



INTRODUCTION

RECRUITMENT is defined ... as enlisting; the act of getting recruits; enlisting people to join an organization or a cause; etc.

EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT... depends on how well you market the organization you represent and successfully recruit new members.

In an effort to successfully grow our Blue Knights membership the International Board of Directors agree that it is important to incorporate an effective and successful Recruitment Strategy and Model. This strategy / model was developed by AJ Sandoval III (Texas State Representative for the Rio Grande Conference) with input from other RGC members. It can be used by chapters everywhere in an effort to increase recruitment percentages. The strategy / model includes various critical success factors, recruitment techniques, tips and plan development.

Our organizational history begins with the formation of our organization which began in the Spring of 1974 by several law enforcement officers from the Bangor, Maine area. These founding fathers formed a small, local motorcycle club that formed new chapters in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and beyond. With the addition of Canada, and later Australia, the Blue Knights became an international organization.

Today as of July 1, 2007 we have 574 Chapters and 18,147 members in 28 countries.

One of the ways each of the Blue Knights Conferences can support its chapters is by being able to provide organizational facilitated assistance. This assistance is designed to promote the vision and mission of our Blue Knights International organization.

Blue Knights International looks forward to receiving feedback concerning the effectiveness of this information. We and the author consider this document to be revisable in order to be more efficient. Forward any and all comments to the International Vice President at JBryan@BlueKnights.org.

My sincerest thanks to AJ Sandoval and the rest of the Rio Grande Conference for sharing this valuable plan with the rest of us for the betterment of the Blue Knights International Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club and all of the law enforcement officers it can help us welcome as new members.

PART 1: CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

In order for a strategy to be effective it must contain “Critical Success Factors.” These key elements set the essential foundation for the model.

STEP 1: PLANNING

- Know your intended audience and prepare realistic strategies to reach them; in our case our intended audience are active or retired law enforcement officers.
- Develop a written plan outlining necessary steps to accomplish your task by assigning action items and having timelines
- Example: The plan is to recruit within our immediate geographical area from:
 - Police Departments A,B,C, and D
 - Sheriff’s Office 1,2,3 and 4
 - State Offices A1,B1,C1 and D1
 - Federal Offices A2,B2,C2 and D2
 - Member 1 will contact the police depts. and sheriff’s offices
 - Member 2 will contact the federal and state offices
 - The timeline is as follows
 - a. 30 days to make contacts at each department and provide information
 - b. 15 days for 1st follow up with each contact
 - c. 15 days for 2nd follow up with each contact
 - d. 15 days to develop new contact if current contact is not productive (repeat timeline starting at “b”)

STEP 2: GOALS / OBJECTIVES

- Identify recruitment goals
- Develop recruitment objectives
- Incorporated timelines and realistic target projections

STEP 3: COLLABORATION

- Identify the law enforcement agencies in your area that employ your intended audience
- Develop a contact within each of those agencies to serve as your contact or representative to coordinate introductions between members and possible members; also assist with posting of information or other recruitment measures

STEP 4: MESSAGE

- Be accurate, brief and clear
- Develop flyers, posters, letters, media sheets, communication messages, television and radio public service announcements that will encourage and persuade possible recruits to join your chapter

STEP 5: ASSESS / MEASURE / REDESIGN

- Conduct informal assessment of goals and objectives by forming an internal committee or focus group
- Determine the effectiveness of proposed strategies by measuring results
- Incorporate redesign into the model and implement

PART II: RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUES

Chapter members with recruitment responsibilities need to understand effective techniques in order to approach the model. Below are primary targeted techniques to assist a focus effort using designated techniques.

PRIMARY TARGETED TECHNIQUES

NETWORKING

1. Design a presentation explaining the local Blue Knights chapter
2. Encourage current members to recommend new members
3. Send thank you note for each referral
4. Invite potential members to an open regular meeting, ride, or general event
5. Provide regular updates/feedback on referrals to chapter; reporting format
6. Design, print and provide flyers, brochures & handouts on the chapter

WORD OF MOUTH

1. Hold a recruitment contest; i.e. monthly, quarterly, yearly
2. Provide incentives to membership for recruitment referrals
3. Ask Blue Knight chapter sponsors and friends to help distribute materials
4. Give out Blue Knights business cards to possible recruits

POSTERS

1. Design and produce recruitment posters, then post at LE agencies
2. Post recruitment posters at motorcycle dealers and motorcycle repair shops
3. Make logo identification a priority when designing and printing

MEDIA COVERAGE

1. Appear as a guest on radio and television talk shows, community channel
2. Submit public service announcements to radio and television stations
3. Send news releases to newspapers, radio and TV stations
4. Identify and network with positive media representatives to assist chapter

EVENTS

1. If your chapter holds fund-raiser give each potential recruit literature
2. Construct a float (local parades) or request riding in event with a banner
3. Hold an open house during a regular or monthly meeting
4. Attend Law Enforcement association meetings, have booth with recruitment material

PART III: A TARGETED RECRUITMENT PLAN

Your recruitment plan must also include targets. Weapons qualifications would not be as effective if targets were missing. Same goes for a strategy or a plan. You must have a target and then work effectively towards reaching the proper target. Here are some suggestions to help you identify proper targets.

TARGET DIMENSIONS

- Demographically (identify the agencies, possible recruits)
- Psychographically (what they want that you can provide)

IDENTIFY BENEFITS OF JOINING

1. Select chief benefits (unique Blue Knights, i.e. international organization)
2. Write powerful headline (4 seconds)
3. Illustrate good times, fellowship, and uniqueness
4. Move recruits toward joining today, not to delay
5. Measure results (pro and con then adjust strategy and implement)
6. Make necessary changes as needed, don't change what's working

PLAN YOUR OUTREACH

1. Set a budget for recruitment
2. Set monthly or quarterly recruitment goals and objectives
3. Anticipate seasonal cycles (spring-higher—winter-lower)
4. Advertise regularly, be creative, look for opportunities, support a rally
5. Advertise when recruitment statistics are lacking
6. Measure and track your response rates, applications requested vs. received
7. Experiment with different media and methods
8. Build around word of mouth and networking referrals

PART IV: MESSAGE AND MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Communications: Getting the Word Out

1. Accurate
2. Brief
3. Clear and Concise

Traditional Approach

1. Flyers
2. Word of Mouth
3. Posters
4. Community meetings
5. Direct mail

Alternative Approach

1. Transit

2. Public Service Announcements
3. Billboards
4. TV/Cable
5. Real-life illustrations and events

PART V: SEVEN (7) CONSIDERATIONS

1. Establish a Recruitment Committee and appoint a Recruitment Chairman. The recommendation is anywhere from three to five members, depending on your chapter size. These individuals can help ease the burden on the Recruitment Chairman and serve to ensure no detail is forgotten. They will also become great candidates when it's time to elect new chapter officers-they are already trained and know the chapter's recruitment strategy.
2. Don't make your best recruiter the Recruitment Chairmen. A successful Recruitment Chairmen need only to be organized, have a strong desire to succeed, and be able to motivate chapter members. Think about it-if your best recruiter is always busy planning events and worrying about logistical details, how much time will he/she actually have to recruit potential members? Now it makes sense.
3. Set a recruitment goal, objectives and track committee progress. A good rule of thumb when planning goals and objectives is to begin with the end in mind. Make the number challenging, but attainable, and don't settle for less. There are plenty of quality men and women out there who would make great Blue Knights-we just have to strategically find them.
4. Ask your chapter membership to make recruitment an important thought and process. Create recruitment incentives for chapter members and recruitment committee members. Be creative with the incentive rewards. For example: Dinner for two, movie tickets, gas cards, gift cards from Wal-Mart, free oil change, gift card for motorcycle accessories, a motorcycle detail gift certificate, acknowledgement at a regular meeting, etc., the list is endless.
5. Invite the potential member to a chapter ride, regular meeting, lunch or dinner. This is a great opportunity to spend an hour or so in one-on-one conversation with a prospect getting to know their interests and potential barriers to commitment. In the end, both sides will benefit because you would have shown the potential recruit you care about him/her becoming a member and develop a positive relationship you and they will never forget; very important to make it a positive one.
6. As easy as this may sound..."Ask somebody to join." Amazing, but true...no one ever joined our organization before they were asked. This is not about "Having them wanting to join our organization", it's about "Us wanting them to join our organization." If we believe a potential recruit would make a great member, we should move forward to assisting him with the application and selection process. We might want to serve as their sponsors till the process is completed.
7. Make use of multiple recruitment styles depending in the recruitment situation. Recruitment styles could be made up of "Large Groups", "Small Groups", and "One-on-One". Depending on what the recruitment situation calls for dictates which recruitment style you select. For example: If you have several people (10 or more) interested in receiving some information about the chapter then it would probably be

a good idea to invite a large group of chapter members to attend the meeting or presentation. On the other hand if you have only one person interested in receiving some information it would be more advisable and maybe more comfortable for the potential recruit to be in a “One-on-One” setting. The important thing to understand is that there is no magic formula to decide which one to use, just a suggestive formula. Call if you are having difficulty deciding, we’ll be happy to assist.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Recognize RECRUITMENT...

- Takes time, effort, and commitment from everyone involved
- Is a process involving methodical planning and strategic vision
- Incorporates into the mission of the Chapter and the Conference
- Should be a constant year-round activity by the membership
- Essentially should be fun, competitive and rewarding

REFERENCE CONTACTS AND LINKS

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