



OLDER WORKER RECRUITMENT IDEAS



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OLDER WORKER RECRUITMENT IDEAS



- **Recruitment of Targeted Groups for SCSEP**
- **1. When you communicate information about the program, are you asking for job seekers?**
- **2. Are you selling the benefits of the program?**
 - **Paid Job Training? Assisted Job Search?**
 - **Job Placement? Supportive Services?**
 - **Higher Pay?**

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The Recruitment Message You Send to Your Community will determine the Outcome of your Program.

If your recruitment message is similar to:

“Wanted! People aged 55 and Older who are interested in joining a government financed program that provides part-time employment. Program pays minimum wage while performing community service for local government or local non-profit organizations. We will train.

Contact the _____ County Senior Community Service Employment Program at _____”

Who will respond to this promotion?

Persons who want to enroll in a program that pays minimum wage for part-time work performing community service.

Will persons seeking part-time or full-time employment, who need more than the minimum wage, apply?

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- **What kind of response should you expect if your recruitment message is something similar to this:**
 - ▶ **“Wanted. Seniors interested in either part-time or full-time employment in the health care field. Local jobs available as health care aides with health care facilities and/or in-home care. Good wages, paid training. Contact the _____ County Senior Community Service Employment Program at _____”**
 - ▶ **OR**
 - ▶ **“Mature Workers Wanted. Earn While you learn. The Senior Community Service Employment Program is offering paid job training in Customer Service. If you want to start a second career, then call (626)791-5010. The National Council the Aging.”**

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How you get the Recruitment Message to the Community will be determined by whether you are an urban program or rural.

Urban programs will rely more on neighborhood networks than mass media.

PSAs may be less effective in urban areas than rural programs.

Urban programs may target limited English-speaking persons more so than rural programs.

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Regular mail-outs to community-based organizations, advertising jobs you have created with employer partners is a good tactic for recruiting participants. Most community-based organizations are providing services to families that may include older workers. Especially ethnic minorities, because many cultures dictate they assume responsibility for older relatives who may not be in a position, economically, to provide for themselves. Offer to screen older family members, at no charge, to assist them in obtaining other services they may be entitled to but may not be aware. Such as NCOAs *Benefits Check Up*.

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Urban programs should target community ethnic, social, and cultural agencies to reach limited English-speaking potential applicants. Most new immigrants tend to locate in neighborhoods where other like immigrants live and where housing is more affordable.

Ethnic neighborhoods attract ethnic oriented businesses, especially grocers, restaurants, merchants, and churches. Bi-lingual, or multi-lingual hand outs should be distributed to these locations. Merchants and clergy are extremely effective in getting information about the SCSEP to limited English-speaking, eligible applicants. Focus on training opportunities that will provide “new skills” leading to good jobs, locally, paying good wages.

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Many neighborhood merchants and churches have associations. The Church Avenue area Merchants Association. The Hometown Ministerial Alliance. Address these associations at their regular meetings. Merchants and pastors usually know of potential applicants who need the services that the SCSEP can provide, and, will gladly share this information with people they feel would benefit from enrollment. These associations are glad to be able to pass on to you individuals that meet the eligibility criteria. It helps them better serve their customers.

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It is Important to recruit Bi-lingual “staff” from ethnic communities that will provide credibility to the recruitment effort. Many immigrants are reluctant to become involved in programs that are provided by “government” agencies.

Job Fairs should be targeted for ethnic neighborhoods. If you are in New York City, you should know that recruitment of Hispanics will be focused in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens.

Recruiting immigrants from the former USSR will be focused in Coney Island and Brighton Beach.

Recruiting Asian immigrants will be focused in Chinatown or Flushing Queens.

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Senior Oriented Community Centers are a great resource for recruitment of applicants in urban and smaller, more rural communities. The SCSEP offers an alternative to daily activities. Most older persons relish the opportunity to contribute to the community, family and to their economic self-sufficiency.

Public libraries are a source for reaching older persons. Especially older persons living alone or with limited contact with other family members.

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Refugee Resettlement Programs offer an ideal resource for recruitment. Most are interested in income, jobs and skill development. Most refugee resettlement programs are sponsored by faith-based organizations that provide immediate credibility to recruitment efforts.

One Stop Career Centers are an excellent resource for recruitment of older workers. Most One Stops operators are more than happy to have older worker recruiters located at their Career Centers.

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Watch for published announcements of meetings of public agencies and community organizations. Public agencies are usually required, by law, to publish or announce through other media, the scheduling of meetings open to the general public. Most community-based organizations are required by their charter, or by-laws to publish scheduled meetings. Most will permit limited time on the agenda to permit you to inform the meeting participants of job openings and recruiting drives.

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Most Rural Programs must be more creative in their Recruitment methods.

Advertise in local, weekly newspapers instead of state or large city newspapers.

State and large city newspapers offer little interest to people in more rural residents.

Rural residents read smaller, weekly publications from front to back.

PSAs more effective with local radio stations.

Most local stations are interested in “air-time” fillers.

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The appearance of elected officials at meetings and events are usually mentioned in newspapers, radio and local tv stations. Elected officials are usually very “approachable” at meetings and events. They are glad to get information from you about your program, especially if the information will assist them to assist their constituents training and/or jobs. This helps them to “better serve their constituency”. They are smart enough to know that constituents who receive “special” treatment are not likely forget.

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PennySaver or other free publications are usually available at groceries or convenience stores.

Thrift Stores, usually operated by non-profit and faith-based organizations, such as Goodwill Industries, Salvation Army, or Veterans organizations. Many income eligible families, including older workers, frequent Thrift Stores in search of affordable clothing, furniture, and appliances.

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MAKE REGULAR MAILINGS TO ELECTED OFFICIALS informing them of success stories about participants who have completed the program by getting new careers. They love this. Include information about employer partnerships, especially if you are recruiting participants, to be trained through community service, to fill jobs for these employers.

Mailings should include elected officials for local, state, and national office. Be sure to get to know staff of elected officials. Furnish handwritten testimonials from successful unsubsidized job placements. “Thank you” letters from former participants.

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Often, recruiting in rural areas requires more innovative approaches.

Regional Councils of Government

In rural areas and small cities COGs are usually multi-functional agencies. Many are incorporated into:

Economic Development Authority;

Area Agencies on Aging;

Senior Centers;

Local Workforce Boards;

One Stop Operators

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Economic Development Agencies usually are involved in the location, or re-location, of new businesses coming to the area. Offer to recruit and assist in the skill development training of older workers to make the experience of coming to a new community more enjoyable through your contribution in providing them with a skilled workforce. Tell them about the availability of OJE.

Area Agencies on Aging are a good partner to have. They can provide excellent referrals to the SCSEP. Through their many services and programs, they usually know older workers who are eligible and would benefit from the SCSEP.

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Local Workforce Boards

Do not assume that they are aware of your programs. Even though the professional staff may know you, Board Members may not know about the SCSEP. Request time on the agenda, for public meetings, to request assistance in recruiting participants. This could open some previously closed doors. REMEMBER, your relationship with local WIBs and ONE STOP operators will be as strong as YOU make it.

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And, of course, One Stop Career Centers.

Offer to provide program participants to assist as Center “staff”.

Usually, One Stop Career Centers will refer older workers to the SCSEP participant staff for service.

Negotiate co-location, if possible, but be aggressive in the development of Memoranda Of Understanding (MOUs). Spell out, in detail, services you will provide to the One Stop, and what you expect in return.

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Recruiting Veterans

Veterans Organizations may be your best source for recruitment.

American Legion

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Disabled American Veterans

AmVets

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RURAL PROGRAMS

Make all speaking engagements recruiting missions. Offer to speak at Rotary Club weekly meetings. Program chairpersons are always looking for speakers fifty weeks a year.

Attend Chamber of Commerce meetings and ask for time on the agenda to pitch recruitment efforts.

Attend United Way sponsored agency meetings.

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Physically or emotionally challenged older workers:

Vocational Rehabilitation;

**State Supported Vocational Schools
for challenged persons;**

**Advocacy organizations for the
challenged.**

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Many rural or small community churches happy to put recruiting messages in Weekly Bulletins.

Invite elected officials to speak at Job Fairs. Usually results in large turn-out if publicized appropriately. Find out from local Congressional office staff when the member is expected to be home.

Make SCSEP information available to Adult Education programs. Many attendees may know of eligible persons.

Supply propriety schools and training providers with SCSEP information and the recruitment effort.

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Send Success Stories to local, newspapers.

Visit Senior Centers and make recruitment pitches.

Publicize OLDER WORKER OF THE YEAR winners.

Publicize EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR winners for hiring older workers.

Publicize TRAINING SITE/HOST AGENCY OF THE YEAR winners.

Publicize IEP accomplishments by participants. Such as GED recipient; computer class completion; or certification for completion of care-giver training;

Utilize Advisory Committees to provide referrals for the SCSEP.

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