



Del-Mar-Va Council
VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT GUIDEBOOK

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT CYCLE



In the life of every organization, there comes a time for new leadership to take over. This may come about due to a retirement, someone moving within the organization or someone leaving all together. How this process is handled from the beginning determines how well the transition happens and how well the unit will fare in the future. We have developed 5 key steps in the recruitment of volunteers: Prospecting, "The Ask", On-boarding, Mentorship and Succession planning. We have attempted to establish a set of guidelines that we feel will help with the recruitment of volunteers and their retention. Please feel free to modify as needed based on your experience.

Visit www.dmv.org/volunteer for additional Volunteer Recruitment resources, Podcasts, Parent Surveys, Volunteer Position descriptions, and tips & tricks.

PROSPECTING

Finding the Talent Pool



Prospecting is the first step to finding the volunteers for any group. Whether a Scout unit, District Committee, Council working group or a little league team, volunteers are the heart of the organization. Finding the right fit for your group is a very important task and one that should not be taken lightly. When prospecting for new volunteers the use of the following can help greatly.

- 1. LOOK AROUND.** If your group is already formed and running, the easiest place to find a volunteer are the parents that show up each week or are consistently at meetings. Don't forget to include the parents of Scouts who are aging out. They may be willing to stay around in the unit for a while or may be a great addition at the District or Council level. If you are in a Troop and have a Pack that most of your Scouts come from, talk to and get to know the leaders from that unit, they may be looking to continue in a leadership role.
- 2. ASK YOUR CURRENT LEADERS IF THEY KNOW A PARENT THAT MAY BE INTERESTED IN HELPING.** The current leader may have a parent friend within the unit that they would like to work with. There may be sleepers in your unit, that when asked will help out, but they will not come forth on their own.
- 3. FIND NEW PARENTS THAT WILL BE AROUND A WHILE.** While prospecting keep in mind how long that parent/Scout will be in the unit. If you can find a parent that will be around for 2-3 years, that is a great opportunity for some consistent leadership.
- 4. SKILL SET.** Determine what skill set is required for the position and search out a parent that may have the necessary skill set or hobby interest.
- 5. PARENT SURVEY.** The use of a parent survey will help the committee chairperson to identify individuals with certain skills or talents that may be useful to the unit or simply unknown to the leadership. This should be part of any new Scout/parent paperwork. The important part of the survey is to follow up and have a committee person actively review them.

MAKING THE ASK

Approaching the Prospect

The second step of the volunteer cycle is "The Ask". We have developed 6 main parts to help you.

1. PREPARATION.

Understand why people volunteer and why they choose to stay and volunteer.

Have a clear understanding of the role that you are asking the person to take. Have a fallback position or a less intensive role in the same interest area if you get a firm no. Understand the time commitment you are asking for must be realistic. Talk to folks who know the person in question; try to understand their strengths and weaknesses before you meet. Understand the barriers to a yes and prepare a strategy to overcome them. Develop or obtain a brief job description, but keep it simple and accurate. Know what resources are available for the position, whether it be training, documentation or other volunteer support. Know the status of the position in question, is it new position, well defined or a rebuild? Lastly, find someone who can help you get the prospect to a meeting.

2. SETTING UP THE ASK.

Pick a neutral site that is convenient to the prospect, it could be a restaurant, coffee house or other public place. Pick a convenient time and bring someone that knows the person or the position.

3. "THE ASK"

Spend some time getting to know the prospect, discuss their current Scouting situation or connection. Talk with them about the position that you are about to offer. Make the ask! Share with them the resources you brought, description and time commitment of the position along with any training that is available. Be prepared to counter any barriers that they may bring up so you can reverse the no. Gauge whether to press for an answer or offer time to think about it. The ask works best when it is personal, the general ask in front of a large group doesn't seem to work.

4. FOLLOW-UP.

Within 24 hours reach out to the prospect and thank them for meeting with you, ask if there is any additional information they require from you and set a deadline for an answer. Discuss with the person who assisted you to get them to the meeting the potential outcome.

5. WHAT IF THEY SAY NO.

If the prospect says no, please evaluate their resolve; it may just be a first reaction, never take no as an answer the first time. Find out what the barriers are and try to find a position that may bridge those barriers. Most importantly, keep trying. If that position was not the right fit, see if you can find one, even if it is a few months or years down the line.

6. WHAT IF THEY SAY YES.

The first thing that you should do is thank them for their willingness to step up and help.

You should follow up on any promised resources in a timely manner and check back with them at various intervals, especially within the first 1-2 months, to see if they need anything or if you can be of help.



ON-BOARDING

Setting Your New Volunteer Up for Success



After you have "prospected" and found the right person, made "the ask" and they say yes, what comes next? In order for a new leader to be successful, the onboarding process must be done well and correctly.

1. EXPLAIN THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES FULLY.

Explaining the roles and responsibilities to the new leader will allow them to understand the position better.

2. HAVE THE LEADER GET THE TRAINING THAT IS NEEDED FOR THE NEW ROLE.

Having the leader fully trained for the position is not only required, but it will help him/her feel more confident in the role. It also gives others a good feeling knowing that the person has training in what they are being asked to do.

3. LET EVERYONE IN THE UNIT KNOW THAT THIS IS THE GOING TO BE THE NEW LEADER FOR THE POSITION.

Communicating to the unit who the new leader will be is important for everyone to get used to the idea of a different person in that role. This should be done as soon as possible after the new leader has said yes. It is important for a smooth transfer of roles that everyone is aware and prepared for the change.

4. HAVE THE NEW LEADER JOB SHADOW AND/OR TAKE A SMALL PART OF THE JOB.

Experience is something that can't be taught or learned from a book or in a

classroom. Having the person take on a small role or job can show them that they will be successful and it is a great motivating tool for a new leader.

5. HAVE A SPECIFIC TIME OR CEREMONY TO COMPLETE THE TRANSFER OF ROLES.

Make the transfer of the position something to be proud of by holding a formal ceremony, like a Court of Honor or Pack Meeting. This will allow everyone in the unit to see the new leader in an official role and it will make the experience memorable for all parties. Giving a small gift or token to the new leader is important. This makes the new person feel that they are part of something special and more meaningful to them. An example of this is, the old Scoutmaster tears off the Scoutmaster patch from his uniform and hands it to the new Scoutmaster to sew on his uniform.

6. CREATE A LIST OF THE FIRST FEW ITEMS THAT THE PERSON SHOULD TACKLE.

An action item list will provide the new leader a starting point and ensure important things don't get missed in the transition.

7. ARRANGE FOR THE LEADER TO MEET THE DISTRICT STAFF.

Meeting the district or Council staff will allow the new leader contacts to discuss any questions they may have pertaining to the new position.

If the "on-boarding" process is handled correctly the new leader will feel welcomed and prepared for the new role that they are taking on.

MENTORSHIP

One-on-One Coaching & Support

Mentoring is defined as: "The guidance provided by an experienced person". Mentorship is a period during which a person receives guidance from a mentor. Notice the words Guidance and Period. As a Mentor, it is important to determine the best method to provide guidance to your mentee plus realistic transition time expectations.

The purpose of a mentor is to ensure a leader's current position is handed over effectively to the next leader. This is an important part of the process because it takes the mystery out of what the role entails and provides effective teamwork during the transition period.

1. SHARE YOUR TOOLS & DOCUMENTATION

Have clearly listed directions or procedures noting who is the point of contact, best demonstrated practices and what worked or needed improvement. The leader that is leaving their position should set the right expectations regarding the role and document all their responsibilities.

2. REVIEW ANNUAL CALENDAR TOGETHER

Having a binder or folder with notes organized by activity/event and providing contact information is often helpful. Ensure that a calendar is provided to

the mentee so time commitments will not be a surprise.

3. BE ENCOURAGING AND PATIENT

Keep the lines of communication open while working together, and with the unit. We recommend the new leader take on the role with the prior leader stepping back. This allows everyone (including the Scouts) the opportunity to work with the new leader and grow accustomed to them in the role. Show enthusiasm and sense of fun and purpose for the position. Let them know that they can do the job better than you did, encourage them to try new or different things within the role to keep things fresh. Offer praise for the job that they are doing.

4. DEFINE THE MENTORSHIP DURATION

Check in with the new leader on a regular basis and agree upon the best method of communication – text, email or phone call. Have at least a year of mentoring and partnership between the outgoing and incoming leader, if possible. This will allow you to attend meetings together, prepare as a team, and review how things went after an event/task.



SUCCESSION PLANNING

Planning A Bright Future



Succession planning should be an active part of every unit or groups committee meetings or gatherings. The job of succession planning really starts long before you are ready to hand it over to the next leader. There are a few things that you can do while in your role to help find your successor when the time comes.

- 1. START EARLY.** Every member of a group or organization will need to be replaced at some point. Having an idea of the skills needed for a given position will help you when you start the prospecting phase.
- 2. REEVALUATE LEADERSHIP ROLES YEARLY.** You don't want to be surprised by the leader that quits with no warning, and you don't want to assume that a person is going to stay for a certain amount of time. Having a conversation about tenure and how long they see themselves in that roll, will allow you to start the succession planning with plenty of time to do it right.
- 3. COMMUNICATE.** The COR, committee chair and each active leader should have an idea of who they think will be a natural successor to their role. These thoughts should be shared with the committee chair so that multiple people don't have the same person in mind for different roles. At least once a year, the committee should look at the active leaders and take a survey of how long each person sees them self in that role.

We hope that these guidelines will help you recruit the volunteers that are needed for your unit, district or committee. We have kept the 5 steps as concise as possible, please change to fit the position as needed.



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