SCOUTS®
Creating a Better World

7 KEYS to Recruiting Volunteers

World Organization of the Scout Movement/Asia-Pacific Region

World Scout Bureau/Asia-Pacific Regional Office
4/F ODC International Plaza Bldg.
219 Salcedo Street, Legazpi Village
Makati City 1229
Philippines

Tel No.: +63 2 817-1675/ 818-0984
Fax No.: +63 2 819-0093
Email: asia-pacific@scout.org

www.scout.org

March 2007

SEVEN KEYS TO RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

RECRUITING the volunteers you need:

- get everyone involved
- know the job – find the man or woman to fill it,
- get a short term commitment initially which may lead to long term involvement.

RETAINING the volunteers you have:

- with appealing, active programs,
- with lots of fun and involvement
- with volunteer satisfaction

RECLAIMING volunteers who leave Scouting:

- by finding out and correcting the causes for leaving,
- by effective follow up on the transfer system,
- by reclaiming volunteers personally.

REFERRING the volunteers who move:

- through friends – pass their names along to the proper person to follow up,
- by looking wide – keeping your eyes/ears open-advising local Scout office

RECOGNIZING the volunteers you have:

- "pat on the back" from a status person for a job well done.
- prompt issuance of awards and certificates,
- personal face-to-face contact as often as possible,

REFUSING/REJECTING volunteers who are not suitable:

- screen all offers of service carefully,
- follow up to appropriate level if volunteer has to be rejected.

ROTATING volunteers who need more challenging work:

- allow people to follow their own interests,
- watch for volunteers who need and could serve better in a more challenging job,
- be firm in relocating volunteers who would be more effective in other positions.

RECRUTING

Effective volunteers, like effective leaders are made, not born. However, they must first be found. Before they can be found, someone must know where to look and whom to look for. Every day scores of new members are being sought, contacted and recruited into a great many organizations. One of the greatest assets an organization can have in attracting adults is an effective program, well known to the community and held in high regard. Effective volunteers who are enjoying their work are probably the best method for attracting new volunteers. This includes leaders and committeemen who tell their friends of the interesting and rewarding volunteer opportunities, as well as the housewife who carries the word over a cup of coffee to her neighbor.

A well planned recruitment program, whether carried out on a personal basis or as a group effort should include the following:

1) A definition of the overall purpose of Scouting, its geographic scope and specific programs.
2) An outline of the duties that the volunteers will be expected to carry out and the attendant responsibilities,
3) A realistic outline of Scouting's expectations in terms of time required of the volunteer performing a task.
4) An outline of the resources available to the volunteer in the form of on-the-job and formal training, printed materials, facilities, resource people ad other supporting personnel.

The orientation and selection of leaders for administrative roles needs as great care as that given to leaders working with young people and adults. It is not enough to select committee personnel who have important positions in the business and social life of the community. A sincere interest and the will to work are pre-requisites.

THE IMPORTANT JOB OF RECRUITMENT

Here are a few principles that will help individuals or groups recruiting volunteers for Scouting:

- Know what type of members you are looking for and the role they will be expected to play in Scouting. Look for the specific type of person that you are after whether it be section leaders, group or section committee members, operating committee members, or council personnel.

- is the person being recruited needed to work in an adult-to-adult or adult-to-young people relationship? It is important to recognize the difference and recruit the appropriate type of person.

- Recruiting should never be a mass project. Specialization and attention to detail should be given. Get as much pertinent information on potential members as possible: name, age, special interest, abilities and skills, memberships in other organization, activities in the community, friends and business associates, occupation.

Recruiting should be as decentralized as possible. All members of Scouting should be active recruitment agents and take advantage of recruitment opportunities in their own neighborhood, social, religious and business circles. In these areas individuals have prestige and their enthusiastic endorsement of Scouting carries weight. Names of potential members should be distributed to members of Scouting on the basis of related interests. That is, if you are looking for section Scouters give names of potential Scouters to active Scouters for contact.

FINDING THE PROSPECT

Use all available resources in the community to find potential members. These include:

- Census lists
- Telephone directories
- Classified directories
- City directories
- Voting lists
- Chamber of Commerce information
- Religious groups
- Other organizations' lists
- Lists of parents who have children in school
- Lists of high school, college, and other school alumni
- New residents, as listed in real estate offices
- PTA/Home and School lists
- Industries and housing projects
- Suggestions made by newspapers, radio and TV stations
- Service club personnel
- Community leaders
- Former members

Ask the young people members in your group. They have definite ideas of what they see as a leader and can sometimes suggest a person. Senior Scouts, Ventures and Rovers are encouraged to select their own leaders and can be of definite help in securing section of Scouters.

Don't overlook the fine leadership potential developing in Senior Scout/Venturer and Rover sections. These young people are keen, wise in Scouting ways, socially aware and anxious to become involved in community activities.

Possibly the best resources of all will be found in present members of Scouting and their friends. "A satisfied customer is our best advertisement".

APPROACHING THE PROSPECTIVE MEMBER
(See Appendix "A")

Always be sensitive to the feelings of the person you are trying to recruit. Find out before hand their skills, interests, hobbies and who their friends are. Your appeal can then be based on something you know they like to do, are good at, or where they can serve with friends.

As already mentioned, the personal approach is the best method. This can be brought about in a number of ways:

- Invite the prospective member to one or several meetings, especially social events. Be sure they are met and welcomed. Have a warm, outgoing person assigned for just this task.

- Familiarize the prospective member with other types of activity in Scouting other than the one you may have in mind for them. Don't "over tell." Have one or two specific areas in mind that you are sure the prospect will be interested in.

- Send the prospective member a publication or pamphlet that will interest them and tell them about Scouting and its activities. Follow up with a phone call.

- Send them a personal letter, signed by someone that is favorably known to them. Follow up by telephone or an invitation to a meeting. Once contact is made, follow up—keep in touch.

RETAINING

The other side of the coin in recruitment is retention. No matter what role they play in Scouting, volunteers must immediately begin to feel at home and to find their place as a welcome member of Scouting. What happens to the people to run the show? Do they maintain their original interest in Scouting or after the initial enthusiasm is worn away, does their attendance and participation slacken off; do they gain personal satisfaction or are they disappointed?

All members need to work together to see that everyone remain interested and active in Scouting.

Have a well defined plan of what is required of members--- what Scouting wants them to do. Plan to engage the new member in some activity that will make full use of their potential abilities and make them feel necessary and wanted.

Every new member in Scouting should have an understanding of our history, philosophy, ideals, structure and methods. There are training sessions for this purpose and they should not be overlooked in the familiarization of new members. New members should be give a chance to attend a variety of meetings and to take a hand in different activities until they find the things that they feel they would best like to do.

A FEW POINTS ON KEEPING MEMBERS

a) Keep an up-to-date census of individual members.
b) Provide opportunities for participation.
c) Provide opportunities for developing skills.
d) Recognize members promptly for their work and accomplishments in the organization.
e) Plan a review of activities.
f) Relate policy and program to the needs of members.
g) Welcome new members to your social activities.

RECLAIMING

Develop a Reclamation Plan

Although Scouting is interested in recruiting new members, it is also concerned why members lose interest or drop out. There are two good reasons why a follow up procedure should be developed.

1. Members who have dropped out or who no longer attend meetings may be persuaded to renew their interest; perhaps in another area.
2. Knowing why members have dropped out will help to assess the general condition of Scouting by revealing the causes for dissatisfaction. Where possible these causes should be corrected.

   Sometimes a drop out means merely that a member has become less active than before; sometimes it means they have lost all interest in Scouting and have no desire to continue their membership. Loss of interest or drop out is not necessarily a sign of failure on the part of Scouting. It could simply mean:

- Changed interest.
- Poor health,
- New responsibilities (job, family, moving)
- A general decline in membership in many organizations.

Every organization must expect some turn-over of membership. A determined effort should be made to re-interest inactive members. A group should review the membership record of everyone who has dropped out entirely or had shown dissatisfaction and lack of interest. Identify common factions that point to causes of dissatisfaction, loss of interest or personal problems.

The matter should be discussed with every available in active or former member. Friends and associates of former members are another source for determining causes.

Arrange an interview with members who have dropped out or have become inactive and keep a record of these people and the causes. Review theses causes regularly for trends.

Contact should be maintained especially with those who have dropped out as a result of personal emergencies (illness, new bay, temporary absence, pressure of absence). Once the emergency is over be sure they are welcomed back.

REFERRING

Your Loss – Some one's Gain

When a member moves from your council/branch/province, refer them to the council/branch/province they are moving into. Personal contact with Scouting maybe the first friendly contact established in new and strange surroundings. Let these people know Scouting cares; appreciates their contribution and wants to make them welcome in their new locate.

"Mobile Memos" are available for this purpose from council/branch/province office or Scout headquarters.

Look wide. Keep your eyes/ears open. No matter where you may be—at work, at a party, or at a bowling banquet, you may hear of someone who is interested in getting involved. Get their name, contact them, sell them on Scouting. They will appreciate Scouting making the first move. They may not be able to assist in your group, but a phone call to your council/branch/provincial office or Scout headquarters will ensure a follow up and a place for them.

RECOGNIZING

All human beings feel the need for recognition. Scouting is keenly aware of this and provides ample opportunity for recognition in many forms: medals, certificates, citations, titles, pins, brooches and badges.

Don't forget the friendly "pat on the back" for a job well done. Done on a face-to-face basis this form of recognition is sincere, immediate and very personalized.

Volunteers give a lot of themselves, but their spouses deserve recognition too for their untiring, though often unseen, support of Scouting. A small gift or a bouquet of flowers says' "we recognize the contribution you are making."

To be effective, all awards or recognition should be presented promptly by a person of status and preferably before the group the recipient has been active with.

REFUSING/REJECTING

Volunteers should not be considered for service until they have been thoroughly screened. Fund out about their background, history, habits and morals. Once you are sure they are the kind of person you will have complete confidence in and who will live up to Scouting's principles, then, and only then, can they be seriously considered for service.

Should you for any reason have to refuse an offer of service, pass along to your next senior council all the pertinent details.

ROTATING

Volunteers sometimes get stale, bored an lose their effectiveness because the challenge goes out of their job. Keep on the alert for volunteers who are reaching this state. Convince them that a change would be beneficial to them and also to Scouting. Be firm in suggesting a change for volunteers who would be more effective in another job.

Know your volunteers interests. What they like to do and what they do most effectively are closely related. Rotation of jobs develops individual skills, broadens their outlook and keeps a challenge always before them.

APPENDIX A

How to Obtain Volunteers

STEP 1

Call a meeting of the group charged with obtaining the volunteers you need.

Parents of Scouts may be asked, first by written invitation, then by personal follow up to make sure of a full meeting.

STEP 2

At the meeting discuss qualifications of a good volunteer.

"The kind of person whose influence upon your boy/girl you would accept complete confidence……."

In detail:

1. Previous experience is not an important pre-requisite.
2. A person of unquestioned reputation for integrity and clean living.
3. A person who likes young people.
4. Dependable in carrying out undertakings; can be counted upon to give Scouting the necessary time and attention.
5. Having definite leadership ability, yet not likely to run a "one-man show".
6. Persons with definite standards and opinions, yet able to work amicably with others who may not always agree with them.
7. Having definite trade, business or professional connections.
8. Preferably a member of the sponsoring body.
9. Teachable; one who would willingly take training.
10. An outdoor person.
11. Meets the requirements in the appropriate sections of By-Laws, Policies and Procedures with regard to age.

These qualifications are particularly important in the recruitment of section Scouters.

LOOK WIDE. YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCE IN SCOUTING IS NOT AN ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION FOR SERVICE.

STEP 3

Make a list of possible prospects.

Use every means at your disposal to compile a list of prospects (see page 5).

Put down each person who seems to have all or most of the desired qualifications.

Finally, arrange the list in or of desirability. Don't take for granted that any person is too busy.

STEP 4

Appoint a sub-committee to call on prospects.

Chairman appoints a sub-committee of three or four persons to interview prospects in the order listed.

The person selected should have personal acquaintance with each prospect, and should be convincing and persuasive talkers.

Don't overlook the possibility of including actual young members on your sub-committee when approaching section Scouter prospects. An appeal from youth to any adult is a potent motivator.

STEP 5

Make appointment with first prospect.

Sub-committee makes appointment with the first prospect on list, at their home and at their convenience. Purpose of the appointment should not be stated over the telephone. Say, "A small group of us have a community matter in which you can be of important help. May we call on you...? When? In preparation for visit, the sub-committee studies; 10 Reasons Why You are Being asked to Become a Volunteer:

1. Because we know you as a person of integrity, high principles and clean living.
2. Because we believe you are a person with the spirit of service to "your day and generation."
3. Because the basic Scouting code of honour and service would, we believe, coincide with your own ideals and life venues.
4. Because we believe your high personal standards would be an example and inspiration to young people.
5. Because we know you get along well with young people and that they like you.
6. Because you are an "outdoor" person.
7. Because we believe service in Scouting offers you a natural and enjoyable field of service and youth leadership.
8. Because the technical knowledge involved would readily be acquired by you, as you have an open mind to learn were this is necessary.
9. Because we believe the parents of the young people of this community would place them under your influence with every confidence.
10. Because, although a busy person, we believe you would, when presented with an opportunity of important service, in one way or another, find the necessary time.

STEP 6

At least three members of the sub committee call to present their case. If all are not able to go, the meeting is called off and a new date is set.

The sub committee makes every effort to secure "yes" if unsuccessful, the sub-committee proceeds to make an appointment with prospect two, and so on.

These six steps, carefully followed will almost certainly secure your volunteer.

Note:

Originally adapted from "SEVEN KEYS TO RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS" of Boy Scouts of Canada. Reprinted in the 1980's with the kind permission of Boy Scouts of Canada for use in the Asia-Pacific Region

This is the second circulation by the World Scout Bureau/Asia-Pacific Region with minor revisions.

March 2007