



# DYNAMIC RECRUITMENT PLAYBOOK FOR SCOUTS BSA

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



## A Little Background

In the book, *I Heart Recruitment*,<sup>1</sup> the authors describe 3 distinct types of prospective members to a fraternity:

**Always Joiners = 15%**

**Maybe Joiners = 70%**

**Never Joiners = 15%<sup>1</sup>**

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

Our organization 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 ways. Enter **Dynamic Recruitment**.



## Static vs. Dynamic Recruitment

Dynamic Recruitment differs from Static Recruitment in the following

- Static Recruitment is event-based, generally held at a recruitment night where the prospective members gather and hear of the benefits of being a Scout, and some of the families complete 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 families through a successful system built upon daily patterns of behavior that produce results.<sup>2</sup>

## When should we consider using Dynamic Recruitment?

Dynamic Recruitment might be used in any of the following circumstances:

- If your Spring Recruitment did not yield the desired results in Troops that set a goal of recruiting enough youths to form a new Patrol.
- If Fall Recruitment did not yield the desired results in Troops that set a goal of recruiting enough youths to form a new Patrol
- Troops that desire to grow enrollment during the program year outside of their standard recruitment events and have plans to accept new youth at any level throughout the program year.
- Troops with a non-standard (7-10 month) program year that desire to grow membership outside of their standard recruitment events.
- One or two open houses or recruiting nights a year can be easily supplemented by dynamic recruiting for a satisfying result.
- Dynamic recruitment calls for a number of Normal Friend Activities (NFAs) as part of the Troop meetings with weekend outdoor activities such as game days, cookouts, day hikes, *etc.*

<sup>1</sup> “I Heart Recruitment,” Colleen Coffey and Jessica Gendron, Carmel, IN, Phired Up Productions, LLC, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

**There are eight steps to Dynamic Recruitment:**

- 1. Know the Basics<sup>3</sup>:** Do things that attract a lot of high-quality families and make sure everyone is dedicated to the Troop’s purpose.
- 2. A.C.E. Your Values:** Promotes **Achieving, Communicating, and Expecting** the values of Scouting in everything you do as a Troop. (See table below)
- 3. Get Motivated:** Build your Troop’s dream. Get your families to build a recruitment dream so big they will do whatever it takes - every day - to make it a reality. If you have Troop members who are not in-tune with the recruiting efforts, don’t spent time trying to convince them to join. Instead, focus your energy on individuals who will move the effort and help the unit grow.
- 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.
- 5. Sell 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 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 climbing 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 we can be confident going out into the world, shaking hands, developing friendships, 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 8 steps to unearth big results.



*These steps will be discussed in detail later.*

**Know Your Own Unit (5 minute self assessment)**

In order to be a successful Scout group, the unit leaders must evaluate itself and how it makes decisions related to its unit values. **Achieving, Communication, and Expecting Your Values** helps create a strong Troop image and gets more people involved in Scouting.

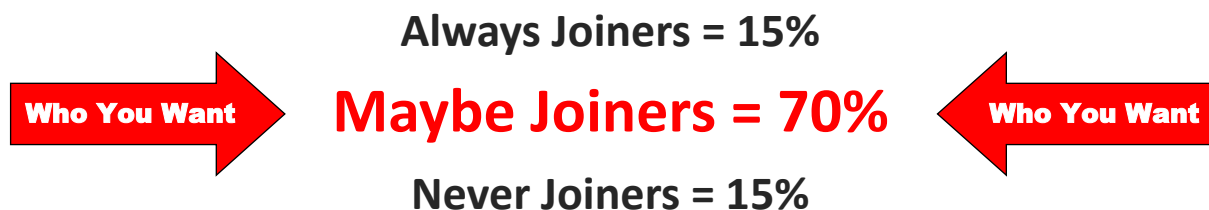
<u>Values</u>	<u>Communications</u>	<u>Expectations</u>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

## Continuous Implementation

In order to introduce Dynamic Recruitment in a Troop, we will have to ensure the families subscribe to the four competencies of dynamic recruitment.

- **Motivation:** Having the drive to do what is necessary to get the results you desire.
- **Audience Awareness:** Knowing who you want, where they are, what they want, and how to find them. We need to make it personal, one-on-one and relational.



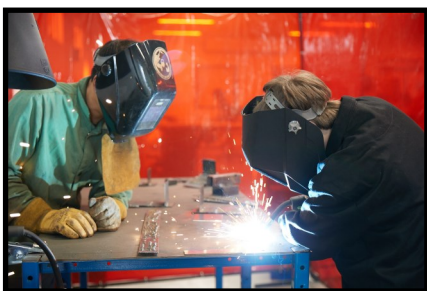
- **Product knowledge:** Having a good understanding of your Troop, its value to its members, and its value to the community
- **Skills:** Having the ability to share your passion for Scouting by effectively communicating, socializing with potential families resulting in growing your membership<sup>3</sup>

### Why consider Dynamic Recruiting?

*“We propose implementing a dynamic recruitment model to recruit several Scouts and volunteers who are willing and able to subscribe to the four competencies (above) and take action so the necessary training to successfully engage in dynamic recruitment is completed.*

*By empowering unit volunteers and family members to serve as the evaluators of the trial and trainers for the following year. With this approach, a Scout group can grow on its own and not rely on Cubs crossing over to sustain the Troop. This proposal assumes a Troop has a New Member Coordinator, as they would be pivotal in implementation of a Dynamic Recruiting Program.”*

— Cheryl Parson, VP of Membership, Volunteer since 1998



*Dynamic recruitment is volunteer driven because unit leaders know their program best. Working alongside your District Executive will result in growing your unit membership, adding new volunteer leaders and make Scouting fun for all.*

## 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 Troop needs 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 Normal Friend Activities every other month, possibly in lieu of or in addition to Troop meetings. Remember, Normal Friend Activities don't have to cost much (if anything), and dynamic recruitment is less expensive and more fun than static recruitment.

4. **Know Your Audience:** Troop leaders and parents 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 Normal Friend Activity and social media group. Follow this up by having a meeting with the new family.
5. **Sell 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.
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.

#### Aims of Scouting

- Character Development
- Citizenship Training
- Physical, Mental & Emotional Fitness



#### Aims Delivered by these Methods

1. Ideals (Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout Motto, Scout Slogan)
2. Patrols
3. Outdoor program
4. Advancement
5. Adult Association
6. Personal Growth
7. Leadership Development
8. Uniform



## Applying the Competencies in Three Simple Steps:

The previous 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,” and signs them up to the Troop.
3. **Repeat it!** - Review, revise and make plans to do it all over again next year.

## Final Thoughts

Please remember you are not being asked to do more work, you are simply being asked to apply these concepts to what you do with your unit. A steady flow of youth into a Scouts BSA Troop is essential to maintaining the Troop’s health. Plus, new Scouts bring energy and enthusiasm to the Troop program! To avoid the pitfall of shrinking membership, a Troop should add at least 10 new Scouts every year through Crossovers and recruiting. Having a year-round growth plan in place will help attract new Scouts.

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



---

## Support Materials

- **Unit Program Planning Tools** | Boy Scouts of America ([scouting.org](https://www.scouting.org))  
<https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/troop-resources/program-planning-tools/>
- **100 Point Scouts BSA Troop Adult Participation Form** (PDF)  
<https://blackswampbsa.doubleknot.com/document/100-point-scouts-bsa-adult-participation-form/214617>
- **Webelos-to-Scouts Transition** | Boy Scouts of America ([scouting.org](https://www.scouting.org))  
<https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/troop-resources/recruitment-marketing/webelos-to-scouts-transition/>
- **Tufts Study confirms: Scouting builds character** ([scoutingmagazine.org](https://scoutingmagazine.org))  
<https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2015/10/22/tufts-study-confirms-scouting-builds-character-six-critical-areas/>
- **Parent Talent Survey** - Scouts BSA <https://blackswampbsa.doubleknot.com/document/parent-talent-survey-scouts-bsa/211518>
- **The Scouting Edge: A study of Ethics & Character in America** ([scoutingmagazine.org](https://scoutingmagazine.org))  
<https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2024/06/04/what-is-the-scouting-edge-here-are-some-key-findings-from-the-latest-research/>
- **Black Swamp Area Council Membership Hub** [www.blackswampbsa.org/resources/membership-hub/75884](http://www.blackswampbsa.org/resources/membership-hub/75884)