



Recruiting Community Affiliate Members

A Workshop

Purpose: To present and discuss ideas for recruiting Community Affiliate members into your council.

Learning Objectives:

1. To understand the importance of recruiting Community Affiliate members into your council.
2. To identify the benefits of membership to the Community Affiliate prospect.
3. To develop a list of prospects for Community Affiliate membership at your council.
4. To develop an action plan for contacting and recruiting Community Affiliate prospects into your council.

- Agenda:**
1. Identify the benefits to the council of recruiting Community Affiliate members.
 2. List the benefits to the business of Community Affiliate membership.
 3. Identify and select recruiters.
 4. Prepare a script for asking prospects to join your council as a Community Affiliate member.
 5. Identify Community Affiliate prospects.
 6. Develop retention strategies for Community Affiliates.
 7. Finalize action plans.
 8. Measurement and follow-up.

Limit: Two Hours

Recruiting Community Affiliates - An Overview

Many Navy League councils receive tremendous support from their communities: financial support, publicity, sea services support (for members and their families) and youth group support. Why do these councils have success, when other councils report financial difficulty, lack of volunteers, and aging membership? The answer may be in their efforts to engage their community in council-sponsored activities. What are the critical success factors when trying to increase community involvement? What council "behaviors" discourage community involvement? Prepare a list below of your thoughts. Rank the items on each list by their importance to making the council successful (effective) or unsuccessful (ineffective).

<i><u>Effective</u></i>	<i><u>Ranking</u></i>	<i><u>Ineffective</u></i>	<i><u>Ranking</u></i>

The facilitator will now ask you to share your lists with others in the class as we prepare a composite list.

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The Navy League has a membership category that can help your council engage the community, as well as provide financial support, sea services support and youth group support. This category of membership is called **Community Affiliate membership**.

The Community Affiliate member can be any business in your community that wants to support the young men and women serving our nation in one of the sea services, or wants to support one of our youth groups. They do not have to have a business relationship with the sea services or your council, although they often do have such relationships. Navy League Corporate members are typically larger companies that do business with the Department of Defense and want to demonstrate their support of the sea services. A local branch, plant or office of a Corporate member may become a Community Affiliate member to connect with their local council. The levels of membership available to a business are described in the NLUS "Guide to Business Awareness: Community Affiliate, Business Associate, Corporate Membership", the handout for this workshop.

This workshop prepares participants to initiate a Community Affiliate Recruiting campaign in their council. The learning objectives are summarized in the Workshop Agenda. Let's get started!

Selling the Council

Many councils have a few Community Affiliate members, each recruited by a council member who had a relationship with the business owner. This method is successful, but will not result in a large number of Community Affiliate members. It can, however be a starting point for your recruiting efforts. To recruit large numbers of Community Affiliate members, you need an organized campaign and the full support of your council. So the first step is to sell your council on a recruiting campaign.

Community Affiliate members provide a council with ***the following benefits***:

1. Increased membership (each Community Affiliate membership includes four (4) individual memberships).
2. Reliable council revenue - The sponsoring council receives a \$200 rebate from the \$400 Community Affiliate membership fee. Renewals receive the same rebate as a new Community Affiliate membership, so a large number of Community Affiliate members can provide budget stability for your council.

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3. Improved "return on investment", since a Community Affiliate membership returns \$50/individual member annually, versus \$10/year for a single member.
4. Business people tend to be younger and bring enthusiasm, business expertise and fresh ideas into your council
5. Community Affiliate members will sponsor many council activities, if asked.
6. Community Affiliate (CA) members will often help recruit other businesses into CA membership.

Can you think of additional benefits to a council that could derive from recruiting Community Affiliate members? Please share your ideas with the group.

There are expenses associated with Community Affiliate recruiting - printing, postage, hosting of networking events, personal mileage expense for the CA recruiters, and business meals. The council may want to reimburse some or all of these expenses; the CA recruiters should know their financial commitment when they begin. Prepare a budget for presentation to your council's Board of Directors, detailing what expenses are reimbursable. You should offset expenses with projected revenue from recruiting of Community Affiliate members at \$200 council revenue per CA member recruited. A goal for first year CA recruiting should be established and justified.

Schedule a time period at the next council Board meeting and request the endorsement of your council's Board of Directors for the program and the budget. A summary of the benefits to your council should be presented and thoroughly discussed. With your Board's approval, you can move on to planning your recruiting campaign.

Prepare the Sales Proposition

Why should a business join the Navy League as a Community Affiliate? What are the benefits to the business? How can a business member participate in council activities? These are important questions that you must be prepared to answer. Here are some benefits you might want to include in your sales proposition:

Patriotism: Although the events of September 11th are not as fresh in our minds today as they were in 2001, there is still a lingering question in the minds and hearts of many Americans: "What can I do to support the War on Terrorism?" Turn the question around and you have your initial approach to any business: "What are you doing to support the

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young men and women fighting the War on Terrorism?" If the respondent is unsure, follow-up with this compelling question: "Do you want to do something to support the young men and women fighting the War on Terrorism?" If the answer is "yes", then tell them about the Navy League (this approach also works for individual member recruiting).

Networking:

In many communities the Chamber of Commerce gives members the opportunity to network and seek new business opportunities. Community Affiliate members can be given the same opportunity, often at less cost (\$400/yr) than the Chamber (we don't want to compete with the Chamber of Commerce, we want to complement them). If you use this approach you must commit to provide the networking events. Fortunately, many Community Affiliate (CA) members **welcome the opportunity to host these events** and showcase their organization to the council's CA members. If you have military facilities in your community, your CA members would like the opportunity to meet military leaders in a social setting. Your members may also want to network with Navy League's Corporate members in your community if you invite these members to participate. Furthermore, any Navy League member can attend the Navy League's Annual Sea-Air-Space Maritime Exposition in Washington, DC, **the largest in the world.** Finally, the Navy League's relationship with the sea services may enable your council to schedule DOD procurement officers in your community presenting a seminar on doing business with the US government, *which provides your council with a benefit that differentiates your offering from the Chamber of Commerce networking opportunities!*

Visibility:

Closely related to networking is visibility in the community. Your council can commit to help a business increase community visibility through CA membership. Basically, your council's community and sea service support activities may be attractive to a local business. Sponsorship opportunities during council events provide visibility for the business in a positive way - supporting our troops, their families and youth groups! Community Affiliate members should also

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be featured in your council's newsletter, on your website, and in other promotional material (event flyers, newspaper articles, etc.). CA members may want to provide discounts to Navy League members in your council, including other business members. The Council's Public Relations Committee should seek opportunities to promote CA activities and provide pictures to the media.

Youth Groups: Many businesses may want to support community youth, and the Navy League can help! Your council may support the Naval Sea Cadet Corps (NSCC), the Naval League Cadet Corps (NLCC), the Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp (NJROTC), the Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (MCJROTC), Young Marines, and the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC). The young people supported by Navy League councils are the future leaders of our country, and many businesses are proud to support them.

Ship Visits: If your council is located near a body of water, ship visits may be possible. Navy, Coast Guard, NOAA and Military Sealift Command ships can be toured, as well as any military base, station or facility. Reserve Centers are located across the United States and are often the only military presence in a community. If there is a port near your council, ask the sponsoring service to schedule a ship visit, then provide a warm welcome, with the assistance of your Community Affiliate members. Priority/VIP tickets for CA members and CA prospects to attend these events can build CA membership and loyalty.

Adoption: Many councils adopt ships, stations and other sea service units. Your CA members may welcome the opportunity to participate in the adoption of military units. CA members may also want to sponsor specific awards for the adopted units. *Note: CA members may not adopt military units due to DOD conflict of interest rules.*

Social: Some councils have an active social calendar, which also attracts Community Affiliate members. CA members often will provide the site for the social event and the refreshments. Or, the CA members may just appreciate the opportunity to socialize and network with Navy Leaguers.

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These are some of the benefits reported by various councils that help them recruit Community Affiliate members. Your council needs a detailed listing of the benefits being offered to prospects for Community Affiliate membership. A list of Council events and activities is also useful for encouraging CA membership.

Exercise

Purpose: *To prepare a list of benefits your council offers to Community Affiliate members.*

- Action:**
1. *Brainstorm a list of potential benefits your council can offer to Community Affiliate prospects.*
 2. *Determine what action, if any, is necessary to make each potential benefit available to CA members.*
 3. *Prepare an action plan to gain approval for the benefit and make it operational.*

<i>What action is needed?</i>	<i>Who will complete this action?</i>	<i>Is Board approval required?</i>	<i>When will action be completed?</i>	<i>Remarks</i>

4. *Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress and complete the final list.*

Limit: *This exercise should take 30 minutes.*

Community Affiliate recruiting should not be attempted until your council has completed a "List of Benefits for Community Affiliates - XXXXXXX Council". This list should be produced on council letterhead and made available to your council CA recruiters. Recruiter selection and training does not have to be delayed while you complete the action items, as long as a

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lengthy delay does not occur between training and starting CA recruiting.

Select & Train Recruiters

Your recruiting team leader should be comfortable in the sales environment. Experienced real estate agents, insurance agents, bank community lenders and financial planners make excellent recruiters because they are skilled in building relationships and don't get offended when told "no thanks". Council members who are well known and respected in the community are also excellent candidates, but they must be trained. The recruiters need to know about the Navy League, your council and be conversant in what we do! Therefore, preparation and practice are critical to the success of your CA recruiting campaign.

After your team is selected, schedule a working meeting (at least one hour) to prepare and practice presentations. The basic approach has three elements: An opening, the "elevator speech", and the closing.

Opening. The opening needs a "hook", a question that begs for a response and makes the prospect want more information. The question cited earlier works well for most CA recruiters:

"What are you doing to support our young men and women fighting the Global War on Terrorism?"

An alternative (softer) approach is:

"Do you want to do something to support our young men and women fighting the Global War on Terrorism?"

If the business does not respond affirmatively to these questions, consider a youth group question, such as:

"Do you want to support (do more to support) the youth in our community?"

The initial approach is more likely to be successful if you know the "hot buttons" of the business owner. Does the business support a youth sports team, for example? If so, the "youth" approach may be successful. What other organizations does the business owner support (look at the decals on the window and plaques displayed at the business)? Do they provide a logical link to Navy League activities, and thus a hook? Does anyone in your council know the owner? If so, can they provide insight into the owner's "hot buttons" and can they introduce the CA

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recruiter to the owner? "Know your prospect" is important for improving your success rate in recruiting.

Elevator speech. The 2-minute "elevator speech" is your answer to the question "What is the Navy League?" Your response must tell them about the Navy League in two minutes or less. The "Mission and Goals" plastic card is a good job aid for your elevator speech, but you need to be able to deliver it without reading the card! Many CA recruiters keep a supply of the cards and give one to the prospect.

Closing. The prospect should be given a summary of benefits, both national and local, using the materials prepared in the previous exercise. Activities and events sponsored nationally and locally may also be used to explain what the Navy League does. Don't go on too long about the benefits - your prospect will give you visual clues when to stop! **The most important part of the closing is to ask the prospect to join the Navy League as a Community Affiliate member!** This request should be natural, in your own words, and sincere. For example: "I would like to have you as a valued member of our council and the Navy League - please join us by completing this application and giving me a check for \$400." At this point the prospect will say yes, or raise objections. Your recruiters need to anticipate possible objections and practice responses to the ones you identify as most likely to arise. Once again, preparation and practice will improve your success rate.

Each recruiter needs their own script so that their approach is natural and comfortable. Writing the words (script) on a 3x5-inch card and practicing delivery with other members of your team builds confidence. The next exercise will get you started.

Exercise

Purpose: *To prepare CA recruiters for the CA recruiter practice session.*

- Action:**
- 1. Working individually, prepare your opening and your "elevator speech". Write out your final version on 3x5-inch cards.*
 - 2. As a group, review the marketing materials and organize your benefits summary.*
 - 3. Brainstorm a list of possible objections that you anticipate from prospects. Discuss the objections and evaluate their probability of occurrence. Delete the least likely objections.*
 - 4. Brainstorm responses to the objectives. Evaluate them for effectiveness and keep two or three per objection.*

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5. Prepare a summary table of objections and responses (next page).
6. Schedule a one-hour practice session with all CA recruiters. Each recruiter should prepare and present their opening approach, elevator speech, summary of benefits, and closing. The recruiting team can give each other presentation feedback and raise objections to afford practice in responding to objections. Multiple presentations by each CA recruiter will improve delivery.

Limit: The preparation session should take one hour.
The practice session takes at least another hour.

Anticipated Objections to Community Affiliate Membership

Objection	Responses
	1. 2. 3.
	1. 2. 3.
	1. 2. 3.
	1. 2. 3.
	1. 2. 3.

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With practice and experience, asking a local business owner to join the Navy League as a Community Affiliate member will become natural and easy.

Prepare a Prospect List

The preparation of a prospect list is best done with input from as many council members as possible. Members of your council can identify dozens, if not hundreds, of local businesses as prospects - businesses with which they have a relationship or know the owners/managers. Employers (past and present) of your members are also good prospects. The next exercise can be conducted with your council's Board of Directors initially, then repeated with all interested parties in your council if more prospects are needed.

Exercise

Purpose: *To prepare a list of business prospects for Community Affiliate membership and assign a recruiter to contact the owner.*

Action:

1. *Call a special, one-hour meeting of the Council Board of Directors with the Community Affiliate recruiters.*
2. *Pass out lined sheets of paper to each attendee. Ask each attendee individually to write down the name of every business that they encounter daily. **Don't "disqualify" any business, regardless of size or commercial activity.***
3. *Next, ask each attendee to write down business contacts from past employment, membership in civic groups, associations and fraternal organizations.*
4. *As a group, write each business prospect down on the contact action list below and determine who will make the initial contact - the CA recruiter and the person who knows the owner, if possible.*
5. *Schedule follow-up meetings - weekly at first, then monthly after the program is moving forward.*
6. *Report results at monthly board meetings:*
 - *Number of businesses contacted*
 - *Number of Community Affiliate members recruited*
 - *Success rate (#joined/#contacted)*
 - *Top recruiters*
 - *Problems being encountered*

Limit: *This meeting should be completed in one hour*

Develop Retention Strategies

Community Affiliate members join to support our sea service personnel or youth groups, to gain and/or keep your council's business, to network, or for some other reason. Therefore, you must meet their expectations, which requires a plan. The following actions are recommended:

1. Review your council's "promise" to the prospects - the list of local benefits that were used to recruit the new member. Make sure your council delivers on the promise and affords the CA member the opportunity to do the things you listed!
2. Recognize new Community Affiliate members in the following ways:
 - Profile the new CA member in your newsletter and on your website;
 - Present the Community Affiliate plaque to the business owner at your next regular meeting;
 - Recognize the CA owner when they agree to host an event or sponsor a sea services activity;
 - Promote CA involvement in your council's support activities with local media; and
 - Recognize the CA member when they renew their membership.
3. Invite your Community Affiliates to all events sponsored by your council, especially ship or station tours. The invitation should be personal, delivered by the member of your council who has a relationship with the business owner - or the CA recruiter, if no relationship exists.
4. Ask (survey) the new Community Affiliate (the business owner) and their 4 designated individual members what areas they want to support - ship/station/unit sponsorship, membership recruiting, planning networking events, working with youth groups, or general council management. Follow-up and provide the opportunity requested.
5. Ask the business owner to join your Board, particularly if s/he can provide valuable expertise (e.g. accountants, lawyers, PR and financial professionals).
6. Ask the business owner to sponsor sea service personnel awards (sailor of the year, NROTC swords, N&MCJROTC Roosevelt Medal, etc.) as a method to get them involved. The business owner should be asked to present the award to the recipient. Take pictures and present copies to the business owner at a future council meeting; publish the pictures on your website and in your council newsletter. Provide a Public Relations news release and pictures to media outlets in your community (for a list of media outlets, go to the NLUS website at <http://www.capwiz.com/nl/dbq/media/>).

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7. Host networking sessions ("Wine and Cheese" parties work, according to successful councils). These sessions should be offered even if the Community Affiliate members did not request them! The CA members should be encouraged to invite their friends and business associates, thus giving your CA recruiters more prospects! Don't forget to use a "sign-up sheet" to record the names, business affiliation and contact information of attendees.
8. Community Affiliate members often bring younger members into your council, so reconfigure your meeting schedule to include activities that appeal to families (e.g. picnics, attendance at local sports events, etc.). These younger members should be involved in deciding what activities to offer, since they best know what appeals to their families. Engagement with local active duty sea service personnel is always a good activity to include - your CA members want to meet our young warriors!

Remember, you will not retain your Community Affiliates unless they are involved in a meaningful way in the Navy League. The secret to retention is **"Recruit - Connect - Retain"!**

Start Recruiting!

Recruiting Community Affiliate members is a personal event that is often built on existing relationships. Face-to-face meetings are necessary to properly deliver your message. CA recruiters should try to meet the owner, president or general manager of the business - s/he needs to talk to the decision maker! Start with businesses your council uses - the restaurant(s) where you hold meetings, the printer of your newsletter, your bank, hotels that you use for meetings, your website host, bus companies you use, your council accountant, lawyer, investment advisor, etc. and employers of your council members. New Community Affiliate members will often recommend other businesses that should join, including their suppliers. Once you get started, your efforts can snowball - *but you have to start asking!*

Measuring results and tracking progress are important for two major reasons:

- Reporting results is a motivator because "What you measure is what you expect!" Smart managers know that measurement is *management's hidden persuader*. People are accountable when they know results are being tracked and reported.
- Success requires recognition to be sustained. Contests among sales people are well known in business because the best sales people are competitive and want recognition.

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Decide what type of recognition (plaques, free council dinner, Certificate of Appreciation, etc.) your council will use **before you start recruiting.**

Your Council Board of Directors should determine what type of recognition will be given to the top recruiters *and the recruiting team.* The Council President should also recognize the Community Affiliate members and the CA recruiters at council meetings.

The Community Affiliate Contact Action List should be a living document, with new prospects added to the list (and assigned to a CA recruiter) as they are identified. Prospects that do not join as a Community Affiliate member should be asked to join as an individual member. The business that says "no thanks" this year may have a change of ownership (or a change of heart), so businesses should not be stricken from the contact list until they become CA members. The CA recruiting team leader normally is accountable for maintaining the list and reporting results to the Council Board of Directors.

Final Thoughts & Summary

Community Affiliate membership is not intended for *major* defense contractors, or *large* organizations that do business with the military. Councils can earn commissions for recruiting Corporate members, so larger companies and DOD contractors should not be neglected. Any business can be a member, and most will join if you tell your story and ask them to join.

Community Affiliate members will remain with your council if you involve them and recognize them. Finally, Community Affiliate members bring new energy, new ideas and financial stability to a council. If you follow the process in this workshop to develop a plan, then execute your plan and measure results, your council will be well on its' way to achieving Outstanding Council status and receiving recognition from the Navy League National President at our next Convention! Good luck in your efforts...

The End!