



Best Practices: Membership Recruitment & Retention

Recruiting Members

- **Focus Specifically on the Recruitment of Incoming Freshman**
 - Send Welcome Packets over the summer to every Black Incoming Freshmen
 - Have a NSBE E-board member or two work and summer programs (if applicable) for incoming freshmen in engineering and promote benefits of NSBE membership all summer
 - Have a Social/BBQ that highlights NSBE over the summer
 - Since most incoming freshmen live in on-campus housing, host a door-to-door recruitment initiative where the chapter leadership/members visits every Black Freshman to personally invite them to join NSBE

- **Actively Recruit NSBE Members**
 - Market the NSBE Success Stories
 - Send emails and arrange for presentations where members have an opportunity to share how NSBE has made a difference in their lives (helped them get a job, helped develop them as leaders, helped increase their GPA, etc...)
 - Door-to-Door Recruitment of ALL potential members who live in campus dorms
 - There is NO substitute for face-to-face interaction
 - Target all STEM Majors (STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)
 - It is a common misconception that NSBE is only for students majoring in engineering, targeted initiatives focusing on all STEM majors helps to erase these misconceptions
 - Market NSBE Member Exclusive Benefits
 - See “Retaining Members” regarding how to develop these benefits

- **Discount on Chapter Dues**
 - Give discounts (or free chapter membership) to people that register within the first couple weeks/month of school, or before the first meeting of the year
 - “This helped increase our membership rapidly. By FRC we had 80 members” – 2005-06 University of Michigan Chapter President

- **For incoming freshmen/transfer students they receive discounts on membership before FRC**

- **Membership Referral Competition**
 - Competition to see what member could recruit the most members



- “The member who successfully recruited the most members won a trip to National Convention” – 2005-06 Virginia Tech Chapter President
- **Create Rivalry Based Competitions with Other Chapters**
 - Engage entire membership in competition to see which chapter can reach the most members
 - EX: University of Michigan vs. The Ohio State University
University of Southern California vs. Stanford University
- **Set Monthly Membership Goals**
 - Actively try to recruit X number of new members on a monthly basis and don't let the membership chair sleep until that number has been reached.

Retaining Members/Increasing Participation

- **Determine how to provide NSBE Members with a Distinct Advantage over Other Engineering Students on Your Campus**
- **Develop Effective Processes for Understanding Needs of Members (and Potential Members)**
 - Hold targeted Focus Groups for the demographic that you are looking to serve
 - “Our chapter implemented focus groups which provided detailed insight into the needs and wants of our members. Our chapter is going to be stronger going forward because of this increased understanding.” – 2006-07 Northeastern University Chapter President
 - Understand the needs of Black Engineering students on your campus and figure out how to meet these needs through chapter initiatives
 - Poll NSBE members and non-NSBE members on campus to understand organization impact
 - Develop effective program/event evaluation process, then use this feedback to modify existing programs/events
- **NSBE Member Exclusive Benefits Policy**
 - Implement policies where NSBE members received VIP treatment at NSBE Events
 - “We developed an incentives program and witnessed a decrease in membership apathy” – 2006-07 MIT Chapter President
 - Some member only examples include:
 - Opportunities to include resume in resume book given to corporate partners
 - Win prizes (only NSBE members are entered into competitions, raffle drawings, etc)
 - Receive corporate sponsor giveaways
 - Enter through VIP line at social events



- Discounts/Free Passes to NSBE Events that Cost \$
 - Partner with other campus organizations to do the same thing at their events
- Front row/reserved seating at meetings/events
- Eat First during General Body Meetings
 - Communicate that food is ordered for just the membership and to guarantee they would eat they needed to become a member
- Opportunities to sign up first for Mock Interviews, Resume Critiques, etc
- This helped convert free loaders into actual members
- Every chapter should easily be able to list 5 tangible benefits that will come from being a NSBE member.

- **Create NSBE Family/Community Environment**
 - Welcome first timers at various NSBE events (similar to Church)
 - Create non-traditional NSBE groups (e.g. NSBE sponsored Intramural athletic teams, book clubs, etc.)
 - This helps provide more avenues to attract new members.
 - The Executive Board must get to know every single Black Engineer on campus
 - Make a commitment to breaking down the e-board/membership barrier.
 - Each NSBE member should receive approximately 4-5 personal e-mails throughout the semester
 - The content should range from encouraging them to sign-up for XYZ Program to thanking them for their support
 - Celebrate Holidays Together
 - “Our chapter would have regular Chapter Dinners in the Dining Hall” – 2006-07 University of Southern California Chapter President

- **Develop Points/Rewards System for Measuring Participation**
 - Create Awards/Incentives for Active Members (ex: Member of the Year, etc...)
 - Provide Discounts to Membership Based on their Participation
 - Communicate to membership that you must participate in NSBE both semesters AND be an active member to receive a chapter discount to National Convention.
 - This helps mitigate members who only come to February and March meetings because they want to go to National Convention
 - It forces people to be active both semesters
 - Send the Message: Early Involvement is the Ticket for National Convention Travel

- **Successful Social/Community Events**
 - The events alternated between community service activities and social events
 - “We gave discounts or free passes to only NSBE members and we sponsored a party at a local venue, gave away Christmas presents.” – 2003-04 The Ohio State University Chapter President