



United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps

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NSCC INFORMATION LETTER 15-87

From: Executive Director, U. S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps
To: Distribution

Subj: RECRUITING AND RETENTION OF NSCC OFFICERS

1. The major constraint to growth of the Cadet Corps programs is the lack of adequate numbers of qualified, competent adult leaders. It is futile to recruit cadets unless units are properly staffed and have the resources to provide them with interesting and challenging training programs. If you can't keep them interested - you won't keep them. The Navy and Coast Guard are more than generous in making their facilities available for cadet training. Competent adult leaders are needed to ensure that these facilities are utilized in the training of cadets. Consequently as a matter of priority, all concerned and involved with the Cadet Corps programs should help identify adult leaders. The typical adult leader is a unique individual, a Person who willingly gives of his or her time and effort (and at no small personal expense) to help the Cadet Corps and the Navy League attain the objectives in the training and education of American youth. Once found and enrolled they must be retained. The remaining paragraphs deal with actions that might be taken in accomplishing this very worthwhile task.

2. Recruiting:

a. Gain the cooperation of commanding officers of local Navy/Coast Guard activities and, most important, Of the commanding officer of the local Naval Reserve Center, in publicizing our program and recruiting adult leaders. You will find them most supporting and willing to help.

b. Visit civic/patriotic organizations such as the Lions Club, Kiwanis, Elks, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Fleet Reserve Association, etc.. These organizations have individuals with a wealth of information in numerous fields and every effort should be made to enlist their Support as adult leaders.

c. Visit local schools and canvass the faculty for adult leaders. School guidance counselors can help you in this regard - they are also an important source of cadet referrals.

d. Make yourself and the Cadet Corps programs known to local churches, regardless of your own faith.

e. Talk to fellow employees - solicit their help.

f. Keep in close contact with your local Navy recruiter. Navy recruiting has a vested interest in the Cadet Corps programs as a source of well qualified accessions. They will, and can, help.

g. Pursue any other potential areas/leads in obtaining adult leaders. For example, encourage cadet parents to become involved in the program. This might be on a short time basis, however, cadet parents can make a solid contribution.

h. Finally there is the consideration that while we need adult leaders, the first priority is in quality - not quantity. Too many adults try to become adult leaders for the wrong reason. Be sure that those adult leaders that you recruit join the Cadet programs for the right reasons.

2. Retention. If an adult leader thinks that he or she is making a meaningful contribution to the training of young Americans, and if this contribution is recognized, the retention factor goes way up. The first step is to get the newly appointed officer acquainted with the Cadet Corps program, and for those individuals with no prior military service, acquainted with the Navy. The newly appointed officer with no Navy experience should be encouraged to take Navy correspondence courses, Basic Military Requirements, Naval Orientation, Leadership to name a few. Also, they should be knowledgeable with the contents of the Bluejackets' Manual. With knowledge comes confidence - and confidence is essential to the success of a leader. The following are measures that can be taken in your efforts in your efforts to retain adult leaders:

a. Adult leaders must have a sincere and genuine interest in the cadet's welfare and training. Strong encouragement and leadership by example is a must unit officers.

b. Assign an officer to a billet whose background will make him/her an effective leader. For example, female officers with secretarial/clerical experience would be effective in administrative duties, This is also true of Naval Reservists with Yeoman and Personnelman experience.

c. Once an officer has been thoroughly indoctrinated in a particular field of the unit organization, rotate the officer to another billet. An officer will lose interest if left in the same billet for a long period of time and will tend to lose interest in the program.

d. The more experienced officers should set an example for new officers. Many new officers and midshipmen are not familiar with naval customs, traditions, and proper wearing of the uniform. If other unit officers are lackadaisical and present a poor military bearing and dress, then the new officer will tend to follow them. The NSCC Uniform Regulations are quite comprehensive in the description and wearing of naval uniforms.

e. Assist new officers by answering any questions that they may ask and ascertain the correct answer. It's hard for a new officer to be indoctrinated if senior officers within the unit appear to have little interest in the details of the Sea Cadet program.

f. Schedule unit field trips to military installations and other points of interest which are educational. This will be a learning process for the officer and will acquaint him/her with the duties of an escort officer.

g. Encourage unit officers to participate as escort officers during the Summer training period. Many such escort billets are not only interesting but also educational.

h. Commend an officer for a job well done in front of unit personnel. Do not admonish an officer in public as this serves no constructive purpose.

i. Hold "All Officers" meetings on a regular basis in order to discuss unit activities and any problem areas. Give attention to the solutions offered by your officers in problem areas and do not make up your mind before all recommendations are considered. If an individual's suggestion is ignored or belittled, it can be very discouraging to the point that he/she will be reticent to discuss problem areas.

j. Recommend appropriate NSCC ribbons for those officers who have done an exceptional job when assigned a particular task. As there are no pay or allowances within the NSCC, the award of an appropriate ribbon is one way of showing appreciation for a job well done. This will help to encourage an officer to further beneficial actions.

k. Recommend promotions for deserving officers as soon as they are considered prepared for additional responsibilities and have the necessary longevity in grade. Promotion recommendations must be made on merit, not longevity. Criteria for officer promotions are outlined in detail in NSCC Information Letter 2-87.

3. Navy League Council Support. While primary responsibility for adult retention rests with the unit commanding officer, the attitude of, and support given, by the sponsoring Navy League Council is a major factor. If adult leaders do not think the council is supportive, that the members are not appreciative of their efforts, they will tend to lose interest - for obvious reasons. For this program to succeed, there must be full council involvement and support. The role of the NSCC Committee Chairman in generating this involvement and support is most important, He/she must be fully informed as to the unit's activities and unit needs. He/she must ensure that all cadet and officer accomplishments are recognized with appropriate ceremony. This is a simple, but very effective motivational tool which is all too often overlooked. Adult leaders work hard - their efforts must be recognized.



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