

THE OPEN HOUSE APPROACH



There are two methods available with the Open House Approach to membership recruitment: The informal and the formal.

INFORMAL

The informal approach is very simple. Each member is asked to invite a friend he'd like to see be a member, to a "fun" activity, usually either a social or sporting activity. At the activity, the member introduces their friend/prospect to everyone. The members present give him/her a warm welcome and ask the friend/prospect if they plan on joining the chapter/bethel/assembly. Each member points out what a lot of fun DeMolay, Rainbow, Jobies is and what a good group of people are in the chapter/bethel/assembly.

Throughout the evening the members make a point of answering all of the friend's questions about DeMolay, Rainbow, Jobies, which are bound to come up. The members also make sure that they tell the friend/prospect about their group, who are members, and all the fun activities that they put on. Don't miss the opportunity to point out that the group is run by the guys/gals; they decide on the activities, then plan and carry them out. Since the member has invited a friend, they know what the friend likes to do, and ties those activities to your groups activities. The member mentions, repeatedly, the activities that the chapter/bethel/assembly puts on that are in line with his friend's interests.

At the end of the night, the member asks the friend to join. They give the friend a membership application and gets it filled out that very night. If the friend wants to think about it, the member should contact them 24-48 hours later. If the friend is still in doubt, the member should invite him/her to another fun event. During this event, the members make a point of saying "Hi" to the friend/prospect letting him/her know that he/she has been asked to join, and that they would really like to see that happen because they would make a great member. At the end of the event ask the question and get the completed membership application and check.

This type of membership recruitment is a continuous process.

FORMAL

The Formal Open House approach is a little easier for the small to medium sized chapter/bethel/assembly to handle. It is best held in a home, but can also be held at the Masonic Hall where you meet. Try to have between 3-10 prospects present and the same number of member. The membership draws up a list of prospects, divide up the list, and personally invite the prospect to the Open House. At the same time, invite the parents. If the parents cannot attend, the members should offer to pick them up and bring them to the Open House.

A good format to use is as follows:

1. Start at 6:30pm with pizza and sodas. Have the groups leader at the door to welcome the prospects as they enter
2. Give everyone, including the members, name tags.
3. Have the members meet and greet all of the prospects and their parents. Several Advisors and/or member's parents should also be at the Open House to welcome and talk with the parents.
4. At 7:00pm, the Line Officers (or three member) begin to talk about DeMolay/Rainbow/Jobies. Each should speak no more than 5-7 minutes. Each speaker should cover a specific area of information. Caution: give a broad overview, not a detailed description. You are trying to build enthusiasm for joining, not telling them everything they didn't know about your group. The information to be presented should be planned in advance and even rehearsed. The three areas to be covered are as follows:
 - a. Welcome and brief description of what your group is.
 - b. A brief history and description of the your chapter/bethel/ assembly. Talk about the members and advisors and how the local organization is run.
 - c. The variety of activities and program.
5. Have an Advisor or member talk about how the parents can be involved in the organization as an Advisor or just a parent. This should be very short.
6. Have the Rainbow and/or Jobies (if a DeMolay Open House) OR the DeMolay (if a Rainbow/Job's Daughters Open House) welcome everyone and tell the guys/girl about their involvement.

7. At this point have the parents adjourn to another room and the prospects stay where they are.
 - a. In the parents group, have an advisor explain how the organization will benefit their child's character development, leadership skills and tools for everyday use. Then answer questions.
 - b. The prospects should be shown video (YouTube, PowerPoint or just plain pictures) of the groups activities and events. The members should stress the fun the prospect will have in DeMolay, Rainbow and/or Job's Daughters, relating their experiences at the local level, district/region level, and state activities and events.
8. Finally, around 7:45pm, have both groups come back together. Pass out membership applications and ask the prospects to join. Thank everyone for attending. Answer any final questions. Collect the completed membership applications and checks or dismiss the group and then personally speak to each prospect and his parents, answering their questions and collecting their completed membership application and check.
9. You may want to consider having Visitation report forms on hand at the Open House and completing them at the same time you collect the membership application.

If you do it right, you'll be finished by 8:00 – 8:15pm, so the prospects can be home in time to finish any homework they might have.

Never hold a formal Open House for less than 3 prospects. Using this method, your group can expect about a 50-70% success rate. Using this method quarterly, means your group could achieve a growth of 200% of its annual membership goal each year.