

# Effective Mentor Recruitment



Getting  
Organized,  
Getting  
Results





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## Getting Organized, Getting Results

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# Introduction

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No mentoring program can succeed without an adequate supply of volunteer mentors. A shortage of volunteers can mean long lists of youth waiting to be matched, little flexibility in reassigning participants whose matches end prematurely, and a greatly reduced ability to use existing mentors to recruit new volunteers.

In spite of recruitment's obvious importance, most mentoring programs struggle to meet recruitment goals. This can be for various reasons: a lack of resources, a shortage of qualified adults in a particular community, and even challenges in meeting the needs of diverse social, cultural, and ethnic groups. Too often, though, recruitment efforts suffer from a lack of organization and effort. If mentoring programs are going to meet their goals, it will be through a carefully planned and coordinated effort.

This book explores many of the reasons recruitment efforts sometimes fall short and offers some simple things your program can do to focus your volunteer search and build a framework for recruitment success.

## Who This Book Is for

This book is designed for mentoring programs funded through the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS), Mentoring Grants initiative. These grantees exist in a variety of school, community, and afterschool settings, but all strive to use year-round mentoring to improve academic outcomes, increase school connectedness and attitudes, and positively impact a number of social and developmental outcomes. The advice in this book is also general enough to be helpful to other youth mentoring efforts.

Volunteer recruitment, like many aspects of running a mentoring program, is impacted tremendously by local circumstances and program-specific resources and skills. What might work for one program in one city could be ineffective for a program elsewhere. In some ways, OSDFS mentoring grantees all have unique circumstances, in spite of their shared goals and common funding. As a result, this book is designed to look at recruitment holistically and from a broad perspective. It examines often overlooked program elements that affect recruitment. It also offers tools that can help your program determine what strategies will work for you. Perhaps most important, it examines the philosophical principles behind effective recruitment, looking at how programs lay the foundation for success.

This book will be most useful to program coordinators, recruitment directors, and those with similar positions of influence within a mentoring program. However, a core principle of this book is that everyone in a mentoring program has a role to play in volunteer recruitment—many others will inherently be a part of the process outlined in this book.

## How This Book Is Organized

The information in this book is presented in logical progression from broad concepts to specific approaches, culminating in the development of an individualized recruitment plan for your program.

The first chapter covers the guiding principles, mindsets, and philosophies behind effective mentor recruitment. These are what programs of all shapes and sizes struggle with, and they will influence how successful your particular approaches will be.

The second chapter looks at the “prep work” your program can do to make recruitment successful. These tasks provide the direction and structure for your recruitment work, focusing on the background information you’ll need to make informed planning decisions.

Chapter 3 addresses specific recruitment methods. Your program may wish to implement many of the strategies in this section, or just a few. These are organized into three broad categories: marketing-based strategies, “tried and true” methods, and innovative “outside the box” approaches.

The last chapter offers a planning tool you can use to build a custom recruitment plan. While no two plans will look alike, the important thing is to actually have a formal plan. Without one, your recruitment results will be spotty and your waiting lists of youth will grow. With one, your team will be organized, efficient, and poised for success.

## Why Targeted Recruitment Is So Important

A mentoring program cannot do its good work without volunteer mentors, so there is an obvious need in simply getting adequate numbers to reach the matches your program is obligated to make. But good recruitment goes beyond numbers. Targeted recruitment—recruitment that is focused on particular attributes—guarantees not only that your program will hit its benchmarks, but that the types of individuals you recruit will also be up to the task. And while many programs use a formal screening process to weed out unsuitable volunteers, they can also save staff time and program resources by being intentional about who gets recruited in the first place.

### What Does the Research Say About Effective, Targeted Mentor Recruitment?

While no definitive scientific study has been made of the best ways to recruit mentors, a number of key points have emerged from the research that can affect how your program goes about recruitment:

- **Mentors (and all volunteers) get involved for a variety of reasons.** Theories abound as to why volunteers get involved. Some focus on “social” or “human capital,” referring to the peer networks, cultural connections, and available personal time and resources that lead someone to volunteer (Wilson, 2000; Portney and Berry, 1997). Others look at personal traits, such as empathy and “prosocial” attitudes (Penner, 2002). Still others look at what the volunteer expects to get out of the experience (Clary et al., 1998). Although there is no one answer to why mentors choose to get involved, the variety of potential reasons does mean that mentoring programs will have to employ a variety of approaches in their recruitment efforts. The programs that are most successful are those that identify their potential volunteers’ motivations and beliefs and speak to them directly during recruitment messages (Clary et al., 1994). The next chapter discusses volunteer motivations and how to address them in your recruitment efforts in further detail.
- **Word-of-mouth and television coverage are key strategies.** This finding comes from research done on effective Big Brothers Big Sisters recruitment strategies (Roaf et al., 1994). By television coverage we mean not paid advertisements (although the study found those to be somewhat effective) but rather public service announcements (PSAs) about the program and need for mentors in general, and specially developed local news segments that periodically feature youth on the program’s waiting list. Four of the more successful programs in the BBBS study ran a weekly news segment called “Wednesday’s Child.”
- **Mentors respond best to a direct appeal.** The popularity of word-of-mouth becomes clear when one considers that the majority of mentors in a 2002 AOL Time Warner survey indicated they had gotten involved because they were directly asked to, or because of their association with an organization involved with a program (O’Connor, 2002). Another program survey in 1999 found word-of-mouth to be the most common recruitment method in 71 percent of the programs (Sipe and Roder, 1999). This is consistent with research into broader volunteer trends, which suggest a direct appeal for help, especially from within a peer or social group, might be the best way to approach volunteers such as mentors (Independent Sector, 2001; Penner, 2002). In other words, while your Web site and the posters you’ve put up all over town will help, they are unlikely to be the main sources of inquiries.
- **Little research exists on how to best present the concepts of mentoring during recruitment.** Some programs present mentoring as something fun, simple, and relatively easy. Big Brothers Big Sisters, for example, has built its national recruitment efforts around the concept of “little moments, big magic,” which positions mentors as average people who are capable of bringing about changes in youth just by spending time with them and being themselves. Little is mentioned of the youth’s (sometimes substantial) needs, or that mentoring can often be difficult or frustrating. Others go with the opposite end of the spectrum, mentioning the often dire circumstances of the youth they serve, creating an empathy-based appeal that motivates volunteers to take up the cause.

Unfortunately, there is no research that directly supports one approach or the other. Some prominent mentoring researchers, such as Dr. Jean Rhodes, recommend a blended approach, encouraging potential mentors by letting them know that they have the ability to succeed in the role and emphasizing the fun moments mentoring provides, while also presenting mentoring as a series of occasionally hard-fought smaller “victories” that make a big impact over time. This keeps volunteers from being disillusioned once they get involved while alleviating some of the fears they may have about the experience.

The key to targeted recruitment is to tailor how mentoring is presented to the particular groups you approach. One group may be more responsive to the “fun” part, while others may be more motivated by the impact they can have on problems in their community. The values and character of the group you are targeting can suggest the approach to take (e.g., the local Red Hat ladies might be looking for a fun way to give back, police officers and educators might be more interested in addressing community or youth concerns).

- **Race and gender are important, but social networks are what impact recruitment.** Some research indicates that minorities may be motivated to volunteer in agencies that have minority staff members involved in recruitment (Furano et al., 1993). Broader evidence suggests that volunteers may be motivated by opportunities that impact what they perceive to be needs in their own racial/ethnic community (Portney and Berry, 1997). Gender comes into play around societal and cultural expectations associated with mentoring. Women tend to volunteer more than men do, especially for tasks that are viewed as nurturing or educational. It’s no secret to most programs that it takes additional effort to effectively recruit male mentors.

Unfortunately, little research exists on how to best target very specific cultural and ethnic groups. There is no magic formula for recruiting, say, Native Americans or “older men.” To suggest that one set of strategies can appeal to an entire group is to reduce things to the level of stereotypes and generalizations.

Programs can best address race and gender issues in recruitment by tapping into the smaller community-based social networks and organizations to which these individuals might belong. For example, a program needing more black male volunteers might work with the local college chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha; a program targeting lawyers as volunteers would be wise to get involved with the local Bar Association chapter. So while race, culture, ethnicity, and gender all are factors in targeted recruitment, it’s really the access to the groups themselves (and the social motivations for volunteering those groups provide) that is important.

- **Mentor recruitment is challenging.** In the aforementioned AOL survey 11 percent of the respondents reported volunteering in a formal mentor program, and 42 percent of those who were not mentoring said they would be willing to do so in the future (O’Connor, 2002). But getting that group to actually take the

plunge can be a challenge. The aforementioned BBBS study found that only 43 percent of the potential mentors who made initial inquiries to the program went on to apply formally (filling out an application and beginning the screening process). Of that subgroup of formal applicants, less than half actually made it into a match (Roaf et al., 1994). Even Big Brothers Big Sisters has expressed concern over reaching its stated goal of one million matches by 2010, in spite of the fact that their efforts have resulted in over 250,000 new mentors since 2000.

In light of this research, programs should recognize that mentor recruitment is not easy. But it can be very successful if your efforts are organized and you are prepared for the challenge. The next chapter further discusses building a positive and realistic recruitment mindset and setting achievable recruitment goals.



# Guiding Principles of Effective Mentor Recruitment

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What makes a successful mentor recruitment effort is not just the specific strategies or the amount of money spent. It's also the attitudes, personalities, and diligence behind the effort. While planning and strategies are important, good mentoring recruitment is always in the *doing*, not just the planning. Recruiting mentors is a hands-on, face-to-face endeavor. It's about making personal connections, even when using mass-marketing strategies. Because of this, even the best plans can get derailed if program staff members are not prepared, give up easily, or don't allow adequate time or resources to do the work. Conversely, even an average plan can find great success if the people leading the charge are skilled, motivated, and working together.

The following general principles can help a mentoring program start its recruitment efforts from a realistic and practical point. These are all principles we have seen programs both struggle with and use to considerable advantage. They will likely influence how you decide to approach the rest of the planning and strategies in this book.

1. **Recruitment is part of everything your program does.** Not all recruitment happens within the context of a plan. You may have planned presentations at local businesses, PSAs on the radio, and a booth at community events, but recruitment is just as likely to happen in a casual conversation at the grocery store or at a BBQ hosted by one of your mentors on a Saturday afternoon. It can happen any time, anywhere.

Your program is engaged in recruitment 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Every time you interact with a community member or a potential volunteer, whether through an advertisement, a marketing campaign, or a personal conversation, you are leaving an impression about your program. You are conveying something (positive, you hope) about the work you do and the quality of your services. All of these impressions affect how potential mentors view you and your mentoring opportunity.

Successful recruitment is an outcome of overall program quality. Simply put, if yours is a well-run, professional program, recruitment will be a whole lot easier because those qualities will shine through in everything you do. Potential volunteers will feel positive about participating in what you are doing, believing that their experience with you will be a good one.

2. **Everyone (staff and board members, volunteers, community partners) has a role to play.** While most recruitment efforts in mentoring programs fall on the shoulders of program directors and recruitment coordinators, almost every person your program touches has a role to play in making recruitment effective. Many programs place far too large a burden on one person while ignoring the rich tapestry of resources that other players bring to the table:

- ***Current mentors.*** The best method of recruiting new mentors is by tapping into the circles of friends, family, professional colleagues, and social groups that your existing mentors provide. Your mentors likely know many others who share similar values and who would make a similar mentoring commitment. They can also provide powerful personal testimony about the experience.
- ***Board members.*** If your program is housed in a nonprofit agency or with a social service provider, you likely have a board of directors composed of individuals with extensive community connections and access to tremendous resources. Board members can really help mentoring programs in two key areas: sustainability and recruitment, both of which utilize similar skills and personal networks. Your recruitment plan should give board members a prominent role (in fact, they might be uniquely qualified for some of the tasks). They can provide “ins” to local businesses and organizations, be instrumental in building partnerships that impact recruiting, and can help gather funding and in-kind resources that can boost recruitment. They can even demonstrate their support of the program by serving as mentors themselves.

Even if your program doesn't have a formal board, it likely has some form of advisory council or steering committee made up of influential individuals or representatives of larger groups. Tap into the skills and spheres of influence they can provide.

Of course, getting this level of participation from a board or advisory group requires having a solid relationship with them. Spend time building that relationship from the beginning and make sure that they are connected to what's happening in your program. The importance of active, strategic board involvement in just about everything your program does cannot be overstated.

- ***Parents and youth.*** Many parents with children in mentoring programs wind up volunteering themselves once they see the positive impact mentoring can have. Or they may be willing to volunteer in some other way, such as helping with recruitment tasks. They can also provide great testimony about the program to other parents, coworkers, and friends.

And there is no better walking advertisement for the success of a program than the youth who are benefiting, who are turning things around and



achieving goals and dreams. Find a way to prominently involve your youth participants (especially your “veterans”) in recruitment.

- **School staff.** Since all OSFDS-funded mentoring programs have some kind of inherent school connection, they should not hesitate to ask teachers, administrators, coaches, and other school personnel to lend a hand with recruitment (or to serve as mentors themselves). Once again, all these groups have large spheres of influence and connections to other professionals and friends that likely care for educational and youth development issues. School staff can be a great liaison between an OSFDS mentoring program and potential volunteers in the community.

Since recruitment can happen any time, anywhere, all these influential groups should be able to tell your potential recruit about the experience of being a mentor and the impact of your services. This can be done informally or built into planned recruitment opportunities. But the point is to *identify the people who care about what you are doing*, who are already engaged at some level in your work, and give them opportunities to utilize their connections and skills. In addition to involving these groups in specific recruitment campaigns, it is important to create a culture where such support takes place automatically on an ongoing basis.

The next chapter discusses assigning recruitment roles in further detail. Appendix A offers a simple tool that can help you identify groups that may be able to help you with recruitment and the types of assistance they can provide.

3. **Be realistic.** One of the biggest mistakes mentoring programs make is overestimating the recruitment success they will have, especially in new or “start-up” programs. This is a common problem for programs operating on grant or foundation dollars. In an effort to secure funding, their grant proposals often promise unrealistic numbers of matches, sometimes in the hundreds. All this does is set them up for “failure” (of course, the only true failure is having either no matches or matches that are unsafe and ineffective; just remember that staff can become discouraged when benchmarks—realistic or otherwise—are not met).

Start small and build momentum. Considering that many of the best recruitment methods involve using your current mentors, recognize that it will take time to build up that pool of “recruiters.” For an OSFDS mentoring program, especially one that is brand new, a modest goal of around 25–50 matches for the first year should provide plenty of challenges. More established programs can aim for higher numbers if they have the staffing and infrastructure to pull it off. But keep in mind: mentoring is about the most intensive volunteer commitment you can ask someone to make. Many people you talk to will NOT have the time, personality, values, and commitment to serve as a mentor in your program and sometimes your “batting average” in mentor recruitment will be small. So keep your goals modest and realistic to start with, building on whatever initial success you do have.

- 4. Be determined and resilient.** Don't get discouraged when the going gets tough. This is especially true in approaching organizations and groups that could potentially supply large numbers of volunteers. It can take several attempts to find the right point of entry into, say, a local corporation. They are likely bombarded with requests from all kinds of charitable and youth-serving organizations—if they say “no” once, it's not necessarily a sign that they are not interested. Keep trying. Go back to them four, five, six times. Getting your foot in the door often comes after building a personal relationship with a key figure, and that can take time.

The one thing that impacts volunteer recruitment more than anything is the attitude, effort, and tenacity of those in primary recruitment roles. Remain positive and focused on your goals. As author Richard Bach once wrote: “Argue for your limitations, and sure enough, they're yours.”

- 5. Be creative.** Program coordinators always want to know, “What are the surefire ways to recruit volunteers?” Unfortunately, there really is no right answer to that question. Programs need to find what works for them rather than simply emulating what someone else did. For recruitment to work, you have to be creative.

Creativity comes in developing strategies that work for your unique circumstances. If one of your board members works in the advertising industry, you may be able to get billboards around town or help in developing a slick marketing message. If one of your mentors owns a restaurant, perhaps he or she could put a flier about the program in with every to-go order, or put out table tents. If several of your mentors are artists, you could have a show of their work at a local gallery where you can work the crowd. You may find that there are recruitment opportunities within other program activities, such as fundraising events or establishing new partnerships. The list of creative, innovative ideas for recruiting mentors is endless, but they are always homegrown and a custom fit to your program.

- 6. Be flexible.** Flexibility comes into play over time. Not every idea you try will work. Some may exceed your wildest expectations. It is possible to shift gears and try new things without scrapping your recruitment plan entirely. Just remember that when recruitment is tough, the best thing you can do is stay positive, brainstorm some creative new ideas, and mix things up as needed.

The Appendix offers a tool that can help you identify barriers and brainstorm solutions when recruitment gets bogged down.

- 7. Know your strengths and limitations.** Those who do recruitment in mentoring programs need to have the proper skills to do their jobs effectively. Successful volunteer recruitment requires a broad set of skills, including:
  - public speaking

- interpersonal communication
- writing and editing
- basic youth-development concepts and programming
- self-motivation
- marketing
- passion and commitment to your cause

Not everyone has these skills, and certainly not all of them. But if you are creative in how you assign your recruitment tasks, you can make sure that each of these areas is covered. If your program coordinator is great at planning, but doesn't do that well in front of a group, she probably isn't the best person to be the primary speaker during a presentation to a business. Instead, get some of your mentors and mentees to talk about their experience, get someone from your board who is a good public speaker to lead the presentation, or develop a moving video or slide show. It sounds simple, but many good recruitment plans are subverted by people taking on tasks for which they are ill-suited. The next chapter discusses more about tapping skills and assigning roles.

- 8. Properly fund and staff recruitment tasks.** Volunteer recruitment is labor-intensive. It involves developing print materials, making extensive personal contacts, working out of the office, and making myriad public appearances. But recruitment can be a whole lot easier if you make sure those responsible have sufficient time for the tasks.

This can be challenging in OSFDS-funded programs, which often have only two or three staff members, and some of those at part time. Just remember that you simply can't have a program without mentors, so regardless of whatever else is on people's plates, recruitment must be a high priority. There's no magic formula for how many hours a week to spend on recruitment tasks, but if you're not getting the results you want, it may be a matter of how time is allocated.

Dollars (and in-kind resources) matter a lot, too. While many popular recruitment methods are free or inexpensive, some (ads, printed materials, a Web site, a booth for events) will cost money. The planning tool in Appendix A factors both staff time and financial costs into the big picture of your plan.

- 9. Track your efforts.** How are people finding you? What's working? Are potential mentors connecting with your messages and motivations? The easiest way to track this is to have a "how did you hear about us?" question on your volunteer applications and to ask it of those who contact you by phone or email. Tracking things like Web site hits, dissemination of print materials, and how many friends and family current participants bring into the fold can also help. You can even get software to help track activities and target individuals (some programs use software similar to a donor tracking database to track potential recruits). Regardless of how you quantify your efforts, your recruitment plan should build

in periodic points where you review how each strategy is working and retool accordingly. The sample plan in this book builds in quarterly reviews.

10. **“Pay it forward” by broadly promoting volunteerism and youth development in your community.** Too often mentoring programs adopt a stance of competition rather than one of cooperation. After all, volunteers are a scarce commodity, and there are only so many to go around. Don’t let this mindset put you at odds with other nonprofits and youth-serving organizations in your community and keep you from reaping the benefits of cooperation and collaboration.

Instead, focus on what you share in common with the other educational, social service, and philanthropic agencies in your community: you are all trying to improve the lives of youth and make your corner of the world a little better place. You have way more in common with your “competition” than differences.

Partner, formally or informally, with the other programs in your area that are working with youth. They may be getting volunteer applicants who are a better fit with your program than theirs, and vice versa. If you have a good relationship with, say, a local tutoring program, you may be able to get referrals from their volunteer recruitment campaign when they find individuals who are looking for something deeper than tutoring. You, in turn, may be able to send prospective tutors their way. But this can only happen if you are building relationships and getting involved with what others in your community are doing.

# Preparing to Recruit

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Now that you have a good mindset and a group of organizing principles, it's time to start your real preparation work. This chapter details several steps you can take to lay the groundwork for volunteer recruitment. It's worth noting for OSFDS mentoring grantees that some of this groundwork may have been done during the development of your grant application or during the course of your program operations to this point. But if your program has already done substantial recruitment planning (or if you're a new coordinator who has inherited an existing plan), the process described in this chapter can help you develop additional strategies to supplement your existing plan.

1. **Determine who you want to serve as mentors.** Start by focusing on the personal characteristics you want your mentors to have, certain demographic qualities, and specific groups of individuals that may be fruitful. The chart below shows some common examples.

Personal Qualities	Demographics	Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Honest</li> <li>■ Dependable</li> <li>■ Well-educated</li> <li>■ Caring</li> <li>■ Empathetic</li> <li>■ Professional</li> <li>■ Religious</li> <li>■ Resilient</li> <li>■ Outgoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ages 30–45</li> <li>■ Men/Women</li> <li>■ Specific race/ethnicity</li> <li>■ Living on the west side of town</li> <li>■ College graduate</li> <li>■ Retired</li> <li>■ Owns vehicle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ College students</li> <li>■ Doctors</li> <li>■ Lawyers</li> <li>■ Rotarians</li> <li>■ Local artists and musicians</li> <li>■ Church members</li> <li>■ Outdoorsmen</li> <li>■ Teachers</li> </ul>

So how do you know what characteristics to look for? The obvious place to start is with your program's mission statement. Some people think a mission statement is just a slick phrase for marketing purposes. It is so much more. It is the goal you are trying to achieve and it should influence everything you do at some level. It likely describes, at some level, the work you do, and should hint at some of the personal characteristics that your mentors might have.

In addition to your mission statement, you can develop a list of mentor characteristics by looking at:

# Who Mentors?

Several demographic and personality traits are shared by those who typically serve as mentors or who would consider doing so in the future. In 2002, the AOL Time Warner Foundation, in partnership with MENTOR, sponsored the National Mentoring Poll of 2,000 adults. The poll found that:

- 57 million adults would seriously consider mentoring
- 99 percent of all mentors already in a formal mentoring relationship would recommend mentoring to others
- The majority of people became mentors because they were asked; 75 percent joined through an organization with which they were affiliated
- Potential mentors tend to:
  - be between the ages of 18 and 44
  - have household incomes of \$50,000 or more
  - have some college education
  - have access to the Internet
  - have a child in their household
- Of these potential mentors:
  - 88 percent would like to have a choice among mentoring options (depending on their schedule and interests)
  - 84 percent want access to expert help
  - 84 percent want orientation and training before mentoring
  - 67 percent would like their employer to provide time off
  - 47 percent would be willing to mentor a youth online

You can use this information, in conjunction with the other characteristics you define, to narrow your focus and tap into groups of people who might be quite receptive to your opportunity.

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Adapted with permission from: *How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program Using the Elements of Effective Practice: A Step-by-Step Toolkit for Program Managers* (Alexandria, VA: MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, 2005).

Statistics taken from: *Mentoring in America 2002: Research Sponsored by AOL by Time Warner Foundation via Pathfinder Research and MarketFacts*, by Robert O'Connor (Alexandria, VA: MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, 2002).

- ***The needs of the youth you serve.*** What mentor “resources” (connections, skills, beliefs) would help them? What personalities would work best with them? Who in your community could broaden their horizons or meet a specific need? What type of personal background would best apply to those working with your mentees?
- ***The geographic area you serve.*** Sometimes targeting recruitment is a matter of restricting where you look to a few strategic areas. Race, culture, ethnicity, and class also combine with geography when identifying your “turf.”
- ***The needs of the broader community.*** Does your community have issues that might be impacted long term through mentoring? Who is already getting involved in meeting those needs and what qualities do they possess? Where is the time and energy of your concerned citizens already flowing?
- ***How your services will be delivered.*** School-based programs face different challenges than community-based ones: for example, one might have to attract volunteers willing to tutor on a school campus, while the other might require mentors to transport youth and deal directly with issues related to poverty or career exploration. What types of activities do your matches engage in? What qualities would someone need to have to do mentoring well within the context of your program?

All of the characteristics you list will start to show you who in your community might fit your “style” and get you thinking about where they might be found. Perhaps more important, these lists will help in crafting marketing and recruitment messages and in developing formal mentor “job descriptions” (more on that later). So the more work you put into identifying who you are looking for up front, the easier subsequent tasks become.

2. **Develop a formal mentor job description.** Developing a job description for your mentors solidifies the characteristics and qualifications you are looking for and gives you a useful tool in your recruitment arsenal. Many potential volunteers like job descriptions because they clearly delineate what they will be getting into.

There is no “right” way to format a job description, but it should include at least the following categories of information:

- A statement of purpose (think of this as the volunteer’s mission statement, briefly summarizing the role and perhaps the goals of your program’s mentoring approach).
- Duties and responsibilities (explaining what the position does on an ongoing basis).

- Time commitments (both short and long term, and in terms of frequency).
- Qualifications (these can come from the personal, demographic, and group characteristics you’ve listed; they can also come from your policies on eligibility and screening).
- BENEFITS!!! (while they don’t get paid, mentors certainly get something back; tell them just how rewarding the experience will be).
- Background information on your program (not a lot, but some folks will want to know more about the agency right off the bat; include links to additional information on your Web site).
- Instructions on how to apply.

If you are uncomfortable writing in “human resource-ese,” get some help from someone in your agency’s HR department or a knowledgeable board member. Also, create shorter versions for newspaper and magazine ads and try to re-purpose some of the language for recruitment materials and marketing messages.

The following pages show sample job descriptions taken from existing sources from which you can borrow language (note that both have left off some of the information suggested above), while Appendix A offers a blank template you can use.

**3. Inventory potential recruitment locations.** Now that you have a good handle on your target recruitment population, it’s time to brainstorm where you can find such individuals in the community. The most common places that programs look are:

- local businesses
- civic and cultural groups
- schools and educational settings
- military/police/fire
- professional organizations/associations
- public spaces (malls, parks, libraries, community events, etc.)
- fraternal organizations
- religious institutions
- government agencies
- specific sections of town

This list will be in constant flux as you think of new places to add. And that’s OK—you certainly wouldn’t want to limit yourself to the two dozen places that initially popped into your head. For each broad category, list specific organizations and locations (e.g., St. Mary’s Church on 5th Street, under “religious groups”). Also, list briefly what you know about each locale or group. For example, if one of your board members knows someone in the HR department of the local hospital, that’s good information to jot down and capitalize on later. If a certain business or government agency gives flex time to employees who volunteer with youth, note that—it can help you devise a specific strategy for approaching them later.

Appendix A provides a simple worksheet for brainstorming locations.



## SAMPLE MENTOR JOB DESCRIPTION #1

The New Insights Mentoring Program of Winwood Heights helps to empower youth in our community to make positive life choices that enable them to maximize their potential. The mentoring program uses adult volunteers to commit to supporting, guiding, and being a friend to a young person for a period of at least one year. By becoming part of the social network of adults and community members who care about the youth, the mentor can help youth develop and reach positive academic, career, and personal goals.

### **Mentor Role**

- Take the lead in supporting a young person through an ongoing, one-to-one relationship
- Serve as a positive role model and friend
- Build the relationship by planning and participating in activities together
- Strive for mutual respect
- Build self-esteem and motivation
- Help set goals and work toward accomplishing them

### **Time Commitment**

- Make a one-year commitment
- Spend a minimum of eight hours per month one-to-one with a mentee
- Communicate with the mentee weekly
- Attend an initial two-hour training session and additional two-hour training sessions twice during each year of participation in the program
- Attend optional mentor/mentee group events, mentor support groups, and program recognition events [not on printout]

### **Participation Requirements**

- Be at least 21 years old
- Reside in Winwood Heights metro area
- Be interested in working with young people
- Be willing to adhere to all program policies and procedures
- Be willing to complete the application and screening process
- Be dependable and consistent in meeting the time commitments
- Attend mentor training sessions as prescribed
- Be willing to communicate regularly with program staff, submit activity information, and take constructive feedback regarding mentoring activities
- Have access to an automobile; have auto insurance and a good driving record
- Have a clean criminal history
- Not use illicit drugs

- Not use alcohol or controlled substances in an inappropriate manner
- Not be currently in treatment for substance abuse and have a non-addictive period of at least five years
- Not be currently in treatment for a mental disorder or hospitalized for such in the past three years

#### Desirable Qualities

- Willing listener
- Encouraging and supportive
- Patient and flexible
- Tolerant and respectful of individual differences

#### Benefits

- Personal fulfillment through contribution to community and individual
- Satisfaction in helping someone mature, progress, and achieve goals
- Training sessions and group activities
- Participation in a mentor support group
- Mileage and expenses are tax deductible
- Personal ongoing support, supervision to help the match succeed
- Mentee/mentor group activities, complimentary tickets to community events, participant recognition events

#### Application and Screening Process

- Written application
- Driving record check
- Criminal history check: state, child abuse and neglect registry, sexual offender registry
- Personal interview
- Provide three personal references
- Attend two-hour mentor training

For more information, contact the New Insights Mentoring Program at 773-MENTORS or [gmeanwell@newinsights.org](mailto:gmeanwell@newinsights.org).

**AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER  
Minorities and Women Encouraged To Apply**

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## SAMPLE MENTOR JOB DESCRIPTION #2

### Mentor Job Description

**OUR MISSION:** Kids 'n Kinship's mission is to provide friendships to children ages 5-16 who are in need of a positive role model

**POSITION:** Kids 'n Kinship Mentor

**SKILLS REQUIRED:**

- Ability to love and care about children in a nonjudgmental manner.
- Ability to accept a child as they are.
- Basic friendship skills, such as being reliable, accepting, listening, and suggesting.

**DUTIES:**

- Responsible for initiating weekly contacts with the child.
- Consistency in meeting dates; planning outings with the child; contacting the child with changes in meeting plans.
- Maintain ongoing contact/consultations with the Kinship Coordinator sharing concerns, highlights, and ideas.

**PURPOSE:** Develop a positive relationship with a child to reduce isolation, and prevent/reduce at-risk behaviors.

**TIME REQUIRED:** One to four hours per week. (Time will vary depending on the type of contact/activity planned.)

**LENGTH OF COMMITMENT:** One year or more.

**TRAINING:** Kids 'n Kinship training session, ongoing support and consultation with staff.

**BENEFITS:**

- Personal growth.
- Experience the rewards of making a difference in a child's life.

- 4. Inventory your internal resources.** If you're going to maximize your program's recruitment, you'll need to be clear about the resources, skills, and relationships you have at your disposal.

Several program elements go into this internal inventory:

- ***Financial resources.*** The starting point here is your budget—how much money do you have set aside for recruitment activities? This can include the cost of marketing items like Web sites, brochures, or a booth, the cost of ad placement, even transportation to recruitment events. This number might fluctuate down the road depending on the specific strategies you decide to implement, but you should know roughly how much money you have to work with going in.
- ***Staff time and talents.*** You may choose to list staffing under the financial part of your inventory, but don't forget to factor in the skill sets that your team brings to the table. If you have a great in-house graphic designer, that can be a huge asset in recruitment. If one of your trainers is an engaging public speaker, factor that into planning your presentation-based recruitment efforts. Knowing the hours everyone has available, and what they can do effectively with that time, will help you identify strategies that best utilize your staffing.
- ***Community connections.*** Everyone associated with your program has connections to friends, family members, coworkers, social groups, organizations, and so on. You need to know how those relationships could help recruitment from your list of potential locations (as well as add to the list itself). The connections your staff, mentors, board members, and participating families have can expand your list of potential locations considerably. (Note that while we're presenting recruitment planning as a linear, step-by-step process, there will likely be much ebb and flow—one part of the planning resulting in revision of previous ideas. Which is fine, since it's all valuable work toward your final plan).
- ***Partnerships and in-kind resources.*** These resources are what allow you to recruit beyond your internal capabilities. Here, list things like partnerships with local businesses, donations of services or materials (donated Web or graphic design, for example), partnerships with other youth-serving organizations (reciprocal volunteer referral, for example), and opportunities for marketing (such as being able to display recruitment materials in the local college's student union). This list might be small to start with, but as you begin to reach out to the community, opportunities for partnering and sharing resources will increase.

Appendix A offers a tool for capturing the resources you have at your disposal.

- 5. Inventory potential volunteer motivations.** People volunteer for a wide variety of reasons. Your program will need to figure out how to address these motiva-

tions during the recruitment process. But without the ability to conduct a focus group, how do you know what those motivations are? A good place to start is with some of the common motivations found in volunteer research:

- **Demographics.** Some research indicates that who we are generates a type of “community-based social capital” that motivates us to help those who are like us, whose needs are familiar (Stukas and Tanti, 2005). This is evident in studies that show ethnic and cultural groups primarily volunteering in capacities that explicitly impact their own (for example, Carson, 1990). Keep in mind that as you recruit from particular demographic groups, you’ll need to demonstrate how your program is positively impacting them and the groups of which they are a part.
- **Generativity.** This term refers to the need to pass on wisdom, lessons, and knowledge to the following generation, and some researchers have speculated that it is one of the final stages in healthy adult development (Snyder and Clary, 2004; Erikson, 1963). This may be a powerful motivation for some volunteers if you can effectively work it into your pitch.
- **Volunteer “Functions.”** One of the best tools for understanding volunteer motivation is the Volunteer Functions Inventory (Clary et al., 1998). It organizes volunteer motivations into six broad categories:
  - 1) *Values:* the desire to demonstrate one’s humanitarianism and empathy by getting involved
  - 2) *Career:* to enhance career options or explore a new vocational direction
  - 3) *Understanding:* to better understand society and individuals
  - 4) *Enhancement:* to feel better about oneself, to feel needed by others
  - 5) *Protective:* using volunteerism to avoid or work through personal issues
  - 6) *Social:* volunteering to meet the expectations of others

Chances are you will have potential mentors who fit into one or several of these categories. You may be able to craft subtle messages that speak to these personal motivations. For example, the National Network of Youth Ministries uses the tag line “They need what you know” in one of its mentor recruitment campaigns, a phrase that speaks to enhancement, values, and social expectations, but in a very subtle way.

- **Community concern and civic pride.** Other researchers have focused on the larger-level concerns of volunteers, who sometimes get involved because they either see a concrete need in their community or out of a simple desire to show pride in the community by being a supportive, engaged citizen (Omoto and Snyder, 1995). These motivations often dovetail with the demo-

graphic concerns mentioned previously. Most mentor recruitment touches on the needs of the youth and the community. Make sure your approach also appeals to community pride and stewardship.

You might find it helpful to chart what motivations your volunteers could bring to the table. Then, brainstorm possible recruitment methods and specific language that can take advantage of those motivations. Since you're not at the point of identifying specific recruitment strategies yet, this exercise should focus on generating marketing slogans, secondary messages, and subtle points to make during recruitment opportunities.

Appendix A provides an easy-to-use charting tool for considering volunteer motivations.

- 6. Analyze potential recruitment barriers and plan your response.** There are many reasons why individuals may be reluctant to mentor, and your recruitment messages and strategies will need to address these.

Your recruitment team should discuss the specific barriers to recruitment in your program. This can be done at both broadly (e.g., "What are the things about volunteering with us, or mentoring in general, that might be a deterrent for just about anyone?") and in relation to specific recruitment locations or volunteer pools (e.g., "What might be the sticking points for college students, or employees from company X?").

The table at the end of this chapter contains some common recruitment barriers and program responses. As with the motivations, your solutions here might just consist of broad concepts, language for use in media campaigns, and general points of emphasis. These can get fleshed out in greater detail when you develop specific recruitment strategies.

Appendix A offers a blank worksheet you can use to come up with your own barriers and solutions.

- 7. Have your policies and procedures in place and ready to use.** One of the biggest frustrations in mentor recruitment is the length of the recruitment and screening process itself. Conducting background checks and verifying references takes time and some potential mentors can lose their initial enthusiasm if the process drags on. Don't start any specific recruitment strategies until:

- Policies on volunteer eligibility and screening are in place
- Recruitment and matching staff positions are filled
- Youth are being enrolled in the program in sufficient numbers
- Your matching procedure is fully developed and ready to use
- All forms and paperwork have been developed and reviewed by legal counsel as needed

You can also alleviate a lot of volunteer frustration by being clear during recruitment about how long the application process takes, common things that can slow the process down (fingerprint issues, difficulties finding a specifically requested match characteristic, etc.), and the eligibility requirements that your volunteers must meet.

At this point, you've done quite a bit of the background work needed for your plan. You know who you want, where to find them, what might motivate or discourage them from volunteering in your specific program, and some concepts and approaches you think will appeal to your potential mentors. The next step is to consider the myriad recruitment methods available to your program.

## Recruiting for School-Based Programs

Many OSFDS mentoring grantees offer their services at a school site, requiring volunteers to come on campus for their meetings with youth. This can create some unique recruitment challenges. Potential volunteers may be reluctant to volunteer at a school site because:

- They may feel uncomfortable around young people—especially middle and high school ages. It might be helpful to have a few representative youth join you during recruitment presentations.
- They're wary of coming on campus—Middle and high school campuses can be large, chaotic, intimidating environments. Volunteers need to "sign in" and wear identification. You can ease some of the fears about the school environment itself by having recruitment presentations on campus and offering a brief tour of the facilities.
- They have concerns about teachers and other staff—Volunteers need to know that they are welcome on campus and that teachers value having them around to help. Principals and teachers can emphasize this during recruitment presentations. Go over what the on-campus volunteer experience looks like (where one goes, the activities they do with youth, the expectations around academic help, resources that matches can access) so that volunteers know what type of help they will be providing and who they will work with on site.
- They have negative attitudes about school itself—School was not a positive experience for

everyone, and some potential volunteers may be reluctant to go back to that setting. Put them at ease by explaining that this school time will be different, that their role and purpose for being there will make this a positive experience. The following questions can help potential volunteers explore their attitudes and prior experience with schools:

- What memories do I associate with schools and learning?
- What made me more or less successful in school? As a learner in general?
- What are my current experiences with schools and learning?
- What are my experiences working and interacting with children?
- What are my beliefs about education and schools?
- What beliefs or characteristics do I hold that will help or hinder me in my service?

By answering these and similar questions, your potential volunteers will begin to see some of the attitudes and biases that might affect their desire to get involved. These questions can also surface positive memories that might be helpful to recruitment. For example, thinking about the one teacher who took time to give them special help and support can be an inspiration to someone looking for a reason to give back and help others.

Adapted with permission from: "Savvy Traveling: Volunteers Engaging with School Culture," by Nicky Martin, Randi Douglas, and Nancy Henry (*The Tutor*, Fall 2004, pp. 3–4. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, LEARNS.)

## RECRUITMENT BARRIERS

Barrier	Our Response
<i>Fears that mentoring is too time-consuming</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Emphasize that the commitment is only one hour a week.</li> <li>■ Equate that amount of time to other tasks in ad campaign (“In the time it takes to watch <i>Lost</i>, you can rescue someone else in need.” “Your lunch hour can spur someone’s lifetime.”)</li> <li>■ Build words like “fun,” “easy,” “simple,” “rewarding,” “time well spent” into recruitment messages.</li> <li>■ Talk about the activities matches engage in—it will seem less daunting if they can picture fun activities.</li> <li>■ Clarify volunteer training duration/frequency.</li> </ul>
<i>Worried about working with youth’s parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Emphasize that the program focuses on youth needs, not family needs.</li> <li>■ Emphasize that every volunteer gets match support and a staff member who monitors how things are going.</li> <li>■ Clarify mentor roles during presentations. Emphasize that mentors are not surrogate parents.</li> <li>■ Bring in satisfied parents to talk about the positive impact of the program during recruitment presentations.</li> </ul>
<i>Men may be worried about being falsely accused of inappropriate behavior</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Emphasize the role of the case manager and the supervision process in creating a safe, positive experience for all participants.</li> <li>■ Emphasize our policies and procedures related to match supervision.</li> <li>■ We’ve never had an incident; our track record is positive. Emphasize “safe” in media messages and promote the fact that we are a very professional program that’s committed to our community and volunteers.</li> </ul>
<i>Recruits don’t live in our part of town</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tie the needs of our youth to needs of the whole city.</li> <li>■ Mention the flexibility that comes with our community-based model. Match activities can happen anywhere.</li> <li>■ Look into getting bus passes or other transportation donated in-kind.</li> <li>■ Present mentoring as an opportunity to get to learn and grow from other communities and cultures—it can broaden one’s view and increase cultural understanding.</li> </ul>



Recruitment Barriers (continued)

Barrier	Our Response
<p><i>Mentoring is too emotionally involving</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Be clear about the specific goals of the program during presentations. Be careful about talking about “saving” youth. In light of this, we’ll need to track the “Lost/rescue someone in need” message to see how it plays with targeted groups. They may not be receptive.</li> <li>■ Have current mentors speak about the experience at events.</li> <li>■ Emphasize the benefits to mentors on the job description and on the Web site.</li> <li>■ Emphasize match support and the training provided to help set healthy relationship boundaries (it’s the whole program working with the youth, not just the mentor).</li> <li>■ For heavily male audiences, present mentoring as a solution, something that has an impact.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Don’t understand our program’s mission</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Highlight and expand the “About Us” section of the Web site.</li> <li>■ Add our mission/goals to the mentor job description.</li> <li>■ Look up statistics about our youths’ needs for recruitment messages and presentations.</li> <li>■ Have former mentees speak about the impact during recruitment presentations.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Company X already has an onsite, work-based mentoring/ job shadowing program</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Explore possibilities of adding a community-based component.</li> <li>■ Encourage company to develop a policy granting leave time for employees volunteering in the community.</li> <li>■ Ask company to mention our program in their quarterly newsletter.</li> </ul>



# Recruitment Methods

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There is an almost endless variety of methods one can use to recruit mentors. While there is no one foolproof method of recruiting volunteers, all good approaches are customized and tweaked to meet the needs of that particular program. As you read through the strategies in this chapter, think about the special spin that your program could put on them. Note the partnerships and resources you have that could make these approaches to recruitment uniquely your own. Keep the background work you have done in mind, since some of these strategies will resonate with a particular audience you have identified or with a certain message you want to build upon.

The strategies in this chapter begin with marketing-themed approaches that can reach larger, less-focused groups of potential recruits. Next we cover common recruitment strategies that programs employ and how to customize them for your use. Finally, we examine additional creative strategies that your program might be able to adapt.

## Market-Themed Recruitment

When most people think about marketing, they think of consumer products and advertising: Coke vs. Pepsi, Just Do It, the “golden arches.” But marketing principles can also be used to generate interest and involvement in nonprofit and youth-serving programs. The product you are selling is the volunteer opportunity, and there are several key things you can do to reach large numbers of “consumers.”

While there is much more to say about the art of marketing than we can cover in this chapter, there are some basic principles that mentoring programs can adopt that can make their marketing efforts more successful:

- 1. Put a lot of effort and testing into a few key messages.** Marketing is all about creating impressions, the number of instances a consumer sees your message or is exposed to your product. While this certainly has implications for how often you get your message out there (how many PSA slots to get, for example) the key is the message itself. Develop a few phrases or concepts that appeal specifically to the mentors you are targeting and then build all of your marketing efforts from them.

The work you did looking at motivations and barriers will come in handy here. And while your presentations, brochures, and other recruitment tools might have plenty of nuance and variety, your marketing messages need to be focused on a few common themes, such as:

- *Make a friend while making a difference* (speaks to the impact while also highlighting the benefit to the mentor and positioning mentoring as a win-win approach).
- *Mentoring: an hour of fun, an hour of helping* (also “fun” and benefit-driven while addressing the time commitment issue).
- *Salem Mentors, Inc.—helping caring adults give something back since 1970* (promotes the professionalism, permanence, and mission of the agency while appealing to volunteer values).

These messages can then become the emphasis of PSAs, highlights on your Web site, or themes for recruitment presentations. You can choose images and pictures to accompany or reference these messages. You can also create different “levels” or lengths—e.g., expanded language for the Web site, a shorter variation for a newspaper ad.

One useful trick, both for coming up with initial messages and for creating versions of varying lengths, is to answer the question “Why does your program matter?” out loud in 10, 30, and 60 seconds. Start with the long version, and whittle it down to the core, or start simple and expand upon the initial statement. Doing this forces you to consider what matters in your message.

Keep in mind that most quality marketing messages:

- *Use simple language.* You’re trying to inspire people, not impress or alienate them.
- *Include a call to action.* What is it you want them to do?
- *Emphasize benefits.* Why should they take that action?
- *Are supported by facts or testimonial.* These lend credibility to the appeal.
- *Are engaging*—most often by being upbeat, passionate, or clever.
- *Address fears and feed motivations.* You can’t cover every fear or motivation in a single message, but you can target a few key ones.
- *Support your “brand.”* More on this to follow.

While brainstorming a long list of potential messages is a good starting point, it takes testing to solidify effective messages. Once you have some initial ideas, try them out on coworkers, friends, and family. List what they like and don’t like. You probably don’t have the budget or expertise to do a formal focus group, but you can certainly solicit feedback about what was effective or missed the mark. Once your marketing and recruitment efforts are underway, ask your new mentors—those you did reach—what appealed to them about your messages.

- 2. Branding is important**, even for small programs. Limiting your marketing messages to a few key points makes them easier to remember and helps create an identity with your consumers. This is the basis for branding: the familiarity consumers have with the identity of a product or service. Everyone knows the Nike “swoosh,” and everyone still thinks about Wendy’s when they hear the phrase “where’s the beef?” even though that ad hasn’t been on TV in 20 years! That’s branding. And while your small program may never be as nationally known as Big Brothers Big Sisters or the YMCA, you can certainly create strong brand identity within your community.

Since branding is tied to familiarity, keeping the number of core messages you put out to a minimum is a good idea. The same concept applies to visual messages—your logo, color scheme, fonts, and photographs can all be used to create branding. So as you build your marketing materials, be consistent in your message and in the supporting visual elements. Over time, your consumers will begin to remember you. The fourth time people see your flier around town they may vaguely remember you. Then they encounter your radio PSA and recognize your slogan. Then they see your logo on a TV spot. . . . And on it goes, building familiarity, until the day you do a presentation at their company, or a friend asks them to get involved, or they see a TV show about mentoring. Then all those repetitions pay off and they decide to get involved because they know you; you’re that program they’ve been hearing about!

Your brand is your community reputation. Build it wisely and diligently.

- 3. Make sure it’s professional.** Nothing subverts a marketing effort like substandard materials. A poorly designed Web site does nothing to promote your agency and a brochure with grainy pictures and using 75 different fonts doesn’t help either. This is not to say that you need expensive, glossy print materials or a state-of-the-art Web site, but you need to make sure your marketing materials project a level of professionalism and quality that will put a reluctant recruit at ease.

This is an area where it’s critical to honestly evaluate your staff’s talents and the skills of others you have access to (mentors, parents, board members, program partners). If someone on staff “kinda, sorta” knows Web design, don’t rely on him for developing the whole site. Get help where you need it. Web design, desktop publishing, video production, printing, and editing skills are all wonderful things to solicit as in-kind donations.

The sidebar on page 30 offers tips on learning from others’ marketing efforts. The Additional Reading and Resources section lists several books that teach marketing principles and strategies for nonprofit and mentoring organizations.

## Analyzing Effective Marketing Efforts

You can learn a lot about creating effective messages and developing brand identity by studying the marketing that exists all around you. Pick up any free flyers, brochures, business cards, and pamphlets you come across in your community and keep them in a file. Take note of the ones you like, especially from programs similar to your own. Learn from ones you dislike as well. Cut out ads in magazines and papers, surf the Internet for Web sites of both local programs and national nonprofit brands. Analyze radio and television commercials, even those for commercial products and services. Notice the ones that speak to you. Think about why.

List what you think works and doesn't work for each (you can do this on chartpack or a whiteboard for a group process). For each marketing communication piece that attracts your attention, either positively or negatively, evaluate its communication strategy and effectiveness by asking the following questions:

- What is the organization's or program's mission statement?
- Who is the target audience?
- What is its positioning statement?
- Is there a strong headline?
- Is there a "call to action"?
- What are the key features of the program, product, or service?
- What are the expressed benefits to the target audience?
- How do the graphics complement and accentuate the message?

Adapted from: *Marketing for the Recruitment of Mentors: A Guidebook for Finding and Attracting Volunteers*, by Linda Ballasy (Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, National Mentoring Center, 2004).

## Marketing Methods

There are several vehicles for you to get your marketing messages out. Some of these reach the general population (or at least segments of it), while others target specific audiences. The most common types of marketing methods are:

- **The program Web site.** Having a Web site is no longer a luxury or something that does not apply to nonprofits. A Web site is every bit as important as a phone number or a business card. In many instances, it will be a potential recruit's first contact with your organization. As such, it needs to be well organized and professional looking.

While your Web site will likely have many features and a lot of information, the important things that pertain to recruitment are:

- **The language around volunteering.** Is your message consistent? Are you hitting the key motivations and addressing barriers? Is it clear why one would want to get involved? Are you defining the need and making a call for action?
- **Information about the process.** Can I easily tell what's involved in being a mentor? Are qualifications and requirements clearly spelled out? Does the site explain the process for applying and the steps along the way?
- **The images that accompany the message.** Do the pictures you use represent the youth you serve and the mentors you are trying to recruit? Are the graphics consistent with your branding efforts in print, TV, and other media?
- **Contact information.** Surprisingly, many programs don't include full contact information on their Web site. An email address is not enough. People need to be able to call, write, or stop by in person (although school-based programs have restrictions on who can visit the campus). Make it easy for people to get in touch with you.

- **Interactivity.** People searching for volunteer opportunities online enjoy having immediate gratification and feedback. You can address this need by sending an automatic email reply when prospective mentors request more information through your Web site. This email can thank them for their interest, explain the next steps, list orientation dates, and provide potential mentors with the opportunity to fill out or download a formal application.

Ask your program partners and stakeholders to link to your site from theirs. Get your Web site listed in local directories, such as CitySearch or Craig's List, and on your local or state Mentoring Partnership's Web site.

- **Public service announcements (PSAs) and paid advertising.** PSAs are free spots that all broadcast TV stations, cable providers, and radio stations are required to run. PSAs often focus on community needs and services and are a great recruitment resource for mentoring programs. The process for doing these differs from station to station: some want the PSA produced or read by their own in-house talent, while others will accept materials produced by your program. Check with local TV and radio stations to determine their process. In general, radio PSAs will be cheaper and easier for a mentoring program to produce than one for TV or video.

The downside of PSAs is that you have little control over when they are run. Some stations air them during peak hours; others may run your spot at three in the morning. So while they can reach a mass audience, you don't ultimately have much control over placement.

Paid advertising, on the other hand, offers much more control over content and placement. Essentially, you get to make it look or sound how you want and have it played at times of your choosing (or placed in specific locations in the case of print ads). But that control costs money, often more than a grassroots mentoring program has to spend. Even print ads in local newspapers can be expensive.

Smaller programs might be best served through a combination of PSAs and other recruitment methods. They might invest in advertising in a few key spots, such as during National Mentoring Month (taking advantage of the "buzz" surrounding mentoring during January) or during specific programming (during sporting events, for example, if a program is trying to reach a largely male audience).

Regardless of what type of PSAs or ads you choose, remember the following principles:

- *Keep it professional.* If your staff does not have video production or desktop publishing skills, get donated skills and assistance.
- *Refine your message.* This is where it will really pay off to have developed your messages in varying lengths. You'll need to accomplish the same thing in a 10-second radio spot that you would in a 30-second spot: spur the listener to take

action. So keep tweaking your message until you find the right words for the time or space allotted.

- *Get as much of it for free as possible.* Be persistent about PSA opportunities. Often TV and radio stations are bombarded with requests for PSAs, so it might take a while for your program to get added to the mix. If you go for paid ads, be specific about when—or where, if in print—you want them to run. It’s unlikely you can afford many pay prime-time spots, so try to pick and choose less expensive placements that can stretch your budget while still reaching the demographics you are targeting.

- **Posters and flyers.** Get a local artist or design major at a local college to develop an eye-catching poster for you. See if a local print shop will run some free or cheap copies. Prominently placed fliers and posters are a great way to create brand recognition in the community. Make sure your posters have a compelling graphic, a simplified message (too much text is a no-no), and instructions on how to get involved or learn more (tear-off tabs with contact information work well for this).

Place your posters and flyers strategically, based on the list of recruitment locations you developed earlier. Ask local businesses and program partners to display your posters. Ask mentors to put them up at work. Take advantage of community bulletin boards in places like libraries and coffee shops. You don’t need to plaster the whole city with them, but a few strategically placed fliers can really help create awareness.

- **Newsletters.** A program newsletter can be a tremendous marketing tool. It not only keeps all of your program participants engaged and informed, it’s also a great tool for reaching out to new volunteers. Newsletters can be sent to current mentors, board members, parents, and mentees, as well as targeted businesses, organizations, and recruitment locations. Create a “friends of the program” mailing list, composed of individuals and institutions that are not currently directly involved, but that may be receptive to what you are doing. Getting copies to volunteer or community outreach coordinators at local businesses can be a great way to reach those volunteer-rich environments.

Most of the recruitment work done by a newsletter will be through creating general awareness of the program, but you might wish to devote space each issue to highlighting youth on your waiting list or talking about the need to serve more youth. A newsletter can also be a great way of announcing and maximizing participation in any formal recruitment drives that you have coming up. You can even include a mail-back inquiry card for interested potential recruits.

Make sure your newsletter is professional looking and well written, even if it requires getting outside assistance. Some programs are skipping printing and mailing costs altogether and are going with an electronic newsletter. They either email a PDF version or send program updates in a plain or rich text email. While these e-newsletters are cheaper to produce and distribute, they are also more



easily ignored and often don't have the lasting impact of a print copy. After all, the chances of someone leaving an email laying around for others to see are slim. Ideally, you should offer your newsletter in both formats, letting your customers choose which delivery method they prefer.

In addition to your own newsletter, try to get coverage about your program in the newsletters of community organizations, schools, churches, associations, and other volunteer-rich entities.

- **Public relations.** The term public relations encompasses a wide range of activities that can increase awareness of what your mentoring program is doing and how community members can get involved. PR almost always provides free airtime, but it can take a lot of staff time and energy to do it properly.

Most public relations activities happen through television, radio, and print media. The aforementioned public service announcement is, in fact, a form of PR. Because you must work closely with media outlets and employees, good public relations efforts start by building relationships. Get to know key media personnel, such as editors and directors of programming. You can also use your board members and other key program partners to find an "in" to local media outlets.

In addition to PSAs, there are several PR options that you may want to explore:

- *Press releases.* This common media tool can be used to inform the community about your program's successes, announce new volunteer opportunities, and promote upcoming program events. A press release basically reads like a newspaper article, starting with a catchy "lead" or headline, and working downward to more specific (and less important) information. Media outlets will use the press releases you write and send to determine if your story is worthy of coverage, so the more compelling you can make it, the better.
- *Backgrounders.* Similar to a press release, backgrounders are even more geared toward being directly adapted by the media. The idea here is that you write the bare bones components of a story, which a reporter or author can then easily turn into a finished article for the newspaper/magazine. Backgrounders are especially effective when used in conjunction with a related press release.
- *Media interviews.* These can be hard to come by, but an on-air or featured print interview is a great way to generate interest in your program. Try to schedule these around important events, like the receipt of a new grant, during National Mentoring Month, or when a program milestone has been achieved. Because these sometimes happen spontaneously (for example, the local paper is doing a story on youth development programs in the area and a reporter calls out of the blue to get "the scoop" on mentoring) have a designated program spokesperson who can articulate your core messages on the spot. But if you have advance warning, you can usually work with the reporter to see what he wants to cover in the interview.

- *Op-ed pieces.* These are opinion-based editorials that run in most newspapers and some magazines. Most consist of some type of social or political commentary, so you probably won't be able to simply write about your program in general. But you could write about the need for mentoring in your community and the great work that mentors do, while slipping in a few things about how your program is meeting the need. Think of this as stealth marketing.
- *Press events.* Invite the media to cover things like mentor recognition ceremonies, group outings, or announcements of new funds or services. Give media members plenty of advance warning, and keep in mind that your story might only make the air on a slow news day.
- *Press kits.* Some programs create a press kit, which can include press releases, brochures, annual reports, evaluation results, success stories, photos, and contact information. A press kit makes it easier for media members to work with you. It can also be given to prospective volunteers who want to learn about an agency before getting involved.

Whatever public relations strategies you choose, keep in mind that what you gain in getting your message out is tempered by the loss of control over when and how your message gets delivered. You may have been hoping for a TV interview and coverage of your awards banquet, only to find that a number of newsworthy items have bumped you off the air. The opportunity to get an op-ed piece in Sunday's paper might come to you in a last-minute call on a Friday. So put some time into your PR work, but don't rely on it entirely.

- **Electronic community bulletin boards.** Cable access channels almost always offer some kind of community bulletin board feature that allows you to list volunteer opportunities. Newspapers also offer community bulletin boards and calendars of upcoming events (perfect for listing a recruitment drive), especially local grassroots publications and college newspapers. These placements are almost always free to nonprofits and youth-serving organizations. Also, look for bulletin boards run through local newspapers, magazines, and online classifieds (such as Craig's List).
- **Annual reports.** Annual reports discuss the program's history and mission, its operations and management, its success, and its future directions. Annual reports are nice little summaries of who you are and what you're doing. They are not a recruitment vehicle per se, but can be used to motivate prospective volunteers, especially when they highlight program success (either by profiling successful matches or by detailing evaluation results). A version of your annual report should be on your Web site and in your press kit.

Several specific recruitment strategies discussed later in this section are variations on marketing and PR themes. Be creative in putting your own spin on some of these general strategies. And have some fun—developing marketing messages and campaigns can actually be a rewarding, creative, and exciting endeavor!

## Common Mentor Recruitment Strategies

There are some basic recruitment strategies that almost all mentoring programs attempt in one form or another. The success you have with these strategies will depend on how closely you adhere to the principles outlined earlier in this book, the quality of your messages, and the planning and skills of your staff.

### Formal presentations

Ideally, your recruitment plan will provide you with ample opportunities to address large groups of potential volunteers. Such potentially “volunteer rich” environments include:

- *Local businesses and corporations.* Work with their community outreach or volunteer coordinator to get an invitation to present. You may be one of a number of groups that are invited to come in periodically as part of a formal corporate philanthropy program. Ask to disseminate print materials on site, such as on bulletin boards or in break rooms.
- *Churches and other religious institutions.* Go through the pastor or congregation leadership; their buy-in is critical in appealing to the “social expectations” that can motivate volunteers.
- *Fraternal and sorority, and other service groups.* Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Elks, etc. Do some research beforehand to see what other types of community involvement they are engaged in and play on the common themes you see.
- *Professional organizations and unions.* Targeting organizations, such as the Bar Association or the Teachers Union, can pay huge dividends if you are looking for a specific group of mentors.
- *Police, fire, military.* Research their community involvement and outreach programming and tailor your presentation to hit on the values they act on already.
- *Universities, colleges, community colleges.* College students are an obvious pool of potential mentors (although they may or may not fit the demographic profile of those you are trying to recruit), but don’t forget that these places have large numbers of faculty, administrative personnel, and maintenance/security staff. If students are your target, get invitations from student groups and the student government. If targeting faculty and staff, go through the university departments. Back up these presentations with print materials and appearances at campus events.
- *Neighborhood associations.* Your city government should maintain a list of these.

Developing a presentation should come easily once you have thought about your recruitment messages. You may find yourself developing different themes for different

audiences depending on their motivations and potential barriers. Regardless of the particular flavor you give each presentation, it will likely include:

- An opening “lead” that grabs their attention. This can be a story about a mentee, statistics that highlight a community need, or a question to the group about mentoring or youth that segues into the story of your program.
- The history and mission of the program. This connects your values to theirs.
- Information about the youth you serve.
- Information about how mentoring works, what it does for a child.
- What it’s like to be a mentor in your program. What are the typical activities? What is it like developing a relationship with a kid? When and how do we meet?
- Evaluation results that show your program’s success. Volunteers will want to know that your services work. If your program is brand new, delve into the available mentoring research and give them evidence that this is a successful cause.
- The benefits to the mentors. No matter how you spin this, you should always talk about what they get back.
- Eligibility requirements and the application process. This can save you a lot of time later by letting unqualified individuals self-select out.
- How to take the next step if they want to get involved. Ideally you will want to end with a direct “call to action,” a phrase or closing thought that directly asks them to help the youth you serve by becoming mentors. Remember to present more than one way to get involved. Of course the call to become a mentor should be the number one request, but there are other ways people can get involved (for example, linking their Web site to yours, creating an opportunity to present at their place of worship, or sharing their skills during one of the program’s group events).

Most presenters use a PowerPoint presentation, overheads, newsprint, or some combination of media. You might also find it useful to invite mentors, mentees, or parents to speak about the positive impact of the program if you think that will motivate volunteers or reduce their fears.

When you finally get your big chance to present, remember to:

- Be on time and stay on time during your talk
- Leave plenty of time for questions and answers
- Don’t rely on one piece of technology; if you have a PowerPoint, bring backup handouts in case the projector dies
- Let people know how to contact you if they have questions

- Leave behind brochures and applications
- Thank them!!!

## Personal appeals

Research indicates that most mentors get involved because someone directly asks them. Quite often this person is someone from a peer group, their family, their workplace, or from some other social group to which they belong or with which they identify. So it's no surprise that most programs put their staff, mentors, board, and other stakeholders to work asking others to become mentors.

This can take several different forms. A few common ones are:

- *Recruitment challenges.* These are annual contests between program staff, board members, parents of participating youth, and mentors to see who can recruit the most volunteers via word-of-mouth over the course of a month. Another variation is to have parents, mentors, and board members team up with a lead staff person and make personal appeals and presentations to friends and family. Their staff person then follows up with a phone call—and the team that gets the most new recruits wins.
- *Postcard campaigns.* These combine a personal appeal with a media campaign. The program prints postcards that say “Someone thinks you’d make a great mentor” or a similar phrase. The postcards also feature core messages and images about mentoring and are self-addressed to the program. Mentors, parents, and other stakeholders then make their personal appeals, giving each potential recruit a postcard. If interested, the person simply fills out the postcard, sends it to the program, and receives a follow-up call and an invitation/application to become a mentor. Even if not interested in becoming a mentor, the person can still help the cause by passing the postcard on to someone else.

Personal appeals can also happen naturally as an outgrowth of the good work your program does. If people like being involved in what you're doing, and can see the positive impact it's having, they will recommend the experience to others. This illustrates why recruitment is both an outcome of running a quality program and something that can happen at any time. Encourage your stakeholders to directly ask others to mentor on an ongoing basis. It's the most direct way to recruitment success.

## National Mentoring Month and state partnership tie-ins

By presidential decree, January is National Mentoring Month. Every January, the Harvard Mentoring Project and MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership sponsor a series of public service announcements about mentoring. They also work with television producers to weave mentoring themes and stories into programs that will air

## National Mentoring Month

You can learn more about National Mentoring Month, including the media campaigns and available PSAs, at: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/wmy2006/index.html>.

A listing of state and local Mentoring Partnerships can be found on the MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership site at: [http://www.mentoring.org/mentoring\\_month/](http://www.mentoring.org/mentoring_month/).

that month. Many state and local Mentoring Partnerships also sponsor statewide recruitment blitzes and media campaigns of their own. Your program is missing a huge opportunity if you are not connected to the Mentoring Month efforts of your local partnership or initiative.

Even if your program does not have access to a larger coordinated Mentoring Month campaign, the Harvard Mentoring Project (see sidebar at left) makes a media kit, complete with customizable PSAs, available to local programs to help them tap into the increased public awareness about mentoring that happens every January.

State and Regional Mentoring Partnerships may also offer marketing and recruitment opportunities during other months. If your state or municipality has one of these organizations, keep in contact with them and take advantage of opportunities they present.

## Formal partnership agreements

Sometimes recruitment can take a simpler route: getting a formal commitment from a business, religious institution, local/regional government agency, social group, or other large volunteer source to provide a certain number of mentors. Often the onus for this recruitment falls on the internal volunteer or community outreach coordinator at the source. This allows your program to get volunteers while letting others do the legwork for you. Of course, this strategy only works once a solid and trusting relationship has been built between the program and the volunteer source. They need to be committed to meeting their obligation and your program should be aligned with their values and philanthropic goals. You may be able to work with them to craft policies that make it easier for their employees to volunteer (such as comp time for community volunteering). See the sidebar on the next page for tips on working with corporate volunteer programs.

## Utilizing Corporation for National and Community Service resources

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has several programs and volunteer services that can help mentoring programs with recruitment:

- *AmeriCorps and VISTA*. AmeriCorps members can serve as mentors themselves or help with recruitment-related tasks. AmeriCorps volunteer recruitment stations can also send volunteers your program's way. VISTA members help build program infrastructure and capacity. They are ideally suited to running volunteer recruitment campaigns and bring considerable skills, energy, and community connections to your program.

- *SeniorCorps*. If your program is targeting senior volunteers, the Foster Grandparent program might be able to supply them in abundance. Additionally, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) provides volunteers who work in capacity-building roles. In the coming years, they will be targeting highly skilled, recently retired Baby Boomers to help local programs build their infrastructures. You may be able to get help with marketing, advertising, desktop publishing, or event planning from an RSVP.

These CNCS programs will work with you to identify areas where you may require assistance and help recruit individuals who can give you the support you need. Contacting the CNCS office in your state is a good starting point for finding out how to fit SeniorCorps and AmeriCorps resources to your recruitment needs. You can find contact information for your state at: <http://www.americorps.org/about/contact/index.asp>.

## Booths at community events

A booth can be a fun way of getting to know your community. Building a booth can be a bit expensive, especially for printing signs and graphics. But it is a one-time expense and, once again, this is an area where getting an in-kind donation is well worth the effort. Your city or county should keep a list of community events you can get involved in. You can also work with program partners to have a presence at events they sponsor.

Make sure your booth has plenty of literature available and at least two knowledgeable, outgoing staff members manning it at all times. Having mentors there can also be helpful. You don't need to do a "hard sell" at community events, but you should be able to answer any questions that people have and be able to work your recruitment messages subtly into conversations with those who stop by.

## Good Advice for Seeking Corporate Volunteers

The following tips come from the director of community relations and Charitable Activity at a large financial institution in the Midwest:

1. Provide adequate lead time. Several weeks notice is often enough, but sometimes companies have to delay bringing in new opportunities because of prior volunteer commitments.
2. Describe exactly what you want from the corporate volunteers. There should be a good fit between the culture and interests of the corporation and the opportunity. The expectations around service should be very clear.
3. Remember that timing is everything. You may get better results out of particular corporations at different times of year.
4. Have realistic expectations. Many corporate volunteer efforts are for shorter projects. It can be difficult for corporate volunteer coordinators to commit volunteers for longer-term projects (such as mentoring).
5. Consider corporations when looking for board members, too. They may not want to volunteer as mentors, but corporate volunteers can fill gaps in the governance of your program and can provide specific skills.

Adapted with permission from: *Winning Volunteer Recruitment Strategies: Techniques to Increase Recruitment and Improve Retention of Volunteers and Members* (Sioux City, IA: Stevenson Inc., 2001).

You can also look into placing your booth at local markets and businesses, if appropriate. Although booths at events will not necessarily get you large number of mentors immediately, it is an important way you can let the community know you exist.

## Additional Recruitment Strategies

Outside of those commonly applied strategies, there is an almost endless list of other unique ideas your program can consider. The following are a number of fun and innovative strategies from which your program can draw ideas and inspiration. Some are variants of marketing and PR strategies, but they are all things that you can adapt or use to get your creative juices flowing.

### Recruitment ambassadors

This uses a volunteer in a different role: as a recruiter, not as a mentor. Ambassadors can either take responsibility for getting volunteers from a specific volunteer source that they are connected to (like their church or where they work) or they can simply volunteer to help your program with the recruitment tasks you already have set. This can be a great role for those who used to be mentors and still want to help the program. Develop ways for volunteers to serve as community liaisons and get them out there increasing your presence wherever volunteers can be found. (Strategy adapted from the National Network of Youth Ministries. Visit <http://www.mentoryouth.com> for more information about their ambassador campaign.)

### Inserts

This category of ideas involves working with a business or organization to disseminate print materials about your program. Common insert opportunities include:

- In grocery bags from a certain chain (or on receipts)
- Printed on restaurant placemats
- With employee paychecks
- On free bookmarks at a book store
- In bulk mailings by businesses
- In newspapers
- With (or on) event tickets
- In programs for sporting events or theatre performances



## **Table tents**

A variation of the insert is the table tent, which can be placed on tables at restaurants and employee cafeterias. Some programs give special table tents to their mentors, especially those who mentor during work hours, which say things like “Gone mentoring” or “Ask me about mentoring when I get back.”

## **Pre-movie slides in theaters**

Most movie theaters have lengthy slide shows that run before the previews start. These often have public service announcements and other nonprofit messages woven in. Try to form partnership agreements with theater operators to get slides about your program added to the show.

## **Creative print ad placement**

Most people associate advertisements with magazines, television, and other common media. But you might also find success getting your message on public transportation, on donated billboard space, or in programs for concerts, plays, and other events. Some programs even place ads in public restrooms! Remember that wherever there are people, there’s an opportunity for a print ad.

## **Innovative mentor recognition**

Since the best way to bring in new mentors is through your current ones, your program, put some thought into how mentors are thanked and honored for their work. Most programs do some form of yearly recognition, usually at a ceremony or banquet. But you may want to consider thanking them where they are. Thank them in their company’s newsletter or have their boss thank them in a monthly meeting. If many volunteers come from the same church, ask the pastor thank them in front of the congregation. Sometimes, recognition is more powerful when it comes from an unlikely source. So brainstorm ways your program can thank your mentors in personal, unique ways that connect your program to the other important things in their lives. Your mentors will be happier and you just might make some new connections or generate some new interest in your program along the way.



## CHAPTER 4

# Making a Recruitment Plan

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To this point you've done all the background work you can do and have considered a wide variety of specific recruitment strategies. Now it's time to put it all together and make a plan.

This book offers a simple, straightforward way of creating a formal plan, and there is both a completed sample in this chapter and a blank template in Appendix A. The plan here consists of charts that detail the logistics of your efforts. This format works well both in print and on newsprint or whiteboards. You may choose to write your plan in a more formal "report" style.

Successful recruitment plans address the following components:

- *What?* What is the approach? What are the goals of the specific strategy?
- *How?* What are the little steps and small tasks that make up the larger strategy? What resources (time, money, skills) are needed to make it happen?
- *Who?* Clearly delineate who has responsibility for each task and make sure they have the skills to do the job.
- *When?* Timelines are important. Not only do you need to make staff time to do recruitment tasks, you also need to coordinate your efforts with things like Mentoring Month, external recruitment drives, and the annual cycle of your program services (for example, school-based programs do a lot of recruitment legwork during the summer months).
- *Where?* Some of this may be covered under "how," but recruitment often means getting out into the community or placing messages at strategic locations. Your plan will need to detail this.
- *A review and revision process.* Your plan should set goals and benchmarks that you can track your progress against. Review your overall strategy at least quarterly to see if it is meeting expectations. Remember, once the plan is complete, don't feel like it's set in stone. You may find that some of your approaches work better than others, and your plan should be revised accordingly. Just remember to formally schedule these reviews the way you would any other important program task.

## A Sample Recruitment Plan

The following sample recruitment plan was created for a fictional program located in a medium-sized town. While it is for an OSFDS grantee, it offers a hybrid school-community program, where matches meet once a month on campus for academic assistance and three times a month in community-based settings, frequently at the local Boys and Girls Club, which is a partner. The program has been around a few years, so it has both current and past mentors to draw on and some very positive evaluation results. It is run by a full-time coordinator (Eve), a full-time recruitment and match specialist (Mike), and two half-time case managers who oversee matches (Amy and Patti). The plan runs for a year, from July 1st to June 30th (the team decided that getting organized during the summer was the best approach).

This sample shows how the various pieces described in this book fit together to create a detailed, focused plan. The plan is divided into three sections, beginning on page 46:

- Marketing strategies
- Specific recruitment activities
- A yearly timeline

For the first two sections, we've provided just a few examples. For instance, the marketing sample only includes a Web site, some PR activities, and the development of a newsletter, but not other common tasks like designing a poster or doing direct mailing. The recruitment activities only detail one presentation to a business and an annual Recruitment Challenge, but not other common strategies like applying for a VISTA member or forging a formal volunteer partnership with a local corporation. The timeline can help you plan for peak recruitment times and schedule recruitment tasks logically around other important program functions, such as mentor training and recognition events.

As with all the tools in this book, these can be adapted to meet your program's needs.



# MARKETING STRATEGIES

Strategy	Group(s) targeted	Core messages, motivations/barriers
<p><b>Program Web site</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ General population.</li> <li>■ Individuals we have made a presentation to.</li> <li>■ Younger professionals (more likely to want information in online format).</li> <li>■ College students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ "Give something back."</li> <li>■ Put testimonials from current mentors, parents, youth on the Web site.</li> <li>■ Add a FAQ page that talks about eligibility requirements and the application process.</li> <li>■ "Mentoring is fun!" (helps alleviate the fear of having to be a "savior" for some).</li> <li>■ Emphasize the minimal time requirement to appeal to college students/seniors.</li> <li>■ Research statistics about the youth we serve and community needs for the "About Us" page.</li> <li>■ Develop an online application form to make the process easier.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program Newsletter</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Corporate volunteer coordinators.</li> <li>■ Board member contacts.</li> <li>■ Parents of mentee.</li> <li>■ Mentors.</li> <li>■ Other youth-serving programs in the community.</li> <li>■ Extra copies disseminated at student union, Volunteer Center, CNCS office, library's "Community Connections" kiosk. (This will target college students, people already seeking volunteer opportunities, and well-educated volunteers.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ "Our program works" – let's play up our evaluation results.</li> <li>■ Showing what mentoring looks like in action – alleviating fears by profiling a match-of-the-month, using lots of testimonial quotes.</li> <li>■ "Mentoring Is Fun!"</li> <li>■ Create sense of community and family by profiling staff and board members in each issue.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Initial PR Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Radio PSAs on KFX (sports talk) and KEX (news).</li> <li>■ Op-ed piece in newspaper.</li> <li>■ Slide on Community Bulletin Board, on cable access channel, and in local movie theaters.</li> <li>■ TV interview during Channel 2's daily "Season of Giving" segment in December.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ General population (op-ed, cable bulletin board).</li> <li>■ Men (KFX spots).</li> <li>■ People with values such as "compassionate, caring, devoted, concerned" (Channel 2 spot, op-ed piece).</li> <li>■ Educated, professional (op-ed).</li> <li>■ Seniors (KEX has large retired audience).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ "Give something back, help a child become what she was meant to be."</li> <li>■ "An hour of your time can make all the difference."</li> <li>■ "Our community needs you."</li> <li>■ End PSA with direct "ask."</li> <li>■ Make sure KFX spot is read by male (ideally on-air talent).</li> <li>■ Make sure cable access bulletin board allows for logos and images (branding).</li> </ul>

**MARKETING STRATEGIES continued**

Resources Needed	Timeline	Persons responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Domain name registration and two years of web hosting: \$500.</li> <li>■ Eve (our best writer) will write FAQ and “About Us” language.</li> <li>■ Mike (with Joe’s help) will develop the language for the recruitment page and the online application.</li> <li>■ Joe (parent of mentee) will provide editing help as needed.</li> <li>■ Donated Web design help from Kevin at the University’s design program.</li> <li>■ Web design software: \$150 (Dreamweaver 7.0).</li> <li>■ Donated branding assistance from Dennis at Wieden and Kennedy (friend of Board Member Steve).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All Web content written and edited by end of July.</li> <li>■ Online form tested and debugged by July 15th.</li> <li>■ Web site live by August 1st.</li> <li>■ Track feedback about the Web site via online survey and by talking to applicants who say they heard about us through Web site: ongoing task, starting in August; reviewed at quarterly meeting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Eve – lead person; writing, research on community needs</li> <li>■ Mike and Joe – writing/editing</li> <li>■ Kevin – Web design, purchasing software, securing domain name</li> <li>■ Dennis – branding help</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Paula, also from the design program, will do layout as part of an internship.</li> <li>■ Eve, Mike, and Amy will all need to devote writing time to this every few months.</li> <li>■ Printing materials and cost donated in-kind by Sunset Printing (be sure to note this in every newsletter).</li> <li>■ Design software: \$400 (Adobe InDesign).</li> <li>■ Bulk mailing will be around \$500 an issue, so \$2,000 annually if we do it every quarter.</li> <li>■ Patti, who has a digital camera and an eye for design, can take photos and coordinate getting parent permission for using the kids in pictures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Since we want this to be heavy on match profiles and program updates, we’ll schedule the first issue to come out in early October, once the program is really rolling.</li> <li>■ Other issues will be in December (just in time for National Mentoring Month), March, and June (launching our summer recruitment efforts).</li> <li>■ Content will be finalized two weeks before print dates to give Paula enough time to design it.</li> <li>■ Printing and mailing takes one month.</li> <li>■ We need to be prepared for a rush of applications in the weeks following each issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Eve, Mike, Amy – lead writers</li> <li>■ Patti – pictures, permission forms</li> <li>■ Paula – design</li> <li>■ Melissa @ Sunset Printing – printing and working with bulk mailing facility</li> <li>■ Everyone – responding to increased inquiries after each issue</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Kevin can design the slide (free).</li> <li>■ Eve will need to spend a good amount of time working her contacts at Channel 2 in order to get one of those segments.</li> <li>■ Jason (board member) knows the station manager and can also make a call if needed.</li> <li>■ Mike will need a few days to write the copy for the PSAs. He will also need a week or so to line up the placements.</li> <li>■ Joe (parent of mentee) has offered to write the op-ed piece, focusing on the impact the program has had on his son.</li> <li>■ Wieden and Kennedy will help prep Eve for interview.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ We want the movie theater slide running very soon to take advantage of the summer blockbuster crowds. Kevin said he can have the slide ready next week. It will run through February when attendance really drops.</li> <li>■ Eve should start networking with station personnel in September. The “Season of Giving” segments are taped in mid-late November and air throughout December.</li> <li>■ PSAs will run in July and August, and then again in November–January.</li> <li>■ Mike will have the PSA text done by next Friday.</li> <li>■ Op-ed piece will run during National Mentoring Month (Jan.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mike – Radio PSAs</li> <li>■ Eve – Season of Giving interview</li> <li>■ Jason – Help with arranging interview if needed</li> <li>■ Joe – Op-ed piece</li> <li>■ Kevin – Slides</li> </ul>

## RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY: PRESENTATION

Activity	Targeted group(s)	Recruitment goal(s)	Core messages, motivations/ barriers
<p><b>Formal presentation at Kroger regional offices</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Kroger employees (especially those living on the east side of town)</li> <li>■ Men</li> <li>■ Those close to retirement</li> <li>■ Technical/computer skills (if we get enough, we can launch our Computer Club idea)</li> <li>■ "Caring" individuals</li> <li>■ "Problem-solvers" (men)</li> <li>■ Executives (either as mentors or for Board positions)</li> <li>■ Vehicle owners (the Kroger offices are outside of town)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 20 inquiries for more information</li> <li>■ 12 applications</li> <li>■ At least eight men</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Previous Kroger philanthropy focused on "at-risk" kids and poverty issues. Corporate volunteer slogan is "Kroger: Contributing to the Community One Heart at a Time."</li> <li>■ Kroger tends to favor punctuated volunteering on projects of limited duration. Year-round mentoring will be a new focus for them.</li> <li>■ "Mentoring can help a child overcome barriers and fulfill dreams."</li> <li>■ "Mentoring works" (focus on our outcomes and evaluation results).</li> <li>■ "Mentoring helps solve community issues" (language around impacting a whole generation might be effective).</li> <li>■ Time commitment: Many employees would need to drive into town to mentor, so let's talk about time requirements and how much FUN mentoring can be.</li> <li>■ We should also highlight the wonderful benefits to mentors, since this will be a new volunteer experience for Kroger employees.</li> </ul>



**RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY: PRESENTATION** continued

Specific steps	Resources needed	Timeline	Persons responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Contact Kroger Volunteer and Community Outreach Office</li> <li>■ Jane (board member) knows the Regional CFO and can also let him know we'd like to meet with them</li> <li>■ Develop presentation, PowerPoint, slides</li> <li>■ Round up brochures, applications, and other print materials</li> <li>■ Work with Kroger to set time for presentation</li> <li>■ Find participating youth and mentor to give testimonial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Two weeks of Mike's time to set up the meeting and prepare the presentation.</li> <li>■ Brochures, applications (will need to print more), back-up hard copies of presentation. Sunset Printing said they can give us a 50% nonprofit discount. On the applications and brochures. Cost: TBD</li> <li>■ Laptop (Eve's); they supply projector.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Kroger's volunteer fairs are in late November and late May.</li> <li>■ It will probably take a month to line everything up, so the process should begin in October and again in April.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mike – setting up the meeting; developing presentation; following up on inquiries</li> <li>■ Patti – finding mentor/mentee to present, reprinting brochures and applications</li> <li>■ Eve – getting laptop ready for presentation</li> </ul>

## RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY: RECRUITMENT CHALLENGE

Activity	Targeted group(s)	Recruitment goal(s)	Core messages, motivations/ barriers
<p><b>Annual Recruitment Challenge</b></p>	<p>The friends, family, coworkers, peers, and associates. . .</p> <p>of our. . .</p> <p>board members, mentors, and mentees and their parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 100 inquiries for more information</li> <li>■ 50 total applications</li> <li>■ At least 20 male applicants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Personal appeals!!! Use of testimony about the impact and quality of our program is paramount.</li> <li>■ “Mentoring is rewarding!”</li> <li>■ “Mentoring makes me feel good about myself.”</li> <li>■ Highlighting program impact/evaluation results to back up the personal story.</li> <li>■ Try to ease fears about the level of commitment or the difficulties in forming a relationship by being honest about the occasional struggles and emphasizing the benefits to the mentor.</li> <li>■ “Everyone had a mentor growing up. Who was yours?” Build self-reflection into the appeals that you make.</li> <li>■ Above all else: DIRECTLY ASK THEM TO MAKE THE COMMITMENT!!! Research indicates that this is key.</li> </ul>

**RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY: RECRUITMENT CHALLENGE continued**

Specific steps	Resources needed	Timeline	Persons responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify one representative from the three competing groups to coordinate their team's efforts.</li> <li>■ Have those representatives contact (phone or letter) their group and announce the 2005 Recruitment Challenge.</li> <li>■ Each board member, mentor, and parent/mentee must make a personal appeal to at least 5 other people.</li> <li>■ We will provide them with sample scripts and a wealth of print materials and applications.</li> <li>■ The team will also get credit if any of the people they ask bring in even more applicants. We'll need to develop a tracking sheet to capture this.</li> <li>■ The contest will last one month.</li> <li>■ The winning team will be treated to a donated banquet at El Gaucho Steakhouse downtown.</li> <li>■ We hope to get media coverage on this from a press release.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All staff will need to make sure they have time cleared on their schedule to deal with the influx of applicants and inquiries.</li> <li>■ We will need to print up more brochures, FAQ pages, applications, business cards, and bookmarks. Sunset Printing said they can give us a 50% nonprofit discount. Total cost: \$850.</li> <li>■ Tracking sheet for inquires and applications.</li> <li>■ A day or two of Eve's time to craft the press release.</li> <li>■ Mike and Joe (parent of mentee) will develop the sample scripts for the contestants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Materials need to be printed by December. If possible, we should combine this with the printing Mike will need for recruitment presentations this year.</li> <li>■ The Challenge will run from January 15th to February 15th.</li> <li>■ The banquet will be held March 1st.</li> </ul>	<p>Mike – choosing team representatives, developing scripts</p> <p>Patti – reprinting brochures and applications</p> <p>Eve – writing press release</p> <p>Joe – helping with scripts</p> <p>All staff – helping process inquiries and applications</p> <p>All of our stakeholders – getting the word out!</p>

# RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY TIMELINE

Marketing Activities	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
<b>Program Web site</b>	Write content/ design	Launch				
<b>Newsletter</b>		Writing/ Editing Design	Issue #1		Writing/ Editing Design	Issue #2
<b>Movie theater slides</b>	Design and make arrange- ments					
<b>Cable Access BB</b>	All year. Make arrangements in July					
<b>Channel 2 interview</b>			Initial networking	Prep	Taping and airing	
<b>Radio PSAs</b>	Develop spot, begin placement					
<b>Op-ed piece</b>						
<b>Other Activities</b>						
<b>Kroger presentation</b>				Prep, make arrangements	Presentation	
<b>Recruitment Challenge</b>						Prep, print materials
<b>Other</b>						
<b>Other</b>						
<b>Other</b>						
<b>Review of plan</b>			Review meeting mid-month			Review meeting mid-month



JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE
	Writing/ Editing Design	Issue #3		Writing/ Editing Design	Issue #4
Joe writes	Runs in paper				
			Prep, make arrangements	Presentation	
Challenge underway	Challenge ends	Banquet on the 1st			
		Review meeting mid-month			Review meeting mid-month



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APPENDIX A

# Recruitment Planning Tools

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WORKSHEET: DEFINING OUR MENTORS

Personal Qualities	Demographics	Groups
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■
■	■	■

Statement of Purpose/Mentor's Role:

Duties and Responsibilities:

Time Commitments:

Mentor Qualifications:

Benefits to Mentors:

Agency Background Information:

How To Apply

WORKSHEET: INVENTORY OF RECRUITMENT LOCATIONS

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Category	Specific group/location	What we know about this group/location	What could they provide (best case scenario)
<i>Local businesses</i>			
<i>Service organizations</i>			
<i>Professional organizations/ associations</i>			
<i>Civic and cultural groups</i>			
<i>Religious institutions</i>			
<i>Schools and educational settings</i>			
<i>Government agencies</i>			
<i>Public spaces (malls, parks, libraries, etc.)</i>			
<i>Military/police</i>			
<i>Sections of town</i>			
<i>Other</i>			
<i>Other</i>			

## WORKSHEET: INVENTORY OF INTERNAL RESOURCES

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### *Financial Resources*

	Amount	Timeframe (how long this money is supposed to last)
Recruitment Budget		
Marketing Budget		

### *Staff Resources*

Staff member	Hours per month to spend on recruitment activities	Skills that can help with recruitment

**Community Connections**

Person (staff, volunteer, parent, board member, etc.)	Community connection (individual, business, organization, church, etc.)	What that connection might provide (skills, access, resources, networking, etc.)

**Partnerships and In-Kind Resources**

Partner (organization, business, individual)	What they provide now	What they might provide in the future

WORKSHEET: VOLUNTEER MOTIVATIONS AND OUR RESPONSE

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Motivation	How can we take advantage of this motivation	Slogans, messages, images, approaches
Demographic motivations (cultural, ethnic, religious, socioeconomic; driven by identity)		
Generational motivations ("passing it on," giving back)		
Community motivations (specific needs, general support)		
Social motivations (meeting the expectations of peers/family/social groups)		
Enhancement motivations (self-esteem, feeling needed)		
Other		
Other		



WORKSHEET: POTENTIAL BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS

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Barrier	Our response

PLANNING WORKSHEET: MARKETING STRATEGY

Strategy	Group(s) targeted	Core messages, motivations/barriers	Resources needed	Timeline	Persons responsible

PLANNING WORKSHEET: RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY

Activity	Targeted group(s)	Recruitment goal(s)	Core messages, motivations/barriers	Specific steps	Resources needed	Persons responsible

PLANNING WORKSHEET: RECRUITMENT TIMELINE

Marketing Activities	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE

Other Activities	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE

APPENDIX B

# Additional Reading and Resources

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# Additional Reading and Resources

## Recruitment and Program Development Resources

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