

Member Recruitment Guide #7: Four-Year Commuter Schools

Michigan District of Circle K



Invitational Recruitment



Invitational recruitment refers to inviting specific students to join Circle K, usually through a letter writing campaign or other efforts more involved than simple word of mouth. Students to invite can be identified in a number of ways, including recommendations from faculty, recommendations from current members, freshmen applications that indicate Key Club membership or other significant involvement in service, or

Key Club senior response cards. The effort demonstrated with a letter or other personal communication is important, and makes potential members feel special and needed. In particular, invitational recruitment is effective in influencing individual students even in an atmosphere of overall apathy, so it may succeed where other recruitment efforts fail.



Information on the Georgia District's invitational recruitment program is available in digital format along with this series. This document includes template materials which you can modify in executing your own invitational membership drive, including implementation steps, recommendation request letter to faculty member, invitation letter to attend informational meeting, application for membership, agenda for informational meeting, invitation letter to join Circle K, and thank you letter to faculty member.



Input for this series of guides was obtained through an extensive survey conducted at International Convention 2001. The survey respondents included over 160 members from 27 out of the 30 districts, and represented clubs at all types of schools. The Michigan District extends its sincerest thanks to all who completed our survey.

The information in this series is intended to supplement the existing recruitment resources provided by Circle K International, some of which are listed on the final page of the Member Recruitment Guide #1. This guide contains information on recruitment methods proven to be particularly successful for your school type. Please also consult the Member Recruitment Guide #1 in this series for information on recruitment methods appropriate for all school types. Methods not discussed here or in the Member Recruitment Guide #1 may not be successful for your school type.



This guide is designed for...

Four-Year
Commuter
Schools

... such as extension campuses of major public universities or urban public universities. "Commuter" refers to a campus where students primarily live away from campus – perhaps in neighboring communities – and generally come to campus only for classes or extracurriculars. If this is not your school type, please consult the appropriate guide in this series as well as Member Recruitment Guide #1.

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Information Booth at Organizational Fair

An information booth is an excellent way to enhance awareness on campus about your Circle K club. Especially if your school has several competing student organizations, students can use as much information as possible about each organization to make the best choice, and this method provides that necessary information. Motivated students will stop to learn about Circle K's opportunities, and on a campus where students are already motivated to serve the community, that awareness may be all it takes to increase your membership. But personal contact with a recruiter and friendly follow up efforts can motivate even the most apathetic passer-by to consider Circle K.

Design a large and easily visible display for your table to attract attention from afar, and use pictures on the display board to entice students to look closer. Pictures of club activities can also be easy conversation-starters with students who stop and look. Fill out your display with your club's banner, gong, gavel, and scrapbook. Be prepared with handouts, such as the free brochures available from the international office or handouts you create yourself. Distribute candy, attaching information about the next club meeting, perhaps with a witty message as discussed in the unique recruitment ideas article in Member Recruitment Guide #1. Provide sign up sheets for students who would like additional information, and try

to encourage everyone who stops to talk to provide their contact information to you. You can even add fake names to the sign up sheet to make it look popular and gender-balanced – just keep track of which names are real and which are fake! Consider having sign up sheets for upcoming projects available at the booth as well.

The behavior of recruiters at your information booth can make or break the endeavor. At least two members should staff the booth at all times. Recruiters should be enthusiastic and proactive, initiating conversation with passers-by rather than waiting for them to stop and look. Without excited recruiters, an information booth is too passive to be effective. Recruiters should emphasize the fun and service aspects of Circle K, but should also be prepared to talk about leadership opportunities, the Kiwanis family, and interaction with other Circle K clubs. Ensure that the conversation with a potential member is two-way. After a brief introduction, ask the visitor about his ideas and interests, and highlight projects that fit his interests. Always remember to mention the date, time, and location of the upcoming meeting to students you talk to at the booth! For more guidelines for recruiter behavior, see the word of mouth article and the "Come Play With Circle K" idea in the unique recruitment ideas article, both in

Member Recruitment Guide #1.

Your work is not done when you take down the display. Follow up is crucial. Since the list will probably be too long for one person to handle, split up the names of potential members among several current members for individual follow up. Follow up persistently with those who signed up, through a combination of phone calls, e-mails, and newsletters.

At most types of schools, an information booth is most effective at an organizational fair, usually held at the beginning of each term. Organizational fairs are especially well-attended by freshmen, who are attractive potential members because they have years left to contribute to the club and may not be involved yet in other extracurricular activities. If your organizational fair has a large freshmen attendance, encourage students to ask general college-related questions, too. This can break the ice and initiate a friendly conversation with a recruiter. All students, freshmen or otherwise, who attend an organizational fair are there because they want to get involved with something, and even those who many not think they're looking for a service organization may become interested through talking with your recruiters at the fair.

New Student Orientation

Through new student orientation programs, you can have access to a captive audience of students, an opportunity difficult to replicate at other times in the year at a commuter school where everyone keeps a different schedule. Contact the administrative office that coordinates your

school's orientation programming to see if there are opportunities to hold an information booth during orientation events, give a presentation during an orientation program, insert a letter or handout in orientation materials, or otherwise be visible to new students during orientation. Also,

inquire about including materials in orientation mailings sent to new students before they arrive on campus or about assisting with special welcome activities during the first weeks of the term.

Mass Meeting

The mass meeting is a critical element of the recruitment process at most schools, and is often the culmination of a membership drive. Of course, to be effective, the mass meeting must be preceded by publicity through several other techniques, such as those discussed elsewhere in this series.

At the mass meeting, your club is able to disseminate more detailed information than through any of the other means of publicity. And the mass meeting is an opportunity for potential members to interact with enthusiastic members, and perhaps to feel welcomed during the awkward discomfort of being a new student. Not only should you inform and welcome potential members about Circle K, but you should also provide ways for them to have their questions answered and to become involved right away.

The mass meeting should be enjoyable as well as informative for a potential member, even if that means significantly altering the regular format of your meetings. Tailor the atmosphere of your mass meeting to the sentiment of students on campus. Will students at your school be attracted by a fun social atmosphere? By an earnest, reflective focus on service? By an ambitious, go-getter climate? Design your mass meeting to reflect the aspects of Circle K that you think will be most attractive to attendees.

Posters

Posters are a simple way to reach a wide audience with information about Circle K. Given just the basic information, many interested students will take the initiative to attend a meeting. Also, you can tailor posters to target specific audiences, such as Key Club alumni. Or, you can use detailed posters to reach out to prospective members who can't attend meetings by including information about specific upcoming projects, socials, and other events directly on the posters.

However, because posters are such a passive form of publicity, you must

go to special efforts to get your posters noticed in the first place. Posters should provide a constant reminder to students about Circle K, so hang them all over campus – you can never have too many! Hang posters on bulletin boards, on kiosks, in the corner of chalkboards, on signposts, on windows, on sidewalk surfaces, inside bathroom stalls, over water fountains, and in all areas of campus including classrooms, classroom buildings, and food courts. In fact, since posters are so frequently removed, covered over, or ignored, a thorough campaign could reasonably involve re-postering the same areas

multiple times per week. But with all this photocopying, if your recruitment funds are limited, they might be better used on other methods.

In addition to quantity, features such as flashy designs, bright colors, or oversized paper can help your posters stand out. For other creative poster ideas, read about the “Bra in the Men’s Room” poster, the “K-Campaign”, and the “Who Cares?” campaign, all covered in the unique recruitment ideas article in Member Recruitment Guide #1.



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