

Local Section Recruitment Fundamentals

Volunteer Journey

1. **The doubter** is outside volunteering, and may have attitudes, characteristics or circumstances which keep them a non-volunteer.
2. **The starter** has entered volunteering by making an enquiry or application.
3. **The doer** has committed to being a volunteer and begun volunteering.
4. **The stayer** persists as a long term volunteer

Goal: To turn doubters into stayers.

Eight Barrier Facets

There are barriers that need to be overcome within AIChE and your local section. Keep these in mind.

1. The image and appeal of volunteering
2. Methods of recruiting volunteers
3. Recruitment and application procedures
4. Induction into volunteering
5. Training for volunteering
6. Overall management of the volunteering
7. The ethos and culture of the organization
8. The support and supervision given to volunteers

Recruitment Ideas

If you are part of an established local section, you probably already have some sort of an annual schedule that you follow. Here are some more ideas that you may want to consider. If your section is fairly new and does not have an established volunteer base and annual schedule, please take note of the items with an * in front. These are the core activities.

- *Regular Meetings – Typically September through May
 - Find where ChemE's are most concentrated in your local section area
 - May have multiple concentration zones
 - Try to find venues that meet your criteria (See Venue Comparison Sheet at end)
 - Location
 - Seating
 - Meal pricing
 - Presenter stand (if needed)
 - Audio/Visual equipment
 - Internet Connections
 - Make welcome bags for new comers with items that have the local section website. Some giveaway ideas:
 - Mugs
 - Pens
 - Notepads
 - Candy
 - Rulers
 - Stress balls

- *Technical Sessions
 - *Workshops
 - Project Lessons Learned
 - Technical Papers
 - New Technologies
 - Technology Improvements
 - Consider having workshops before the regular monthly meeting to allow smaller topics:
 - Safety
 - Environment
 - Professional Engineering
 - Ethics
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Communication
 - Robert's Rules of Order
 - Short Technical Sessions
 - Young Professional Topics
- *Social Events – Probably one of the easier events to organize and could attract a greater variety of local members in the area to recruit from.
 - Sporting events (baseball/football/basketball/swimming/rugby/hockey)
 - Festivals
 - Plays
 - Retreats
 - Painting Classes
 - Amusement Parks
 - Concerts
 - Art Exhibits
 - Picnics
 - Zoo
 - Science Museums
 - Dinner Cruise
 - Wine Tour
 - Golf Event
- *K-12 Activities
 - *Visit local Schools/colleges
 - After School Meetings
 - Career Fairs
 - BOS/EOY Parties
 - Picnics
 - Science Fair
 - *E-Week
 - ChemE Car
 - Scholarships
 - Boy scouts / Girl scouts
- *Intersociety Events
 - AADE – American Association of Drilling Engineers
 - ACS – American Chemical Society
 - ASCE – American Society of Civil Engineers
 - ASME – American Society of Mechanical Engineers
 - IEEE – Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers

- ISA –International Society of Automation
 - NSPE – National Society of Professional Engineers
 - PMI – Project Management Institute
 - SME – Society of Manufacturing Engineers
 - SPE – Society of Plastics Engineers
 - MTS – Marine Technology Society
 - SPE – Society of Petroleum Engineers
 - SWE – Society of Women Engineers
 - WEN – Women Energy Network
- *Newsletters
 - Advertisements for specific events
 - Calendar of upcoming events
 - Advertisements for specific tasks
 - Acknowledge volunteers for past events and specific contributions
 - Ask for award nominations
 - Contact Information
- *Website
 - Same information as newsletter
 - Include an email sign up on the front page
 - Have volunteer sign up registration for larger events
 - Upcoming events and webcast links
- Plant Tours – some places, (particularly manufacturing facilities) will give guests small trinkets, which participants can take back to their offices and be a good way of getting the attention of their coworkers to participate in future local section events.
 - Refinery
 - Pharmaceuticals
 - Equipment
 - Valves
 - Other non-traditional Chem-E manufacturing facilities
 - Food Industry
 - Beverage Industry
 - Instrumentation
 - Pilot Plant
- Special Events
 - Pi Day
 - Star Wars Day
 - *E-Week
 - Offshore Technology Conference / other conferences
 - Boat tour (Houston has Ship Channel Tour of industrial plants)
 - Energy Day
 - Arbor Day
 - Build a float for a parade

- Webcasts – will require specialty A/V equipment and a laptop to record it as well as volunteer well versed in how to set up it.
 - Advertise on website
 - People who see you setting up will want to help. Have an instruction sheet and clearly labeled equipment/cords.
- PE Review Class - a great way to get people pursuing their PE to get them involved in the section activities
- Regional Conference – currently in Central Florida, Chicago, Northern California, and Houston areas. A great way to get volunteers in the section involved as well as generating extra revenue for the section however it does require a significant amount of volunteer manpower and support from local industry to put on a successful conference.

Methods of volunteer recruitment

There are a lot of ways to advertise for volunteers. These include:

- Talking to members at section events
- Word of mouth referrals
- Leaflets and other printed media
- Giveaways with organization name and contact information
- Organizing and publicizing events
- Press and radio ads
- Online - on your own website and via volunteer recruitment websites.
- Regular email blasts/newsletters

Include a phone number and email address so potential volunteers can get in touch easily.

None of this matters if your organization does not appeal to the member. Always keep your sections vision/mission/goals in mind.

Recruitment Approaches/Advice

Add people to email lists as soon as possible to receive information on events and activities.

Start small – invite people to just take part in existing activities. The more they enjoy the activities, the more they will want to volunteer to keep it going.

Ask the person if he/she has any particular interests/passions

• Education	• Young Professionals
• Plant tours	• Social Events
• Networking	• Specific Engineering Topics
• Career Building	• Information Gathering
• Audio/Visual	• Website Building
• Registration	• Local Events
• Leadership	• Inter-Society Communication

Ask the person if he/she is looking to improve personal skills for career advancement:

- Writing
- Speaking
- Organization
- Leading People
- Financial Bookkeeping
- Technologies
- Creativity
- Keeping up with current events
- Meeting new people
- Self Confidence

Give volunteers approximate time commitments associated with various tasks as well as basic requirements for the task. Make sure you let them know about support they will receive from yourself/others. Explain how this helps the organization and how their help will be appreciated. Lack of definition can scare potential volunteers off as much as too much definition. Think about it as though you were the one being asked. What made you volunteer?

Check in with volunteers to make sure they enjoy taking part in the organization. Look for the following:

- If they are satisfied with their involvement
- If they are meeting the types of people they hopes to meet
- If they would like to stay involved
- If time commitments are working with their schedules
- If they would like to take on another task, perhaps of their own creation
- Where they see themselves having the greatest impact
- What kind of activities would get them to bring their colleagues

You should not have to “bait” people to get them involved. If your local section builds/maintains a program centered on serving chemical engineers in your area, you need only remain diligent in advertising needs and keeping an open feedback loop.

Note the strengths and areas for improvement associated with volunteers and try to tactfully guide them in improving those strengths that will help them in their careers. Most people do not focus on others’ weaknesses unless they are “deal breakers”, such as missing deadlines repeatedly or being overly critical. Respectfully talk to the person about these “deal breaker” behaviors, letting them know that you value their contributions, but see an area that may be holding them back in their careers or might be damaging to the organization. Work on strengthening these attributes to a societally acceptable level, but also work on areas where they are already pretty good and make them great.

Design manageable task and offer support to help volunteers accomplish them. Let volunteers know what kind of an impact the task has on the local/national section. This will create positive relationships and ensure best chance for future volunteer involvement.

Let people take ownership of a task. Ask them how they envision a successful outcome to a task. Let them know what your expectations are and then let them make the task their own. Offer support, but don’t micromanage. If their way of tackling a task does not

conflict with the expectations you set, you can offer advice, but you are likely to ruin future volunteering from them if you constantly devalue their contribution.

Respect peoples hesitations to getting involved. Ask them what they would need in order to say yes. Did they have a bad experience with the organization in the past, perhaps just a bad experience volunteering?

Try not to display negative emotions you may have about your volunteer efforts publicly. This may drive volunteers away, because who wants to volunteer with a whiner? Try to turn negative emotions into a drive to improve the organization and remove those things that are causing the negative emotions from the start.

Venue Comparison Sheet

Location Name			
Location Address			
Contact Person (Email) (Phone Number)			
Large Seating Room Capacity			
Meal Pricing			
Side Rooms Available? (#)			
Internet Connection Information			
Presenter Stand			
Presenter Lighting (good/poor)			
A/V Equipment (Projector Screen, Projector, Microphone, Speakers, Mix Board, etc)			
Other:			