



50 Ways to Strengthen Your Chapter's Recruitment Strategy RIGHT NOW

1. **Read our VBR Chairman's Manual.** This may be the best 45 minutes our members [not just officers] could spend on understanding solid recruitment theory. To put it simply, if we don't understand the why behind the how, we'll never make much progress in terms of recruitment. You can find a .PDF copy available for download at www.sigmanu.org/recruitment.
2. **Read the Recruitment Bluebook.** Once you have read the Recruitment Chairman's Manual, the Bluebook will give you the "How to" as opposed to the theory. The Bluebook will give you the step-by-step process to create your year-round recruitment plan.
3. **Don't make your best recruiter the Recruitment Chairman.** A successful Recruitment Chairman need only to be organized, have a strong desire to succeed, and be able to motivate chapter members. Think about it – If your best recruiter is always busy planning events and worrying about logistical details, how much time will he actually have to recruit prospective members?
4. **Establish a Recruitment Committee** to assist the Recruitment Chairman. We recommend anywhere from two to five men, depending on your chapter size. These individuals can help ease the burden on the Recruitment Chairman, serve to ensure no detail is forgotten, and will become great choices when it's time to elect new officers – they are already trained and know the chapter's recruitment strategy.
5. **Set a recruitment goal and track your progress.** As Stephen Covey of *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* fame suggests, successful people [we'll say chapters] begin with the end in mind. Make the number challenging, but attainable, and don't settle for less. There are plenty of quality men out there who would make great Fraternity members – we just have to find them.
6. **Remember you can have BOTH quantity and quality.** These concepts are not mutually exclusive. Chapters that believe they are should admit they're just lazy and don't really want to recruit. There are PLENTY of quality men on your campus – they just don't all participate in "rush week" activities. Go find them in class, the residence halls, etc. and you'll wonder why you were ever worried about numbers in the first place.
7. **Think of "Rush Week" as merely icing on the cake.** Chapters that are successful build relationships with students and recruit year-round. Chapters that fail rely on local IFCs to "deliver men to their house" once or twice a year. Going into any "rush week", we should already know the men we intend to offer membership to. Then, if we happen to run across a handful of other strong potential members, great. If not, our recruitment success for that term has already been secured.
8. **Leave your house.** Again, stop waiting for prospective members to come to you – they won't. When it comes to Fraternity, studies have shown that 60%-80% of the male student population on any campus consider themselves "maybe" or "never joiners". That means if we're expecting to get all our men from formalized recruitment periods [the "always joiners"], we're completely ignoring a majority of our potential market. Doubtful a successful business would stay in business long if they approached their customer base in the same fashion.
9. **Ask your candidates to help you recruit.** For every new man you bring on board, give them an immediate sense of ownership in their future candidate class by handing them two unsigned bid cards in envelopes. Ask them to find two other individuals on campus who are of Sigma Nu quality and, within reason [and adhering to voting rules for membership in *The Law of Sigma Nu*], defer to their judgment. Once the active chapter has voted to give those students a bid, let the candidate present the bid card to *his* recruit. Trust us, if they are strong candidates themselves, they won't bring weaker individuals to your table.
10. **Always speak with the utmost respect** for other fraternities and sororities on campus. Chapters who share less-than-favorable opinions of other groups with prospective members will get a less-than favorable result

when it comes time to close the deal. If they inquire, encourage prospective members to visit other houses and form their own opinions about individual groups on campus.

11. **First day of class?** Stop looking for someone you know – sit down next to a guy you don't know and start a conversation. Recognize you'll be able to continue to get to know him at least twice, if not three times, a week just by going to class. Plus, you will have a legitimate reason to call him outside of class without it feeling awkward – you'll be writing the same papers, studying for the same exams, and working on the same projects. A recruiter's gold mine...
12. **Learn to remember names.** Chapter members who recognize and say "Hey [name]", not just "What's up" to a prospect when they see him on campus are impressive. It shows they care enough about someone to have taken the time to remember their name. Prospective members will think so, too.
13. **Hold a recruitment workshop** for your chapter at least once a year, if not twice, and be sure all new members are in attendance. Don't assume everyone already "gets it" and knows how to recruit. During the workshop, cover the basics of effective recruitment conversations and review the chapter's recruitment goals. Role play – have the younger members recruit the upperclassmen. As with all things in life, we will only get better with practice.
14. **Practice formalized recruitment week** with a "dry run". If you have systems to move prospective members around the house, ensure they meet certain officers, have their pictures taken, or get to spend time answering questions with specific people, practice those things with existing members. Nothing is more confusing [and frustrating] than when best-laid plans fail to operate. Formalized recruitment week is not the time to discover a plan's weaknesses or revise things on-the-fly.
15. **Ask sorority women for student referrals.** Stop by their houses during dinner hour and give them a White Rose or bouquet of their respective flower. Let them know you appreciate all they do on campus to help Sigma Nu and that, likely, they know/are dating other men who would make great Sigma Nus. Ask for those guys' names and, if known, a contact number. Follow up these warm leads by letting the prospective member know so-and-so from such-and-such house spoke very highly of them. Ask if you can set up a time to share why you think Sigma Nu would be a great fit for them.
16. **Ask alumni members for student referrals.** Rather than just asking them for money, ask them if they know of any students coming to/attending your college/university who might be interested in fraternity. A chapter's alumni newsletter is a great vehicle to make this happen on an annual basis.
17. **Ask professors / faculty members / coaches for student referrals.** Think about it – they work with and advise students all day long! Who better to ask for the names of academically-focused and hardworking students? Again, when following up with these prospective members, let them know who spoke highly of them – it will get your foot "in the door" much more quickly.
18. **Get involved with campus move-in day.** Wear your letters and make some friends. Even if your school won't let you wear letters on move-in day, go carry some boxes and talk to male students. Don't forget to engage their PARENTS in conversation as well. If we can sell them on the idea of fraternity, they can help sell their son on the idea, too.
19. **Get involved with new student orientation on campus.** Every campus has an orientation team and those student leaders get first crack at making friends with incoming students. Even if you have to "disaffiliate" and not wear your letters that week, you can speak positively about the Greek community. You can also identify strong students for your chapter to follow-up with in the future.
20. **Call a prospective member and take him to lunch/dinner.** Everyone has to eat and a hot burger and fries sure beats any flavor of ramen noodle out there. Plus, you get the chance to spend an hour or so in one-on-one conversation with a prospect getting to know his interests and potential barriers to commitment. In the end, that investment of a six dollar value meal has the chance of paying for itself dozens of times over.
21. **Ask somebody to join.** Amazing, but true...No one ever joined our organization before they were asked. Recruitment is not time for believing prospective members have to "show us they want it" before we offer them a bid. If we believe a prospect would make a great member, we should let him know sooner than later.
22. **Host a Sigma Nu INTERACTIVE** recruitment event in the residence halls on campus. Or, hold one at your house. Regardless, this is an extremely inexpensive way to introduce the idea of fraternity to many prospective members at once [but still in a conversationally-based environment]. It also does a lot to break

down the traditional stereotypes commonly associated with membership. Contact the General Fraternity for more information on how to plan an event like this.

23. **Do your laundry in the undergraduate residence halls.** That's right, disconnect the house washer and dryer and require all your members to do their laundry where the students live. Think about it...When you're doing laundry, all you can do is start a conversation, play a game of pool, or watch a ball game in the residence hall lounge with other students. They're a captive audience...take advantage of that fact!
24. **Identify the "connectors" in your chapter.** Too many of our chapters do not take advantage of the resources they already have among their ranks. Which members are involved in other student clubs and organizations, hold leadership positions on campus, or have access to the residence halls? Who do they know and/or which students look up to them who are not already affiliated with a fraternity? The students they name are already warmer leads than just picking up the phone and calling someone.
25. **Be yourself, but look the part.** Sloppy dress results in sloppy recruitment. While a shirt and tie may not be necessary, at least look like you care about your appearance and took some time to get dressed this morning. Although you should always look presentable as a chapter, this is especially true during formalized recruitment periods on campus. Prospective members will take note.
26. **Clean your house.** Similarly, just because you think it's "fratty" to live in squalor doesn't mean anyone else on campus will. Straighten the composites, sweep and mop the floors, and take out the trash – *at a minimum*. Then, consider what other inexpensive and big "bang-for-your-buck" home improvements can be made in less than a day's time [touch-up paint, carpet cleaning, etc.] No one joins a fraternity for their house, but a positive first impression can go a long way when it's time to close the deal.
27. **Make a presentation about Sigma Nu to another student club/organization on campus.** Share some basic information about our group and let them know we are doing a membership drive. Take the names of interested students and follow up with them individually. Since most campuses have several hundred student groups, the options here are truly limitless, but we definitely recommend hitting the following organizations: National Residence Hall Honorary, Student Government, Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity, Student Ambassadors, Orientation Leaders, College Democrats/Republicans, etc.
28. **Do a community service project and invite prospective members to join you in your efforts.** Put your money where your mouth is. Rather than just talking about the community service we perform each year, actually invite prospective members to join our efforts. Recent studies have shown as many as 90% of students come to college wanting to do more community service, so let's engage those desires. Plus, we get several hours of time to build a relationship with them and see their work ethic first-hand.
29. **Identify your "perfect prospect" and write those character traits down.** Create a "shopping list" and determine where people with those traits would be on campus. Do you need stronger upper-classman leadership? Better athletes to win the IM leagues? Younger students with prior leadership experience? If so, go recruit them just like an athletic coach would – don't assume they'll come to us. Better yet, write down the names of the best unaffiliated students on campus and then go recruit them.
30. **Ask existing chapter members "What made you join?"** Likely, you'll find one answer repeating itself throughout this exercise – the people. Not the parties, not the alcohol, and not the women. So, what did those people do to stand out in the minds of your newest members? Learn from your best recruiters and repeat their actions.
31. **Remember "People join people, and a good fraternity too."** Recruitment is about building genuine relationships with others, not selling "fraternity" within the first five minutes of meeting someone. And, no matter where your personality falls [introverted or extroverted], anyone can offer their friendship to someone else. To put it simply: Everyone has the ability to recruit someone else.
32. **Determine what you are selling during recruitment.** Trust us...friendship first, Sigma Nu second. However, if we aren't all on the same page when it comes time to sell Sigma Nu, our disconnected messages will not sit well with prospective members. Do all our members know what we value as an organization? Can they explain the dues structure and how our money is spent? Do they accurately know what the Fraternity's GPA is? If not, find a way to ensure they do.
33. **Identify your weaknesses as a chapter.** No one wants to join a losing team. Just as we sell our strengths, we need to be able to proactively address those areas we aren't as strong in. If our grades are below the All-Men's or All-Fraternity average, how do we plan to rise above those marks? If we are struggling with

manpower and each member currently holds two or three offices, how do we plan to avoid burnout? Once these things are determined, they can be sold as effectively as our strengths and will instill confidence for the future.

34. **Have business cards printed** for your Recruitment Chairman [better yet, all your members] with their contact information listed. A simple and professional way to get your name out there. Templates can be found in the Marketing Materials section of www.sigmanu.org/vbr.
35. **Offer a “books scholarship” to incoming freshman students.** Be it as little as \$50.00 or as much as \$250.00 or more. Require a short application that includes an essay on academic integrity and the Honor principle to qualify. Interview all applicants and reward the best. Regardless, build relationships with the strongest applicants. If even one applicant joins Sigma Nu down the road, the scholarship has paid for itself.
36. **Recruit a “Parents Team”** to help you close the deal with other students whose parents do not want them to join. No matter how savvy you believe you are, parents will always listen to and trust other parents more than they do an 18-22 year old. The best parents to recruit are those who were originally opposed to their son joining a fraternity but have now seen how Sigma Nu has positively influenced his life.
37. **Make plans to attend a Sigma Nu Institute this spring.** They're FREE, held all across the country and cover several areas of chapter operations. Recruitment is a big part of this program and can help all chapters by working together. Registration is available online at www.sigmanu.org/events/sigmanu_institute.
38. **Offer incentives to your chapter's best recruiters.** What are you doing to recognize the people making a manpower difference in your chapter? Whether it's applauding their name at a chapter meeting, giving a best recruiter plaque at the end of the year, or even offering financial compensation for outstanding results [What's it worth to the chapter if an individual member generates an additional \$2500 in dues revenue a year?], we should be publicly praising hard work and effort when it comes to recruitment.
39. **Call the General Fraternity and ask for recruitment help.** [540] 463-1869. Amazingly enough, whether you ask your Leadership Consultant or the Director of Recruitment, they will offer advice, ideas, and review the additional resources that are available either free-of-charge or at little cost to your chapter.
40. **As a chapter, eat lunch – together – on campus once a week.** Everyone has to eat, so why not make a chapter event out of it? Head to the residence hall cafeteria or food court, wear your letters and have fun. Don't necessarily go with the intention of recruiting anyone, just the intention of being visible and catching up with each other. Then, start conversations with and involve the other students sitting around you. Before you know it, you'll be friends with dozens of unaffiliated students who could become your next class of new members.
41. **Be confident.** Successful recruiters are confident in their abilities and assume the prospective member will say “yes”. If we don't believe in ourselves, it will come across in our conversations with prospects and negatively influence their decisions. Never assume you “can't close the deal” or that's all you will be able to do in the bid room – we promise.
42. **Use multiple styles of recruitment:** Large group, small group, and one-on-one conversation. Not everyone stands out in a crowd, so we must recognize prospective members will respond to different situations and recruitment environments based on their own individual personalities.
43. **Identify a prospect's “Barriers to Commitment”** and, as a chapter, develop strategies to overcome them. Everyone has them – grades, finances, parental approval, fear of hazing, etc. Regardless, if we fail to identify what is most important to a prospective member's decision-making process, we'll never be able to close the deal in the end. Just as a salesman must identify his customer's potential objections to buying a new product, we must do the same for all our prospects.
44. **Provide transportation to and from ALL your recruitment events.** Don't expect a prospect to just “show up”. Have the brother with the strongest relationship with a prospective member offer him a ride and use that time together to catch up since the last time they spoke. Then, once at the event, have that brother introduce him to members he hasn't met.
45. **Establish a recruitment budget and stick to it.** Although “Rush” is expensive and “Recruitment” is not, a successful chapter ensures the availability of funding to assist their efforts. Recruitment should never be a variable expense – it's the lifeblood of your chapter. And for every dollar you intend to spend, ask the chapter “What do we expect to get in return?” If they can't easily identify what the expected return on investment [ROI] is, don't let them keep it in the budget.

46. **Track and share information you learn about prospects** with other chapter members. Use a spreadsheet program like Excel or database program like Access. Recruitment is a group effort and your group will be only as good as its information. It does us no good for only one member to know how to get in touch with a prospect, or that he was already invited to this weekend's recruitment event but can't attend because of a prior commitment. Provide weekly electronic updates of this information to your members via e-mail and verbally discuss any important changes to the file at chapter meetings.
47. **Recognize recruitment takes time.** If we expect to earn enough of someone's trust to ask them for a lifetime commitment, we have to be willing to invest time with them on the front end. This is precisely why "rush week" often produces less-than-desirable results for so many of our chapters. Chapters that recruit year-round, however, gain a competitive advantage over the other fraternities on their campus.
48. **Make the presentation of a bid individualized.** Sure, you may have 20 other prospects to "bid up" tonight, but no one wants to be considered part of a package deal. The invitation to join Sigma Nu requires unanimous consent of our membership and is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – make sure the way you present a bid card to a prospective member reflects those two things.
49. **Make the presentation of a bid personalized and meaningful.** Before presenting a bid, take the time to laser print or neatly scribe the full name of your prospective member on the envelope. Consider having every member of your chapter sign the card and also include a short handwritten note from the prospect's primary recruiter [or member with whom he has the strongest connection]. While you're at it, why not seal the envelope with a wax seal of the chapter? Each of these things silently re-enforces the idea that the chapter intended to offer the prospective member a bid and planned for this special occasion.
50. **As Recruitment Chairman, give a report to the chapter every week.** Anything is better than "no report" after formalized "rush week" and it will keep your members focused on the idea of year-round recruitment. Better yet, take just one of these items a week and review / discuss its implications for five minutes with the active chapter. You now have an entire year's worth of reports ready to go.

Visit www.sigmanu.org or call your Leadership Consultant for additional information on how to implement many of these ideas. Have a great idea we missed? Submit it to headquarters@sigmanu.org.