



The Official Recruiter's Cheat Sheet

At a public event, in a trade show setting or any other face-to-face recruitment opportunity – you have about 30 seconds to identify, qualify and recruit a prospective volunteer to sign up. Therefore you need to be prepared.

Tell them:

- ✓ **Who we are looking for** – We're looking for people to volunteer as firefighters and emergency medical personnel; administrative/scene support; etc.
- ✓ **Why we want them** – We want additional volunteers because due to many factors: our ranks are down, our emergency responses are up and there are more jobs to do – creating more opportunities to volunteer. (*Use 'want' in lieu of 'need.' Need can imply desperation.*)
- ✓ **The benefits offered** – Free training, learn new skills, meet new people, serve your community, have fun, personal satisfaction and camaraderie; [Insert your FD's benefits here.]
- ✓ **The commitment required** – May not be as big as they expected. Don't sugar coat it – but don't oversell the requirements either. Explain why commitment is necessary. Focus on the positives.
- ✓ **Why you volunteered** – A sense of belonging, achievement, increased responsibility, diversity from paying job, growth and development, self-respect, challenge, recognition, have fun and enjoy life. *You fill in the blanks.*
- ✓ **How to apply** – Fill out an inquiry form for the recruiter to return to the appropriate party.
- ✓ **How the process works** – Their contact information will be forwarded to the appropriate emergency services agency and a rep from there will follow up with them soon. Let them know that the recruitment clearinghouse/lead agency/governing organization may follow up with them as well. Explain the steps to joining and becoming a member.

In General:

- ✓ Have fun and be yourself.
- ✓ Speak slowly and listen intently.
- ✓ Be courteous and outwardly friendly. Invite them into your booth/space/firehouse.
- ✓ Show an interest in everyone. The person you take the time to listen to may not be a viable recruit – but they may know someone who is. Referrals are powerful.
- ✓ If you don't know the answer to something – say so. Take down their information and tell them someone will contact them with the correct answer. Be careful not to comment on the requirements of, or benefits offered by any department but your own.
- ✓ Recruiting opens the door for other discussions. Never be confrontational with a prospect. If necessary, tell them that you are not the person to comment on that subject and if they would like you to take their contact information – you will have someone follow up with them.

Most importantly: Treat everyone as if you are someone they want to volunteer with.



TIGER SCHMITTENDORF
MUTUAL AID FOR MARKETING YOUR FIRE DEPARTMENT