

## 101 Ways to Recruit & Retain Student Organization Members

1. Smile! No one wants to join a “frowny” organization.
2. Ask yourself why you joined the organization. This will help you build a foundation for your recruitment process.
3. Figure out why students would want to be involved on-campus or in your organization. Keep in mind that most students who want to get involved want *GRAPEs- Growth, Recognition, Achievement, Participation and Enjoyment* in student life.
4. Be prepared. Understand the costs, time commitments, and effort that membership brings and share this with the prospective member. Make sure he/she understands what will be expected of him/her. Share why your organization is important and meaningful to you.
5. Be sure you are the right person to extend the invitation. Find a member of your organization who knows the prospective member, or find a person with good communication skills. Identify the best person to share the invitation to membership. However, do not put pressure upon that one person and do not only depend on his/her skills. Attend workshops so that all of the members in your student organization have strong communication skills.
6. Personalize your invitation. Why do you want the particular individual you are asking? What makes this person “right for your organization?” Talk about how your organization membership will meet an important need that he/she may have expressed or will provide an opportunity for community involvement, friendship, and personal growth.
7. During your meetings, have nametags for the current and prospective members. This way, everyone could greet one another by name, rather than with, “hey you!”
8. Think about how the invitation will sound to the prospective member. Ask positively with the expectation that he/she will accept. Show your interest in the person and your commitment to your organization’s mission.
9. Be enthusiastic. Always speak from the heart. Remember: enthusiasm is contagious.
10. Avoid monotony. Break the ice with creative “ice breakers.” There’s more to breaking ice than having the prospective members stand up and state their name, major, and why they want to join your organization.
11. Be realistic about your expectations. A working parent may need a flexible schedule and may not be available to attend all meetings. Consider how your organization can fit into their family’s schedule and work routine.
12. Remember the “courtesy factor.” Whether you phone a person or initiate a conversation face to face, determine if this is a good time to talk. If not, schedule a more convenient time.
13. Bring closure to the conversation. A prospective member may want to think about the invitation or may want to consult others. Agree upon a time when you will contact him/her again to learn his/her decision.

14. Follow up quickly. If your invitation to join the organization is accepted, be ready to move forward with induction and orientation. You'll want to involve the new member as soon as possible.
15. Accept "NO" graciously. The timing and situation may not allow a prospective member to accept your invitation to membership.
16. Don't overlook anyone. Try to recruit even those who merely glance through your banners or flyers. If they took the time to read your organization's name, then, at least take time to ask for their contact number.
17. Know that the "image" of your group is, and sell the image you want. If people see your group as a drinking group – and if this is not the image you want – then you need to promote the image you would prefer in all of your recruitment materials. Recruit people who fit the image you are pursuing.
18. Co-sponsor campus events so that your organization's name will be out there more. Be sure to always have membership information available at all events you sponsor.
19. Have a membership drive. This can happen at anytime of the year, and remember that you will have the most competition at the start of the year when every other organization on campus is recruiting. Advertise the membership drive, but remember that advertising and motivating your current members to get out there and meet people will make the most difference.
20. Attach an answering machine to a phone line and make it a 24 hours "events line" that students can call to find out about cool things to do each week. BE sure to let the caller know that the events line is sponsored by your organization and how they can get involved.
21. Give away key chains, cups and other items. This helps to let people know you are out there.
22. Get exclusive rights to a really cool "members only" job. For example, if your organization members always get to be ushers for on-campus concerts, people will want to get involved so that they can work concerts too. Same thing for athletic games – anything where people have to pay to get in.
23. Ask a prospective member if you can have an executive meeting in his/her dorm.
24. At your next meeting, do role-playing. One person is the recruiter and the other is a recruitee. Practice dealing with excuses like, "I don't have time," or "I need to study all the time, I can't be a part of an organization." The more comfortable your members are recruiting, the more they will do it. Give them the practice that they need.
25. Create a display that you can set up all over the place! Include photos descriptions of local efforts as well as national efforts (that is, if your student organization is a national one).
26. Have your current club members get new members who are looking for a way to get involved on-campus. There is a lot of underutilized talent out there, but you have to go find it.

27. Sponsor a movie! Give a recruit brochure to everyone who attends. Have your members wear your organization gear (hats, t-shirts, sweaters). The more people see a well-bonded group, the more likely they will want to be a part of it.
28. Talk to a local pizza delivery place into letting you tape flyers to the tops of all their pizza boxes. That is a sure way to get attention! You can mix prevention messages with recruitment messages! It's also a great public service for the pizza place.
29. Rent a video camera and make your own recruitment video. It's okay if it's amateur and sloppy, just make it funny! Show your group members at an event. Show a few minutes of a typical meeting, show your members hanging out, bowling, whatever! The more hilarious the better. You might even have competition among groups of members to see who can put together the best recruitment video.
30. Have a party! Plain and simple. It's a great way to meet new people and talk about the organization.
31. Have a movie night. Go on opening night to a movie that's playing in town. Your members have to buy their own tickets, but give free tickets to their friends who might be interested in joining. Of course, this will require a little money so get creative.
32. Get involved in the Orientation Program in any way you can. Help st