

Membership Program Director

(extracted from Supreme Pub 962-2010)

Recruitment, Retention and Insurance Promotion

The many good works of the Order are entirely dependent on an involved, committed and growing membership. After all, without a strong membership base and regular efforts to attract new Knights and replace those who've left, none of the other important council efforts on behalf of the Church and community would be possible.

Each council must be proactive in its approach to membership growth to ensure success. You cannot sit back and expect membership growth to occur on its own. An organized and active membership team is an absolute must for EVERY council.

The membership committees should be organized as described on page 5 of this program manual and on the chart on this page. As membership director, committee chairman or committee member, you are responsible for guiding the growth of your council.

Every Knight can and should play a role in membership activities. Some will function best as part of recruitment teams or as individual recruiters. Others who are not comfortable approaching prospects directly, can contribute by identifying prospects for recruiters to contact from among their family members, friends, coworkers and other acquaintances.

You and the other members of the membership committees should immediately begin planning the programs and events that will ensure a successful year of membership activity. A well-rounded and continuous program should employ various initiatives and include the participation of many members. A combination of recruitment methods — church drives, open house programs, two-on-one team recruiting, individual recruiting, "VIP" Club promotion, etc. — along with retention and insurance promotion efforts, will produce the award winning results desired. The key is to immediately get organized and get started.

RECRUITMENT

The following pages provide successful methods and ideas for finding and recruiting new Knights. Choose those that best fit your situation and will best serve your council. Make a commitment to expanding the council and its accomplishments, and work together to meet that commitment.

• Organize your membership campaign in 10 easy steps:

1. Set goals and quotas.
2. Organize your campaign.
3. Set up recruiting teams.
4. Develop prospect lists.
5. Start team recruiting.
6. Visit prospects personally.
7. Ask prospects to join.
8. Ensure prompt initiation.
9. Complete proposer duties — follow up! Make sure new knights and their families are welcomed and involved.
10. Recruit another member!

If each of these 10 steps is implemented, your council is sure to experience recruitment success.

• Lead by example. Because **example is often the most effective form of leadership, ask each officer, director and chairman in your council to bring in, at the very least, one new member**. If they just aren't good at recruiting, make sure they offer leads on new members. By personally recruiting new members, council leaders can then speak with conviction when emphasizing recruitment. You can even introduce a little competition into this effort by prominently posting on a bulletin board the names of each officer and the prospects they've brought in.

• Refer to the **How to...Succeed at Membership Recruitment** handbook (#2769) for ideas on membership

campaigns that can be implemented in your council.

- Set a goal in your council to **attain Star Council status**.
- Personally **invite every eligible Catholic man** to join and get involved. Seek their open, public and unselfish participation in solving the problems of today.
- **Utilize membership recruitment video productions**. A number of productions are available for either training membership personnel and recruiters, or for educating prospects and their families on what the Order has to offer. The following productions are available free except for shipping and handling charges from the Department of Fraternal Services. Full descriptions and additional ordering information are provided in the *AV Flyer* (#1539) and in the *Supply Catalog* (#1264). Videos can be viewed at www.kofc.org/films.

PRODUCTIONS FOR RECRUITERS (in DVD format):

— *Membership Recruitment Flipchart*— 12 Minutes — Available in English, French and Spanish

PRODUCTIONS FOR PROSPECTS (in DVD format):

— *Experience of a Lifetime* — 11 Minutes — Available in English, French and Spanish (VHS & DVD)

— *Founding to Future* — 17 Minutes — Available in English

— *Life and Legacy of Father McGivney*— 14 Minutes — Available in English, French and Spanish

BLITZ MATERIALS:

— *Prospect Cards* (Item #921A) help councils collect information on prospects. They also can be placed in pews for collection after Mass.

— *Did You Know? Flyers* (#1267) detail 24 interesting facts about the Order.

— *Membership Documents* (#100) are what recruiting is all about. Get prospects to sign these and their presence at a First Degree is the result.

— *The Greatness of a Man Flyers* (#4496) give a quick overview of the Order from its creation to the service opportunities it offers to men today.

- Process all prospective members or candidates through the **Admission Committee**. Make certain that all completed membership documents are immediately forwarded to the Supreme Council office following exemplification of the First Degree.
- Organize your own **First Degree team** and conduct frequent exemplifications in your council. Set a council goal of holding a First Degree every month. This will help to keep council recruiters working to find prospects on a regular basis. At the very least, schedule three First Degree exemplifications every six months. It is not necessary nor desirable to wait for a large class before holding a First Degree. If one or two men have to wait weeks or months to take the First Degree, they may lose interest.
- **Select honorees as the focus for your council's First Degrees:** Father Michael J. McGivney, Pope Benedict XVI, Christopher Columbus, council chaplains, past grand knights, religious figures, your state or district deputy, worthy council members and their families, a local hero or celebrity, etc. Make sure these honorees are people who are well-known throughout your council and community. By selecting honorees as the focal point of the degree, you create an extra sense of importance and excitement and feelings about the honoree and will work hard to recruit new members as a testament to that person.
- Encourage **all First Degree members to achieve their Second and Third degrees** as soon as possible. Advise them, in advance, of the Second and Third degrees scheduled. Participating in the advanced degrees allows new members to become more involved in your council . . . which makes them better Knights . . . which will often make them more effective recruiters.
- Assign a definite **quota of new and former member additions** for your council. Strive to attain the Father McGivney Award.
- Sponsor incentive programs for recruiters in your council and promote the Supreme Council's "**Very Important Proposer**" (VIP) Club. For more information about the "VIP" Club see the "VIP" Club flyer (#2488).
- Use the **Prospect Referral Card (#921A, for distribution to prospects)** and the **Prospect Card (#921, for distribution to members)** available from the Supply Department, for soliciting new member prospects.
- Develop close ties between councils and parishes, which are mutually beneficial and helpful to members in developing their lives of faith, worship and service. The K of C Parish Round Table program has been designed to help foster continued close ties between parishes and councils, especially in areas where council membership may come from several surrounding parishes. Simply put, the **K of C Parish Round Table** program is an offer of service from the local council to every parish in its area. This service

will not interfere with any existing parish council or organization, since the pastor himself designates in which programs the council should become involved. Further information is provided in the Parish Round Table flyer (#2632).

- Seek the **cooperation of your pastor in your membership recruitment program**. He may be able to suggest parishioners who would be good prospects for membership.
- Obtain the **endorsement of the ordinary in your diocese**. Ask that a letter be sent to all churches in the diocese promoting the Order and its recruitment programs. Ask that “Knights of Columbus Sunday” be designated.
- **Utilize direct mail**. Make your initial contact with prospects in a simple, effective and inexpensive manner. Start with a mailing of the Membership Invitation card (#2599), signed by the grand knight and sent to parishioners, neighbors, friends, relatives and other potential Knights. The invitation informs the recipient that he has been suggested as having all the qualifications necessary for membership in the Order and will be contacted by a council representative to arrange an appointment to acquaint the prospect with the Order. About a week after the invitations have been mailed, follow up with telephone calls to all recipients and schedule visits by two-man recruitment teams.
- Establish **contact with high school and college graduates by sending the “Congratulations” card (#938)**, and including your name and phone number.
- **Invite 18-year-old graduates from your Columbian Squires circle to join your council**. These young Catholic leaders are already dedicated to the ideals of Columbianism and can bring their energy and ideas to council efforts. The best way to ensure that Squires will be eager to be a part of your council is by regularly making your Squires circle part of council programs and activities. A strong working relationship with these young men will certainly prepare them to graduate into their new role as Knights.
- Encourage use of the **Membership Recruitment Flip Chart video production or the actual flip chart (#889) and binder** by your members when they visit a prospect and his family. The presentation provides an overview of the programs, activities and initiatives the Order has undertaken.
- Promote the **Order’s program of fraternal benefits** to prospects as one of the many advantages of membership. The Family Fraternal Benefits flyer (#2761) and the Member/Spouse Fraternal Benefits flyer (#2773) are available through the Supply Department at no cost and are excellent tools for explaining these valuable benefits.
- Prepare recruiters to answer questions about the Knights of Columbus by urging them to carry the **Pocket Flip Chart (#2041)** at all times. This guide to the K of C is an excellent recruitment tool. Pocket Flip Charts are available in quantity at no charge from the Supply Department.
- **Fulfill your duties as a proposer**. Once you’ve recruited a new member, accompany him through his degrees, introduce him to his new brother Knights, encourage him to join one or more committees and actively participate in the council.
- Contact your **Knights of Columbus field agent to help your council recruit new members**. His knowledge of professional salesmanship techniques will be very helpful. Ask him to conduct seminars on recruitment strategy for your council members.
- Sponsor a **“Church Drive” program** for recruiting new members. Contact your pastor and arrange to set up tables in the church hall or vestibule and display literature, pamphlets, posters, etc. throughout one weekend. Distribute the Prospect Card (#921A, E, F, S) to men as they come to Mass. Follow up with anyone who completes the Prospect Card by sending a recruitment team to pay him a visit. Extend a personal invitation to the prospect and his family to learn more about the Knights of Columbus and to join.
- Preach the good news of the Order. Suggested **pulpit announcements (#2678)** urging parishioners to join during a church drive are available from the Supply Department. These messages, when customized with local information and accompanied when possible by an endorsement from your pastor, can prove very effective in convincing families to consider becoming a part of the Order.
- **Use advertisements in diocesan or local newspapers**.
- Sponsor an **“Information Program” for juniors and seniors in parochial high schools**. Obtain approval and seek the assistance of the school principal in the promotion of your membership recruitment program.
- Utilize the **“Welcome Wagon”** in your community to disseminate information about the Order — its purposes, programs, accomplishments, awards, history, etc.
- Promote the **“Blazer Club.”** Councils award blue blazers to those members who recruit 10 members within a specific time period. Recognition should be given to “Blazer Club” members at state conventions

and meetings, council events, etc.

RETENTION

Cut down on membership suspensions, a serious problem in the growth of our Order and its councils. The first step toward retaining members is the establishment of a strong, active membership retention committee including the deputy grand knight (chairman) and the trustees. Our Order loses many members within the first or second year after initiation because they are uninformed on the programs, objectives and achievements of the Knights of Columbus. Others leave due to lack of opportunity to reap the benefits of membership, including the chance to work on activity committees they found interesting and challenging.

- **Determine the causes of suspensions in your council** and provide possible solutions to the problem.

Examine your “council’s conscience” often to find possible reasons why a member loses interest in maintaining his active membership in the Order, then work to eliminate those reasons.

- Make certain that your **financial secretary is following the prescribed procedures for the “Notice of Intent to Suspend” program**, including personal contact by the retention committee.

Have him give a list of those members who are in danger of being suspended to the retention committee. The committee can divide the list equally and have teams of two members each personally call upon those members and urge them to become active again.

- Make certain that an **Admission Committee** is appointed and operating properly within your council. The “Admission Committee Questionnaire” (#391, E, F, S) should be completed in triplicate by each new applicant. The questionnaire is distributed to the program director and the field agent and a copy is retained in the council files. New members should be assigned to program committees of interest to them as soon as possible. Make certain that all members have some specific responsibility or task within the council.

- **Evaluate the programs and activities now being sponsored by your council.** Full utilization of the Service Program proves to be the very best membership retention measure available. Suggest diversified programs aimed at improving your council’s image in the community. Programs must be meaningful, sincere and diversified to provide appeal to all segments of your membership.

- **Promote retention programs** sponsored by the state and Supreme councils.

- Conduct **“Operation: Re-Member.”** Your financial secretary should be able to provide a listing of all members suspended from your council. After obtaining the listing, it is suggested that each former member be personally contacted and asked to enroll again as an active member in your council. Check the rules governing membership procedures for former members. All recruiters should be familiar with these procedures before contacting former members.

- Conduct a survey among members to determine their preferences for committee work. A special **“Member Interest Survey” (#1842)** is available in quantity and at no charge through the Supply Department for use in this effort. Make certain members are appointed to those committees where their interests lie.

- Plan a **“Welcome Back”** or **“Come Home”** program for former members. Send special invitations to attend the program to all former members and their families. Also invite members of your council and their families to the program. Show one of the Order’s video productions which help tell the story of the Knights of Columbus. Arrange for appropriate speakers. Following the program, arrange to contact all former members in regard to activating their membership.

- Strive to **streamline council meetings.** Keep discussions, comments, etc., within the proper limits. Extraneous matters should be promptly referred by the grand knight to the proper committees for further discussion and solution.

- See that **council meetings start on time — even if only a few are present.** When the members begin to realize that the meetings will start on schedule, meeting attendance will be improved, interest built and more members will be retained as active members.

- Institute a **“Shining Armor Award”** program to get your council’s new members active in service programs as soon as possible. This program was set up to recognize service to the Order with distinction during a Knight’s first year of membership. It’s a tremendous way to get new members active and also honor them as elite members of the State Council’s membership during their first year as a Knight. New Knights that are involved in at least three service programs, attend three council business meetings, receive their Third Degree, meet with their council’s insurance representative and recruit at least one new member — all during their first year of membership qualify for this award. More information about this program can be obtained by reading the Shining Armor Award Flyer (#4297).

INSURANCE PROMOTION

As a fraternal benefit society, the Knights of Columbus maintains, for the protection of its members, an insurance program of sufficient scope and flexibility to meet almost any need.

The Knights of Columbus insurance program is operated solely for the benefit of its members and their families. Thus it is in a position to offer a variety of life insurance products comparable to those sold anywhere — and at a competitive cost.

With more than \$70 billion of insurance already in force, our insurance program gives us the financial muscle and organizational framework to recruit new members and to strengthen the loyalty and dedication of those within our fold. Throughout the Order, our insurance and fraternal aspects must be blended into a smooth-working team. Such is the task of each insurance promotion chairman.

- Conduct a **“Fraternal Benefits Night.”** Set aside several nights during the fraternal year for insurance promotion presentations at which your field agent can provide information on the Order’s top-rated insurance products. Invite Knights, prospects and their families to attend and learn about the variety of benefits offered. Each field agent has available to him at no cost a “Fraternal Benefits Night” packet through the Supply Department that can assist with preparing for and conducting these presentations. The agent can also arrange to show the video production *Peace of Mind*, which explains the many benefits of the Order’s insurance program.

- Check your council’s insurance quota for Supreme Council awards. **Strive to attain the Founder’s Award.**

- **Introduce your agent at all council meetings** and First Degree exemplifications he attends.

- **Refer all insurance inquiries to your field agent.**

- Ask your public relations chairman to establish an **“Insurance” column in your council bulletin** and include the name, address and telephone number of your council’s field agent.

- **Forward a copy of all Membership Documents (#100) to the general agent** immediately following the exemplification of the First Degree.

- Encourage a **good working relationship between the financial secretary and the field agent** — a cooperative and effective relationship between these two important officials will help council members receive the service they deserve.

- Make certain that your **field agent is included on all council mailings** —an informed agent will be able to service the needs of members more effectively.

- **Include your field agent in the planning of all major programs and events** to ensure that the insurance program of the Order is represented in all pertinent activities.