

# Recruiting Volunteers: A Total Approach

**Overview:** This workshop provides a comprehensive approach to recruiting volunteers or members. It works through several dimensions including defining an approach, understanding what motivates people, and both broad-based and targeted strategies. The workshop introduces many techniques and it provides participants with an opportunity to bring it all together in a plan. It is especially geared at coordinators of programs who are responsible for training leaders and volunteers to do outreach and recruitment. A helpful complement to this session may be the workshop and techniques in “Manage by Calendar,” also found in the C.O.O.L.-Idealist Civic Engagement Curriculum.

**Category:** Recruitment; project planning; leadership skills; outreach; management; civic engagement

**Level:** Intermediate to advanced levels; most suitable for students or staff in leadership or coordinating roles

**Type:** Structured activity suitable for workshop (e.g. retreat or training); content may be woven into meetings

## **Focus or Goals of this Guide:**

- Provide participants with a set of knowledge and tactics pertaining to recruitment
- Provide the opportunity for participants to apply recruitment strategies in the development of a plan
- Engage the group in thinking creatively and strategically about recruitment

## **Materials:**

- Pens and markers
- Flip chart paper
- Copies of attached handouts

## **How to Prepare:**

Review the entire guide and handouts to get familiar with the material.

After you have read through the guide, we suggest you gather and/or create examples to illustrate particular techniques, such as sample flyers, ads, PSA scripts, in-person asks, and personal letters.

### How to Do/Brief Outline:

The total suggested time for this workshop is 2 hours, 50 minutes, but may be lengthened or shortened depending on the needs of your group. The outline has the following parts:

- |                              |                           |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Warm-Up: Wants and Offers | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 2. A = Approach              | suggested time 25 minutes |
| 3. B = Belonging             | suggested time 25 minutes |
| 4. C = Cast a Wide Net       | suggested time 35 minutes |
| 5. D = Direct Asks           | suggested time 35 minutes |
| 6. Exchanging Ideas          | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 7. Wrap-up                   | suggested time 10 minutes |

## 1 Warm-Up: Wants and Offers

Suggested time: 20 minutes

For this exercise, use sheets of flip chart paper or 11x17 paper (one for each participant).

Give each participant a sheet of paper and at least one marker (with some masking tape rolled on it). Instruct the group to fold their sheet into three columns or draw two lines. Then, label the columns (1) wants; (2) offers; (3) contact info, as demonstrated here:

WANTS	OFFERS	CONTACT INFO
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Give them time to complete each column as instructed:

- Wants – list what you want (bullet points) in terms of volunteers, resources, trainings, etc for your program/project
- Offers – list all of the different resources you can offer volunteers in terms of skills, funding, contacts, advice, support, connections, etc.
- Contact info — list your contact info

After ample time, have participants post their sheets and do a gallery walk. If time allows, have participants share verbally as well. As a facilitator, try to draw connections among the participant's examples.

This warm up is mainly an icebreaker here, but you can do the following:

- If participants are leaders of different programs, have them note interconnections between their work and how to help each other
- If participants will be on their own recruiting later, note how to use this activity within a potential recruitment meeting (modified?)

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## 2 A = Approach

Suggested time: 25 minutes

Distribute copies of the handout and transitioning into the content of it. Explain that:

*In this workshop, we'll be focusing on recruitment. Here is a simple mnemonic devise to define our strategy:*

- A= Approach
- B= Belonging
- C= Cast a Wide Net
- D= Direct Asks

In this portion, use the handout to explain the essence of Approach, which consists of basically two steps:

- **How many people do you need to recruit?** Knowing these numbers helps to create a structure that utilizes your immediate resources/colleagues.
- **What is the caliber of people you need to recruit?** You should know what level of training and/or experience your volunteers need to truly be helpful in your work, and you need to know where/how to find and communicate with them.

Start by asking participants to write down who, in their immediate network, could be involved in helping with recruitment. Ask them to consider:

- Other staff/members
- Former volunteers
- Friends
- Advisors
- Partner groups/organizations

Then, have participants write a volunteer job description that defines the characteristics of a volunteer/member who is a good fit for the program. They can do so as a "Want Ad." Have people post these.

Then, ask people to consider where to find people with those characteristics.

Use the content on the handout (and below) and work through an example. Then give individuals time to do so.

Campus Groups and Avenues	Community Groups and Avenues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community Service Office</li><li>• Service Learning Office</li><li>• Student Life</li><li>• Chaplain's Office</li><li>• Dean's Office</li><li>• Career Service Office</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schools</li><li>• Youth Groups</li><li>• Nonprofit Organizations with similar population/focus</li><li>• Churches/religious entities</li><li>• Mayor's Office</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study Abroad Office</li> <li>• Student Groups/Clubs</li> <li>• Activist/Political Groups</li> <li>• Student Government</li> <li>• Fraternities/Sororities</li> <li>• Ethnic Groups/Associations</li> <li>• GLBTQ Groups/Associations</li> <li>• Religious Groups/Associations</li> <li>• Cultural Groups/Associations</li> <li>• Alumni Associations</li> <li>• Professors</li> <li>• Classes/courses with suitable focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Government departments with similar population/focus</li> <li>• State Government agencies</li> <li>• Professional Associations</li> <li>• Parent Associations (PTAs, PFLAG)</li> <li>• Neighborhood Association/Block Clubs</li> <li>• Stores/retail establishment with related population/focus</li> <li>• Companies</li> </ul>
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Use the handout instructions and example to have participants create a power map of their approach:

- Map yourself and your immediate colleagues
- Map affiliations that you and your colleagues have
- Map other groups and associations that you think are good places to recruit (and some potential numbers)
- Map whether you have connections to individuals in those places
- If you do not have connections, map whether you have looser connections (e.g., friends of friends)

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### 3 B = Belonging

Suggested time: 25 minutes

Engage the group in a brainstorm addressing the question, “The Last Time You Volunteered for Something, What Were the Reasons?”

People will respond with such things as:

- Fun
- Meeting people
- Power
- Money
- Getting a date
- Making a difference
- Caring about an issue

Close the brainstorm down and transition into the next part of the handout, presenting the content about *B= Belonging*.

In particular highlight the reasons for joining and/or volunteering, which are:

- Affiliation

- Achievement of goals
- Power
- Activity
- Ownership
- Competence
- Recognition
- Meaning

Then also note that these characteristics take many different forms. Use the charts and text on handout to reinforce ideas, as well as stories from the group.

Then, ask people to spend 5-10 minutes working on their own to develop 5 key reasons to volunteer or join their effort (program, group, event or whatever). Each reason should fall into a different category below (use the content on handout to fully explain each):

- *Skill Development*
- *Work Experience/Professional Development*
- *Personal Experience*
- *Social Contact/Social Interests*
- *Contribute to community*

Have a few participants (or all, if time is available) share these verbally or on flip chart paper.

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## 4 C = Cast a Wide Net

Suggested time: 35 minutes

Transition into the next piece, reminding participants of what they have done so far (all of this is also on the handout):

- Made some goals and determined an approach
- Mapped some networks
- Figured out ways to appeal to the reasons people volunteer or join

Now, explain **what is casting a wide net?**

*Definition: Recruiting through open, at-large channels.*

Channels include:

- Ads
- Flyers
- Door-to-door
- Online, list serves and mass e-mailings
- Bulk mailings
- PSAs (Public Service Announcements via the radio/TV ads)

**Explain why wide net recruiting is important:**

- ***It creates a buzz:*** Sure, you're going to go ask friends of friends to join your group, you have to. But when you can back it up with a flyer or an ad in the newspaper, you'll create more buzz/hype. Friends can tell friends, without you being there.
- ***It establishes legitimacy:*** There's importance to having an opportunity presented in formalized, recognized ways, particularly in writing. Your targeted asks? and one-on-one meetings will more likely feature such responses as, "Oh, I've heard about this," or "Oh, I saw something about that."
- ***It helps you meet legal requirements and to be inclusive:*** You may be the best-networked person, in your opinion, but the fact is you don't know everyone. You want to create an inclusive recruitment strategy that reaches as broadly as your budget and time permits. This also helps you to meet legal requirements to be non-discriminatory because you will have made the opportunity known and available to anyone. And you may just find that one person who is a perfect fit for your group whom you or your friends didn't know.

Now, have people review the handouts on their own (you can briefly touch on each element, e.g. using flip chart visuals). Give them 15-20 minutes to do the following:

- **Using the content and suggestions contained in the handout about strategies for casting a wide net, develop either:**
  1. **A PSA (script)**
  2. **An Ad (overview, text)**
  3. **A Flyer (overview, text)**

Circulate around the room and help where needed. Then, have individual participants or small groups (e.g., programs) present briefly. Enlist the rest of the group in giving feedback.

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## 5 D = Direct Asks

Suggested time: 35 minutes

Now, transition participants into D= Direct Asks. Use the handout to help (text below):

Casting the net widely is an important strategy, but it will probably not work without its counterpart: casting the net narrowly through direct, targeted asking.

Targeted, "direct asks" are when you go directly to individuals and enlist them to join your group (or event) and/or to recruit others to do so.

Examples of direct asks that are most effective include:

- In-person (in meetings, cold calls or other venues)
- Personal Letters

Have people return to their initial Power Map graphic (step A). Then, considering what they defined as the approach, have them identify an individual (known or not known) as the "target."

Then, give everyone 15-20 minutes to do the following:

- Knowing your target (whether to join or to recruit others to join), create a strategy for the direct ask for this person and the group he/she represents by doing either of the following:
  - Envision an in-person ask
  - Write a personal letter

Encourage people to get their ideas on paper to present it. At the end of this time, have one or more individuals present and engage the rest of the group in giving feedback. You want to use the content on the handout for giving positive and constructive feedback.

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## 6 Exchanging Ideas

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Now, ask people to reflect on all four steps:

<b>A=</b>	<b>Approach</b>	<b>Defining your approach</b>
<b>B=</b>	<b>Belonging</b>	<b>Understanding what motivates people</b>
<b>C=</b>	<b>Cast the net</b>	<b>Broad and inclusive strategies</b>
<b>D=</b>	<b>Direct asks</b>	<b>Targeted and personal strategies</b>

With these steps in mind, weave them together into a plan (including a specific timeline). Ask them to use their real timeline or provide one for the purposes of the session. This is the time to work through some decisions and work plans for the real recruitment challenge.

After 10 minutes of individual or group planning, have participants share either in pairs (for giving and receiving feedback or testing ideas) or take a few more volunteers in the group to share their ideas.

Again, reinforce content and learning by adding your own positive feedback and suggestions for consideration through the facilitation process.

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## 7 Wrap-Up

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Wrap with a summary and/or open dialogue about what was covered. Also, define and discuss next steps (will the group meet again, where to get help, etc.)

You can also forecast future trainings or discussion on retaining volunteers. This can be summarized by:

<b>Four things to consider after getting someone involved</b>		
<b>F=</b>	<b>Follow-Up</b>	<b>Staying in touch and involved</b>
<b>G=</b>	<b>Give</b>	<b>Recognition, roles and giving back</b>

H= Hear                      Hearing volunteers and listening back  
I= Integrate                Integrate volunteers into structures & operations

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## **Facilitator Resources**

Check out the resources on the Corporation for National and Community Service's website for more volunteer recruitment and retention tips and hints:

[http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/building\\_blocks/volunteers\\_members.php](http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/building_blocks/volunteers_members.php)

# Recruiting: A Total Approach

Four things to consider when recruiting:

A=	Approach	Defining your approach
B=	Belonging	Understanding what motivates people
C=	Cast the net	Broad and inclusive strategies
D=	Direct asks	Targeted and personal strategies

## A= Approach

To begin with, you want to consider the goal of your recruitment and design an approach. Review all of the recommended strategies below. Then consider the following:

**How many people do you need to recruit?** Knowing these numbers helps to create a structure that utilizes your immediate resources/colleagues.

Considering your current networks (which include colleagues, friends, and friend of friends), is there a way to break down your recruitment goal? Consider the following examples:

Example 1: Recruiting 60 people for an event  
Team of 6 staff/lead volunteers  
Each person recruits 10 (or more)

Example 2: Recruiting a diverse team of 12  
Team of 3 co-leaders with diverse affiliations (such as student government, activist group, GLBT alliance, fraternity, sorority, black student union, and so on)  
Each person tries to recruit 4 members through diverse channels (or more)

Example 3: Recruiting 250 people for an event  
Team of 5 lead organizers  
Each person must recruit 50 people (or more)  
If each organizer gets 5 people to recruit 10 others, the goal is met

**What is the caliber of people you need to recruit?** You should know what level of training and/or experience your volunteers need to truly be helpful in your work, and you need to know where/how to find and communicate with them.

Given some basic projections about the structure and strategy for recruiting, you then dig deeper and ask, “what characteristics do the people we want have?” and “where do we find people with those characteristics?”

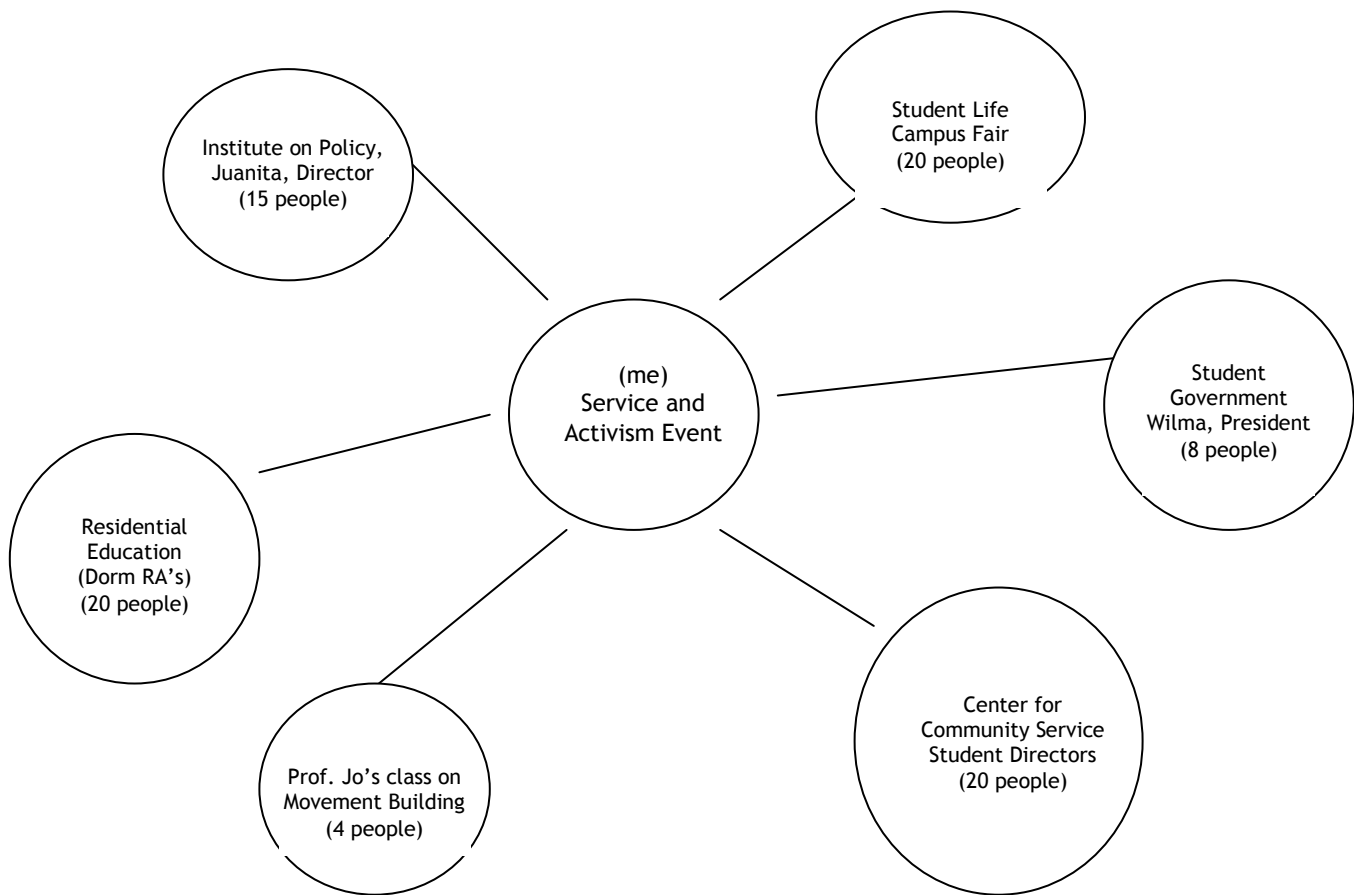
Depending on what you are recruiting for, consider the following types of groups and institutions, on campus and in the community:

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Considering these entities, create a map that graphically represents your structure and initial approach. To do that:

1. Make a list of yourself and your immediate colleagues (ideally, this list should be spread out all over a piece of paper, not printed vertically like a typical “list”). Draw lines between those people who you think know each other. This is called a “map.”
2. Map affiliations that you and your colleagues have – this can include organizational memberships, professional associations, clubs, hobby groups, etc.
3. Map other groups and associations that you think are good places to recruit (and some potential contact information, if you know it).
4. Map whether you have connections to individuals in those places.
5. If you do not have connections, map whether you have loose connections (e.g., friends of friends).

**Take a look at the example on the next page and do your own:**



## **B= Belonging**

Then, it's helpful to understand the different kinds of things that motivate people to join a group or support a cause.

### **Why People Join**

There are a number of common reasons that people tend to volunteer, join groups or support specific goals. Psychologically, some common factors are:

- Affiliation
- Achievement of goals
- Power
- Activity
- Ownership
- Competence
- Recognition
- Meaning

These factors often show up in a whole array of ways, when volunteers are asked about their motivation. Some of the answers to "why volunteer" you may hear are:

- To feel needed
- To get to know a community
- To demonstrate commitment to a cause/belief
- To gain leadership skills
- To do your civic duty
- To keep busy
- To donate your professional skills
- Because there is no one else to do it
- To have an impact
- To learn something new
- Guilt
- To be challenged
- To feel proud
- To make new friends
- To explore a career
- As therapy
- To do something different from your job
- For fun
- For religious reasons
- To earn academic credit
- Because an agency is geographically close
- To have an excuse to do what you love
- To be part of a team
- To gain status
- Because you were asked
- To build your resume

Having a realistic sense of the many and diverse reasons that people volunteer will help you to both tailor your pitch effectively and respond to the interests and motivations of the individual. These reasons often fall into several broad categories:

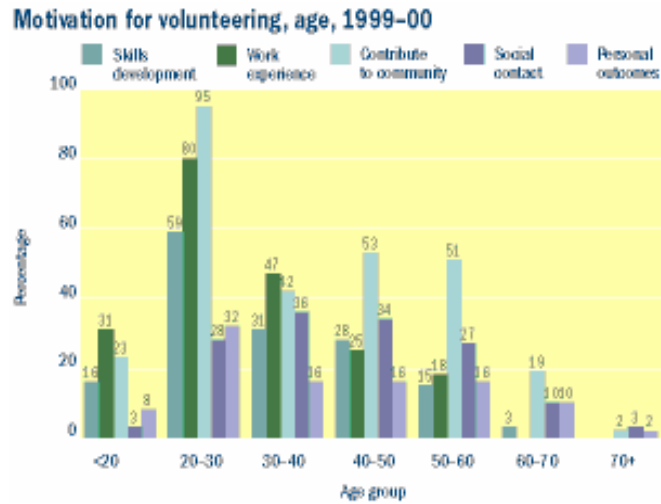
- *Skill Development* – One key factor often cited for volunteering (in a variety of contexts) is skill development. People seek the opportunity to learn and practice new skills (whether cooking, teaching, or facilitating). Try to articulate the opportunities for skill enhancement in your appeal.
- *Work Experience/Professional Development* – A related reason for volunteering is to gain particular work experience and develop professionally. For example, one can gain management experience as a volunteer in a way that can benefit post-college or later opportunities.
- *Personal Experience* – Another factor that motivates people to volunteer are previous personal experiences. For example, someone may tutor because he or she had a tutor as a child that impacted future performance in school. Another might volunteer because of a perceived negative experience that s/he would like to see not repeated or carried forward in society.
- *Social Contact/Social Interests* – The desire to make friendships and relationships, especially with those with perceived commonalities, also motivate some to volunteer or join. It's important that your recruitment appeal also illustrate the ways that your group offers social contact and enjoyment.
- *Contribute to community* – Another reason often cited is the desire to give back or contribute to community. This may be in a general, altruistic sense or in a particular sense, for example to contribute on an issue or value one holds (such as cultural sensitivity, religious belief, or to stop violence).

Research conducted by government agencies has found the following related to individuals reasons for volunteering

(Source: <http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/stateoftheterritory2000/ourcommunity/96-97.html>)

- *The reasons why people volunteer are complex and multifaceted. Some of the main reasons are skill development, work experience, to contribute to the community, for social contact and the desire to help others.*
- *The main reason female volunteers cited, is to contribute to the community. For males the main reasons are also to contribute to the community closely followed by work experience.*
- *Motivation for volunteering varies markedly by age. For those aged under 20, the main motivation is to gain work experience, with social contact relatively insignificant. For those aged 20 to 30 the motivation for volunteering is more likely to be contributing to the community.*

- *Social contact as a motivator to volunteering is important to those aged over 30.*



## **C= Cast your net wide**

Okay, so by now you've:

- Made some goals and determined an approach
- Mapped some networks
- Figured out ways to appeal to the reasons people volunteer or join

Now, even though you're going to proceed with some targeted, strategic recruiting, it's a good idea to cast a wide net.

### **What is casting a wide net?**

*Recruiting through open, at-large channels.*

Channels include:

- Ads
- Flyers
- Door-to-door
- Online, list serves and mass e-mailings
- Bulk mailings
- PSAs (radio and TV ads)

### **Why is wide net recruiting important:**

- ***It creates a buzz:*** Sure, you're going to go ask friends of friends to join your group, you have to. But when you can back it up with a flyer or an ad in the newspaper, you'll create more buzz/hype. Friends can tell friends, without you being there.
- ***It establishes legitimacy:*** There's importance to having an opportunity presented in formalized, recognized ways, such as in writing. Your targeted asks and one-on-one meetings will more likely feature such responses as, "Oh, I've heard about this," or "Oh, I saw something about that."
- ***It helps you meet legal requirements and be inclusive:*** You may be the best-networked person, in your opinion, but the fact is you don't know everyone. You want to create an inclusive recruitment strategy that reaches as broadly as your budget and time permits. This also helps you to meet legal requirements to be non-discriminatory, because you will have made the opportunity known and available to anyone. And, you may just find that one person who is a perfect fit for your group whom you or your friends didn't know.

### **Techniques for Casting the Net Wide**

#### **Flyers**

- Your flyers should describe your organization/cause, what you looking for from volunteers, what they will get out of the experience and how/when to reach you.
- Put on a symbol or logo (especially if you also have banners and signs with one) on the flyer.
- Add a couple catchy lines that will attract people.
- All writing should be large type so as to be seen from a far.
- You should put the flyers up everywhere and give them out to whomever you can.

#### **Public Service Announcements**

PSA's are short messages put on radio and TV stations for free, designed to be heard by many and made to grab interest and attention to a cause or an issue

They should:

- Have a sense of immediacy
- Be personal and catchy
- Brief and specific
- Sound smooth
- Be in active voice
- Include accurate facts, dates, and names, and answer Who, What, Why, When, Where, and How.

- Fit your message to the time slot:  
10 seconds=25 words  
30 seconds=75 words  
60 seconds=150 words

After you make the PSA, send a thank you letter to the public service director and/or the DJ or TV host that airs the PSA. Ask your friends to do the same. They like positive feedback!

Here is a sample script:  
PSA Script on “Driving While Black”

Guy #1: Aw, man!

Guy #2: What?

Guy #1: The police are following us.

Guy #2: You sure?

Guy #1: Everywhere I go, they're there, I'm telling you.

Guy #2: All right, be cool. Hold on...why are we scared? We didn't do anything wrong.

Guy #1: Yeah. So why are they pulling us over?

Announcer: *“The sight of a police car shouldn't scare you. Driving while black or brown isn't against the law, but police officers stopping drivers because of the color of their skin is. In one case it was found that minorities made up only 16% of drivers, but were 74% of those stopped and searched. Enough! Call the ACLU hotline and tell us your story at 1-877-6-PROFILE. Together we have the power to help end discrimination by the police. Let's Arrest Racism.”*

### Handouts

- Create a schedule card and hand them out while people are standing in line to register for classes or to get lunch. Tell them to fill out with their class responsibilities and any other responsibilities (e.g. work study, job, clubs) and then to check-in with the volunteer/community service department with the free time they have for a volunteer project that fits their schedule. Be prepared to have flexible opportunities for students to get involved with- even if it is only a few hours per semester.
- Create table tents (paper folded in half that stand on tables in the cafeteria, coffee shop and other places the students convene). Create a funny, creative, or alarming message. Use BIG print so people can read if they are passing by the table. You can expect that they will last for a few days. Get permission from campus or the dining staff.
- Give away blank floppy disks or CDs with a label that has your message and web site address. This is especially useful at the beginning of the year and during midterms.
- You know those free post card stands at restaurants and coffee shops? Get one printed for your issue- it's NOT expensive. Put them everywhere and give them out on campus and in town.
- Hand out condoms with a label that has your message and web site address on it. This is fun and people love to get condoms. Leave them in common areas.
- Get fortune cookies made with your message or facts about your issue inside and give them out in the cafeteria, in dorms and at events.

### Signage

- Create a 'controversial' or catchy billboard ad that sits in a visible place. Expect a reaction and ask permission before hand.

- Run your campaign in waves (called teaser ads). The first week, put up posters with one line or symbol. The next week, add on to the line or symbol. The next week, add on to the previous week. By the fourth week, the flyer should convey a complete message.
- Create a logo/symbol that represents your movement – make stickers and post them everywhere. Make up buttons and bumper stickers. Go around campus sticking them on people's backs – with their permission, of course!
- Ask restaurants and bars if you can post flyers on the back of bathroom stalls.
- Make flyers with your message on it and a little information about what you're looking for. Post them on billboards, corporate bulletin boards, and non-profit bulletin boards.
- Produce T-shirts with your message and web site- make them funny or controversial.
- Hand out flyers, T-shirts, bumper sticker, or posters-all with your message and web site- at a concert, on campus, or during another event.
- For protests, get rain parkas made up with your message on the back.
- Ask a store if you can use their store window for a display on your issue and event.
- Make a banner using a sheet with your recruitment message. Hang the sheet between two poles or in the cafeteria. Make a logo or symbol that people will remember and put it on the banner. Make Internet banners for your and others web sites.

### Ads

- Get a magazine to run an ad for you. This requires relationship building. Talk to the person in charge of advertising or community service.
- Run a classified, "Looking for Activists."
- Ask the campus and community radio and TV stations to run a PSA. Try to schedule interviews and offer prizes through the station.
- You can save money by asking the school's administration or student activities department if you can include a flyer in the mailing that the new students get before they arrive on campus. Include important information on how they can get involved once they are on campus. Include a return postcard that they can complete that has information on what type of projects they are interested in- follow-up the first week they are on campus.

### Other

- Go door-to-door recruiting volunteers. Have a sheet that you can hand to students and community members with details, or to leave under their door if they are not home. Be able describe your organization/cause, what you looking for from volunteers, what they will get out of the experience, how/when to reach you and of course a thanks in advance.
- Ask professors if you can speak before or after the class about volunteer opportunities. Discuss opportunities that are relevant to that specific class topic. For example, in a freshman English class, recruit volunteers to publish the weekly newsletter or to write articles for the campus and community newspaper.
- Make a pitch at the next RA meeting. Ask them to appoint a representative on each floor of their dorm that attends monthly meetings at the volunteer center. This way those floor representatives can create bulletin boards, make flyers and talk with the residents on their floor about volunteer opportunities.
- Use chalk on sidewalks, streets, and chalkboards to advertise an event or message. If people are comfortable with it, have those who sign up, write a message around the ad you put up.
- Email friends/past volunteers and ask them to help and to ask others.
- Go to individuals, on-campus groups (fraternities, sororities, existing tutoring program, religious/spiritual groups, etc.), and other meetings. ***The number one reason people do not volunteer is because no one asks them.***

## D= Direct Asks

Casting the net wide is an important strategy, but it will probably not work without its counterpart: *casting the net narrowly through direct, targeted asks.*

Direct, targeted “asks” or requests are when you go directly to individuals and enlist them to join your group (or event or whatever) and/or to recruit others to do so.

Examples of direct asks that are most effective include:

- In-person Asks (in meetings, cold calls or other venues)
- Personal Letters

### In-Person Asks

Have a sheet that you can hand to students and community members with details, or to leave under their door if they are not home.

- Describe your organization and/or cause and your work. Make sure people know who you are, and also set context (why you exist). Keep this information concise and in regular language (not jargon).
- Be able to answer any questions about your organization and what they do or have done. In other words, know the basic history, even if you are new. Especially know any previous work done with that individual, group, or neighborhood (and whether it met expectations).
- Know what you looking for from volunteers, in terms of experience, time, and characteristics. Be specific about future plans and needs. Having a basic volunteer job description (whether to share in person or in writing) is helpful.
- Know how to articulate benefits for volunteers, referring especially to the reasons for joining. Know what they will get out of the experience and convey that. Use a diverse array of reasons and listen carefully to modify your pitch.
- Explain how and when to reach you. Make sure the people you talk to have contact information for you and your organization. Tell them explicitly when you need to hear from them. Give people a business card and/or written flyer to refer to later will help them to remember and follow up. If you use email, send people an email with contact information (such as a v card).

### Personal Letters

Write a letter (on paper or via email) to friends, community leaders and other active community members, inviting them to join your group and/or recruit others to do so.

Personal letters are especially appropriate for:

- Formal requests of non-profit leaders or community leaders
- Formal requests of campus administrators and professors
- Professionals

Some suggestions for creating effective personal letters are to include:

- A brief history and/or context for your organization and what you do, even if you think they know it (e.g., *“created after the election turnout last year, our group focuses on registering young people to vote”*)
- A statement of genuine understanding and/or appreciation for their work or who they are (e.g., *“we are writing you because we know you work with young people in the neighborhood each year”*)
- A connection between the person and their work and you/your event (e.g., *“as an alumnus of the university who served in student government, you know of the impact its work can have for students”* or *“as a community organization that hosts student volunteers annually, you know how important this issue is”*)
- Information about event that you are asking them to help with, including the date, location, time, purpose, general outline of the program, and highlights (e.g., you can include another brochure or flyer, but it’s helpful to note the important details in the letter itself)
- Specific information about what you are looking for and when you need a response (e.g., *“if you could identify 4-6 young people you know who would be good candidates for this opportunity, it would be great. I will follow up by phoning you next week”*)
- A special thanks

This letter should be no more than one to two pages in length (one is preferable; keep in mind that the person likely sees at least several pieces of mail daily). Be concise and specific. And, be courteous and direct.

**Four things to consider after getting someone involved**

<b>F=</b>	<b>Follow Up</b>	<b>Staying in touch and involved</b>
<b>G=</b>	<b>Give</b>	<b>Recognition, roles and giving back</b>
<b>H=</b>	<b>Hear</b>	<b>Hearing volunteers and listening back</b>
<b>I=</b>	<b>Integrate</b>	<b>Integrate volunteers into structures &amp; operations</b>