Recruiting Members

EXAMINE YOUR ORGANIZATION
You must know the product before you can sell it. Knowing the answers to the following questions will help your group define or redefine your recruitment efforts.

1. What is our group's purpose?
2. What is our group's future plans?
3. What does our group have to offer to its' members?
4. How many people do we realistically want and/or need to constructively function as an organization?
5. Why is a diversified membership particularly important to our organization?

DETERMINE A RECRUITMENT PROFILE
Who do you want to attract to your group? Answer the following questions to help your group find and identify potential new members.

1. Is academic level important?
2. Is academic major important?
3. Are there any particular skills or talents you are looking for in members?
4. Are you looking for people with a particular interest or hobby?
5. Who are you looking for in order to diversify your membership?

GET THE WORD OUT
Now that you have examined your organization and determined who potential members might be, you need to advertise your organization and position openings. Answering the following questions will help you develop your publicity strategy.

1. What medium will most likely appeal to your potential new member?
2. Is there a certain spot on campus this person is likely to be?
3. What resources (people, time, money) does the organization have to give to a publicity campaign?

PUBLICITY SUGGESTIONS
If your organization wants to make a sincere effort at recruiting diverse new members, then a combination of the following suggestions should be used. Remember the previous question, “what medium will most likely appeal to your potential new member?” Some groups only put an advertisement for their organization in the newspaper and then wonder why people do not show up. Time and effort are required to make a sincere, strong recruitment campaign.
Recruiting Members (cont’d)

Send letters or flyers promoting your club and position openings to your target population or to people who have contact with your target population.

- Registered Student Organizations
- Campus governing groups
- Academic advisors
- Professors

Post flyers throughout campus. Place advertisements in the newspaper. Attend meetings of other organizations (registered student organizations, governing groups, etc.) and ask if you can make a short presentation/announcement regarding your organization and position openings. Hand out flyers at events that attract your target population. Have all current members make personal invitations to all target group people they encounter (in classes, where they work, where they live, etc.). Word-of-mouth and personal invitations are very powerful publicity tools. Make personal phone calls or visits to faculty and staff who have close contact with your target population. Ask them to promote involvement in your organization to the students.

SELECTION PROCEDURES

Some organizations have a selection process for members and/or officers. It is important that your entire process is fair and consistent. The following are suggestions for a selection process.

1. Establish selection criteria. For example, criteria may be “ability to work with others.”
2. Have a standard evaluation. Fill out an evaluation for each candidate. Your groups should have written documentation on why you selected certain people over others. Many people dislike the idea of filling out evaluations because they take time and effort, but they are important in a fair selection process.
3. The leader of the group should keep evaluation forms in a secure, confidential place for at least one month after the process is over.
4. Have a training meeting with all members participating in the selection process. Inform members of the procedures and expectation of the selection process.
5. In selecting candidates, decide which qualifications are absolutely necessary for the position and which can be easily acquired through training. Focus on the essential qualifications. If a candidate lacks skills that can easily be learned through training, give the person a chance.

RETAINING YOUR MEMBERS

Your new members, like old members, need to feel like they belong in the group. Get them involved in the activities of the organization. Solicit their ideas. Do activities of interest to them. Get to know the new members and help them to get to know you. Do not treat new people as intruders invading your territory. Let them know their contributions are needed and appreciated.