



MARYLAND VOLUNTEER

Tiger Schmittendorf's Top Ten Commandments for Recruitment & Retention

1. Think of your recruitment challenge in simple terms. If each of your existing members recruited just one new member – what effect would that have on your roster? You do the math.
2. Be careful what you wish for. More members equal more help, more people to manage and more people issues to deal with. However, this can't deter you from recruiting more. Plan for volunteers.
3. Behind every good leader is a bunch of good followers. You're already in a leadership position if you've learned to be a good follower. Learn your position and play it well.
4. Be courteous, kind and forgiving ... or at least establish a minimum standard for human relations. Treat your fellow members with the same basic level of respect that you would give to a first acquaintance. It goes a long way towards retention.
5. Know your competition and pounce at every opportunity to recruit: at church, at work, in your neighborhood and even at an emergency scene. Fire prevention shouldn't be practiced just one week of the year – neither should recruitment.
6. Whose job is it to recruit new members? Everyone's - not just the chief or the membership committee. Work as a team to build a bigger, better team.
7. Peace at home = peace at the firehouse. Make sure you're targeting the right audience with your recognition and incentives programs.
8. If it's quantity you need – take a shotgun approach to recruiting. If it's quality you want – make it a target shoot. You might need to do both.
9. Outward success cannot be achieved without inward change. Look at the way you do everything. Leverage what's good about your department. Change what's bad.
10. When searching for the ultimate recruit – think of the person you would want to serve with ... or be saved by. Then go out and get 'em.