



Creating the purpose

Objective: To renew or establish members' commitment and passion to pursue your club's purpose in the community

Purpose: To guide your thoughts and reflections about what your club represents, and to use those feelings to inspire action for change

Goals: To determine the niche for your club in the community, how success should be measured, and what members enjoy about their experience

Audience: Club members

Every organization needs to define its purpose — what it does and why it exists. A club's purpose should:

- Brand the club's identity
- Offer clarity to potential members and partnering organizations
- Help the club set goals and priorities
- Guide members and leaders in making decisions about service and fundraising activities

Members around the world affiliate themselves with Kiwanis because of a shared passion for improving their communities, particularly where children are concerned. And how they choose to do that varies depending on the needs of the community, the resources they have available, the interests of their members and the partnerships they form.

Whether planning a new fundraiser to build a playground or taking over a longstanding community event, the club's actions should be guided by a purpose. Establishing this purpose describes how your club will accomplish Kiwanis' mission of "Serving the children of the world." More specifically, it will help your club deliver the "wow" that makes current and future members enthusiastic about sharing the club experience with others.

What is your club known for? What is its purpose?

Why do you serve?

What do you love about your club? Have you ever told nonmembers what motivates you to serve? For that matter, have you told other members — or asked them?

Some group reflection at your next club meeting could be both eye-opening and motivational, helping to establish or revitalize your members' commitment to the club's purpose. At an upcoming club meeting, learn from each other's inspirations and ideas. Use these prompts and questions to encourage members to share what makes the club special — and to think about the reasons, people and partnerships that will keep it going.

Community:

- I care about our community because:
- What community near us could benefit from a Kiwanis club?
- How can we make our community more aware of this club and all we do?
- Local organizations we should work with:
- People to invite to our club:
- What our community really needs from us:
- How can our club learn what our community needs most?

Possibility:

- Young people inspire me because:
- How do we inspire kids' and other young people's commitment to service?
- How can we keep our club strong?
- My club inspires members to get involved by:
- My dream...
 - for our club:
 - for our community:
- With five more members, our club could:

Pride:

- My proudest Kiwanis moment: (existing clubs only)
- The best way to describe our club to a potential member:
- I love this club because:
- I joined this club because:

Here are three ways you can involve club members in sharing ideas. Write one of the above questions on a note card then use one of these methods to structure a discussion:

1. **Build the future.** Divide club members into groups or pairs. Give each group or pair one note card. Allow ten minutes for discussion. Ask a spokesperson from each group to share responses with the club.
2. **Begin the brainstorm.** Choose an activity leader or note-taker. Give each member a note card or cards. Ask for volunteers to share their responses.
3. **Share the love.** Give each member a randomly selected note card. Ask them to write down or think of an answer during the meeting. Ask each member to share his or her response.

On an easel pad, consolidate the group's answers to help determine the club's purpose. These aspirations and thoughts represent members' commitment to serving the community and improving the club. If consensus can be established, these ideas might serve as a framework for accountability and future goals. Discuss the next steps for any action ideas at your board meeting or a membership committee meeting.

If your club has ideas that can't be achieved without support, consider looking for sponsors or partners. Take a look the **Developing community partnerships** tool for ideas about how to get started. If your members are learning about additional ways the club might help the community, see the tool **Rediscovering your community** for more information about one way to do this.