



# *the* recruiter

**FarmHouse ~ 99 Years and Still Growing Strong**

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## **Growing as a Chapter Means Educating Your Chapter**

Once the FarmHouse Leadership Academy is over, it will be very important for each chapter's recruiter to teach the chapter what he learned while in Kansas City. A recruitment workshop is a great way to educate the whole chapter. First, think of about 25 questions commonly asked by potential members such as: "How much does it cost to be a member?" or "What do I have to do to be initiated?" Write each question on a 3x5 index cards and write numbers 1-25 on the back. Next, randomly hand out cards to chapter members during a chapter meeting. Ask the person with the #1 card to stand up, read the question and answer it in front of the group. When finished, the group shall offer feedback on the person's response. Don't be afraid to critique each person, but also give positive praise so each member's self-confidence grows. The end result will be a whole chapter with the self-confidence to talk to anyone who has a question about their chapter.

### **Steps to Make Your Recruitment Successful**

1. **Start early.** Lack of preparation results in uncoordinated fiascos. Members do not know what their roles are, people and supplies aren't where they should be. The lack of preparation is very visible to potential members.
2. **Try something new.** Don't get caught up in what other fraternities are doing. Be creative, be different, but most of all, be yourselves!
3. **Practice.** Work on proper introductions, correct handshakes, house tours and conversation skills. Those are some aspects to a recruitment event that you can practice to ensure a successful event.
4. **Make recruitment expectations clear.** New chapter members have the best opportunity to bring in friends from the dorms, friends from high school and people from general classes. Upper classmen in the chapter are the ones to "sell" what FarmHouse offers. They have the opportunity to explain, first hand, how FarmHouse has helped them through school and how it has positively affected their life.
5. **Don't limit yourself.** For example, a chapter may recruit strictly Ag majors. The Ag college may consist of 500 students, half of which are women, leaving 250 students left to choose from. With a 30 man AGR chapter on campus, that leaves around 200 men left to draw from. On a campus with a 15,000 undergraduate population, the chapter has just limited itself to 1.3% of the student body.

### **One Chapter's Success Story**

We are pleased to announce that the Alberta Chapter has completed the fall semester with one of their largest fall new member classes in, well, no one seems to remember when a larger class was initiated. Eleven men were brought into the Alberta FarmHouse experience this fall. Adding 11 men to an 18 man chapter will surely produce a bright future and increase the opportunities ahead!

President Callum Sears attributed the chapter's recruitment success to a number of factors. First, the chapter set a recruitment goal of a certain number of men to recruit. Early identification was also key, pinpointing potential members before the summer then maintaining contact with them throughout the summer. Sears mentioned including recruits in the chapter's daily activities was beneficial, giving the prospects the chance to participate and see what their dues would go towards. He also stated that having a presence on campus either at organization fairs or having members involved in student organizations helped get the FarmHouse name out.

**Way to go men, keep up the good work, eh!**

*"You only have one chance to make a first impression."*

# Commitment is Golden

To ensure chapter growth, recruiting more members is not the final solution; retaining members is the bottom line. Once pledged, we must ensure the men will commit to the new member education period. Retention affects each individual chapter as well as the International Fraternity.

## Depledges affect individual chapters by:

- Loss of chapter manpower
- Loss of future leadership
- Loss of future alumni involvement
- Loss of revenue in the chapter budget

## Depledges affect the International Fraternity by:

- Fewer men to attend FarmHouse leadership conferences
- Loss of future FarmHouse alumni
- If there are 550 new members and 15% quit or depledges leave for academic reasons; that equals a loss of 83 men.  $83 \times \$200$  (1 full year's int. dues) results in a \$16,600 loss that could be used for leadership programming, conferences or chapter support.

## Improving Retention of Members

- ✓ **Be honest** when explaining what the expectations and time commitment of a new member will be. Have available a syllabus or outline of the pledge semester to give to potential members.
- ✓ **Evaluate why past members have depledged.** If it was for academic reasons, for example, reevaluate the academic expectations.
- ✓ **Create a Big Brother program.** Each new member would be assigned a person that would be their mentor. The big brother would be a person to ask for advice and guidance. To ensure a strong program, schedule weekly big/little brother activities to strengthen the bond between the two. The events may be as simple as having lunch together, attending church together or going on double dates.
- ✓ **Empower the new members early.** Allow them to organize a social or community service event for the entire chapter. It will make them feel involved and give them a sense of ownership.

## Common Assumptions

\_\_ **Everyone knows what a fraternity is. FALSE.**

Many people view fraternities from movies or the negative press that is often published. It is our job to educate the uneducated. This can be done by press releases, speaking in classes, giving resident hall presentations or speaking at student organization meetings.

\_\_ **I don't have classes with freshmen so I can't recruit anyone. FALSE.**

Some students want to wait until their sophomore year to settle into school before making any time commitments. This makes them another class to target. The number of transfer students is also increasing. These students may be a good fit since they already have a couple years of school behind them; although relying solely on transfer students may be devastating.

\_\_ **Recruitment is expensive. FALSE.**

People often join because they like the guys they are around. They don't join because of theme parties or fancy houses. Prospective members should be included in everyday activities (service events, philanthropies, intramurals, bible studies and study groups).

\_\_ **We didn't have a good formal recruitment. FALSE.**

15% of freshmen want to join a fraternity, 15% don't want to join and 70% are in between. If we focus on the 15% that want to join, we are missing another 70% that could be potential members. It takes proactive recruitment to target that 70%. That 70% percent will be people that are recruited outside of formal recruitment. Remember, recruitment is 365 days of the year.

\_\_ **We recruit everyone, and then wean them out during pledging. FALSE.**

Chapters should have confidence in who they recruit. If you wait until pledging, you are wasting your time and energy on people that shouldn't even be around. Be upfront and honest about who you are looking for and what the time commitment to FarmHouse is so the people who pledge will be truly committed.

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