



United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps

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8 April 1988

NSCC INFORMATION LETTER 6-88

From: Executive Director, U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps
To: NSCC/NLCC Unit Commanding Officers

Subj: CADET RECRUITING/RETENTION

Ref: (a) NSCC Information Letter 15-87
(b) NSCC Information Letter 16-87

Encl: (1) RECRUITING/RETENTION

1. References (a) and (b) provide information on officer recruiting/retention and council responsibilities in forming sustaining a cadet corps unit. The enclosed summary of ideas concerning cadet recruiting and retention supplements the information previously provided. There are some really good thoughts and ideas which would be of benefit in planning and implementing your recruiting and retention efforts. Put them to good use.


K. T. Weaver

Copy to:
NSCC National Officers/National Directors
NSCC Regional/Associate Regional Directors
NSCC Committee Chairmen



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CADET RECRUITING/RETENTION

GENERAL

1. Cadets attending the NSCC Leadership Academy, Mare Island, California, in June 1987, were asked to compile their thoughts regarding cadet recruiting and retention. These outstanding, highly motivated cadets came up with a list of items that reflect a realistic understanding of human nature and, most important, of the goals and objectives of the Naval Sea Cadet Corps program. We would like to share them with you. We would also like to express our appreciation to Capt. S. W. McCullough, USNR (Ret.) who planned and conducted the course, and who compiled and forwarded the list.

IDEAS FOR RECRUITING CADETS

- Be visible, take part in parades and special holiday ceremonies.
- Support local fund drives and activities such as telethons, Toys for Tots, etc. Always wear your uniform.
- Pass out information on the Cadet Corps programs at any function you might attend.
- Have business cards printed. Give them to people who ask about the Cadet Corps programs. Leave them at service recruiting offices. Leave them at businesses patronized by young people.
- Set up information booths at local shopping malls, fairs, air shows, etc.
- Appear on local TV talks shows to explain the Cadet Corps programs.
- Ask recruiters to pass out promotional literature to young people who come into their offices.
- Take your color guard to junior high/high school assemblies and make presentations using the Sea Cadet film or slide presentation.
- Take the color guard, film or slide presentation to local civic organizations (including the Navy League).
- Have a fund raiser for the unit (bake sale, car wash, etc.). Wear the uniform and pass out literature.
- Write articles for the school paper about summer training and other cadet activities. Give a telephone number for those who might want more information.
- Have posters printed for display at schools and other places where young people go. Have a telephone number on the poster to call for more information.
- Ask school counselors for names of students who are interested in joining the armed forces, and who might benefit from participation in the Cadet Corps programs.

- Have an open house. Invite the public. Have interested students bring their parents.

- You belong to a great organization. Share the news - tell a friend. Be a recruiter yourself.

IDEAS FOR CADET RETENTION

The cadets considered cadet retention as the greatest challenge facing the Cadet Corps programs today. In formulating their thoughts, they decided to classify ideas under ways of meeting basic human needs - a subject studied in their course at the leadership academy. The categories were:

Recognition:

- Cadets should be encouraged and helped to work for advancement. Advancement requirements within the unit should conform to "National" requirements. When a unit CO add extra requirements at the unit level, he or she discourages cadets. Advancements should not be held hostage to the CO's personal whims.

- Give awards for recruiting and attendance. Recognize cadets for outstanding work in the unit.

- Set personal and unit goals in various areas and keep records of progress toward attaining these goals. Ensure that each cadet understands how he or she can contribute to the success of the unit in attaining goals.

Sense of Belonging:

- Cadets would like to be more involved in planning for the unit; such things as outings, setting unit goals, and finding solutions to problems facing the unit.

- Make sure that cadets with transportation problems have the opportunity to car pool.

- Make all cadets feel included and part of the unit. Cliques, nepotism, or favoritism for any reason, will destroy a unit faster than anything else. Be sure that each new cadet feels welcome, use the "buddy system".

- Have social activities to give cadets a chance to interact in different situations: skating parties, movies and pizza, or outdoor activities.

Respect:

- Cadets and officers must always be aware that all people want, and deserve to be treated with respect. If a cadet does not treat others with respect, he/she will be treated in a like manner - and he/she should be counseled. Officers and cadet petty officers should set the example.

Sense of Achievement:

- Cadets should be given the opportunity to take advancement tests when National requirements have been met. COs should not impose local ground rules in addition to National requirements (Note: this particular item came up several times - which would indicate that unit COs should not impose arbitrary requirements).

- Cadets should be encouraged to participate in advanced TWT to learn new skills, etc., to give them a sense of accomplishment.

- Encourage cadets to set personal goals - help them to attain these goals.

Other:

- Unit Organization:

- Units benefit from a POD.

- Units will benefit if the organizational structure is followed. It is important for officers and cadets to know the duties of each billet, and who is responsible for each.

- Follow the chain of command, up and down. That way, everyone gets the word and is able to do his or her job.

- Opportunities for Outside Training:

- The students were of the opinion that cadet interest could be maintained if more opportunities for outside training were available during the school year. Examples were: going to the rifle range; using the damage control trainer, going aboard ship for the weekend, teaming up with other units for athletic competitions, going on survival training, fire fighting training, helicopter orientation flights, working with the Coast Guard on weekend patrols.

- Unit Training:

- Classes should be planned and organized before being presented. (lesson plans)

- Classes should be varied:

- Try demonstrations
- Hands on instruction
- Take cadets for on-site training
- Brainstorm subjects
- Use role-playing to involve cadets
- Ask cadets what subjects they would like instructions in
- Use service film libraries

- Be sure to follow through on plans/outings. Cadets become quickly discouraged if plans are never carried out.

2. The final thought imparted by the cadets was their realization that the key to success of any unit was the motivation and dedication of cadets. Each cadet has a responsibility to attend drills, outings, and all other functions. Each cadet has the responsibility to do all he/she can to make a positive contribution to the unit.