Strength in Numbers:
Tips for Recruiting & Retaining Volunteers for your Sustainability Club
Andrea Norris & Tyler Coleman
About the Waste Watchers: Structure

• Formed in 2012
• Jointly coordinated by the Student Sustainability Initiative (student-run org.) and Campus Recycling (dept.)
• 3 coordinators
• Coordinators plan and set goals annually in:
  • Volunteer recruitment, involvement, training, and retention
  • Activities
  • Marketing
About the Waste Watchers: What We Do

• Mission:
  
  Engage students and the community in waste reduction at OSU by providing educational programming, meaningful opportunities for action, and empowerment of future leaders

• Bottom line: Work on events and marketing aimed at reducing waste on campus
Volunteer Recruitment
Volunteer Recruitment: Market Like Crazy

- Posters
- Table tents
- Pass out fliers
- Tabling
- Slides on campus screens
- Listservs
- Newspaper calendar listings
- Newspaper ads
- Media releases

- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram...
- Websites and blogs
- Check with your student union and other buildings for opportunities
- Member referrals

**Tips:**
- Do everything feasible
- Experiment
- Go broad
Volunteer Recruitment: Involvement Opportunities

• Host an introductory event
  • Example: Waste Watchers Meet ‘n’ Eat
  • It’s an event, not a meeting (i.e. more inviting to newbies)
  • If you feed them, they will (be more likely to) come
  • Agenda: Give overview of the group and upcoming activities. Offer ways to get involved immediately.

• Have regular meeting times
  • Set early in term and advertise
  • Same time and location every week
Volunteer Recruitment: Tips

• Group branding
  • Memorable and descriptive name
  • Wordmark/logo
  • Consistency

• Maintain a list of involvement opportunities
  • Low, mid and high commitment options at all times
  • Assign this task to someone

• Recruitment never ends
  • View everything as a recruitment opportunity
  • Assign recruitment to someone
Running Effective Meetings

- Set an agenda with time points

- Create roles for group members to fulfill
  - Time Keeper – The person in charge of saying when time points come up
  - Facilitator – Starts meeting, keeps it on track, and makes sure everyone can speak
  - Note Taker – Records attendance, ideas, decisions, and tasks

- Allow access to the agenda during and after meetings

Why’s it important?
Demonstrate that the group gets things done.

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**Monday, January 25, 6:00-7:30 pm, 206 SEC**
Snacks by Reedcycler
Present: Zach, Cristina, Margaret, Julia, Dre, Sabrina, Rachel C, Callie, Reedcycler, TCole
Opening: If you had your human body, but the head of an animal, what animal would you pick?
- Roles:
  - Facilitator: Zach
  - Note Taker: Dre
  - Time-keeper: Callie
- (6:00) Opening
  (6:05) TCole, Etc.
  (6:10) 圈外, 圈内, 圈外
Promoting Growth of Knowledge and Community

• Opening questions
  • Ask thought-provoking and/or fun questions at start of meetings

• Funsies: Fun activities such as games and hikes
  • Inside meetings, 15-30 minutes, at over ½ of the meetings
  • Outside of meetings, 1+ hours, 1-3 times per a term

• Edventures
  • 15-45 minute educational sessions, during meetings

Why’s it important?
Members say that this is one of the best things they get out of the club.
Recognizing Volunteers

• Thank members
  • Make thank you cards for recurring members; hand written or electronic
  • “Compliment circle” – members say what they appreciate about other members

• Recognition
  • Social media spotlights for recurring members
  • At different hour milestones, have some way beyond a thank you card to recognize volunteers

Why’s it important?
Recognizing volunteers reaffirms them and reminds them they matter to the group
Creating a Sense of Ownership and Identity

- Empower team to determine activities
  - At every meeting, give time to brainstorm and vote on ideas

- Name tags/nicknames
  - Make nametags and consider use of nicknames

- Chair positions and titles
  - Create roles that go above and beyond and are in charge of specific tasks

Why’s it important?
This builds their resumes and encourages them to take pride in a larger task.
Recruitment and Retention Recap

• Recruitment
  • Use a variety of different marketing tactics
  • Host an introductory event
  • Have easy ways to get involved
  • Brand your group
  • Remember recruitment in an ongoing process

• Retention
  • Make sure your meetings are effective and efficient
  • Facilitate community growth
  • Recognize volunteers
  • Create a sense of ownership
For More Information

Website: http://tiny.cc/wastewatchers

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