
How to
Recruit
Generation
ME

Cynthia D'Amour

**How to
Recruit
Generation
ME**

By Cynthia D'Amour

Jump Start Books

Ann Arbor, MI

Other Books by Cynthia D'Amour

**How to Turn Generation Me Into
Active Members of Your Association**

**Networking: The Skill the Schools
Forgot to Teach**

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This book is dedicated
to the millions
of chapter leaders
around the globe
who, in spite of busy times,
continue to volunteer —
and thus make
our world
a better place.

I salute you.

— Cynthia D'Amour

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— Chapter One —

The Basics of Recruiting Generation ME

- Are you tired of spending too much energy and resources to recruit new members or volunteers — and getting less than spectacular results?
- Is your core group of active members ready to burn out and you need to bring fresh blood in your chapter — but you can't seem to find anyone willing to step up?
- Are you tired of hearing that people have “no time” to join and be active in your chapter?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, you have the right book in your hands.

Recruiting in a “no time” world is different than it used to be. And even if you can get a check from people, there’s no guarantee that they will show up at anything.

Welcome to Generation Me.

Generation Me is not defined by age.

Generation Me is defined instead by people demanding to know what specifically your chapter can do for them — before they join or volunteer.

They require that you become an ace at regularly hitting their hot buttons and providing them valuable benefits to stay involved in your chapter.

You are competing with the many demands for their time — as well as a

tremendous explosion of new ways for people to be involved in general.

The good news: You now have a personal Generation Me coach on your team — ME!

I've been in your shoes. I've served more than 30 total years on boards and recruited more than 250 members.

I've also spent the last several years helping associations from all over the world get more members involved.

So let's use that experience, roll up our sleeves and start talking about how you can find more success with Generation Me.

Whether recruiting Generation Me to join your chapter or to volunteer their time, there are three key motivators and two secret weapons you need to be prepared to use.

The three key motivators are:

1. Personal and/or Professional Development

How does your chapter help people improve their skills, grow their confidence or advance their careers?

Get beyond the obvious such as how your meetings provide cutting-edge information.

What skills can your members develop as they serve on your committees and help out at events?

2. Contribution to a Greater Good

How does being involved in your chapter help others?

Do you have community service projects? Mentor opportunities? Do you help raise the bar in the industry and thereby create a safer world?

3. Belonging to a Community

For some, merely having friends like you is reason enough to join.

These members focus on building relationships at your meetings — and will tolerate serving on committees in order to hang out with the members.

The challenge: Different people have different motivators.

It's up to you to identify what's important to a person as you talk with them before you try to sell them on your opportunity to join or volunteer.

Once you've identified their hot button, or key motivator, focus your energy on only the benefits that are relevant to it.

Let's take something as simple as networking at meetings.

Networking can:

- help you find a new job or solution to your challenge at work.
- help increase your fundraising efforts since people are more likely to say yes when they are personally asked to volunteer for a project.
- help you meet more people and keep in touch with old friends.

It's the same event viewed through the three key motivators.

Match your descriptions and benefits of being involved in your chapter with a potential member's preferred motivator — and watch your recruiting efforts soar.

Another challenge: A potential recruit's key motivator may be different than yours.

When you match a person's motivators with how you talk about your chapter, it feels like home.

When you don't match stories with motivators, the chapter doesn't feel like a fit — and your potential member will go elsewhere.

When talking to a group, weave stories and benefits of all three key motivators into your speech to reach a larger percentage of your audience.

Generation Me is listening for what's in it for them to be involved. Giving solid examples in line with their key motivator helps them to say yes to the opportunity you offer.

The three key motivators are the reasons why Generation Me will get involved with your chapter.

The two secret weapons keep Generation Me coming back...

1. Fun

Do your members have a good time at your meetings and when they volunteer for your chapter?

Providing members with a good time can give you a cutting edge over the other competition for their time.

Plan strategically for fun. Some chapters even have a committee dedicated to keeping meetings fun.

(If you need some help, there are lots of creative ideas in my book **How to Turn Generation Me Into Active Members of Your Association.**)

Your members will make time for a good time.

2. Caring

Your members want to know and feel like you care about them.

- How do you thank your volunteers?
- How do you celebrate member successes and offer support during trying times?
- How does your chapter get personal with your members?

Members will stay more involved when they feel like you care about them — beyond being a volunteer that helps you hit your goals.

When your chapter gets a reputation as being the place to be — a place where needs are met, good times are had, and people care about each other — your chapter will grow naturally and with ease.

To sharpen your recruiting skills even further, let's talk some more about WIIFM — what's in it for me?

— Chapter Two —

The Six Ways of WIIFM

“What’s in it for me?” (WIIFM) is the top question you must be able to answer if you want to get Generation Me involved in your chapter.

Do you think it’s incredibly selfish for someone ask you about WIIFM?

You’ve got to be careful about that. People will sense your feelings of disgust at their question and may feel rejected by you.

Realize that people are bombarded with opportunities every day to soak up their time — just the way your chapter would.

Six Ways of WIIFM

Many options also have a great cause behind them. Plus, the person may have to give up time spent relaxing with family in order to help you out.

When a person asks you what's in it for them to get involved, they are not trying to insult you.

A WIIFM question is a request for you to help them to see involvement in your chapter an important use of their time — to help them justify turning down the others.

Regularly answering WIIFM in everything your chapter does helps more people become involved.

The Six Ways of WIIFM

1. Hit members' hot buttons.

I know we talked about this last chapter, but I can't stress it enough.

Even long term members will have their involvement challenged by other priorities. Hot button examples help keep the reasons they stay involved on the top of their minds.

2. One size does not fit all — get creative with time.

Volunteering and involvement looks different than it did 10 years ago.

- **Some people prefer to commit to specific time blocks versus serving on a chapter committee.**

They may be open to committing to an hour a month — but not want to attend any meetings.

- **Accommodate nontraditional time frames for meetings.**

Holding discussions via e-mail is an example of how to beat the clock and include more people.

- **Create committees based on need versus requiring yearlong commitments to meetings that aren't really necessary.**
- **Create volunteer opportunities that can be done at your meeting and require no extra time.**

Passing out handouts, introducing speakers, writing a few notes, serving as meeting hosts are just a few examples of how members can contribute at meetings.

Value their small volunteer time and when their schedule opens up, you may get even more help from them.

3. Help people fall in love with being involved in your chapter.

You may not even think about why you stay involved any more — it's become a part of your life.

New recruits and volunteers have to experience your chapter first hand with positive experiences to feel as committed as you may be.

Strategically create opportunities for new people get more exposure to your chapter. Get them networking to make friends with other members.

Remember, people get involved because you hit their hot buttons — one of the three key motivators.

Members stay because they are having fun and the chapter cares about them — the WIIFM of love.

4. Tap into members' passions.

Whether you are recruiting new members or rounding up volunteers, the opportunity you offer is much more exciting when it gives people a chance to also pursue their passion.

Most people do not have enough time to do what they love.

People may feel passionately about making a difference or just love to work with numbers.

Don't try to be psychic.

Simply ask people questions such as, "What type of things would be exciting for you to work on?" Or, "You seem to really enjoy public speaking. Would you have any interest on working on our commercials that run on the local cable channel?"

If they gasp NO! to your question, ask what would be a better fit for them.

People will tell you how they want to be involved. Listen for the answers before you present opportunities.

5. Kill the martyrs.

There are always a few people in the chapter who love to go on and on about how hard the work was and how much time they had to give.

Their experiences are exactly what the time-pressed member wants to avoid.

Find ways to keep your martyrs from overwhelming new people.

- Keep their comments at meetings to a minimum when you know they will brag and complain about their demanding dedication.
- Acknowledge their work and frame opportunities to speak in positive ways. “I know you worked hard on this George, what was the one best thing that you got out of your experience on the project?”
- You may need to coach members about what to say at recruiting events.

Everyone can use a refresher about how to share the good stories versus airing all the hard work.

6. Keep your promises and build trust with members.

- **Avoid exaggerating the time needed to complete work.**

Word gets out when you con a member in to taking an “easy” position that actually demands incredible amounts of time — plus people don’t want to be made a fool.

- **Avoid stretching the truth on what your chapter can offer a person.**

For example, don’t brag about your community involvement if it only consists of running an ad in the local paper about your meeting.

You’ve got to be honest with people.

Membership and involvement is optional. Just because a person gives you the dues check once, there's no guarantee you'll get another one.

Members who feel they can trust your leaders, are more comfortable committing to your chapter and getting involved.

Just as exercise keeps you strong, regular WIIFM keeps your member involvement strong.

There are many ways for you to share WIIFM with your potential members and volunteers.

Try it out. The results will prove it's worth investing the time to identify your chapter's unique WIIFMs.

Now let's take a look at how to sell getting involved in your chapter opportunities to Generation Me...

— Chapter Three —

The Six Key Principles of Selling to Generation ME

Whether you are trying to recruit new members, or sign up more volunteers, the critical skill for your success is selling the opportunity.

I've boiled it all down to simply six key principles for you to focus on.

Each alone can help you increase your recruiting success. Used together, watch your numbers soar!

1. Think benefits rather than features.

When explaining why someone should get involved with your chapter, remember to give them some WIIFM.

Make your opportunity relevant to them personally as a benefit — rather than stating generic features.

For example: Monthly education programs can help members stay cutting edge at work or give members a chance to build relationship built on industry issues.

Working on the scholarship program gives needy people a chance to get an education as well as provides training in speaking skills.

2. Have various points of entry.

The Internet has helped to make us less of a linear society.

Create many paths for potential recruits to find their way to joining your chapter and getting involved.

For example: People may join your chapter by attending a formal event, by coming to a meeting with a friend, or signing up after reading materials.

With volunteering, if members don't want to go straight to a committee, give them simple, non-threatening ways to sample what it feels like to volunteer for you.

Giving an hour at an event, greeting at a meeting, hosting a guest are all examples of easy first steps.

3. Think in processes, rather than moments of time.

It takes the average person six to eight exposures to information before they can make a decision to take action.

Six Key Principles of Selling

Single announcements or invitations to join are not enough.

Plan for a process of multiple exposures in your recruiting efforts.

Contacts might include personal phone calls, written invitations, newsletters, actual events, and talking to a variety of people.

Create a simple form to document your committee's follow up with potential members.

Record the date, the type of contact and the potential members' response to it if you know it.

Also record relevant information that will help you build a relationship with the potential member.

If Clara can't make it to the meeting because her child is sick, call her a week later and ask about her child.

Also give her highlights from the missed event and invite her to the next event or meeting.

Your goal is to keep potential members moving through the process of getting to know you and the chapter — so they feel comfortable making the decision to join your group.

The same multiple exposure strategy also holds true when you are trying to get people to volunteer for you.

4. Remember to close the sale — ask people to join or volunteer.

A great pitch full of benefits and stories is a waste of time, if you fail to ask the potential member to join.

In fact, if you don't try to close your sale, your recruitee may feel rejected by you and your chapter.

Closing can be as simple as asking during a one-on-one conversation, “So what do you think? Does this sound like a good fit for you?”

Or by announcing at a recruiting event, “There are membership forms on your chairs. We invite you to take a few minutes now to fill them out and turn them in to our Membership Chair Joe before you leave.”

It doesn't matter whether you are formal or causal about asking people to join or to step up to volunteer — as long as you ask.

5. People make decisions based on emotion and justified by logic.

Your chapter feels good, they have fun at meetings, or perhaps they finally meet people who understand them — these are the real types of reasons that motivate people to join groups or volunteer.

Sharing your stories of involvement is a great strategy for tapping into the emotional side of selling your chapter.

Once the emotional hook is in place, people then look to logical reasons based on WIIFM to justify the investment of their time and resources in your chapter.

Use the skills we talked about in the first chapter to identify and hit peoples' hot buttons.

As you talk to them, weave in the appropriate benefits that will make joining the logical thing to do.

6. "Not enough time," means you haven't sold the right opportunity — it's nothing personal.

Potential members and volunteers use not enough time as a polite way to say no — and to not feel like they are blatantly rejecting you.

People will make time for that which they feel is important.

They don't have time for seemingly valueless endeavors.

You want your potential members and volunteers to feel NOT being involved with your chapter would be a MAJOR mistake for them.

That's why it's so critical for you to weave a strong WIIFM into all of your recruiting efforts.

Now let's take a look at how to run a solid recruitment event — and how to avoid the 16 most common recruiting mistakes...

— Chapter Four —

16 Biggest Recruiting Mistakes to Avoid

At your ideal recruitment party, all would go well...

- Your members rounded up their friends to attend. The room is packed with potential members who were inspired by your marketing efforts.
- Everyone has fun, mingles nicely and potential members all find a special WIIFM in your chapter.
- The program runs smoothly and stays on the promised schedule.

16 Biggest Recruiting Mistakes

- The President gives a spectacular pitch about the chapter and asks people who would like to join your chapter to step to the front of the room to be sworn in.
- Every potential member in the room moves forward with check in hand.

Sound like a fantasy?

It doesn't have to be. With careful planning, you can run a smashing recruitment event.

WARNING: It's the little things that can get in the way of a successful recruiting effort.

What follows are the 16 most common recruiting mistakes I tend to find when working with my clients.

These mistakes are written with new member recruitment in mind; however, every single mistake can

also foil your efforts when recruiting volunteers for your chapter.

The Mistakes...

1. Promotional materials and activities fail to clearly spell out the benefits of being involved.

Your potential members are new to your organization, are generally not psychic and may not be able to see the benefits easily.

Make benefits simple and clear so potential members can get excited about joining your chapter — without having to solve a puzzle.

2. Don't use name tags.

It's hard enough to walk into a room where you don't know anyone — let alone have to remember names!

Using name tags will also make your members more confident in approaching people they don't know — or remember.

3. Don't ask for the sale.

It's a waste of time showing a potential member all you can do for them if you fail to ask them to join.

Most will look for a sign of acceptance from you — that they “made the cut.”

Without it, they feel rejected and probably won't join.

4. Plan your recruiting night on a heavily conflicted night.

Get a feel for where your potential members or volunteers might spend their time and try to plan around it.

5. Fail to delegate enough.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking it would be easier to do it all yourself rather than depend on others.

- You will burn yourself out.
- Others don't get the opportunities to find their niche in your chapter.
- Your members will not have anything invested in the campaign success — and thus be less likely to bring friends to your efforts.

6. Have dollar signs in your eyes when talking to potential members.

There is nothing worse than feeling like a piece of meat or seeing a recruiter drool in anticipation of signing up a new member.

No matter how desperate you are for new members, stay focused on what you can do for them.

7. Don't bother getting your current members to buy-in on the need for new members.

Help current member see why it's to their advantage to grow your chapter.

You need members' help to recruit their friends and make new members feel welcome once they join.

8. Ignore "older paper members" who could be reactivated.

A friendly phone call from you can work miracles — and it's much easier than recruiting from block one.

9. Make it a real challenge to join.

Create unnecessary blocks to joining by simply not returning phone calls or not providing maps to events.

10. Don't have an activation plan for new members.

Just because someone joins, does not mean they will stay. You must help new members get involved as soon as possible to keep them.

11. Ignore your new members' second thoughts about joining — don't give them any proof that they make a good decision by joining your chapter.

Welcome letters, orientations, greeting calls all help ease potential worries about joining.

12. Don't bother to ask for money when you ask them to join.

It's easy to change one's mind when no money has changed hands.

13. Turn away new members — it's not time to join yet.

Do this and you will lose them to another group.

Prorated dues or a few free months can help.

14. Fail to follow up on people who could not make it to first event.

One calendar conflict does not necessarily mean lack of interest.

15. Don't bother thanking the members who give you names of potential members.

Recruiting is an on-going process. Don't bite the hand that feeds you.

16. Promise what you can not deliver — also known as bait and switch.

Eventually they will find out that you lied in a desperate attempt to get members. It's terrible for retention.

Use this list to avoid making the little mistakes that get in the way of great recruiting results.

- Review this list before you plan your next recruiting event to make sure you cover important details.
- A second look at this list just before your event can serve as a confidence builder that you have planned well.

Next some insights into what goes on in the mind of your members...

— Chapter Five —

Recruiting Members to the Next Level

A completed membership application and dues check is just the first step in the recruiting process.

Recruiting is a never-ending process.

Your members need to be recruited to volunteer to help out at events, to work on committees and to serve on your board

Set a goal to have as many people as possible active in your chapter.

- More active members means less work for everyone.

- Involvement gives members their greatest WIIFM for their investment in your chapter — and keeps them as members for the long term.

The first half of this book was solid advice on how to recruit.

The second half is a series of true life case studies from the volunteer front — with many experiences shared from the volunteer point of view.

The stories highlight some of the most common volunteer challenges I'm seeing with my association clients.

When you better understand what's going on your volunteers' minds, you can begin to take steps to work more effectively with them.

At the end of each story, I'll challenge you to create ways to incorporate the key concepts into your volunteer recruitment strategies.

Take time to think about the answers and discuss them with your board.

Jump Start New Member Involvement

Clarisse joined her chapter last week. On Friday, she got a call from Ted who introduced himself to her as one of the chapter's Involvement Advisors.

The chapter had a lot to offer. Ted's job was to help Clarisse identify which volunteer opportunity would be the best fit to achieve the personal goals that inspired her to join.

Ted asked Clarisse questions about what was important to her and why she had joined the group in the first place. Clarisse did a lot of the talking and Ted took notes.

Once Ted got the big picture of why Clarisse had joined, he asked a few

more questions to help prioritize what skills or emphasis she would like to start working on first in the chapter.

They also discussed potential time commitments and how she would like to volunteer if he found opportunities that would help her reach her goals.

Ted asked if it would be okay for him to think about what they had talked about over the weekend. He promised to send her an e-mail on Monday with his suggestions about how to best invest her time with the chapter.

As a new member, Clarisse was impressed with the chapter's commitment to her goals. She felt like Ted really understood why she had joined and was curious to see what he would come up with.

On Monday, as promised, Ted's e-mail of suggested involvement arrived.

Ted had made a few phone calls to program chairs and found two opportunities for Clarisse that fit her goals and interests.

One would give her a chance to develop some PR skills she needed for advancement in her career. The other involved working with high-risk children — something Clarisse felt strongly about.

Ted also quoted a monthly time involvement of two hours for the PR and three hours for the work with the high-risk children.

Clarisse was frustrated. She had told Ted she only wanted to invest two to three hours volunteering per month — but selecting only one opportunity would mean a great loss to her.

Clarisse needed some experience with PR for her position at work and talked to her boss about the PR option.

Clarisse's boss was excited about the PR option and suggested she use some time at the office to get the work done.

Because Clarisse would be getting such great hands-on training through her volunteer project, her boss also offered to reimburse her chapter dues.

Clarisse was thrilled!

With this support from work, volunteering with the high-risk children could be on her time — giving her the three hour per month commitment she felt she could handle.

Ted had included the chairs' names and contact information in the e-mail. Clarisse excitedly contacted them both and will be attending her first committee meeting this Thursday.

Clarisse also sent a big thank you note to Ted. Thanks to him, within a week of joining, Clarisse felt like she was an

important part of the chapter team — and already getting a great return on her dues!

Challenge questions:

- How do you help new members feel like part of your chapter team?
- What do you do to help your members achieve a customized return on their dues?

The Many Faces of Volunteering

Morgan credited her involvement in her local chapter as the reason for her new job. A big step up, it also demanded more time on the road.

Morgan missed a lot of meetings due to travel — but still felt very committed to her chapter.

She frequently ran across people who could benefit from being involved and encouraged them to join.

Morgan enjoyed sharing the benefits of the chapter with potential new members and saw her recruitment efforts as her way to continue contributing to the chapter.

Each month, Morgan forwarded the Membership Chair contact information for the prospective members she had personally primed for joining.

After several months no feedback from the Membership Chair, Morgan attempted to find out what happened to all her recruits who, by now, should be new chapter members.

It took three attempts for Morgan to finally get to the Membership Chair on the phone.

In a very cold voice, the Membership Chair explained that Morgan's efforts created extra work for her — and she did NOT appreciate Morgan's "help".

In fact, she had not followed up on ANY of Morgan's leads.

Morgan was mad. The Membership Chair made her look bad to those prospective members.

She was also sad that her efforts to help had been in vain — and stopped referring people to the chapter.

This chapter not only shut down a great source for new members, but also turned away a member's efforts to stay connected to them.

Challenge Questions:

Active membership comes in many forms these days.

- How do you create alternative ways of volunteering for your chapter to fit busy schedules?
- How do you show appreciation for all of your active members — not just the ones who show for meetings?

How to Kill Volunteer Enthusiasm

Julian, the new Fundraising Chair, was determined to raise a lot of money for the chapter.

Julian spent hours talking to members about what they would be interested in doing to help raise funds.

He also created a menu of options to fit members' time-packed schedules.

Last week was the annual volunteer round up meeting for the chapter.

The committee had done a great job with invitations and promotions. The room was packed with members new and old.

Each officer and chair had the opportunity to present their plans for the year ahead — and to solicit volunteer help from the members. Julian was excited.

Finally, it was his turn. He cleared his throat and started by saying, "Now, all of you know that fundraising is a necessary evil and I know that many of you don't like it..."

He repeated about the necessary evil of fundraising twice during his presentation — and even offered taking a check from those who really didn't want to do anything.

The energy in the room dropped as Julian's programs sounded more like torture than fun.

Julian rambled on about how poorly the group had done last year and how he hoped for different results on the projects this year.

When Julian's volunteer sign-up list went around the room, very few people signed up to help him out with fundraising for the upcoming year.

Julian was disappointed and wondered what went wrong. After all, he had created many new options this year based on members' feedback.

I wished I had had a tape recorder at the meeting to play back his "necessary evil commercial" to him.

Challenge Questions:

We all have too much work to do in our overpacked schedules. You've got to sell volunteer opportunities to your members if you want them to sign up.

When you make a pitch to get volunteers to sign up, you must focus on the positive.

- How do you promote volunteering as a way to have fun?
- How do you keep your volunteer requests positive — in spite of having a bad past experience or desperately needing a ton of help?

You've Got to Seize Your Volunteer Commitment

Jordan attended her chapter's annual volunteer round up last fall.

With her schedule in mind and a desire to get more involved in the chapter, Jordan carefully considered the committees seeking help.

After talking to the chair, Jordan signed up for the programming committee. She was excited about helping to set the pace of the chapter through quality programming.

Serving on the committee was going to be her big contribution to the chapter this year.

Jordan eagerly waited for news of the first committee meeting.

After three weeks of nothing, Jordan gave the chair a call. Since the programming was already planned for the next couple of months, they would have a meeting sometime before the end of the year.

Almost immediately after hanging up with the Programming Chair, the phone rang.

It was the PTA President from her daughter's school.

She asked Jordan to help out with the fall fund raiser. The first meeting was the following week.

Jordan was torn. The PTA committee would be meeting weekly and soak up any time that Jordan had.

Jordan had hoped to make this the year that she did something in her professional group — but they didn't really seem to need her help — plus, the PTA committee needed her now.

Jordan decided to commit to the PTA president to serve on the committee.

Challenge Question:

When you make a big push to sign up volunteers, it's critical to contact them and give them something to do as soon as possible.

Action makes their commitment real — and starts giving them WIIFM.

When there's too much time between the commitment and action, other groups and priorities can sneak in and take the time that was promised to your chapter.

- How do your committee chairs make new volunteers feel welcomed?
- What's the average lag time between committee sign up and involvement? How can you shorten that time?

The Out-of-Site, Out-of-Mind Syndrome Hurts

Bryon had belonged to his chapter for about a year and a half. He had gotten involved right away and was very active on a chapter committee.

The members loved Bryon and he was frequently referred to as one of the chapter's up and coming leaders.

Bryon's company got bought by another. Bryon's boss told him to plan on holding down extra duty for the next three to six months while the reorganization took place.

Bryon had to be very focused on the extra work load. His family was important to him.

He decided he needed to temporarily step down from chapter involvement.

It was a sad day for the chapter. Some members had planned to nominate Bryon for a board position next term.

Although disappointed, members also understood the chaos of takeovers and supported Bryon in his decision.

The months rolled by...

Bryon's work load finally started to lighten up. He was almost ready to get involved in the chapter again.

Through the busy time, another group had been working on recruiting Bryon. They had invited him to a couple of their functions.

Although he was too busy to attend, one of their membership team had regularly stayed in touch with Bryon.

When things started slowing down, the recruiter invited Bryon to one of their social events — a business after hours that was taking place around the corner from where Bryon worked.

Bryon decided to attend. He wouldn't have to spend a lot of time there — and, he wanted to meet his new buddy, the recruiter, in person.

That night, the recruiter introduced his friend Bryon to other members.

Bryon had a great time and decided to stay for the whole event.

Before he left, the recruiter made sure that Bryon had membership materials in his hands — and invited him to join the group.

Bryon told him he needed to think about it. Plus, it would be another two weeks until he could get involved with anything beyond work.

Some of the people Bryon met at the party sent him "nice to meet you" notes. He was impressed.

A week later, the recruiter called and invited Bryon to meet him at the next chapter meeting.

Bryon's original chapter had never called to check on how he was doing. In fact, it had now been eight months with no word from them — except the monthly newsletter.

Although he really enjoyed being involved in the original chapter, Bryon had lost touch with the members.

They didn't seem to care about Bryon any more.

Feeling like a free agent, he decided to get involved with the recruiter's group — where people were already treating him like he belonged.

Challenge Questions:

If a person is active in your chapter, odds are they will always be active somewhere.

- How does your chapter stay in touch with active members who have to take a leave from involvement?
- Who is in charge of these contacts?
- How do you let members know that you still care about them?

Make it Easy For Members to Get Re-Involved

Tina was one of those members who had been around forever — but people rarely saw her any more.

Last month, out of the blue, she attended a chapter meeting.

Frank, the Membership VP was thrilled to see Tina.

Tina was a wealth of wisdom for the chapter and moved mountains when she was active.

The next meeting was going to be on the other side of the city — a bit of a drive for Tina.

Frank wanted to make sure that Tina would keep coming to the meetings —

and didn't want the distance to be an excuse for Tina to no show.

Frank knew that Marla, a fellow board member, worked on the same side of the city as Tina and suggested that she call Tina to carpool with her.

It was Marla's first year on the board. If Frank had not asked her to call Tina to carpool, Marla would not have made the effort.

Marla had heard about Tina and her accomplishments for years. Just thinking about being in the same car with Tina made Marla nervous — but she did it as a favor to Frank.

Marla called Tina and was surprised to hear how enthusiastically Tina responded to the idea of carpooling.

Tina confided that she didn't know a lot of the new members and had felt a little awkward at the last meeting.

On the way over, the two women hit it off almost immediately. They talked nonstop in the car.

At Marla's request, Tina gave Marla some ideas on how to fine tune her work on a chapter project.

Tina knew great short cuts for making work much easier for Marla!

Walking into the meeting, the women were still immersed in conversation filled with smiles and laughter.

Frank was at the registration desk, ready to greet them — and thrilled to see both women so excited.

Marla would be able to learn a lot from Tina — and it would be wonderful to have Tina back involved with the chapter again.

Frank's mission was accomplished.

Challenge Questions:

- Do you have a strategy in place for regularly encouraging longtime members to return to being active in your chapter?
- How do you help longtime, but inactive members feel comfortable and needed when they return to check out your chapter?

How to Become a Volunteer Magnet

Every year, the chapter held an annual fundraiser that involved giving away several door prizes.

The chapter traditionally had problems getting people willing to go into the community to solicit prizes from the local merchants.

Traci was a fairly new member with a lot of drive.

When she heard about the problems in acquiring prizes, Traci decided to step up to the challenge and chair the donation team.

Traci talked to the last three chairs to find out what they had done and what didn't work.

She learned that members were uncomfortable asking for donations. They often committed to help — and at the last minute would frequently be unable to help out.

Traci then talked to some of her friends in the chapter to get their view of the solicitation process.

Many of them thought it was just too much work and would prefer to help out on something that was more fun.

Armed with those insights, Traci set about to make over the donor drive.

She decided to run the donor solicitations as a road rally of sorts.

Traci gave it a snappy theme and had creative announcements at meetings.

The concept caught the interest of members. They weren't thrilled with getting donations — but a road rally sounded like fun.

Finally the big day arrived and 25 members showed up at Traci's house for breakfast.

She put members into teams and gave them a crash course in how to ask for donations from businesses.

Each team was assigned a section of the city and given a list of categories to in which to get donations.

They had only three hours to complete their mission.

At the end of that time, they were to arrive at a secret location for a big party. Traci would call them to give a 15 minute warning — plus directions to the party.

Prizes would be awarded for the most creative results. Points were given for leads as well as actual donations that the team brought to the party.

When the clock struck 10 AM, Traci blew a whistle and the teams were on their way.

Some held quick strategy meetings at Traci's. Others ran for their cars. They were up for the challenge.

At 1 PM, the teams arrived at the party location with both donations and leads in hand.

The room filled with laughter as teams bragged about their efforts and ate their lunch.

In only three hours, they had collected more donations than the total for the prior year — and they also had several strong leads to follow up on for additional donations.

Challenge Questions:

Adding fun and a touch of creativity to volunteer duties can act like a magnet for members.

- How can you add more fun to your next project?
- How do you reward your committee chairs for their creativity?
- If fun and creativity attract volunteers, how can you make your meetings more fun and creative to increase your attendance?

Always Find Room for Interested Volunteers

The chapter had a series of chairs open for the new year. The President announced the opportunities at a meeting and really pumped up how rewarding it was to serve as a chair.

He hit a home run with his message!

The members took his message to heart and the board was flooded with more than double the number of people they needed.

The board was thrilled to be able to pick and choose their chairs from such a selection.

At the next meeting, they announced the new chairs in a grand fashion. They were brought to the front, applauded and photographed.

It was a great moment for the new committee chairs.

Jolaine was one of the people who had submitted an application to become a chair — but was not selected.

Two days earlier, the board had sent her a "thank you for applying, we've got too many qualified candidates, perhaps next year" type of letter.

Jolaine felt rejected by the board.

She had poured her heart into filling out the application and cited several areas where she had a lot of interest in volunteering for the chapter.

Jolaine could accept not being selected as a chair of a committee — but, why didn't the board at least assign her to work on one of the committees?

Shouldn't people who took the time to fill the application out, at least get

special committee assignment or some sort of recognition of their effort?

After all, she had been willing and ready to commit several nights a month to the chapter. Serving on the committee would cut that time in half.

Jolaine sadly mulled this through her head as the meeting progressed.

At the close of the meeting, she decided to skip the post-meeting coffee outing and just go home.

Jolaine had just about walked out the door when Katrina, the new Community Service Chair, grabbed her arm.

"Jolaine! I'm so glad I caught you before you left. You had some great ideas on your board application.

I'm sorry you didn't get to be a chair, but I'd love to work with you.

I'd like to make you the point person for youth involvement.

What do you say?"

Happily feeling like she was now part of the team, Jolaine smiled proudly as she accepted the committee work, "You can count on me Katrina."

Challenge Questions:

- Whenever you ask for volunteers, do you make sure everyone who raises their hand or submits an application gets a job to do?
- How can you make your requests for volunteer leadership sound so appealing that you get twice as many volunteers as needed?

Now it's time to put the recruiting strategies we've explored in this book to work for your chapter...

— Chapter Six —

10 Big Picture Tips for Launching Your Recruitment Campaign

We've covered a lot of information together in this book — from the principles of WIIFM to how to recruit new members and more volunteers.

Whether recruiting new members or volunteers, it's time for you to put this information to work for you.

Here are ten tips to help you keep the big picture vision as you launch your recruitment campaign:

1. Get clear on the outcomes you want to create.

Be specific with your outcome goals. What will your outcome look like when you are done?

Include more than just the number of recruits. Think about current member activation, PR opportunities, etc.

2. Get your chapter's support.

Share the work and the glory. The more people you can get involved, the greater your chance for success — plus you won't burn out.

3. Become an ace at WIIFM.

Read the WIIFM parts of this book periodically. It's easy to get so

involved that you forget the importance of WIIFM for newer members of your chapter.

Regularly review your work and see how many of the hot buttons you have included.

4. Find your irresistible offer.

What's so special about being involved in your chapter? Do the research to find your answer — and then use it with everything.

Make sure you can explain it using the different hot buttons as your base.

5. Keep an eye on the big picture.

Do you know what's the next step for your new recruits? Work with your board team to help ensure a smooth transition for new members to become an active ones.

6. Recruit on multiple levels.

A well run recruiting season can help bring chapter members closer together, bring back members who haven't been seen in a while, as well as bring in new members and active volunteers for the chapter.

7. Celebrate your successes.

Take time to relish how well all of your team's hard work has paid off.

Really make a big deal about achieving your goals — you have just guaranteed the future of your chapter!

8. Keep notes on what worked well.

You'll learn a lot as you run your recruiting campaign. Make note of what works for future Membership chairs — as well as for your own personal reference in your next volunteer adventure.

9. Give lots of thanks.

It's much easier to give lots of thanks than to do it all. Make people feel good about helping you recruit and they'll be eager help you the next time you need volunteers.

10. Have FUN!

Life is too short to not have fun in your volunteer efforts. The more fun you create, the more attractive you become — and the easier it is for you to have recruiting success.

It's now time for you to start taking action. Remember what we've talked about and take time to review key strategies when you need to.

Think WIIFM, create a lot of fun — and have a great recruiting season!

Meet Author Cynthia D'Amour

Having served more than 30 total years on volunteer boards and recruited more than 250 members, Cynthia D'Amour knows first hand the key issues that association leaders face in dealing with Generation Me.

Cynthia is a Leadership Coach and President of People Power Unlimited.

She works with associations that want to get more members involved and coaches leaders who want to achieve.

She also publishes a free weekly e-zine, "Cynthia D'Amour's Active Member Minute," which gives association leaders ideas about how to

Meet Cynthia D'Amour

get more members involved in their organization. (Send an e-mail to damour@peoplepowerunlimited.com to subscribe to this e-zine.)

Cynthia conducts a variety of leadership programs related to getting more members involved and is a favorite presenter at both national and state associations.

A certified teacher with a degree in marketing, Cynthia promotes a strategic, relationship-based approach to reaching members.

Cynthia is also the author of **How to Turn Generation Me Into Active Members of Your Association** and **Networking: The Skill the Schools Forgot to Teach**.

Cynthia was recently named one of the **2000 Notable American Women** for her work with associations. She is also listed in the **2000 Who's Who in**

Business and Professional Women and was named a **1998 Outstanding Young Michigander** by the Michigan Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Cynthia is a regular speaker for the American Society of Association Executives. Her articles are published frequently in association leadership publications. Several of these articles can be found at Cynthia's website: www.peoplepowerunlimited.com.

For more information about Cynthia's programs and availability, call (888) 994-3375 or send e-mail to: damour@peoplepowerunlimited.com.

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How to Recruit Generation ME

Cynthia D'Amour, author of **How to Turn Generation Me into Active Members of Your Association**, created this companion book to help you recruit Generation Me.

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- Marketing savvy strategies for recruiting new members and volunteers
- 16 recruiting mistakes to avoid
- Ten big picture tips for launching your recruitment campaign

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