



RECRUITMENT

What is Recruitment?

Recruitment is the process of inviting or soliciting prospective members, participants, and/or volunteers to join your organization, attend programming, and/or assist the leadership. Recruitment is most effective when there is a formal plan to recruit.

Why is Recruitment Important?

Recruitment is important because it provides structure to how your organization attracts new people. Some people may join your organization without having ever been formally invited or solicited. However, such instances are random and should not be counted on as the only way to increase membership or seek volunteers. Instead, a formal recruitment plan should be a primary process.

Recruitment Basics

When Should We Recruit?

Recruitment should essentially occur throughout the entire year. Your recruitment plan should consist of two phases:

(1) **Orientation week:** This specific recruitment drive should focus on new students and upperclassmen refreshed from the summer break and excited for the new year. This drive should extend through the first few weeks after orientation week as well.

(2) **Rest of the year:** This general recruitment process should focus on students who show interest in your organization through indirect methods like viewing marketing for events or attending actual programs.

Both phases aim to inform students how they can get involved with your organization. The difference is that the first phase is more deliberate while the second phase is more indirect. For more information, click [here](#).

Keys to Strong Recruitment

Although there are a wide variety of reasons why student join student groups, there are two primary reasons that you are able to control:

* **Benefits:** One reason why students may join your organization is because your organization offers them some tangible and/or intangible benefits. Benefits include a sense of belonging, friendship, shared experiences, opportunities to learn particular cultures, opportunities to play a certain sport, etc.

* **Personal connections:** Another reason why students may join your organization is because you and your fellow leaders are able to make personal connections with these students. It's easier for someone to join an organization if they know at least one person in the group and/or feel comfortable with the members of the group.

Recruitment Strategies

Recruitment Phases

* **Orientation week:** This phase should focus on building relationships so that students feel welcome in your organization and know what their relationship with your organization offers to them in terms of benefits. Public relations is the primary way to build relationships and recruit directly because its general purpose is image management, which develops positive perceptions of your organization making it more

likely that students may show interest in joining.

* **Rest of the year:** This phase should focus on building impressions so that the general student body is aware of your organization. Marketing is the primary way to build impressions and recruit indirectly because its general purpose is to not only raise awareness of your organization but also make your organization and programs appealing.

Recruitment of Volunteers

Recruitment of volunteers is slightly different from recruitment of members because volunteers, who are often existing members, are needed for a specific program or task. Things to consider when recruiting volunteers:

* **Clarity of goals:** Be sure to know exactly what you need volunteers for. Students don't like standing around without anything specific to do. Know ahead of time the role and responsibilities of your volunteers.

* **Specific number:** Be sure to know how many volunteers you will need. If you have more volunteers than you really need, you will have bored volunteers on your hands who may become disenfranchised with your organization.

* **Benefits:** Be sure to offer your volunteers tangible and/or intangible benefits. Volunteers are often motivated by some sort of benefit.

* **Encouragement:** Be sure to give your volunteers constant praise and thanks for the work that they do. A special thank you should be given at the end of the program or project that the volunteers worked on.

Recruitment Issues

Retention

The main issue regarding recruitment is how to retain those students you recruited. For more detailed discussion of retention, [click here](#).

Alienation

It is often easy for the leaders or existing members of an organization to talk with each other and not with new students attending organizational meetings and programs. One negative outcome of this unwelcoming environment is a feeling of alienation from those who already know each other. And as a result of this alienation, other negative outcomes such as discomfort, disenfranchisement, and resentment may occur.

- Remember:

You can talk to your friends any other time so use time at meetings and programs wisely by introducing yourself to new students and helping them feel welcome.

Conversations

Related to the issue of alienation is the issue of creating conversation. Talking to someone you don't know may be difficult for some people. Regardless, the benefits of these simple conversations are immense because you help create a welcoming and friendly atmosphere. So do your best to create conversation with new students. It may feel uncomfortable or weird at first, but its relatively easy once you get over the initial shyness or awkwardness.

On another note, conversations also include talking with your friends who don't regularly participate in your organization. During your spare time, it doesn't hurt to occasionally talk to them about your organization and invite them to a meeting or program. Every little conversation you have about your organization helps in a big way.