

SUCCESSFUL RECRUITMENT IS MORE THAN AN ASK

There's not a council – or district – in the BSA that doesn't need additional commissioners. Recruiting is a year round process; we should continually be looking for candidates; but once one is identified, what's next? Successful recruiting it is far more than just asking someone to serve.

PREPARATION

Successful recruitment begins with a vision: how will you – and the person you've identified – know if they have been successful? Increasingly, we have metrics available to identify where Unit Service work is needed. Those metrics can also help measure progress – and success. Before making an ask, write down, specifically, what success will look like. And, make a reasonable estimate of how much time it will take to do the job in question. The best candidates will ask you about both; be prepared to answer.

PASSION

We've all heard it: if find work we love, we'll never work another day in our life; that's passion! Our dedicated volunteers are passionate about Scouting, but when you get down to the details, they're not all passionate about the same things. Some really want to be on the front lines and work directly with the kids; but that may mean helping them work on merit badges, or it may mean taking them backpacking, or perhaps teaching them to swim. Dedicated Scouters understand the importance of Unit Service, but all of them don't have a passion for it. A bit of homework will help identify a candidate's passion; if it doesn't match with your vision, the chances of successful recruitment drop significantly.

POTENTIAL

Passion is one thing, potential is something entirely different. While perhaps hard to understand, some people have a passion for something they're not particularly good at. More homework: what is your candidate really good at? Does it match up with your vision? If so, your chances of success rise dramatically.

PRIORITIES

Strange as it sounds, we don't always control our priorities. A candidate with both passion and potential for the work you need done may have 6 month old twins at home, or may have recently accepted a promotion that will require heavy travel with a burdensome workload for the next 12 months. As a general rule, volunteers should be given the chance to decide whether or not they have the time to do what you need done, but your wisdom is needed, too. Sometimes it is evident that we're asking more than anyone can reasonably be expected to give. That, too, requires a bit of homework.

POACHING

Don't do it!

Even if you've found the perfect candidate – their passion, potential and priorities all align with your vision – don't make the ask until you do one more bit of homework: are they already doing a great job in Scouting for someone else? If so, your first call needs to be to their current leader. Sometimes you'll learn the current assignment is close to a conclusion, or that there is a way for your candidate to do both jobs. But sometimes you'll find that recruiting that candidate for your job will damage our efforts to build Scouting in another area. It's tough to pass on the perfect candidate, but Scouting will be better for it.

Spend time in Preparation; assess Potential and Priorities; don't Poach. It takes a bit more time than just making an ask, but the kids we serve through Scouting will be better off.