job accurately.** Fear of telling candidates the truth about the challenges and conditions of the job is the most common cause of short-tenure turnover. Telling the truth won’t repel the right people. It’s an old story in Rotary—a new staffer discovers that the job is not what he expected and quits. Sometimes the Governor is reluctant to discuss aspects of the job that might seem unattractive for fear the applicant might not want to take the job.

The **ASK** is important. Communicate your vision and how their accepting will help move the organization. Be clear what it expected and why they are being asked. Communicate that you value their contributions (past/present or future).

Ten Questions to Ask When Considering a Person for a Position

1. **Do they put in the time”?**

This measures their commitment to the endeavor. It’s certainly not an absolute but people usually will show you whether they can commit, and a good preview of it is in the way they invest their time.

2. **Does he/she deliver?** Does he/she do the job they were asked to do?

Look for one or two recent examples.

3. **Does he/she initiate change or action?**

Identify concrete examples and write them down, e.g. “Mary appears to be self-motivated. She improved her club’s fundraiser during her year as president...”

4. **Is this person “collegial”?** Does this person “unite in a common purpose and respect other's abilities to work toward that purpose?”

Different types of people can work together well—if they know how to work with others w different styles. Have they demonstrated this self awareness and ability?

5. **Does he/she communicate well:** keep your predecessors in the loop?

Check with people with whom they have worked—you have to actually ask them, keep notes, and maybe ask more than one person!

6. **Is he/she driven to make WHATEVER they touch the BEST** it can be?

Are there specific examples of how this person has made something happen that has lasted more than a year or two? In other words, can we specifically cite examples where something was created that had “legs”?

7. **Does he/she seem more interested in the “title”** than the responsibilities?

Check past organizational charts and directories- is your guy or gal always on committees – and you never had the sense that they were very active?

- Are you considering keeping them in the same position?

 If yes, how long have they been in this position?

 If no, how many years have they been on a district level committee?

- What, if any, chairs have they held?

- Do they switch between committees each year?

8. **Do they have the “experience”** you are looking for in this particular position?

When is ‘experience’ good and when is it not? When does experience become ‘too old’? When is “knowledge” out of date? You need to think about this as you choose.

Is this person known as someone who is tied to the “past” (what they believe are the “tried & true” ways?) Has this been an issue?

Is this person known as a contrarian? (OK characteristic, IF that is what you are looking for)

9. **Does he/she show disciplined thinking?**

What are examples of her/his actions that help make this call?

10. If this appointment **requires content knowledge**, which this individual does NOT have, **can it be learned** in the time available before they take this position? Is this person committed to put in the time, effort (and personal expense) to learn?

Twenty One Headhunter Questions: Ask the Candidates

Define the results you expect and the talent you need. It is clear that the Rotary district with the best people thrives. But finding those talented people is not easy. You might have to learn to think like a headhunter. Here are a few of those types of questions that headhunters ask; asking a few of these questions might help you gain insight into the candidate's personality and reasons for considering the position.

1. Where are you in your Rotary career? This question lets the person brag a little which is good. It also lets you sense the whiners who also feel that when something goes wrong it's always someone else's fault.
2. What don't you like to do?
3. What is the proudest moment of your Rotary career?
4. What do you think your strengths are?
5. What do you think are the misconceptions about you?
6. What is your management style?
7. How would you rate your personality?
8. What do you think is the most difficult aspect of being a manager?
9. In your current Rotary position, what features do you like the most? The least?
10. What were the most significant accomplishments in your last Rotary position?
11. Give me an example of a conflict you had with someone and how you resolved it.
12. What qualities or skills make a good manager?
13. Describe a situation in which your work was criticized.
14. Tell me about one of your failures and how you handled it.
15. How would you define Rotary success?
16. How do you stay current with what is going on in the Rotary world?
17. Describe a difficult decision you had to make in your Rotary club.
18. What do you expect out of this position and your association with this district?
19. What is the first thing you'd do in this new Rotary position?
20. How would you like to grow in Rotary?
21. How would you put this job in the context of what Rotary is trying to achieve?

Other important considerations

1. Should issues of inclusion and diversity ever play a role in your selection? (e.g....equalize representation of a certain geographic region, or a certain gender, or a certain age...) Younger, less-experienced Rotarians approach new positions with fresh perspective and high levels of optimism. Older, more seasoned Rotarians tend to be more established in their Rotary careers. Here are a few thoughts concerning the values of each specific generation as it applies to Rotary.
 - **Matures** (ages 62+) are the keys to the history of Rotary and continue to be very brand-aware of Rotary. They might be slowing down in the service portion but are still leading the strong *service above self image* of Rotary.
 - **Boomers** (ages early 40's-62) are the Rotary's largest repository of talent and experience. They do not plan to leave Rotary as they retire from their jobs and they want to actively participate. Boomers still make up the largest age sector of Rotary.
 - **Generation X** (ages 30-early 40's) are on the move in their careers and in Rotary. They are adept at gaining a range of experiences, and they view Rotary as a place to learn and grow. Work-life balance issues tend to reflect the responsibilities of early family life. They are intolerant of bureaucracy and reject projects that will never see the light of day.
 - **Millennials** (ages 18-30) are steeped in technology and living online. They expect a lot of achievement from themselves and from Rotary. They will be a high-maintenance Rotarian but they might also be the highest performing Rotarians as well. They match their value systems with their grandfathers and as such are very service oriented.
2. One absolute requirement of selecting the right people is to have a well thought out job assessment and job description prior to choosing. This might be a 'preliminary' job description since you probably desire input from the selector prior to finalizing it. Do you have such job descriptions
3. Often it is easier to acknowledge all the above points by comparing more than one candidate for a position, rather than comparing one candidate to a series of job requirements.
4. Rotarians new to District level work make good committee members, not necessarily good Committee Chairs. Think about who you want to "bring along" and put them on good committees, with excellent committee chairs who will train and mentor them.

Who Should You Ask, If You Don't Have First Hand Knowledge?

If your area of responsibility is so large that you are unable to personally 'know' all the candidates for a position how does your 'research' about candidates change? ASK people! Ask open ended questions, which solicit comment.

1. Talk to someone who has actually WORKED with them in their previous or current assignment.
2. Talk to a recent PDG on whose team they served
3. Ask questions of the person to whom they report in the organization (i.e., District Foundation Chair).
4. Discuss "up and comers" at District Leadership Committee meeting with DG, DGE, DGN, DGND and IPDG. (*a small group*)
5. Ask questions of Rotarians they work with (e.g., club presidents if they have been an AG).
6. *If you don't KNOW and CAN'T find out.....then DON'T appoint them. Don't make appointments blindly.*

Recommendations Which are NOT Good Enough

1. DO NOT be satisfied with "he/she is a great guy". Ask the questions about performance above.
2. "He's done the job for x years---so must be OK". Nope, look for actual performance information

Once You've Got Them, ASSESS Them Early

If you've made a wrong choice, make a gracious change. If you have made the right choice, give them encouragement, praise and opportunity to grow.