

Recruitment Tips

Why do people join organizations?

As you plan to recruit new members to your organization, it is essential to understand the reason people want to join an organization in the first place. Why? Because if your organization can meet the needs of prospective members, you are more likely to recruit and maintain a strong membership. Here are four major reasons people want to join an organization:

- 1. Want to be involved.** Involvement provides an opportunity for students to contribute back to the BGSU community. As the most common reason to join organizations, it is important to be aware of the involvement opportunities your organization provides. Additionally, once you recruit a new member who wants to be involved, it is important to give them ownership of planning a portion of an upcoming organization event. A conversation with the new member about prior involvement experience and their skill sets will help your organization determine the tasks the member should be assigned.
- 2. Want to meet people.** Organizations are a great way for students to meet new people and create new friendships. Many students will join your organization as a way to establish a connection to the campus community and find a place that they feel like they belong. As you are recruiting new members, make interested students feel welcomed, comfortable, and valued. Once they are recruited into the organization, it is important to recognize the new members in the room through introductions and ice breakers at each meeting. Recognizing the presence of each member present can contribute to people feeling that they are a valued member of the organization.
- 3. Want to develop leadership skills.** Students will sometimes join an organization because they know that they want to be a student leader or think it would be beneficial to add to their resume. These students may have prior leadership experience or see involvement as an opportunity to build new skills. When speaking with these students during the recruitment process, it is important to discuss potential committees they could chair or leadership opportunities they might pursue as a member. Again, it is important that you help this type of member find ways to become active in the organization and build the skills they are hoping to gain from involvement.
- 4. Believe in your cause/purpose of your organization.** This type of member is likely to feel strongly about the purpose of your organization. Share the passion you have for the organization with them as you clearly convey the mission and goals of your organization. Once this member joins the organization, it will be important that the organization is living up to its mission and goals. Having conversations with all members about how to achieve the organization's mission and goals throughout the year will be important to building member's dedication to the organization.

People may join your organization for a combination of these reasons, and more! It is important to recognize the different reasons people may want to join your organization when creating your organization's recruitment plan. In addition to thinking about why people join your organization, use this tips to help your organization successfully recruit new members:

- Determine your target group numbers
- Stand out. Try something new that sets you apart from the crowd and attracts new members to have a conversation with your organization's current members. As you attempt to increase visibility, make sure that your organization's purpose is incorporated into all recruitment efforts.

- Create a business card with organization's contact information as well as meeting times.
- Bring sign-up sheets for new members to all of your events.
- Elect a recruitment chair to focus on this aspect of your student organization.
- Collaborate with groups who share a similar mission.
- Be creative.
- Call the BGNews to see if you can have an article written about your organization.

Recruitment is a continual, year-long process for your organization. While you may have a higher recruitment push in the fall, it is important to consider approaches for recruiting new members all year long to help your organization stay energized and excited about the work you are doing.

Adapted from OSU Center for Leadership Development at: <http://oregonstate.edu/cld/tipsheets>.