



## SIMPLE 5-STEP RECRUITMENT SYSTEM

By: The Social Excellence Project

**#MRIHA (pronounced mer-ee-ha)** is about as simple of a model as you can get. Those letters stand for five simple steps... Meet, Record, Invite, Host, Ask. The #MRIHA model puts the individual potential member at the center of your recruitment plan. That's important, because often when we ask a group leader to tell us their growth strategy they'll provide a calendar of events and tell us about their newest social media posts. Those are fine, but great recruiters understand that the prospect -- the person you're trying to recruit -- has to be at the center of your plan. Recruitment is about relationships, and relationships are personal. #MRIHA is a personal process that every prospect walks through.

**MEET:** This week, what are the tactics you'll employ to meet non-members. Maybe you'll ask for referrals from outside sources. Maybe you'll conduct membership drives that result in names and contact information of new folks. Maybe you'll execute a major inbound marketing strategy that isn't focused on "getting your name out there," but instead is focused on getting names and contact information on your list so that you have a chance to build a relationship with them. Maybe you'll participate in community events, or organizational fairs. Maybe you'll conduct a raffle or a survey. Maybe you'll put on an event that provides a service to the population you'd like to recruit. Whatever you do though, it has to result in handshakes (I define a "handshake" as either an actual handshake in real life, or a virtual connection point that results in a. new names and contact information on your list and b. a reason to follow up). Until you've "shaken hands" with someone you don't have a chance to recruit them.

**RECORD:** Tracking individual relationships is a key indicator of a group's recruitment potential. Having a consistent system for tracking individual potential members - their names, contact information, personal profiles, and a history of touch points with your organization is absolutely key to successful recruitment. If you don't have a recruitment tracker, you're not recruiting... This can be a spreadsheet, a formal CRM "customer relationship management" software, or a big piece of paper on a wall someplace -- it just has to be updated consistently and allow you to watch as individual potential members move from strangers to acquaintances to friends to hot prospects to members. In fact, we recommend using a simple ranking system: When you first meet someone they're a "D." When you interact with them (perhaps over coffee, a meal, at an event, or some relationship-building activity), they become a "C." When they start to show some interest in your group, they're a "B." When you've decided they're a good fit and they are very interested, they're an "A." And when you've asked them to join and they've fully committed, they become an "A+."





**INVITE:** A direct, personal, one-on-one invitation is both highly effective and all too rare. Too many organizations "spray and pray." They send out bulk invites, they "spam" people, they post an event date and time and just hope a bunch of highly motivated strangers will magically show up. Sometimes that works. Most of the time, it doesn't. It helps to consider what you're inviting people to. Consider the ranking system above. Maybe your organization's events aren't really for strangers or people whose name you just obtained. Perhaps your organization's events are better suited for B's and A's. The D's and C's on your list would likely benefit from some extra trust-building, some friendship-time, a more personal approach before it's likely that they'll show up to the big event you might be planning. Personal invites, intentional relationship building, and patience all pay off in the end.

**HOST:** When you do have a chance to engage with potential members, be a warm and thoughtful host. Remember, blabbering on about how great you believe your organization is will almost always never work. They need to be loved. They need to know they would matter to you. They need you to be Socially Excellent -- choose to be curious, generous, authentic, and vulnerable. Choose to care deeply. Create what we talk about as "Thumbs Up" interactions. The way you and your members fill the "social space" between yourselves and the potential member will define your organization's brand, and for that matter, your organization's recruitment potential.

**ASK:** "Will you join our group?" It might seem obvious, but you actually have to ask that question. Not, "Let us know if you're interested." Not, "We hope you'll consider joining." A direct, sincere, and hopeful ask is often absent in the actual experience of many potential members for your group. "Closing the deal" can sound a little sales-y, we know, but truthfully there is nothing more flattering to someone than being personally and intentionally asked to be a part of someone's group. Humans are social animals and we all want to be included. We all want to be wanted. Don't forget to ask.

