

Leadersheet

Recruiting New Members

New members are the life of any organization. They provide new ideas, enthusiasm, and replacements for lost members (old members of student groups don't die; they graduate!).

Everyone wants new members. New organizations are starting all the time. As the number of student groups increase, the competition for new members intensifies. This section is designed to help your group successfully recruit and retain new members.

Getting Started

The first step to take in planning a recruitment drive is to look at your organization: you have to know the product before you can sell it. The best way to run an unsuccessful campaign is to be unsure of the goals and objectives of your own group. What is our purpose? What are our plans? Knowing the answers to these questions will help you define whom you want to recruit and how you want to recruit them.

Build a profile of the person you want to recruit: Freshman? Graduate student? Male or female? What major? Interests or hobbies? Religious affiliation? Residence halls? Off campus? A particular department? What medium will most likely appeal to this person? Posters? Music? Keep this profile in mind when you advertise.

Think of the things your organization has to offer to prospective members. Fun? Prestige? Leadership possibilities? Developing interpersonal skills? Be sure to incorporate what you have to offer into your publicity.

Publicity

The publicity for your recruitment drive will require your best effort in many areas, including creativity, budgeting, and time management. Don't be afraid to delegate authority. Organize committees for publicity and other areas. Get the whole group involved: the group will work better if everyone is given a role in planning and executing the drive. If your members are pleased with your organization (and their role in it), they will do a much better job of selling the product.

Be Creative. Your publicity is more likely to be effective if it is noticed. Make a realistic budget and stick to it. Any publicity must be cost-effective to be successful. Write out a time-line of all deadlines to be met – be sure to plan the entire campaign (e.g., when is the deadline for getting the publicity to the printer so that it gets back to us in time?).

Keeping your prize ... Retaining your members!

Above all, your new members (like your old members) will need to feel like they belong in the group. Get them involved in the workings of the organization. Get to know them. Help them get to know you. Let them know that their contributions are needed and appreciated. Following these steps will lead to a more enjoyable and rewarding experience for both the new members and for the organization.

REMEMBER: A group with no members has short meetings!