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Commissioner Recruiting: Work the Plan

It's an old saying: "Plan the work and work the plan."

And it's one worth considering when thinking about recruiting commissioners. We know the tools and techniques that work best, but too often they don't deliver what is needed: "an adequate number of trained commissioners who provide a link to district committees in support of a quality unit program." The reason? Too often, there isn't a plan to put those tools and techniques to work, or we don't put the plan to work. We're seeing encouraging news about membership growth and creation of new units, which makes recruiting new commissioners more important than ever.

So, what does a commissioner recruiting plan look like?

Consider these elements:

- **It starts with a vision.**

It's impossible to determine the resources needed without knowing the objective. A clear, concise vision defines success and enables identification of the resources needed to achieve it.

- **It's data-based.**

The necessary research has been done to identify how many of what types of units must be served today *and* how many new units are planned to be added during the coming year. Equally important, the number of *active, engaged* commissioners is known.

- **It's SMART.**

It includes goals that are **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource based, and Time oriented.**

Most of those terms are probably familiar, although "resource based" may not be. The point is that our plan needs to identify how many of what type of commissioners with what skills are needed. Recruiting volunteers with strong administrative skills who aren't very comfortable building relationships and working in teams may not be the best approach to finding new unit commissioners. A volunteer with a servant's heart and knowledge and experience with Cub Scouting probably isn't the best candidate to serve a ship.

"Time oriented" is critical. Hitting that goal ensures we're adding the commissioners needed because the plan includes specific dates for doing so.

- **It's dynamic.**

Things change. Some volunteers will move on to other opportunities and will need to be replaced. Additional new units may be created (a good thing!). A recruiting plan must respond to changing needs.



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- **It's integrated.**

Good recruiting plans require leadership; for commissioners, that means they start with a council commissioner who establishes an overall plan.

Each district should have a plan that responds to its specific needs *and* supports the council plan and ensures its success.

- **It's written.**

It doesn't matter whether it's on paper or in an electronic format, but the plan must be put in writing.

- **It's public.**

Recruiting commissioners is a shared responsibility. Every commissioner should know the plan and contribute to it. Engaged unit commissioners, for example, are in their units and can identify volunteers who might be great candidates; effective roundtable commissioners work with leaders from throughout the district and may also have recommendations. Both build relationships that may be valuable in asking a qualified candidate to serve.

But at the end of the day, the best possible recruiting plan is still only a plan.

Successful recruiting of commissioners requires that we create a plan, but it also requires that we work it!



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