



BOY SCOUTS
OF AMERICA
MEMBERSHIP GROWTH



DYNAMIC RECRUITMENT PLAYBOOK

FOR SCOUTS BSA

*A Guide to Growing the Scouts BSA Program
Through Personal Invitation and Interaction*



Prepared. For Life.®

A Little Background

In their book, *I Heart Recruitment*, the authors describe three distinct types of prospective members to a fraternity:

Always Joiners = 15%

Never Joiners = 15%

Maybe Joiners = 70%¹



Our recruitment strategy in the BSA has frequently been directed at the “Always Joiners”, with varying results. The “Maybe Joiners” are out there and ready to join, but we must change our recruitment strategy to get them.

The Boy Scouts of America has long used static recruitment as its main (sometimes only) method of recruitment. However, given the changing societal norms and school access issues depending on your geographical location, we need to explore alternative recruitment. Enter **Dynamic Recruitment**.

What is Dynamic Recruitment?

Dynamic Recruitment differs from Static Recruitment in the following ways:

- Static Recruitment is event-based, generally held at a recruitment night or open house where the prospective members gather and hear of the benefits of being a Scout, and some of the families submit an application (either in-person or online at some time in the future).
- Dynamic Recruitment is an intentional and continual process of proactively seeking high quality [youth] through a successful system built upon daily patterns of behavior that produce results.²

There are eight steps to Dynamic Recruitment³:

1. **Know the Basics:** do things that attract a lot of high-quality families and make sure everyone is dedicated to the troop’s purpose.
2. **ACE Your Values:** Promotes Achieving, Communicating, and Expecting the values of Scouting and the BSA in everything you do as a troop.
3. **Get Motivated:** Build your troop’s dream. Get your families to build a recruitment dream that is so big they will do whatever it takes - every day - to make it a reality.
4. **Know Your Audience:** Stretches our understanding of our potential member families and helps us understand where we can find the thousands of future members that are sitting out there waiting to be asked.



¹ *I Heart Recruitment*, Colleen Coffey and Jessica Gendron, Carmel, IN, Phired Up Productions, LLC, 2007.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

5. **Know Your Product:** We must know our product before we try to sell it. Understand and be able to communicate the value and benefits of scouting, so that when the opportunity arises, we can sell anyone on how great it is to have their child be a scout. We must be able to explain how BB and archery are great but getting into college with an Eagle Scout scholarship is better and learning leadership skills is the best. What is their personal scouting story? How has scouting impacted their family?
6. **Develop Skills:** Build our interpersonal skills so that we can be confident going out into the world, shaking hands (social distancing permitting), developing friendships, and inviting and recruiting youth and their families.
7. **Grow Wiser:** We must be willing to learn the lessons that will make us wiser. We must continually seek out new ideas, new strategies, and new systems to take scouting and our troop from mediocre performance to amazing results.
8. **Repeat:** We must systematically learn and re-learn each component of the eight steps to unearth big results.



These steps will be discussed in detail later.

Implementation

In order to introduce Dynamic Recruitment in a troop, we will have to ensure that the scouts and their families subscribe to the four competencies of dynamic recruitment, known by the acronym “MAPS”:

- **Motivation:** Having the drive and guts to do what is necessary to get the results you desire.
- **Audience Awareness:** Having the awareness of who you want, where they are, and how to find them. We need to bring the heart. The reason dynamic recruitment works is because it's personal. It's one-on-one, it's relational.
- **Product knowledge:** Having a good understanding of your troop, its value to its members, and its value to the community
- **Skills:** Having the ability to communicate, socialize, and effectively grow your membership⁴

Implementation. We propose that we implement a dynamic recruitment model to councils that can recruit several Scouts BSA troops that have scouts and family members that are willing and able to subscribe to the four competencies (above) and take the necessary training to successfully engage in dynamic recruitment. These individuals can hopefully serve as the evaluators of the trial and trainers for the following year.

One of the added benefits of dynamic recruitment is that is entirely volunteer driven, so it can increase the membership of a district/council without any impact on the district executive's workload.

⁴ *Ibid.*



As stated previously, static recruitment has been the mainstay of the BSA for years. For this reason, we think that it remains a viable approach to invitation and recruitment, even in the troops that select to participate in the dynamic recruitment pilot. One or two open houses or recruiting nights a year can be easily supplemented by dynamic recruiting for a satisfying result.

Additionally, dynamic recruitment calls for a number of normal friend activities (NFAs) as part of the program. In this context, it may be necessary for the troops to alter their meeting schedules to accommodate these by alternating the traditional troop meetings with weekend outdoor activities such as game days, cookouts, day hikes, *etc.*

This proposal assumes that a troop has a membership coordinator and New Member Coordinator (NMC) in place, as they would be pivotal to the monitoring and implementation of a dynamic recruiting program.

Applying the Eight Steps

The Eight Steps and How They Relate to Scouts BSA:

1. Know the Basics: Volunteers will need to know the basics of scouting, including the aims and methods, and be able to engage in conversations about any and all of them. They will also have to be able to speak of the fun the scouts have in their troop, while they develop valuable life lessons and leadership abilities.
2. ACE Your Values: Practice of the Scout Law should be evident in all of the activities we invite our new families to attend.
3. Get Motivated: Why is the troop interested in growing? Will it allow them the flexibility to pursue bigger and better adventures? Will it mean more help at meetings, or more money for the troop to plan activities? The troops will need to set an ambitious recruiting goal and agree to continue inviting and recruiting new scouts and families until they reach (or surpass) the goal. Councils should develop programs to financially support the campaigns as well as develop incentive programs to motivate successful campaigns. Troops should revise their calendars to allow for NFAs every other month, possibly in lieu of or in addition to troop meetings (see above). Remember, NFAs don't have to cost much (if anything), and dynamic recruitment is less expensive and more fun than static recruitment.
4. Know Your Audience: A troop should develop a "names list" of potential new members from sources such as class rosters, youth sports rosters, club memberships, home school associations, *etc.* Each scout and/or parent should commit to inviting a number of the



families on the list with a personal invitation call or text message, and an invitation to the troop's next NFA and social media group. Follow this up by a meeting with the new family.

5. **Know Your Product:** We need to be able to explain to the potential family how much fun scouting is, but we must also be able to explain to them how much value is added to their family by having a child in scouting. We will also have to teach the families how to respond to the common reason for not joining in an effort to help them “sell” the program.
6. **Develop Skills:** We must encourage scouts and/or families to make the first contact with prospective scouts and their families, have them get to know each other, and invite the prospects to a Normal Friend Activity (NFA).
7. **Grow Wiser:** Essential to any change of tactics of this sort is to conduct an in-depth after-action review of the methods and results of the program at specified points during and at the end of a scouting year. Mistakes are OK but repeating them is not.
8. **Repeat:** Following the review, we will prepare for the next year with revised plans as necessary.

These eight steps can be simplified in the Scouts BSA setting to three simple steps:

- 1) ***Know it!*** – Know and live the Scouting Values, set your recruitment goals and recruit until you meet (or exceed) those goals.
- 2) ***Do it!*** - Every scout and/or family in the troop personally invites up to five (5) families over the course of a year, one at a time, and follows up with them in a “Normal Friend Activity” (NFA), and signs them up to the troop.
- 3) ***Study it!*** - Review, revise and make plans to do it all over again next year.

Support Materials

- [BSA Tufts Study Infographic](#) (PDF)



Successful Recruitment = More Scouts = More Scout Families!
"Many Hands Make Light Work"