

RECRUITMENT AND ORGANIZATION BUILDING

Time: 90 minutes (one hour for presentation; 30 minutes for role-plays)

MATERIALS:

Poster paper and markers.

HANDOUTS:

Recruitment Guidelines

CHARTS:

- Organizational Assets
- Leaders, Members, Supports
- Two Key Concepts to Membership Building
- Two Rules for Constant Recruitment
- Self Interest Chart
- Recruitment Guidelines

L NOTES FOR TRAINER

This session relies more on the experience of the trainer than do most of the others. It raises questions about organizational and leadership development that are difficult to answer unless you have actually done it. It also requires skill both in guiding the discussion of why people participate in organizations, and in critiquing the role plays.

Session Outline:

1. What is an organization. A brief discussion of how real world organizations work that defines the elements of building an organization.
2. Motivation of leaders and members. This section introduces the concept of self-interest through a discussion of why people got active in organizations.
3. Guidelines for recruitment. A short lecture by the trainer. (It helps to have the points written out on large charts beforehand.)
4. Role play. Three model recruitments will be done with the whole group present .

Please note that the timing is very tight on this session as the content has been expanded from the regular Academy recruitment session. It is actually something of a combination of recruitment and leadership development.

II. What Is An Organization 30 Minutes.

Leaders, Members And Organizational Assets :

Say This

This discussion relates to the second column of the strategy chart. Organizational Considerations.

- In an ideal world an organization is a group of like minded people who come together to share in a common enterprise. In reality, an organization is a handful of highly motivated leaders who compete with other interests for the time and energy of a larger number of members. The members, in turn, attempt to mobilize much larger numbers of even less motivated supporters (or constituents) for the purpose of exercising power over reluctant policy makers, both on campus and in government. It is a wonder that this arrangement works at all, but it does.
- People talk about building an organization, but what exactly is meant by that? An organization has specific assets, and building it means increasing and improving them. The main assets are:

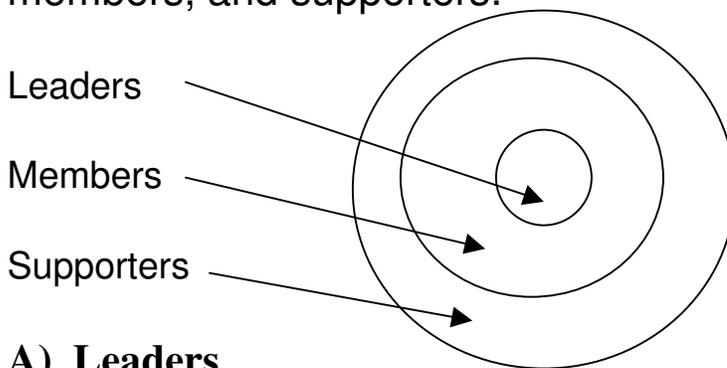
Put on board.

Keep this list up in front of the room during the presentation and check off each topic as you come to it. Without it, it is very easy for the group to get lost while you go into the details of each part.

Organizational Assets

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| A. Leaders | F. Staff |
| B. Members | G. Communications |
| C. Supporters | H. Information |
| D. Allies | I. Money |
| E. Skills | |

Draw a the below chart to represent the size of leaders, members, and supporters.



Leaders are the people who really want the group to work. We will discuss what motivates them in a moment. In an undergraduate organization, it is best if leaders are Juniors, with Seniors drawing back but still around to help and guide, while Sophomores and Freshmen are being groomed for next year. An organization can be highly successful for a couple

of years under the leadership of former students who hang around the campus, but in the long run this is self-defeating.

- For leaders to develop, there need to be places for them in the organizational structure, such as heads of committees, heads of projects, organizers of specific events, etc. Setting up these structural niches may seem bureaucratic or cumbersome, but without them, the only other way for leaders to arise is by strength of personality. That reduces their numbers, lets out some otherwise good people and often creates conflict with existing leaders. If a new person shows a desire to become part of the leadership, create a place for him or her. Don't wait until the person either leaves or attempts to displace an existing leader.

B) Members:

Most members don't want to be leaders (unfortunately). They want to contribute a limited amount of time without taking a great deal of responsibility. They want to know that their time is being used well and effectively. During the three or four hours a week that most members can give to an organization, they would usually rather be told what needs to be done than spend the time discussing it, and not really have time left to do much. For this reason meetings should be held only when there are major decisions to be made. The rest of

the time have work sessions instead of meetings. Doing work is a way of testing potential leaders. The best leader will do anything that needs to be done, including staying up all night making sandwiches. The person you don't want in the leadership is the one who comes to tell you just what everyone else should do, but never has time to do it unless it is a meeting with a very "important" administrator.

There are two key concepts to membership building

Put on Board

- * Constant Recruitment
- * Entry Level Program
- Constant recruitment means that every week the organization is doing something to recruit new members. This can be a table in the union or outdoors, floor meetings in dorms, two minute raps in classrooms (with instructor permission), and holding your own events that attract large numbers.

There are two rules for constant recruitment:

Put on board

1. People won't join unless you ask them.

2. Recruit to an activity, not to a meeting.

- The first thing you ask people to come to should be an actual activity, not a planning meeting. Constant recruitment therefore requires constant events. This is a good thing. You want new people to understand that the organization is about doing not talking. This concept is easily grasped in community organizations, but on campus where sitting and talking can be paid work for some, the distinction between talking and doing is often blurred. (If you are talking to 500 people, that counts as doing.)
- Entry level program means that you always have an activity for people to do that doesn't require a lot of experience. An entry level program consists of things that new people can do right away. It includes:
 - Distributing literature
 - Posting things on bulletin boards
 - Keeping lists
 - Making turn- out phone calls
 - Updating the web site.
 - Getting petitions signed or letters written.
 - Helping at information tables
 - Actions, picket lines or demonstrations

Remember, members are people who want a useful activity. If you don't provide it, some other group will.

C) Supporters

There are two kinds of supporters, those whose names you have and those whose names you don't have. Every group should keep a list of several hundred supporters who you can reach by phone, fax, mail and e-mail.

- In addition, there needs to be systems for getting the word out to the others. The goal is to constantly increase the size of the supporters list. Petition drives can accomplish this as well as "send me more information" cards and coupons. At least once a semester, an event should be held for which you attempt to mobilize every possible supporter.

D) Allied Organizations

- The more allies you have the stronger you become. Working in coalition is tricky and we will (have) discuss(ed) it further in the coalition section.
- The key to building alliances is not getting other groups to help you, and then having to return the favor. It is showing them how they can build their own membership and program by working along with you. Knowing how to do this is a special skill which has to be learned.

E) Skills

Many skills are needed in an organization including:

- leading meetings
- public speaking
- strategy development and planning
- organizing large events
- writing
- fund raising

Of course it is really people, not the organization, who have the skills, but a strong organization will find ways of getting skilled members to teach others, so that the skill is passed along within the organization from year to year. A clear division of labor within the group helps to facilitate this. A committee structure is also helpful, even though people in smaller groups often feel that they don't need one.

F) Staff

Most campus-based organizations have no full time staff which is why activity is so inconsistent over a period of years. National and state student organizations are particularly helpful in this respect. When the institutional memory of an organization can reach back only three years at

best, there is a great deal of reinventing the wheel.

G) Communications

Communications means the ability to get the word out quickly and often. Organizations need both internal and external communications systems.

Internal systems include telephone trees, and up-to-date mailing and e-mail lists.

External communications include; literature distribution systems in residence halls, web pages, people who regularly cover certain buildings with posters, people who will do class raps, regular outdoor leafleting and tabling, contacts with on and off campus media, and the ability to generate press events.

Once these systems are in place, they need to be used regularly or they deteriorate.

A distinction should be made between organizing and mobilizing. Increasingly, on and off campus, mobilizing is being done by e-mail and through the web. People may get e-mail asking them to e-mail the target, or they might get notice of a demonstration from a web site. This is all fine, but electronic mobilization, useful as it is, is not a substitute for actually bringing people together to exchange ideas, debate strategy and form personal relationships. Organizing is about building community as much as it is about mobilizing.

H) Information

Information is what gives your group the edge and ties in coalition partners and individual members. Information includes the specifics of problems and issues, the status of legislation at the national and state level, what other organizations are achieving and what is happening locally. Part of the value of belonging to a larger state or national organization is getting regular information, as well as being able to have an impact on issues beyond the campus.

I) Money

"Whenever five or more are gathered together, pass the hat."
This is the first rule of fundraising. It means that fund raising must be built into everything you do.

- Even if student government is providing all, or part, of your funds, you have a political responsibility to get

students into the practice of regularly asking for, and giving, money. There are many activities for which student activity funds can't be used; for example, renting buses to bring high school students to the capital to oppose a tuition increase or cut in student aid.

- As an aside, because so many campus organizations interface with off campus groups, its worth noting that grass roots fundraising makes an organization more democratic. Every group has expenses, and if some members just pay out of their pockets, because paying is easier than fundraising, it means that only more middle class people can afford to belong. It can also mean that those who most frequently pick up the tab, come to think of it as their organization. Grass roots fundraising also means independence from foundations and other funders who always attach some measure of control when money is given. When you leave campus remember, you heard it first at the GROW.

Meetings

As we have been talking about communications and information in organizing, this is a good time to raise a few points about conducting meetings. Running good meetings is an art and the organization that masters it will grow. In general, meetings will be better attended and more interesting if they are used to make decisions rather than presenting reports and updates. At least one decision at each meeting should be about taking action.

- Group decision making works best when clear alternatives are presented. This is particularly true for larger organizations. It should be the job of the leadership, steering committee, or whoever plans the meeting, to frame the alternatives for each decision to be made. Of course the members are free to reject the choice of alternatives and start over, but even doing that helps to clarify the problem and moves the group forward. The worst possible meetings are those where everyone sits around for a while until finally someone says, "Well, what would you like to talk about?" It should be the goal of every organization to spend as little time in meetings as possible, and as much time as possible out doing something.
- Meetings should be planned to last for an hour-and-a-half. Two hours tops.

- Meetings that try to work by consensus are fine for people who have lots of time and few other obligations, but it should be clearly understood that many people who would otherwise support the group's issues are excluded by a lengthy process. People with jobs, family or early classes are most inconvenienced by frequent lengthy meetings. Those with a lot of leisure time are best able to operate in the consensus model. If you want non-traditional students to be able to participate, hold short meeting.

III. Motivation of Leaders And Members

How did you get involved?

15 Min.

The trainer asks this question.

"Think of an organization that you once joined, became a leader of, or in which you decided to play a more active role. Tell us why you decided to join and how it came about.

When hands go up, do as follows:

- Recognize five or six people, and write their responses on the board. What you are looking for is, first, that someone got them involved, and second, that there was an element of self-interest in their involvement. Write in the following format:

Self Interest	Asked

On the left put down in two or three words what the self-interest was. On the right put who asked them to get involved.

Don't actually write the words "self interest" and "asked." Just keep in mind you want to separate these elements as they are said.

- Push people if need be. If everyone is saying that they just went looking for an organization to join, or God told them to become a leader, ask "how" they joined, or how they got into a leadership position instead of asking "why". If they got themselves to a meeting ask, "How did it happen that you actually joined and stayed active." It usually turns out that there was someone who made a point of involving them. Discuss the effectiveness of grassroots forms of recruitment (face-to-face interactions) versus emails and flyers.
- The second point you want to uncover in these stories is the presence of self-interest. What the person got out of it.

Self-interest can be narrow - "I didn't want to see my tuition rise."

It can be broad - "I felt mad and wanted to do something."

It can be social - "This looked like a good way to make new friends."

(For a fuller discussion of self-interest, see pages 8 and 112 of Organizing For Social Change 3rd edition.)

- When you have several good examples up on the board, stop and go back over the answers, pointing out the self-interest, and the presence of a recruiter. You can circle recruiter and self-interest statements with different colored markers

Say This:

- What usually motivates people to join an organization or take a more active leadership role is self-interest. By self-interest we don't mean being selfish or greedy. The word interest comes from a Latin word meaning between or among. So self-interest means self among others, or how we are aware of our selves and our own needs in the context of our relationships with others.
- As we have just seen, people joined organizations or took more responsibility, not just because it was the right thing to do, not just because they were concerned about the issue, but because they also got something out of it. Learning a new skill, making new friends, or the feeling of satisfaction that comes from fighting the good fight. We also saw that when people joined or moved up in an organization, there was another person helping it to happen. Someone was actively trying to get each of these people more involved.

IV. Recruitment Guidelines

The six step process of recruitment. 15 Min.

Say This:

OK, we have said that the most important organizational asset is active members and we have talked about what motivates people to become members, but is there a system to recruiting members that goes beyond good luck? Well actually there is. Each of you needs to become that person who gets others involved, so here are six steps to successful recruiting. They are useful for getting an individual to join your organization, getting members to take on more responsibility and getting the leaders of other organizations to join your coalition.

List major points on the board as you go.

1) Be Prepared

- Learn as much as you can about the person, issue, organization, or campus involved. Set specific objectives, and have a fall back position.
 - I want this person to come to a forum.
 - I want this person to be the newsletter editor.
 - I want a name on the mailing list and a contribution.
 - I want a signature on this post card to the Governor.

2) Legitimize Yourself

Get a "license to operate". This is a statement you make that establishes the legitimacy of the organization or connects you to the person you are recruiting. It particularly applies to recruiting people who don't know you or your organization.

- I am part of the largest student organization in the country.
- I'm also in Professor Taylor's Social Problems class. Aren't you in the global policy focus group?
- Your friend, Harry, suggested that I talk with you.
- Have an appropriate image.

We would all like to think that appearance and language don't matter, but in reality they send a message that can be different from what we actually want to say. For example: Organizers often lapse into speaking using acronyms until all that you hear are letters, or they use terminology that makes you feel too out of the loop to attend a meeting. They really want you to join their organization, but you are reluctant because you don't speak that language.

- You don't have to change who you are to be appropriate, but how you look and how you speak should reinforce what you are saying, not distract from it.
- An appropriate image includes:

List on board.

- Sincerity
- Appropriate dress and language
- Good eye contact. But this is culture specific. In some cultures averting the eyes is a sign of respect, while looking someone in the eye is considered rude.
- Enthusiastic tone

3) Listen

- Draw the person out.
- Identify self-interest.
- Build rapport/trust.
- Establish personal connection beyond the issue: hobbies, books, sports, home town, movies, pets or Socialism.
- Hear and answer reservations.
- Listen for networks you can organize. To what other groups does this person belong?

Match the organization's need to the individual's self-interest. "You want to learn web design? That's great because the woman who does ours is graduating and she

needs to teach someone else.

4) Agitate

The goal is to help the person to see that this is her/his issue as well as your issue. Discuss the issue in a way that makes the person mad at the target.

Examples

"And they won't vote to pass a rent control law. That's because the realtors and developers are giving out thousands of dollars in campaign contributions, just look at this list."

"I saw you picnicking on Miller Green last week. Did you know that every month that grass is sprayed with pesticide and weed killer, and when we asked the Administration how long it took the chemicals to lose their toxicity, they said they didn't know. Our health is less important to them than the appearance of their grass."

- Solution equals organization. Joining the organization offers a solution to the problem.

Give examples of how a similar problem was solved, either here or elsewhere, through organization.
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5) Get a Commitment

Ask, "Will you come?" "Will you do it?" "Will you collect 10 postcards for the campaign by next Friday?"

Clarify next steps.

"I will call you tomorrow with the exact information on when the bus is leaving, and you need to get the \$13.00 in by Tuesday, October 2nd."

6) Follow-Up

- Keep Commitments.
"I'll call to remind you."
- Ask the person for their contact information so that you can continue to update them on events and meetings.
- Help integrate the person into the organization.

There is nothing worse than the organizer who makes a big effort to recruit someone, and then ignores them when they finally do show up.

The steps we most often forget are listening and follow up. (Circle them with marker.)

V. Recruitment Role Plays

Setting Up The Role Plays

1 hour

Trainer's Note. In order to give more people a chance to do role plays, consider dividing the group among the trainers and holding two or three sessions in different rooms.

- Place two chairs in a spot where everyone can easily see them and hear what is being said.
- There will be ~~two~~ three one-on-one role plays. Repeat the sequence if time allows.
 1. Recruiting a student to attend an organization event and support your organization.
 2. Recruiting an individual who has attended an organization event to become a member of an organization.
 3. Recruiting someone who is already a member to take responsibility for some project, or to become an officer.
- Announce the three scenarios and then ask everyone to think of a real life person in one of these categories who they will actually try to recruit in the coming weeks. Call for a volunteer recruiter for the first one. If no one responds, pick someone. (Balance for gender, race, etc.) Say that the role-plays should each last about five minutes.
- Step out in the hall with the volunteer and ask her who the real life person is and to what she wants to recruit them. Ask her to describe the person to you in a sentence. Ask, is this someone you know, or a cold contact? Where is the recruitment taking place?

- Pick a student to be recruited, who matches the description and who has had experience with the issue. (An exact match isn't important. Pick someone who can fake it.)
- Quickly take the student you picked to be recruited out in the hall and say what the issue or organization is going to be. Help the person think up some realistic objections to being recruited - too many courses, working double shift, afraid of losing financial aid, etc.

Then say:

"The goal isn't to be impossible. If the recruiter can find your self-interest, and can describe an activity that is specific, time limited, and that you could imagine yourself doing, then say yes. If not, ask questions that will lead the recruiter to your self-interest and to ways of overcoming your objections."

- Call the group back to order. Say something like, "Kim is going to recruit John to the Committee To Save The Pigs. Kim hasn't met John, but spots him eating a ham sandwich in the cafeteria."
- Let the role play run about five minutes, longer if a conclusion seems about to occur. Then debrief.

Debriefing The Role Plays

- Ask the recruiter how s/he thought it went. What was her/his strategy?
- Ask the Recruitee how it went.
- Say to the group, "What did you like best about the job Kim did recruiting John?" Get all positive comments and cut off negative ones.
- Ask the group "What did you think could be improved in what Kim did" Get suggestions for improvement.

- Add your own comments on improvements.
- End by saying a couple of other things that Kim did that were good.

Watch for organizational problems.

Often when it is difficult to recruit someone, the reason is that the activity, or the issue, or the organization itself doesn't make sense. In which case say, "I think we have an organizing problem here, not a recruitment problem". Then, offer your advice.

Example: Committee To Save The Pigs

John: "Does this mean that if I join I have to stop eating ham?"

Kim: "Well, yes and no."

Trainer: "I think we have an organizing problem here, not a recruitment problem. It is always difficult to recruit to a morally ambiguous position regarding pork. Several of the world's most dynamic religions absolutely forbid eating pork and have gained many millions of adherents. However, their historical growth was limited in those regions of the earth such as North America, where climate and abundant rainfall made hog raising the most profitable. I suggest, therefore, that the organization either change its goal to saving the souls, not the bodies, of pigs, or else adopt a different species, dogs perhaps, that fewer people wish to eat."