

Background on Encore Center

- Founded in 1991
- 1000 + members annually
- Part of Continuing Education division of the university
- Primarily self-supporting through program fees
- 80 short courses/year; 6 weeks each course + lectures and study trips
- Instructors: university faculty, faculty from other universities, community experts, members
- Courses: lecture/discussion; fewer peer-led discussion courses
- All instructors volunteer
- Staff: two full-time and two part-time
- Committees:
 - 1) Advisory Council
 - 2) Program Committee
 - 3) Finance & Budget
 - 4) Membership Development and Marketing
 - 5) Activities and Services
- Other positions: volunteer coordinator, photo archivist, research coordinator
- Also offer extracurricular activities such as book groups, movie groups, writers group, etc.

Strategies for recruiting volunteers:

- Create Job descriptions
- Enforce term limits (if you don't have term limits, create them).
- Chairman and appropriate staff member meets with every potential volunteer to make sure they understand what is involved. We then invite them to attend a committee meeting.
- Educate newcomers
- Recruit and evaluate class hosts (or whatever is your first-step volunteer opportunity).
- Recruit and evaluate those participating in extracurricular groups
- ID potential volunteers in discussion-type classes, study trips and volunteer projects, extracurricular groups, social activities. Get committee chairs and committee members involved in actively identifying prospective new committee members. Encourage staff to think in terms of recruiting strong volunteers.
- Increase transparency (builds community)
- Increase dissemination of information about how things are done.
- Use newsletters and catalogs to communicate message.
- Foster a sense of community
- Train volunteers. And... also train volunteers that they are never "off-duty."
- Train good cadre of committee members so that they can segue into becoming effective and strong chairmen. Having the right person chairing the right committee is critical.
- Give credit and thanks

Train incrementally:

e.g., ID in class ⇔ class host ⇔ committee member ⇔ advisory council/special project/chairman

**-BEFORE-
Marketing and Publicity Committee**

- Develops and disseminates written/printed information about Encore.
- Encourages media coverage by developing and maintaining contacts at newspapers, organizational newsletters, magazines, and other print outlets.
- Develops promotional initiatives such as distributing catalogs to community libraries, senior centers, retirement residences, chambers of commerce, etc.
- Coordinates publicity and activities with the Membership Development Committee.
- Implements pertinent recommendations of Encore Marketing Plan as determined by the committee; consults and coordinates with the appropriate Encore staff.

Membership Development Committee

- Informs the community about Encore's programs through oral presentations; e.g., speeches before clubs and groups and informal presentations at senior fairs and conferences using the Encore video and display board.
- Promotes membership through personal contacts and by networking with organizations and groups that serve the over-fifty population.
- Identifies new groups and organizations that are appropriate to inform about Encore, and provides this information to staff liaison.

Membership Development and the Marketing and Publicity committees usually meet together for an hour and a half every two months. Additional time commitment depends on degree to which members want to get involved in distributing catalogs, speaking before groups and at senior fairs, and undertaking other marketing or membership projects.

-AFTER-

Encore Membership Development and Marketing (M/M) Committee

Mission: to grow, renew and improve the Encore program by reaching, attracting, involving and retaining members committed to an active life of learning and involvement in their community.

Committee Members are appointed by the Director and Committee chair to represent a broad cross-section of Encore members. All Encore members are eligible. Committee members will have demonstrated an understanding of and commitment to the Encore Program and its goals. They will further have demonstrated the ability and willingness to participate in most of the Committee activities described below. Participation on the Committee will normally be for a term of one to three years, to be renewed with agreement of the member, Committee Chair and Encore Director.

The Committee Chair is appointed by the Encore Advisory Council Chair, in consultation with the director. The Chair will have demonstrated an ability and willingness to perform all committee functions over a period of at least one year, and will have demonstrated organizational and motivational skills in directing the activities of the committee and in finding and attracting new members to the committee. The term is normally two years and the chair may be reappointed.

Responsibilities of committee members will include:

- Attend most committee meetings, normally 6 yearly. Report on individual activities and share in the discussion of committee activities.
- Be an active Encore member, enrolled in one or more classes, and active in one or more other Encore activities (A & E, colloquia, trips, Book Club, Writers Group, Seasonal Celebration, Kick-offs, Instructor Recognition Lunch, etc.)
- Distribute Encore catalogs twice a year (July & November) to 4-5 assigned locations (libraries, fitness centers, retirement communities, etc.) convenient to the member's home.
- Make annual telephone or personal contacts (about ten) from an assigned list of organizations of interest to Encore. These contacts may include service organizations (Lions Club, Kiwanis, etc.), retirement communities, church groups and other organizations. The purpose of these contacts is to update contact information, to solicit presentation opportunities and to develop an awareness of the Encore program throughout the communities we serve.
- Make 2-3 informal presentations (normally 10 – 20 minutes) to such groups each year.

2008 OLLI Conference, Tricia Inlow-Hatcher, Encore Center for Lifelong Enrichment, North Carolina State University

- Participate in occasional other committee activities (Newcomers Orientation, staffing an Encore booth at the fairgrounds or convention center) as available, 1-2 times yearly.
- Make telephone contacts (about ten per year, usually in August) with previous Encore members who are no longer active. We do this to provide feedback to the Director on membership satisfaction and trends.
- Help to develop and implement programs intended to attract and retain a diverse Encore membership.
- To informally seek out other Encore members to encourage their full participation in the program and benefit from membership.

Bringing out the best in your volunteers:

- Cultivate leaders, not just committee members who will do work
- Encourage your members to lead and get involved by specifically telling them why you think they can do X, Y, or Z.
- Show them their voice matters
- Encourage diversity (homogeneity = boring and stale)
- Welcome their thoughts and ideas.
- Praise them; let them know their contributions are valued.
- Create a culture where change is good.
- Encourage honesty. Let folks know it's okay to tell you what's not working.
- Encourage questions.
- Diversity of ideas can promote problem solving. Be democratic.
- It's okay to try something that doesn't work.
- Having a team of volunteer leaders means shared ownership of ideas
- LET GO! Herd those cats! Trust others to lead.
- Be enthusiastic! The best role a director/staff can play is to be positive and inspire.

Results:

- Our volunteers feel needed and valued.
- Get to see results of their work, which inspires them to stay involved or get more involved.
- Makes them feel part of a community (when they understand nonprofit, good stewards of their fees, eager to help).
- Program that thrives!