

Leadership – Recruiting Members

When people join a group, think of it as more like a 5-3 vote rather than a landslide winning over of their support. Most people come to new experiences both wanting (the 5 votes) and fearing them (the 3 votes). You've just won then over by a slight margin and it is now your job to keep the "majority vote" in the organization's favor. If you want a member's loyalty, interest, and best effort, you must take into account the fact that:

- The members of your organization need:
 - a sense of belonging.
 - a feeling that they are sincerely welcome and that no one objects to their presence.
 - a feeling that they are needed for their total self, not just their hands, money, specific talents, or because they know someone. Make sure you introduce new or potential members to everyone in the group. The new members will then feel at home with those they will be working with.
- The individual member needs to feel s/he has a part in the planning and execution of the organization's objectives; s/he needs to be a part of the idea sharing, the brainstorming, and the production and decision making process of the organization. Involve new members in specific activities immediately. This is very important – if a new member has nothing to do, he will feel that joining has been a waste of his valuable time.
- S/he needs to feel that the goals and objectives decided upon by the group are within reach and that they make sense. It is also important that his/her being a member of the organization makes a difference to someone and that his/her contributions are appreciated. Recognize the member for participation. A word of thanks personally and privately is important. Recognition at organization meetings and in news stories is important also.
- The individual member needs to be given responsibilities that challenge and that are within the range of his/her abilities and interests. The responsibilities should help the member to become a leader. Be sure to train him/her to do the job assigned. A subtle form of training is to pair members into two-person teams, an old and new member in each, for each task.
- The individual member needs to know in clear detail what is expected of him/her, not just the detailed job, but what s/he has the opportunity to do in the future and what s/he does relates to the total outcome of a group project.
- Finally, the key to keeping new members (and old ones for that matter) is INFORMATION. Make sure to give your recruits all of the information they need to develop into fully functioning members. Gaps in a person's understanding of an organization are probably the quickest way to lose a member.

Other Considerations

- Solicit feedback from advisors and peers
- Organize an effective training program
- Provide a sense of unity
- Compliment good work
- Reward good efforts
- Initiate recognition
- Provide financial reimbursement
- Initiate social interaction
- Recognize individual achievement