

The highest reward for a person's toil is not what they get for it, but what they become by it.

*John Ruskin*

## RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

### Basic principles

- Make recruitment a top priority
- Decide who are potential recruits and what will inspire them to join you. There are all types of students out there - - joiners, idealists, achievers, socialites, resume builders. Make sure your recruitment efforts appeal to the kinds of students you want in your group.
- Tailor your recruiting to what will work best on campus. How do most people learn about campus groups? Are posters and flyers really effective? Or will personal contacts work the best? What is the most cost effective use of recruitment funds?
- Use active and passive techniques. All passive recruiting efforts (flyers, ads in the newspaper) should supplement, not substitute for, active techniques (face-to-face interactions, information tables in key campus locations).

### Before recruitment drive

- Know the purpose, mission and benefits of your group. Current members must be able to describe why the group was created and what it stands for. Review the constitution or purpose statement with members. Then have the group brainstorm short answers to the questions, "What does our organization mean to me?" This will serve as a primer to help members talk in somewhat consistent terms when talking with potential recruits.
- Take an inventory. How healthy is your organization? Is recruitment a priority? What would be the ideal size of your group? What are the major goals for the upcoming year? Who can best help you achieve those goals? The awareness gained from this assessment should help establish recruitment goals and leadership.
- Know what new students are looking for. Students join groups because they find the purpose or activities interesting or attractive. They also want to make new friends and have fun. They may also be looking for some kind of leadership role in the group.

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## **Strategies for recruiting new members**

○ Friends and classmates: Although often overlooked, word of mouth and one-on-one interactions are the best recruitment techniques. Personal contacts allow the potential recruit a chance to ask questions and to get to know someone who is in the organization.

○ Presentations in classes and to other student groups: Informal talks to a student organization are a good way of reaching a large number of students using a personal approach.

○ Dorm Storming: Have groups of members go into the residence halls to distribute information in common areas. But do NOT put flyers in mailboxes or under doors.

○ Telephone/address lists: Have potential recruits leave their contact info at every recruitment event to be used for follow-up contacts. But if be sure you actually do follow up.

○ Host an event: Open houses, formal orientations, and social hours are a great way for students to meet current members. These can be open to all or invitation only. And make sure current members socialize with the new faces and not just their friends.

○ Posters and flyers: They are everywhere on campus and is listed last because it is such a passive tool that too many groups rely on as the ONLY way to recruit new members.

## **And Finally**

○ Be honest: Be up front with students about the responsibilities of membership, dues and leadership opportunities. Honest groups don't hide the fact that there can be personality conflicts and organizational challenges. There is no such thing as the perfect group. This will help new members develop realistic expectations before they join. They may also be more willing to help the organization through new ideas, perspectives and enthusiasm.

○ Make it fun to be in your organization: Belonging to a student group assumes that students will share in the responsibility of running the group. However, membership should be fun. In addition to the day-to-day programs and events, your group should plan social time for members to mingle and relax. Pizza parties, end of the semester bashes and holiday dinners are always fun.