

Conducting a Targeted Recruitment Event

Why conduct a targeted recruitment event?

Conducting a targeted recruitment event is a strategy that has had success in encouraging students to pursue nontraditional careers. Students typically do not perceive that they are welcome, unless specifically invited to explore and supported to overcome their own gender bias and stereotyping (Sheets, Lufkin, Stevens et al, 2003)*.

Targeted recruitment activities could include: personal presentations from persons working in nontraditional fields; hands-on problem solving that exposes students to typical activities of a nontraditional field; industry and college campus field trips; career fairs; job shadow and intern opportunities; coaching on “next steps”; mentoring.

Tips for planning an event:

- Ask for the support and collaboration of the administration and counselors at your school.
- Put together a planning team. Persons on the planning team could include: students already participating in a nontraditional program; parents of students participating in a nontraditional program; alumni that have pursued post-secondary education and/or career in a nontraditional field; counselors; other teachers; business representatives.
- Determine the desired outcomes for the event.
 - Is this event focused on recruiting girls, boys or both? If not both, what activity, program or event will be provided for the other gender? Who is responsible for planning that activity, program or event?
 - Who is the target audience? Students, parents or both?
 - What type of exhibits, presentations or activities will provide the most information and help you reach your desired outcomes?
 - Will there be “hands-on” activities for students?
 - How will you communicate the benefits of participating in a nontraditional program at your school and/or pursuing a nontraditional career after high school?
- Set the date, time and location of the event.
 - Check school, activity, and community calendars to ensure that there will not be a conflict with other activities that could keep targeted students/parents from attending.
 - Does the location support the activities you plan to offer? Ex: If you plan to engage girls in hands-on science experiments, will a room with a sink be necessary for clean-up?

*Sheets, Lufkin, Stevens, Klein, Bhandi, “Improving Performance on Perkins III Core Indicators: Summary of Research on Causes and Improvement Strategies,” National Dissemination Center for Career and Technical Education, The Ohio State University, 2003.

- Develop a budget.
 - Costs could include: transportation, materials/printing, honorariums for speakers, food/beverages, location rental, A/V and room set-up, etc.
 - Assign a planning team member to be responsible for the budget and/or logistics.

- Determine speakers for the event.
 - Who will you invite to speak? Ask students, parents, teachers, counselors, alumni, local colleges and/or your local Chamber of Commerce for speaker suggestions.
 - Can you offer the speakers an honorarium?
 - What do you hope students will gain from the presentation? How much time is allotted for the presentation? What resources will you provide (computer, projector, screen, microphone, etc.)? Does the speaker need to bring any resources or materials with them? Will you make copies of handouts for them?
 - How large of an audience should the speaker prepare for? Is there a dress/attire expectation?
 - Prepare speakers prior to the event. Adult professionals may not be used to giving presentations to students. What do they need to know to effectively speak to your audience? Provide them with tips to ensure that they don't say something that may unintentionally deter a student from pursuing a nontraditional career.

- Invite students/parents to the event.
 - Assign a planning team member to send out invitations and track responses.
 - Ask for an RSVP. Ensure that you don't exceed the maximum capacity for your location.

- Follow-up after the event.
 - Send a "thank you" note to attendees and speakers.
 - Ask the audience to complete an evaluation of the event.
 - Track the outcomes. Did any of the students who participated enroll in a nontraditional program after attending the event?