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# Recruiting Volunteers Effectively for Scouting



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Who has all the adult leadership help that you need?

If you need help, then this session is for you.



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Be honest with yourself.  
How many of you are reluctant to  
recruit people to help do the work?

Why are you reluctant?



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## Usual reasons for lack of recruiting:

1. I want to stay in control. (micro-manager?)
2. I am afraid of approaching people.
3. I am afraid of bothering someone with my problem.
4. I do not know how to recruit.
5. I do not know who to recruit.
6. I tried it and failed, therefore I will not do it again.
7. I do not have enough time to get the help I need.

Do any of these describe you?

Does that last reason really make sense?



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## Does this recruiting approach sound familiar?

- Identify need.
- Phone prime candidate and ask. Get turned down.
- Make announcement in meeting. No response.
- Send out blanket email asking for help. Get no response.
- Get discouraged and quit.

What is wrong with this approach?

**Wrong order and skipped preparation.**

In Marksmanship, this is equivalent to:

SHOOT                  AIM                  READY

Now you are out of ammunition and target ran away.



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## Procedure overview

The following is taught by professional recruiters. It may seem time-consuming but it works.

Doing this takes less time than failing repeatedly. Once you have mastered this, it gets much easier.

Please try it as presented!



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BSA Purpose: To teach youth ethical decision making for the rest of their lives.

Reason for action.

- BSA is best youth development program in the world.
- We need program to maintain their interest, so we have time to teach ethics.
- Youth won't stay unless they maintain interest.

We work on all program aspects to keep interest. That takes dedicated people. So recruit people to do it.

Isn't this worth our effort?



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## When should we recruit?

Normal approach is to recruit in crisis.

Better approach: recruit always.

- Plan unit structure to fit number of families.
- Agree to approach each family to provide 1 adult for some position.
- Use this to train everyone in BSA concepts.
- Let position assistants ease into future jobs.



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Plan positions to fill. Create job description for each.

**For all units you need:**

Unit leader: Cubmaster.

Committee: Committee chair, secretary, treasurer, **adult recruiter**, communication, advancement / membership records, advancement purchase, fund raising, membership (adults & youth), committee members

**For Packs you might need:**

Den operation: Den leader for boys & den leader for girls (at least 1 per grade)

Pack support: Outing planner & committee, service planning team, record keeping (youth and adult medicals, recharter)

**For all units:** Assistant for each position above, other positions as needed.



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# Approach

- Set unit policy: every family “encouraged” to take one position, so no one is overloaded. But do not run off new families.
- Set structure / priority dependent on unit size.
- Create job description for each job before you start.
- Some positions can be done without leaving home.
- Some positions could be combined for small units.
- Management: train, encourage, get out of the way, no micro-managing.
- Start now; you will not complete this immediately.
- Adult Recruiter might be first job filled.
- Fill positions over time. Recruit always.
- “Planned succession” versus crisis action.



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So let us start. What is our target?

A roster filled with quality people who know how to function and will achieve organization's goals.

All actions must be directed towards that target and done in the right order.

If you just start asking people, you will FAIL.



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## Prework summary

### Build a solid foundation.

1. Identify your needs.
2. Write/edit job description for each assignment.
3. Write personal characteristics needed for job.
4. Separately, start a prospect list.
5. Research each person; identify their characteristics.
6. Determine who fits requirements of each job.
7. Prioritize the list for each job.
8. Develop written plan on how to proceed.

Do prework before you ask people on your list.



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## Identify your needs

EXAMPLE: New pack leadership team.

We lost most of the pack leaders over the summer.

- The cubmaster's son moved up.
- The committee chair moved out of town.
- Some dens need leaders.
- We never had a membership chair, but we need it.

What are your needs?

Do not **THINK** them; **WRITE** them.



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## Understand how to meet your needs

To get the pack functioning, we need to fill positions.

- We need cubmaster, committee chair, and new member coordinator.
- We need several den leaders.
- We need a team to plan pack camping and outings.

Determine how many people you need for each task.

Don't let numbers scare you; get ready to recruit them.

What do you need to meet your goals?



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## How do you eat an elephant?

You cut it up into small enough pieces so that no one will choke and eat them one piece at a time.

Recruiting is the elephant before us, so let us figure out how to eat it. You start by creating a job description to describe the work.



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## Job Description show what job must do

Usual action now is to ask people; that is WRONG. Need job description before you start to recruit.

- Cut job in “bite-sized” pieces; do not scare anyone.
- Include large items only, details will fill in later.
- Identify deliverables and timing.
- Make job of limited time duration (one year).

Develop draft document; let recruited person edit it. Let them control final content of “contract” to build commitment.



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## Example:

Scouting America

### POSITION DESCRIPTION

**TITLE:** Cubmaster

**POSITION REPORTS TO:** Pack Committee Chair

**TERM OF SERVICE:** 1 Year

### VISION

- Develop the best pack in the district.
- Encourage all Cubs, Scouting families, and Cubbing leaders.
- Develop and maintain an outstanding Cub program.
- Support local and national Scouting policy, procedures, and practices.

### PRINCIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Guide the operation of the pack.
- Identify and recruit quality volunteers to serve as pack leaders (assistant Cubmaster, den leaders, pack trainer, etc.).
- Encourage all Cubs to advance yearly.
- In cooperation with the committee chair, ensure the completion of all pack goals.
- Develop a strategic plan for the pack that will ensure membership growth, financial support, and quality program.
- Represent the pack to the pack committee.

### POSITION QUALIFICATIONS:

- Have ability to motivate adults.
- Have an interest in serving the youth of the community.



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## Start developing a Recruiting Worksheet. Here are the first 3 columns.

### RECRUITING WORKSHEET – Identify and evaluate candidates

Position	Characteristics needed	Candidate
Cubmaster	Organizer, can recruit, has vision for pack, good with scouts, outgoing, willing to be trained	
Pack membership chair	Understands membership plan, can organize, willing to make phone calls	
Pack trainer	At least 1 year in Cubbing, can train others, understand how dens work, good listener	

Target: 5 names per position. On average, you will get 4 to 5 “no” for every “yes”. If you get a “yes”, reevaluate remaining names to fill other positions. If you get a “no”, see if the person will take part of a job or a different job.





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## **Identify characteristics needed for each assignment**

Write characteristics for each job.

Do you need a manager, a doer, or a combination?

Appropriate person might be different for each.

Identify specific skills that are needed.

Determine if this person must be a recruiter – may be a key characteristic.

Add characteristics to worksheet.



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Expand each of these as needed.

Note: we do not have any names identified yet!





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## Develop list of potential contacts

Where do these names come from?

- Develop Nominating Committee.
- Get suggestions from others (DE, volunteers).
- Find out who stepped down from old assignments.
- Consider people that you meet with at lunch.
- Go where you might find possible prospects.
- Friend-storming. A group jointly suggests names of (e.g. non-Scouting) friends that could work.
- Look everywhere: neighbors, friends, at work, parents of scouts, people in your church or other organizations, NESAs list.
- Never stop looking!



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## Start your prospect list

1. Make list of all tasks to fill (Column 1).
2. Identify characteristics of person needed (Column 2).
3. Collect names of possible candidates.
4. Research everyone; does each one fit job characteristics.
5. Match several (4-5) names to each task.
6. Prioritize names under each task.
7. Identify “help” needed with any name on the list.
8. Enter all of this on worksheet.

This list should be kept “Confidential”.





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## RECRUITING WORKSHEET – Identify and evaluate candidates

Position	Characteristics needed	Candidate	Phone	Priority	Suggested by
Cubmaster	Organizer, can recruit, has vision for pack, good with scouts, outgoing, willing to be trained	Bill Williams	555-1234	1	Joe Anderson
		Ann Brown	555-3241	2	Joe Anderson
		Ed Benjamin	555-9876	3	Me
		Nancy Smith	555-7896	4	Sam Jones
Pack membership chair	Understands membership plan, can organize, willing to make phone calls	Bill Henderson	555-4321	1	Sally Jones
		Tom Jones	555-2468	2	Abner Doolittle
Pack trainer	At least 1 year in Cubbing, can train others, understand how dens work, good listener				

Target: 5 names per position. On average, you will get 4 to 5 “no” for every “yes”.

If you get a “yes”, reevaluate remaining names to fill other positions.

If you get a “no”, see if the person will take part of a job or a different job.



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## Get started. But where do you start?

- Start with most important jobs first.
- You can work jobs simultaneously, if names do not overlap.  
If Joe is second priority for top job and first priority for another job, do not start on second job.
- In each task, ask only top selection. If that is a “no”, then next person is new “top selection”.
- Remember if you are asking Joe for top job, and get a “no”, be ready to ask him for the other job.
- Push for an answer in 2 to 3 days on all requests.



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## Making the pitch - Develop a written plan

Preparation

Introduction

Make the pitch – “sell the sizzle” of  
Scouting Force a decision

Close the deal



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## Preparation to talk

- Study job description. Know the task before you talk.
- Study what you know about the person.
- Contact person; ask for face-to-face meeting “to discuss something critical to community”. Do not explain “why”. Ask for 15 minutes only. “No is an acceptable answer.” Meet in quiet, neutral location.
- Do NOT recruit over the phone. Do not talk about the task, or you will do phone recruiting.
- Never recruit via email or social media.
- Practice “oral” part of presentation out loud with a stop watch until you have it by memory and can keep within time limits.





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## Introduction to the “ask”

You are at your scheduled meeting site.

- In meeting, build rapport, then set short agenda.
- Explain that candidate will control clock.
- Explain that a “NO” is an acceptable answer.  
That should relax things.



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# Make the “pitch”

- Explain quickly what is needed. Focus on value for that person and for community (you will be part of something big). “Sell the sizzle” of Scouting.
- Low key. Do not push to get a lot of “yes” replies.
- Explain what must be accomplished and timing.
- Focus on short-term effort, not lifetime commitment.
- Keep this short. Remember your 15-minute promise.



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## Force a decision

- Find out who is involved in decision making. If spouse is needed, stop and ask to meet them both.
- If discussion struggles, state what you feel, ask for confirmation. This puts them back in front.
- Ask “On scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you”. If a 4, forget them, but you might ask “why”. If 7, find out what it will take to push this to a 10.
- If no interest, that is wrong person. Do not recruit if no interest.
- Ask “what will it take to reach a decision?”.
- Let them break any silence. Do not do it yourself.



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## Close the Deal

- Get them to formally say “yes”.
- Thank them.
- Give them a job description; they should edit it.
- Give them BSA application if not registered.
- Get them information and tasks with deadlines.
- Give them rosters of contacts. Identify training.
- Document all in writing, so there is no confusion.
- Send out appropriate announcement.
- Send them thank you note.
- Get out of the way, but follow up with them.



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## What if they say “NO”?

- Find out if there is a part that he/she would take. Then close the deal on that part.
- Ask who they know that would be perfect for the task and if they would help recruit him or her. Add person to worksheet.
- Still send thank you note.

Expect to get 4 “NO”s for every “YES”.

Telling them the problem may help get assistance later.



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## What if they drag out a response?

- Push for an answer in a short time (usually 3 days). If they wait a long time, the answer is “NO”, but you do not know it. {There are exceptions.}
- Be willing to take a “NO”. It is better than being “on hold” for weeks. You need committed people, and your time is short.
- Be ready to move on without them.

Success is meeting group’s goals and not just having a name on a roster.



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## What happens if you don't recruit?

You risk failure for everyone:

- Youth do not get program they want and need.
- You do not get the help you need.
- Program does not work as it should.
- The “volunteer” is slighted because you did not ask.

Volunteers believe that BSA service helps them be:

- Better citizens 90%
- Better parents 88%
- Better managers 73%
- More patient and tolerant 69%

Source: Scouting magazine, Sept 2008



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## REMEMBER

**Always be in recruiting mode.**

Recruit people anywhere you find them: work, lunch, other meetings, in your neighborhood.

Go where people are.

You are doing important work, so it is important to get the right help.

Go do it!



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# Thank You!



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