

49 WAYS TO GROW YOUR NAMES LIST (For College Student Orgs)

“You can’t recruit who you don’t know.” While that’s the most obvious truth in the world, the number one reason most college student organizations struggle to effectively recruit is that they don’t build a strategy that honors this truth.

As soon as you meet someone, shake their hand, and write down their name and contact info (and other info about them) on your names list, *only then do you have a chance to recruit them to your cause.*

This document is full of 49 (!) specific, detailed, and sometimes scripted ways to meet as many non-members as possible. Work with the “workhorses” in your organization to execute a handful of these tactics throughout the year with excellence, and you’ll have mastered the most important part of organizational growth – meeting new people!

*Note: You won’t love all of these. That’s totally o.k. Maybe they’re not *all* for you. But if you do a thoughtfully chosen handful of these ideas with excellence, your organization will absolutely have more names on your names list!

Recruitment Scholarship

One of the best ways that an organization can spend their often limited financial resources is by investing in a recruitment scholarship. A scholarship for POTENTIAL MEMBERS that allows organizations to set clear standards, formally evaluate leads, and generate lots of candidates.

A great time to implement a scholarship like this is at the beginning of each academic term and especially during the summer months. Note, your scholarship applications will be limited to the amount of promotion you and your members do for it. Some great way to get individuals to apply are by promoting it on your social media, tabling, having members nominate people to apply, and physically handing out hundreds of paper scholarship applications. When promoting your scholarship, get started early and be sure to partner with your admissions office for better success. They may be able to help in promoting it, and even provide access to names of those already on scholarship or first year students who have already been awarded one should they end up attending your university. Ask about the opportunity to send information to prospective candidates through university media or if you can get access to a list of students yourself to reach out directly and set up interviews.

Scholarships don't have to be for a lot of money, setting aside \$250-\$1000, or even a smaller scholarship to be used specifically for books and living expenses. Either way, it is a great opportunity to give back, connect to new people, start a conversation and most importantly, show that your organization holds academic success as a high priority.

“5 for 5” Challenge

Many members consistently pass up the opportunity to interact with non-members on campus. The 5 for 5 Challenge asks 5 members to meet 5 non-members on campus for 5 consecutive weekdays (done right, that’s 125 new names in 5 days!) Often a simple challenge with clear measurables is more effective than some gimmick or expensive event.

Door Holding Campaign

This is one of the more creative ideas that we've seen.

Think of the most trafficked buildings on campus – the library, the dining hall, the student union. Now picture one of your members, sharply dressed, holding the door open for people and saying “have a nice day.”

A few paces inside the building stands another sharply dressed member. They might ask something like, “Did you notice that student that held the door open for you? We are trying to prove that decency is not dead, and this campus is full of wonderful human beings. (Hands an index card and pen) Who are the kindest people that you know on this campus? We would like to interview them for a scholarship/award etc.”

The Door Holding Campaign can be a great PR tool for your organization in addition to
ADDING A BUNCH OF NAMES TO YOUR LIST.

Mind Joggers

Of your entire membership, who is the most connected to undergraduate non-members?
YOUR NEWEST MEMBERS!

The Mind Joggers activity does more than just give them a pen and a piece of paper and ask the simple question, “Who are some students that you know?” Instead, while your new members are thinking of “who are the non-members that they know,” you provide specific examples to help jog their mind. “Who are the students that live in your residence hall? Who is the person that you always see at the gym? Who is the most reliable person you know? Who are the three funniest people that you know? Who came to school from your high school? etc.” Give your members 2 minutes to write down names without the Mind Joggers. Then put an additional two minutes on the clock, give them the specific examples, and watch how the names pile onto their list. In 4 minutes, you could add 100+ names.

Your Names List is a critical first step in developing a successful recruitment system. The larger your Names List gets, the more successful you will become (Remember, “Quantity Drives Quality!” and “You can’t recruit who you don’t know!”) You’ll have a greater opportunity to recruit more quality individuals when you increase the size of your Names List. Put every non-member / prospective student on your organization’s Names List!

Directions:

1. Write down every unaffiliated person that members of your organization know (and that falls in your organization’s membership category) on the Names List. You can use this list of mind joggers to help ensure you have exhausted your network of connections.
2. DO NOT PREJUDGE ANYONE. Now is **not** the time to decide if someone is qualified for membership.

Ready, set, GO! (see next page)

Write all the prospects you know who...

- Are scholars, really smart, tutors
- Are leaders on campus
- Are service minded, in service orgs
- Want to succeed in life
- Value family and friends
- Make you laugh
- Were/are in you freshman hall
- Live on your floor in your building
- Are on your sports team (all of them)
- Are on your intramurals team
- Are in other clubs/organizations with you
- Exemplify pride in your school
- Current/past RA on campus

Now check the following resources for additional names:

- Contacts in your phone
- Social media connections
- Student directory/email lists
- List of all freshmen (from admissions/student affairs)

People you may not have considered:

- Adult students
- Your freshman year RA
- Graduate students
- ROTC cadets
- International students
- Work with you at your job(s)

- Spend their time in the computer lab
- Spend time in the library
- Are spiritually driven/attend your place of worship/attend any place of worship
- Sit near you in class (think of every class)
- Were in last semester/term's classes
- Are already an officer in another group on campus
- You've seen them in they gym, weight room or fitness class
- They traveled abroad
- Considered your group at some point

- Rosters for other clubs and organizations
- Class lists
- Last year's yearbook
- Housing lists
- Rosters for sports teams
- Invitation lists from club events

- That person who never leaves her room
- University professionals/staff
- Your closest friend's friend
- Seniors and Juniors you know
- Friends of your significant other
- Your friends' friends



Rule of 3-to-7

All of your members go to class, right? Maximize this daily commitment and ace both your class and recruitment. Show up 3-to-7 minutes early. Sit in the first 3-to-7 rows (where research says the best students sit). Develop 3-to-7 relationships in each class. (# of classes for a full-time student = 4.

4 x 3-to-7 = 12-to-28 new friends per member). Put those names on the list!



Partnering with Select Organizations

On every college campus, there are hundreds of student organizations like yours. Smart organizations are creating partnerships with groups that have similar values. This partnership is mutually beneficial. Partner with service groups, academic societies, cultural associations, fraternities and sororities, or cause-based organizations — match your values with their work for a perfect fit (and lots of qualified leads).

Info Tabling with a Hook

Each year, every campus hosts some variations of an “activities fair.” Student organizations set-up tables all in a row, pass out fliers, and have surface level conversations. Or, there is an opportunity for student orgs to set up tables in high traffic areas of campus. The goal of “tabling” should not be to pass out your information. It is to get *their* information. Create an experience that will encourage the person passing by to stop, engage with you and write down his/her name and the name of a few friends. Our favorite ideas? Check out the next several pages!

Rock Paper Scissors Tabling

You want people who are walking by to be surprised, delighted, and willing to engage with you. They won't do that if you just put up a bunch of organization paraphernalia and look cool. You have to do something fun! We've seen success when people simply put a poster board up on the table that says, "Rock Paper Scissors Challenge" at the top. Then the instructions read something like, "If you win, you get a high five and a piece of candy. If we win, we get 30 seconds of your time!" Then just step in front of passersby and challenge them to RPS! What's fun is that even if they win, they'll often ask, "Who are you all and what are you doing this for." And remember, if you win, be sure to engage them in a meaningful conversation not some cheap pitch about recruitment. Connect with them, gather their contact information, and set up a time to connect again soon.

Predict The Score Tabling

Super Bowl coming up? Big homecoming game next week? March Madness happening soon? What about the women's Rugby team? Don't forget about the big rivalry game of the local NFL team!

Pick a game. Set up a system for passersby to guess the winner/score (or fill out that super important March Madness bracket!) Then offer a small prize for the winner. Make sure to collect people's names, email, and phone numbers so you can notify the winners!

Tabling With a Raffle or Drawing

Super simple idea. Give away the hot new tech toy, raffle off tickets to the big event happening on campus or nearby. Do a drawing for a lunch with the university president. Get something autographed by someone famous, and raffle it off. Create a charity silent auction with lots of fun prizes that folks can “bid” on with tickets they buy at a set price. Whatever you do, make sure you have people write their name, contact information, and something fun about themselves on the entry form/ticket!

Fun Question Tabling

We've seen organizations table on campus with a big board where passersby can write down their favorite song lyric/movie quote and put their name next to it.

We've seen tabling done with a piece of posterboard with a line drawn down the middle -- on one side the heading says, "Give Up Music," on the other side the heading says, "Give Up Sports." Chapter members then ask passersby to put their name in the column they choose as the answer to, "Would you rather be forced to give up music for life or give up sports (watching and playing) for life?" Then ask why?

We've seen tabling done where people make a deck of 15 cards with powerful questions on each of them. Ask folks walking by to "pick a card." Then engage in a conversation about the question. Finish up with an offer to put their name on a list of people willing to engage in thoughtful dialogue at some upcoming coffee shop sessions.



Sock Drive

The Sock Drive combines service and recruitment. After your organization partners with the local homeless shelter, you go door-to-door in the residence halls. Your pitch, “Our organization is collecting socks (substitute toiletries or canned goods) to donate to the local homeless shelter. Would you be willing to help those in need with an old pair of socks?” If the person donates, ask if they would like to help even more, by inviting them to a service event your organization is hosting at the homeless shelter. Be sure to exchange contact information in order to GROW YOUR NAMES LIST.

Move in/Move out Day

The concept of student leaders helping first-year students move into their residence halls is not new. However, there are more effective ways to do it than swarming the student and his/her family, handing an organizational business card and carrying a few boxes. The best practice is to send teams of two over to the residence halls, begin your interaction with “Hi, what can I help you with?” and be sure to exchange contact information rather than just handing over a business card/flyer. Also, while move-in days are commonplace, move-out days are an untapped market. You could be the only organization on your campus that helps first-year students move-out, building a relationship for the summer and the upcoming school year.



Ask The Rest To Find The Best

Every person you interact with on campus is connected to literally hundreds of other people. If you want to find the best people on campus to be your members, start with asking everyone you see: **“I’m trying to meet the best of the best men/women/students on campus, who should I know?”**

Ask this question to:

- Professors
- Residence Assistants
- Tutors
- Student life staff members
- Student organization leaders
- Student Government Leaders
- Service Organization Leaders
- Honor College Students
- Desk workers
- Groups of students in the dining hall
- The person sitting next to you in class
- Orientation leaders
- Administrators
- The barista making your coffee
- Students in your study groups
- Students together in the student union
- The person swiping student ID’s at the gym
- Student tour guides

Professor and Class Referrals

In a 1-on-1 conversation, ask professors or administrators for recommendations of students they consider to be leaders, scholars, and well-respected students. You'll be surprised at the number of amazing people you'll get information for that may have never considered joining an organization like yours!

The magic is in how you present your request. Here is a sample script:

“Dr. Jones, I am working with a group of student leaders to take a really impactful organization our campus to the next level. We think we can make a bigger impact by improving the level of students we target for membership. We want a higher quality student. We’re missing out on some of the best leaders on campus and good students are missing out on the resources that our organizations offer. Would you share with us the names of several of your top students, especially those who show signs of leadership? Also, may we make a 60 second announcement at the beginning of tomorrow’s seminar to share this opportunity with others in our class?”

Alumni/Alumnae Referrals

An annual or semi-annual appeal to your organization's alumni for recommendations of incoming first-year students is often highly effective for established organizations. However, it may take several years to cultivate the alum list and/or train them to trust their referrals to the organization.

Once you've got a strong base of alums, recommendations typically pay off in the end. Be sure to invite them to other events within your organization as well; don't only contact them for recruitment needs! Many inter/national organizations have alumni groups in large metropolitan areas, so if you're near one you should contact them for referrals as well. The same thing should be done to family and friends of members of the organization as well as family of recent graduates.

And don't forget to put an easy to fill out form for alumni or parents to fill out right and suggest referrals on the homepage of your website!

Remember to plan for proper follow up. People love receiving updates to let them know the status of their referral in the recruitment process. We love to feel that we made a difference. Let them know you are using their referrals and they will continue to provide you with names. A simple thank you note or appreciation letter will go a long way.

Example:

Dear _____,

Thank you so much for your recommendation to our organization. We are so lucky to have dedicated alumnae/i such as you in our organization. Your opinion and insight for our organization is extremely beneficial and we hope you continue to support our group. We will let you know our recruitment success soon!

Thanks again

On-Line Referrals

If someone is interested in your organization, it should be RIDICULOUSLY SIMPLE for them to a) learn more and b) indicate their interest by signing up somewhere.

However, most campus student life websites, most student organization websites, and most student org social media feeds make it virtually impossible to effectively do either of these things.

On your website and in your social media profiles, is it simple for someone who might be interested in learning about your organization to a) learn exactly what steps they should take next, and b) actually give you their name, contact information, and a little info about themselves?

Resource Center

A great way to serve the community and gather names of potential new members is to run a resource center on campus. Consider working with your Dean of Students or Student Life Office to create a resource center that meets the needs of students on campus (especially students your organization is directly targeting for membership). Maybe you could set up shop (table, booth, or office) with educational materials and networking resources for one of the following needs of students:

- Men's/Women's Health Needs
- Campus Involvement Clearinghouse
- Environmental Conservation Information and Opportunities
- Campus Social Scene (What's Going On When?)
- Textbook Exchange
- Study Group Sign Up
- Marginalized Population Support
- Transfer Students
- International Students
- Etc.



100% Student Organization Involvement Policy

A requirement of membership should include leadership in at least one other student organization outside of your club. Not only does this help to instill a valuable trait in your members, but it also helps you to meet other students who aren't yet involved in your particular organization! In order to continue developing the leadership skills in the members of your organization, 100% of your membership should be involved in at least one other student group.

In addition to being known as the organization that campus leaders join, you will have access to dozens of organizations' meetings and rosters. Use this information to build your names list.

Bonus Tip:

To help keep this focused and "results producing," identify up to 20 student groups that typically attract the highest caliber students on campus. You might consider making membership in at least 1 of these groups mandatory for your members and new members.



On-Campus Employment

“Member positioning” is a smart recruitment tactic, and it is really about putting your members in positions of *access to* and *influence over* prospective members. There are jobs on campus where you can do these things while also getting paid for it!

Consider encouraging your members to look into these employment opportunities:

- Scanning ID Cards at the Gym
- Scanning ID Cards at the Cafeteria
- Student Newspaper Reporter
- Freshman Seminar Teaching Assistant
- Freshman Dorm Front Desk Worker
- Resident Assistant
- Orientation Leader

A great standard to have is that a minimum of 20% of the organization members should intentionally be involved as a leader with orientation, residence life, alumni, or admissions. Not only does this add names to your names list, but it also puts extra cash into your member’s wallets!

Shadowing

Many colleges offer opportunities for pre-freshmen to spend a day or two on campus “shadowing” a current student. This gives the potential student a better idea of what a day in the life of a student at your school is actually like. You let them see where you live, meet your friends, go the class with you, eat together on campus, etc.

Spring is the most popular time of the year for these visits. Get as many of your members as possible involved in these “shadowing” opportunities. Of course, this is not a time to hassle prospects or push your organization onto them – use this opportunity to explain the benefits of being involved in organizations like yours and answer any questions they may have.

Members of your organization are already role models for other students on campus, so encourage your members to step up and be a friendly face and future role model to your future classmates.

“Chunking”

During small activities and 1-on-1 meetings (coffee is awesome for this with potential new members), it's ideal to close by asking them to share names and numbers of the people in their social network that they consider top notch. We always want to be growing our social network and building our names list.

Ideally, you want to get 3-5+ additional names of more potential members at a meeting or up to 10+ from someone that's showing a high level of interest. Every new relationship is a gatekeeper to dozens of potential new members!

It can be a little awkward to ask someone having coffee with you to write down 10 names and numbers of their friends. So, we use a technique called “chunking” along with a series of intentional questions to make sure they feel great about recommending their friends. Chunking is the process of getting to a lot of referrals by asking several times in the same sitting for smaller ‘chunks’ of leads.

Start by asking the potential if they'd be comfortable sharing the names of two or three other individuals who they consider the “best of the best.” After they share these names, continue asking them to think of two more people who are similar to the students they just named. Finally before you end the conversation, see if they can name 3-5 more high caliber qualified students.

Ask permission from the potential to get their contact information and set up new small activities. Repeat the process with each new prospective member you meet and continue chunking and adding new leads to your names list!

Scouting

Top corporations and sports teams do not wait for their best players to call them. They actively scout talent in their sector and approach talented individuals to help lead their team. Championship teams are never built from a signup sheet. The same is true of great student organizations. Do you have a scouting report that lists the top leaders, scholars, and volunteers on your campus?

Encourage your leaders to create a “scouting report” of these top unaffiliated students and do your best to maintain communication that allows them to get to know members of your organization by building new friendships.

Hunting For Names (a game!)

This game is a hunt for one thing and one thing only.... NAMES! Grow your names list with a multi-day or recruitment workshop challenge for your members. Attach a prize to the end, and just like that you've got a fun way to grow your names list and teach your members how to have a casual, fun conversation at the same time!

Gather names and contact information of non-members on or around campus by fulfilling as many of these challenges as possible. Use the challenges to start deeper, friendly conversations, then record whom you had these conversations with...

Talk to 1 person about how heavy their bag looks

Talk to 2 people about the smell in here

Talk to 3 people about the weather this week

Ask 1 person where they got their shoes

Ask 2 people how long they've been waiting here

Ask 3 people why the Turkey isn't the national bird

High Five 1 person because of your good grade

High Five 2 people because you both love a certain show

High Five 3 people because of their hard work

The content of your hunt doesn't really matter (I mean, don't be dumb though) — as long as you're using it as an opportunity/excuse to go out and interact with new people. These ridiculous challenges offer an opportunity to start a conversation with someone you just met — which then gives you a chance to add their name to your names list — which then gives you a chance to recruit them.

Obviously don't force anyone to do this, or even come close to doing that. This is meant to be a fun way for the whole organization to make meeting new people a bit more exciting!

Service and Philanthropy Projects

Most organizations are doing service projects throughout the year, but yours can be the organization to do one right as students get back to campus! Set up a marketing effort announcing the event as an open opportunity for community service. Involving non-members will help improve your image and serve as a strong recruitment tool for service-minded potential members. Ask people to sign up to help while you're helping them move in, or at a table strategically placed on campus, or just by wandering around and engaging with first year students (add those names to the list!)

It's not critical to have a blow out service project, but cleaning the highway isn't typically an appealing proposition. If you're having trouble being creative or organizing the event, you may want to consider partnering with another student group or service organization that needs more people to power their event.

Examples of things you can do include:

- Campus clean up
- Clothing drive for a local shelter
- Food drive for a local food bank
- Reading to children at a nearby school
- Volunteering at a local animal shelter
- Cleaning up a local park
- Helping at a run/walk
- Volunteering at a school fundraising opportunity
- Helping at a university athletic event

The Listening Table

Set up a table on campus. Instead of filling it with organizational paraphernalia, bring a simple sign that says: “I’m here to listen”. The sign could also say something like “What is wrong with student life on campus?” or “What changes would you like to see happen to make our campus a better place?” or “Comment Box”.

As curious people approach your table, let them know that you’re there to listen. Engage in deep, meaningful, authentic conversation with your peers and listen to what they have to say. Don’t provide your own opinions. Learn from others. Ask more questions.

Imagine what would happen if setting up a booth or doing marketing work wasn’t meant to SHOUT ABOUT HOW AWESOME YOUR ORGANIZATION IS... Imagine if it was all about just offering to listen.

Listen to others’ opinions of you and your group. Listen to others’ ideas for your organization. Listen to others’ ideas about your campus and community. Listen to learn. Listen to engage. Listen to connect with others. Listen because it will make the other person’s day. Be genuine.

This process will help you get to know people better on campus and can also create an opportunity for you to follow up with the individual at a later date. Trust us, there probably won’t be too many other tables like this one on campus.



Parent Solicitations

Honors & Recognitions:

Mom and dad love to brag about their child and nominate them for special awards. Your organization can host a special recognition for top student leaders.

A solicitation to freshman and sophomore parents can be created that requires an on-line nomination by a friend or family member. In addition to sharing some positive information about the organization, you're capturing personal contact information and pre-qualifying data about their child like their GPA and leadership experience.

Fundraiser:

You could also consider partnering with a local sandwich shop or bakery to offer care packages during midterms and finals. Mail a letter to parents a few weeks before the exam period with a special form that allows mom and dad to send both a care package and a note of encouragement. Your organization can then deliver the packages while making new friends and a few extra bucks at the same time!

Referrals From High School Teachers & Counselors

You've probably got some great relationships with past teachers, guidance counselors, or administrators from your high school. They already know who is coming to your school this/next year, and if you ask the right way they might let you in on that important information. Then you can call those new students from your high school to welcome them to campus and show them around. Consider asking your past high school connections something like this:

"Mr. Johnson, I really appreciated all the guidance and support you gave me as I was making the transition from high school to college. I don't know if you have heard, but things are going great and I've really found a way to stay focused on academics but also really enhance my leadership responsibilities – through my organization. Are there any students from our school coming to my university next year? I'd love to show them around campus and just welcome them. In fact, one thing our organization does is help parents and new students during move-in. I'd love to call any students you know of from our school and offer that help beforehand. I'll even buy them lunch!"

Bonus Tip: Ask your university's admissions office for a list of the "top 10 feeder high schools" that send students to your university.



Presentations to Student Organizations

Reach out to the leaders of other clubs and organizations focused on specific interests. Many of these will give you access to students that never considered your group.

Ask to visit a group meeting to make a presentation regarding campus involvement and leadership. Specifically ask for each attendee to write down on a note card (or text you) 5 people they know who might be interested in an organization like yours.

BONUS: Meet with the group's leaders for coffee before the presentation. You'll get a warmer reception and get better results.



Handshaking Through the Dorms

After you've recruited some first-year students, go over to their residence hall for a visit, and say...

"Jordan (that's the new member), I'd like to meet the best of the best students on this campus so that I can make sure they all have the opportunity to at least consider our organization. More importantly, I'd like to learn from their perspective about how the best of the best students on this campus would lead an organization like ours if they had the chance. I don't know nearly enough people in this dorm. Could you introduce me to the top 5-10 folks you've met so far in this building? I'm looking for the 5-10 people with the most potential for leadership, excellence, and influence. Let's go..."

* Jordan introduces you to one of them *

"I'm Casey, what's your name? Nice to meet you. Jordan says that you're someone I should know, isn't that right, Jordan?"

What are you doing right now? Do you have 5 minutes to chat? Can I come in / Want to sit down?

I asked Jordan to introduce me to people in this dorm that seemed like they might have some potential for doing great things while they're a student here. He already introduced me to Taylor and Jaime down the hall. Do you know them? What do you think of them?

Cool. Listen, I'm looking to learn from the best of the best students on this campus. I really believe in the power of student leadership, and I'm a part of a number of organizations. I want to know what students like you want out of their college experience. I want to know what this school needs to offer to make your time here incredible. Would you be open to me buying you a cup of coffee this week so that we could chat for 20 minutes or so?

What morning works best for you, Monday or Tuesday? Perfect, can I get your number in case something weird happens and I need to call you? Thanks, here's my number too.

Awesome. Who else should I be talking to that Jordan here hasn't thought of yet?

Perfect, are they around that you can introduce me to them? No? Do you think they can come to Coffee?

Hey, I don't want to steal all your time. I'll see you Monday in the union for coffee at 10 a.m.

Thanks!"

High School Visits

Does your college's school year end about a month before your old high school's school year? Probably. Is your spring break earlier than your old high schools? Probably.

That gives you some good time to go back to your high school and give classroom presentations about how great college life is, what it takes to survive, how your organization has made your life great, and how you are willing to serve as a resource to any incoming first year students at your university.

College admissions offices sometimes will reward current students for going back to talk about their university at their old high schools. This can be a great way to do a service for the university while building your names list through all the individuals you meet from your high school that will be attending your college next year.

Pick-Up Sports

Often, less planning is better when it comes to meeting new people. Maybe your organization plays pick-up games of football, basketball, volleyball, ultimate Frisbee, or something similar. Instead of just playing with members, simply head out and see how many prospects you can gather just before the game is about to start. It doesn't seem "recruitment-y" and is just a fun way to get to know people. Make a schedule of "spontaneous" pick-up sports games, and play the sports near the places where your prospective members live or hang out.

Niche Targeted Marketing

Many organizations have a niche market that they are able to focus on and offer a special benefit for membership. Perhaps you're an organization focused on engineering or agriculture. Maybe your organization celebrates a particular culture or heritage. Perhaps you're focused on music or business, or science, etc.

If your organization has a natural niche, be sure to leverage it to the fullest. Build relationships with similarly aligned organizations or clubs (don't forget about high school level related organizations). Hold events focused on your target "niche" audience (remember to *serve them first*, don't just show up to promote your organization).

If your organization does not have a niche, you may choose to create one. For example: Honors students, international students, students from out of state, students interested in a particular career path, students focused on social justice initiatives, students interested in certain political causes or affiliations, etc.

Be about something! The people who are about that thing too will come flocking to you!

Open Entertainment

Most people think that “open entertainment” has to mean a big party, big band, and/or big barbeque. They might also be thinking big expense and big time commitment. None of these have to be true.

Find a creative need that you can fill with the organizational power of your club to offer something of value to your campus. Some examples might include:

- Yard Games
- Spa-Like Treatments
- Sports Tournaments
- Drive-in movie: Renting/moving furniture into the lawn and projecting the latest movie onto the side of a building.
- Gaming tournament

The important part is not the activity itself, but rather the opportunity it affords the organization to capture new names for the list and build new friendships at the event. Don't forget to require an RSVP, register attendees, and/or use a sign in sheet.

Top 20 Lunches & Coffees With Influencers

Who are the 20 most influential people on your campus that you don't yet know well? Think of the people (students or professionals) in positions to influence opinion about your organization.

Write those names/positions down.

Now, one of the most important things you can do to improve the reputation of your organization is to reach out to them to invite them to coffee or lunch with you and one or two other organization members.

While you're there... ask for referrals! Aim for 5 from each influencer. That would get you 100 new names from the most influential people on your campus!

This tactic does two things. It grows your names list, obviously. But just as importantly, we know that *reputation is earned through relationships*. Building trusting relationships with these key influencers can help your organization and you become more connected, more successful, and more respected.

Snow Day Recruitment

When it's cold outside you have two obvious opportunities, bring people together for indoor activities. Or, exploit the weather. Either way, be the person that creates social opportunities that bring new friends together. It might be time to get creative.

Snow ball fights, ice skating (in parking lot?), snow fort competition, creative sled riding, cold pranks, bonfire, hot tub, winter campus Olympics, and warm beverages. Is human bowling possible? What is the world record for launching a snowball? Why do we stop caroling in December?

Take the snow day to change your campus, meet unaffiliated students, and grow your names list by participating in fun snow-themed activities with your new friends!

For those that are more relationship-minded, remember that your snow day is an unexpected gift for faculty and administrators, too. How many points would you score by taking an assortment of hot chocolates to your professor, advisor, another club or group on campus, or the university president and his/her spouse?

By cultivating these relationships, you could also gain access to new referrals and attract new names to your names list.

Crossword Puzzle Help

We once knew an organizational recruiter who was famous for sitting in student unions with a crossword puzzle. Every few minutes he asks someone walking past, "hey I've got a random question ... can you help me with 47 across?" This icebreaker gives him a reason to learn more about that person and gather referrals of top students he/she knows on campus.



High School Pipelines

Once your newest members are recruited for the semester, you'll probably plan to get referrals from them right away to meet their current college friends. Let's see if you're willing to take it a step further.

Have each new member build a list of at least 15 students they know who are still in high school, and are looking to attend your university next year. This can include high school seniors or community college students. Hold a calling/texting session. Reach out to each contact, and invite them to hang out one weekend. Invite them to homecoming or other campus-sponsored events. Be a great host. Your organization is an ambassador for your University.

Purposeful Summer Retreat

Many organizations have summer retreats to get together and enjoy some fellowship over the summer months. But imagine if you had a "leadership retreat" that was simply a way to prepare college students to serve as great leaders in the upcoming school year. Invite incoming students along with students you met during the Spring semester. Hold it at a campground or a member's cabin to keep costs down – or even on campus. Also consider a "service retreat," a "networking retreat," or a "spiritual retreat" depending on the priorities of your members.

Summer University Partnership Opportunities

The school hosts activities for incoming and prospective students throughout the summer. Create a partnership opportunity to tap into one that already exists.

- Orientation Leaders
- Campus Tour Guides
- Hosting Overnight Guests
- On Campus Activities
- Admissions Meetings

Though it may not be possible to promote your organization at many of these school sponsored events, it's certainly encouraged to build friendships and network with the incoming students who attend. Let your face be the first one those students associate with being a "friend" on campus. You may also have an opportunity to invite them to an organization-sponsored activity during your conversation (if appropriate).

Social Media Connections

There are about a million ways to utilize social media to drive names onto your list. And they change every few months, it seems. Here are some basic ideas to consider to use social media for more than just showing off cool pictures of your members' summer vacations.

Paid Ads

Purchasing advertisements on social media platforms is a smart and useful use of your money *if those ads direct people to connect with you and give you their contact information*. Use smart inbound marketing techniques that result in names on your list (hint: aim all interactions at a landing page that collects contact information)

Scouring For Connections

Nothing wrong with spending some time looking through individuals who have self-identified as incoming students next year. Learn about them, connect with them if appropriate, offer to be helpful in their lives. Don't be creepy, but do be smart enough to realize that they're begging for connection before they get to college.

Seek Referrals

Share the fact that you're seeking to connect with "the best of the best" students through your organization and personal social media feeds. Make clear who you're seeking and don't just post publicly, ask individuals and leaders of other student organizations privately through social media for those connections too.

Comment

See a current or incoming student posting some strong content? Let them know. Give them some social media love in genuine ways so that they know they're being noticed. Invite further conversation in your comments.

Targeted Campus Programs

Are you the "leadership" club? Are you the "service" group, the "diversity" organization, or the "academic" org? If you want to create your own brand like that, consider hosting campus-wide programs that are specific to your particular values.

What program can you put on for the campus (and maybe don't attach your name to it) that will attract the type of student you want?

Hold a leadership program with the dean of the business school. Hold a community service program with a group of volunteers from a nearby non-profit. Hold a women's empowerment program featuring local business leaders, life-changing moms, young entrepreneurs, and others. Host a spiritual group with local religious leaders. You get the idea.

Positive Absurdity

There are times during the year when it is hard to get people to talk with you. Mid-semester when people are focused on grades and have their heads down as they walk through campus is an example of when doing something absurd (but positive) to get noticed might make sense.

Utilize the bold members of your organization

- Don't buy pizzas and have a meeting in a meeting room. Buy pizzas and hand out free slices in exchange for a good conversation.
- Don't hang up fliers on bulletin boards. Ask people if you can tape fliers to their backpacks for a day (and shake their hands).
- Don't write about your organization with chalk on the sidewalk. Have a "chalk art" competition one day between classes and challenge people to color in the lines (don't forget the sign-up sheet).
- Don't say "I'll meet some people in my classes." Give high fives to everyone who walks into your class today. Do that with a high five buddy.
- Don't have an info meeting about your organization. Quietly arrange a secret meeting by personal invite only... with a secret password to get in.

Organize Study Groups

To many students, grades are of the utmost importance in their collegiate career. Many students learn and study best in groups of their peers who are taking the same course or exams. A week or two before an exam or a quiz, ask your professor to allow you 1 minute before the conclusion of class to make an announcement about your study group meetings.

When the group gets together, try including older members who may have experience with that class or professor.

Example:

“Hi everyone, my name is KC. Since our exam is coming up in a few days, I’m putting together a study group to go over notes and prepare as best we can. I have already talked with a few people about getting together (name them, point them out) so if you think this might be helpful, please let me know!”

BONUS: take a study break, and invite your new friends out for non-school fun!

Event Tickets

Several organizations successfully partner with their school's athletic teams, local sports teams (e.g. minor league baseball), community events (e.g. chili cook off or community days), concert venues, gaming centers, religious institutions, career fairs, etc.

Many times bulk tickets are given away to organizations willing to help promote the event. The organization is able to create a buzz about the event and rally students to attend. The RSVP's are added to the organization's names list. The organization gets valuable exposure and positive PR. The event itself becomes an opportunity to meet new people and highlight how your group supports the school and/or local community.

Bonus: Be the organization that organizes the carpool to "Away" college sports games!

Advocacy

Are you and your members passionate about making the world a better place in some way? Use that energy to build your names list.

Instead of “showing off your brand” or asking people, “are you interested in our group?” Approach people who want to change the world with you in the same way. Ask them to help. Ask them to protest, to write letters, to do fundraising, to sign petitions, to march with you.

Whatever your cause, lead with it. It’s more authentic to “recruit” people to help you change the world than it is to “recruit” members and hope that they’ll help.



Text For... Something

Imagine your organization displays posters, buys a billboard, rents space on the screens in the union, buys newspaper ads, chucks the sidewalk, etc. But this time you're not just trying to "get your name out there." You're trying to get contact information of non-members.

Example:

Which Professor Is Changing The Most Lives?

"Text Your Full Name, Any Orgs You Belong To, and Your Vote To: 555-555-5555"

Or make it a game. Or make it a quiz. Or make it a raffle. You get the idea.



Admissions, Orientation, and Housing

These three departments on campus have the most direct access to and influence over incoming students. For your organization to build relationships with the key players, constantly offer to genuinely help with their efforts, and thoughtfully ask for referrals might be the smartest long-term strategic move you could make. Do you know all the key employees in these departments? Do you have members who work or volunteer regularly in these departments?

Marketing Collateral That Drives Names

Many organizations will invest an outrageous amount of money into marketing trinkets. We've seen organization-branded water bottles, technology accessories, beer coozies, sunglasses, fanny packs, and flip-flops. These are fine if you're interested in spending a lot of money to give cheap gifts to people (first year students) who are already overloaded with cheap crap.

The question is: how can you turn this need to give away cheap crap into a technique for driving names onto your names list? *Take the example below, and put your own creative spin on it.*

A Midwest organization had a really cool idea. They apparently play a lot of Frisbee on that campus, and they thought maybe they'd create organization-themed Frisbee to give away. But they didn't stop there. These leaders talked about planning a FRISBEE FRENZY DAY on campus.

They'd take their give-away flying discs and spread out around campus. With synchronized watches, as the clock strikes noon, they'd all suddenly start playing Frisbee with strangers. Striking up some Frisbee tossing fun, the frenzy is only effective if each stranger they play Frisbee with gets a free Frisbee and most importantly GETS A CONVERSATION WITH AN ORGANIZATION MEMBER. They'd use these discs and the spectacle of Frisbees flying everywhere to strike up light-hearted conversations with strangers (potential members).