

Summer Recruitment

There is no chapter in the Fraternity that would not benefit substantially from developing an effective summer recruitment program. In the Midwest and the West, some chapters recruit nearly 80% of their new members for the coming year in the summer preceding the fall term and recruit better quality and higher quantity of new members than competitors. In the chapters where summer recruitment is rare or non-existent, any chapter smart enough to seize this opportunity can completely blow the doors off the competition.

The most important purpose of summer recruitment is to secure new men for the chapter long before the competition even knows they exist. For a chapter that is fighting to climb to the top of the ranks, summer recruitment provides the opportunity to recruit men long before the other fraternities are even beginning to think about recruitment. A prospective member can be targeted, recruited, and join long before another fraternity ever contacts him. Remember the recruitment formula. "A man will join the best fraternity that he can find..." The chapter can totally dominate a recruit's time, making SigEp the fraternity of choice. For an already strong chapter, summer recruitment will ensure continued excellence.

Even if summer recruitment is not currently being used on your campus, the need to develop a summer recruitment program is obvious. In the summer months, the brothers have free time, the recruits have free time, and the chapter doesn't have to schedule functions around school events or exams. Conducting recruitment in the summer also provides brothers the opportunity to work together on a common goal. Any chapter who honestly wishes to be successful must make use of the summer.

Even if your university or IFC does not allow the chapter to sign bids before the formal "rush" period, an effective summer recruitment program can still be utilized. Recruitment is simply a process of making friends, and no regulation can stop you from making friends. Potential members can be targeted and recruited and individually recruited throughout the summer; you can wait until the formal recruitment period to give out bids. If the chapter has several men who are only going through "rush" as a formality and you already know that they will join SigEp, you can use these men to help recruit other prospects during formal rush.

Other Ways of Getting Names

Almost every school has a new student orientation program, and chapter members should apply to serve as guides, or the chapter might set up booths and hold a reception for the students and parents. Summer school students living on campus rarely enjoy a great social life, and they are often very receptive to invitations from fraternities. It also may be beneficial to contact the guidance counselors of area high schools to find out which student leaders are attending which institutions in the fall. These are the types of men who make valuable additions to a fraternity, and they deserve special attention in recruitment.

High school yearbooks are excellent sources. They have photos plus information about each senior's interest and activities. Some high schools, however, are reluctant to give yearbooks to outsiders. In this case, directly approach the high school counselors, service club or local fraternity sponsors, and coaches for their recommendations. Either the high schools or your university may give you access to lists of scholarship recipients, both athletic and academic.

One of the best sources is the chapter membership. You should approach each of the brothers, especially the freshmen and sophomores, and have them give you names of good men graduating from their high schools this year. It is reasonable to expect all brothers to recommend at least three prospects during their first year in the chapter.

Chapters should not limit recruitment strictly to new freshmen. Upperclassmen usually have developed study habits and maturity that can make them an immediate asset to any chapter.

Summer Recruitment Organizations & Mechanics

To focus on strategic geographic areas, area chairmen are needed to coordinate the activities for that special area. They will also be responsible for reporting problems and progress to the chapter Vice President of Recruitment. On commuter or metropolitan campuses, area chairmen can be appointed for various high schools from which students are drawn. While on the large state campuses, chairmen can be selected for the key cities in the different parts of the state. Private schools present a somewhat different situation, but inevitably there are a few new students enrolling from some of the brothers' hometowns. The function of the area chairmen becomes a microcosm of the Vice President of Recruitment. It is their responsibility to motivate the brothers in their area to determine who are the outstanding recruits and then become friends with these men. Each area chairman should make an effort, along with the other brothers, to personally visit all the incoming students in his area.

If your situation permits, obtain a list of incoming freshmen. This list is then broken down geographically and distributed to the members. They are then instructed to write or call all freshmen in their area and follow up with a personal visit. (Remember: a phone call or mailing is close to worthless without a personal visit.) Gear the visit toward answering questions about the college first, having a balanced college lifestyle, then drift into talk of fraternities and SigEp. Have materials and facts and figures on hand to leave with the student. If possible, it is a good idea to include parents in the discussion; they usually ask more questions. Visits should be followed up with handwritten notes from the area chairman to both the student and parents.

After many of the incoming students have been personally contacted, a couple of recruitment functions should be scheduled by the area chairmen with whom the brothers and outstanding potential members in the vicinity can become better acquainted. These functions are most successful when they are informal and may include cookouts, raft trips, water skiing, tennis, golf, picnics, or sporting events. Functions of this variety offer the recruit a chance to get to know several members of the chapter well enough that he begins feeling comfortable about the chapter. (Note: No alcohol is permitted at recruitment events.)

What, then, does the chapter Vice President of Recruitment do during the summer? He is responsible for making sure each area chairman is executing an active recruitment program in his respective district. Some chapters provide their Vice President of Recruitment with a nominal financial stipend to compensate for wages sacrificed from a summer job. Many Vice Presidents of Recruitment spend the summer working on behalf of the chapter, making visits and working with the area chairmen in establishing an effective program on the local level. The Vice President of Recruitment should also arrange one or two all-chapter functions on campus or in the house during the summer, where most of the brothers can attend and bring top candidates from their respective areas. A function of this type makes it convenient for the recruit to meet most of the brothers, while at the same time, it allows the members to get a good preview of many potential members. At some campuses with open recruitment, some of the recruits can be approved for invitations at a large summer recruitment function and offered bids. A major summer recruitment function may be a pig roast, softball game, golf tournament, shrimp boil party, or trip to the beach.

Some chapters use what is called the "50-man concept" (the number may vary according to the chapter's plans). The Vice President of Recruitment compiles a list, during the course of the summer (or during the fall if the chapter is on deferred recruitment), of the top 50 prospects. These names are accumulated from the area chairmen and brothers and represent the best candidates for membership in SigEp. The entire chapter makes a concerted effort to get these 50 men to all fraternity events, so that the man is familiar

with the chapter and has resolved any hesitancy about joining. An organized chapter that concentrates on 50 men during the summer should have at least 30 of those men wearing SigEp letters in the fall.

Regional Recruitment Captain Responsibilities

Area Chairmen

1. Organize and carry out an area recruitment program and one-on-one meetings with prospects.
2. Maintain a database on area prospects.
3. Help coordinate city directors and make sure they are making their personal visits.
4. Make personal visits whenever possible.
5. Constantly work toward your goal and report to the Vice President of Recruitment weekly.

City Directors

1. Make personal visits to all recruits and parents in your area.
2. Coordinate other brothers in the city to assist you.
3. Provide recruits with rides to summer and fall functions.
4. Maintain database on all prospects in your city.
5. Constantly work toward your goal and report to the area chairman or Vice President of Recruitment weekly.