



## Intentional Prospect Invitation Strategy from Rock Hill Rotary

Here is a brilliant, intentional and complete strategy that yielded FIVE new members in one pass. Offered by Debbie Abels of the Rotary Club of Rock Hill. All the files needed to execute this are found in the GRAT Library Folder: <http://tinyurl.com/RotaryInvitation>

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I am Membership Committee Chair for the Rock Hill Rotary Club and Rebecca Melton asked me to forward to you the materials we used in our recent membership drive.

Our strategy was to place an **"invitation card"** at each member's place, asking each member of our Club to bring a guest to our February 12 meeting. We make that request every time we have a prospective member event but what was different this time was that the Membership Committee divvied up our membership roster and we each had responsibility for following up with 10 members to ask who they were bringing. That took it beyond a podium request for member involvement to a one-on-one where there was a little added pressure to really think about it and find someone to invite.

The Membership Committee asked members for contact information on their guests, and we sent reminders to each a day or two before the meeting. That also gave us what we needed for follow up after the meeting.

We still didn't get everyone to bring a guest but we did better than we have historically. In years past, we've had between 6 and 10 guests at our event. This year, we had **29 guests** attend and 9 'no shows'--those who were 'registered' but didn't attend. However, several of those had legitimate last-minute conflicts and their member sponsors followed up with information packets or invited them to a subsequent meeting. So, we got roughly 3x-4x the turnout we've had in past years.

I've attached the artwork for the invitation, which we offered both as printed cards and e-invitations, whichever worked best for our members to extend to their guests. With our event scheduled for February 12, we played off a Valentine's "We'd Love to Have You Join Us" theme." We did a variation on that to send to former members we thought were good prospects for returning. The theme on that invitation was "We'd Love to Have You Back."

We also prepared personalized welcome packets which we gave guests as they entered the meeting. These were the items included:

- A welcome top sheet personalized with the guest's name
- A welcome letter from me, tying into the Valentine's theme, which explained who we are and what our mission is
- A page summarizing member expectations
- A page listing meeting dates for the year
- A page explaining dues and fees
- A roster of current members and their professions, to illustrate the scope of our professional network (The only item not attached; I just pulled it off the Rotary website)
- Our Club brochure, which includes an application form
- A chocolate heart

The success of all this is how many visitors actually applied for membership. We have had **five so far**. There are a few pending where they wanted to get work commitments off their plate first or get dues worked into their budget before applying. Our Membership Committee's goal was 10, so we were very pleased with the turnout but less pleased with the final result. We are continuing to follow up with guests who have not given us a firm answer.

----- **Program Details** -- Email Memo to those on the agenda -----

Good morning.

Thank you so much for agreeing to be part of our February 12 Rotary program when we will have potential members as our guests.

Here is the speaker line-up with a reminder of your topic and the length of time you have to speak:

**Debbie:** Welcome guests and Introductory Remarks. A short history of our Club, our relationship to Rotary International, the mission of Rotary and its impact in our community and around the world. **5-7 minutes.**

**Colleen:** Expand on the service mission, talking about local projects we have/are engaged in and where we would like to go in the future. (International?) **2-3 minutes.**

**Rachel:** Give a sampling of other Club activities besides service; concentrate on the professional networking and social aspects. **2-3 minutes.**

**Sherry:** As a recent new member, why you joined the Club and what you've gotten out of it so far. **2 minutes.**

**Mary:** As a recent new member, why you joined the Club and what you've gotten out of it so far. **2 minutes.**

**Carlisle:** Expectations of members. **2 minutes.**

**Frank:** Wrap-up Remarks. **2-4 minutes.**

**Total Program Time: 17-23 minutes.**

We will also be serving cake during the presentations, playing off our theme of "We'd Love to Have You as a Member."

Following the meeting, the Membership Committee will have a roundtable with new members to answer their questions, give them time to fill out the short form application if they'd like to do that on the spot, etc.

Please let me know if you have any questions. And thanks again for helping us with the program!

Debbie Abels  
President & Publisher

**The Herald**  
heraldonline.com

132 W. Main St.  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

[dabels@heraldonline.com](mailto:dabels@heraldonline.com)  
Phone (803) 329-4042 | Fax (803) 909-4202

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