

**RECRUITING,  
RETENTION, and  
RECIPROCITY of  
USA SWIMMING OFFICIALS  
LSC Officials Chairs Workshop  
August 24-25, 2001  
Chicago, IL**

**Introduction**

- **SHARE** various methods of recruiting and retaining officials
- what IS working in your LSC
  - Recruitment
  - Retention
  - Reciprocity

## Topics of Discussion

- PROMOTING
- RECRUITING
- RETENTION
- RECIPROCITY

WHAT WORKS FOR YOU?

## PROMOTING

- **PROMOTING Officials** maybe done in many different ways. Let's discuss several ways to recruit officials.
  - **FIRST** develop your Local Swim Committees
    - **Philosophy of Officiating. This should be** the same as that of the National Official Committee, thus promoting **continuity** of officiating throughout the United States.
  - **DEVELOP** a short term and long term program for **Recruiting, Developing, Promoting, and Retaining** your officials

## RECRUITING

**The most effective way to recruit:  
...use a personal approach**

### ❖ **PERSONAL APPROACH**

- **HAVE** your officials go out and recruit club members on a one on one basis.
- **PARENTS who are** persistently questioning calls: Recruit them to join you.
- **ASSIGN** mentors to new officials.

## RECRUITING

**Recruiting by citing the benefits...**

### ❖ **RECRUITING PARENTS: Some ways to convince them to officiate:**

- **DO** it with your swimmers.
- **DO** it for your swimmers.
- **DO** it for and with your club.
- **IT'S BETTER** than sitting in stand/snack bar,
- **OFFICIATING** starts at the Age Group Swim Program and has the opportunity to see the world through swimming!
- **BENEFITS** of being an official would give them a better understanding of the rules to which swimmers must conform.
- **FRIENDSHIPS** are made and kept for a lifetime throughout the country.

## RECRUITING

**Recruit by getting the word out at the local clubs...**

### ❖ **INFORMATION MEETINGS**

- **INVITE** interested parents to attend an informational meeting during USA Swimming, College, High School, or Recreation meets.
- **GIVE** officiating overview at the parents' meetings at the club
- **DISTRIBUTE** the pamphlet "Parents Guide to Officiating" to parents
- **ENCOURAGE** the teams to reward their officials by paying the official's USA Swimming registration
- **ESTABLISH** a liaison between the teams and the Officials Committee

## RECRUITING

**Recruit by getting the word out during the meets...**

### ❖ **INFORMATION MEETINGS/BOOTHS**

- **STAFF** an officials information booth in you local age group meets or recreation swim meets.
- **DISTRIBUTE** the pamphlet "Parents Guide to Officiating" to parents at the meets.
- **CONDUCT** clinics before your meet sessions or in-between split sessions
- **USE** the meets to call your scheduled clinics to everyone's attention.
  - Announce during timer's briefing
  - Announce at coaches meeting
  - Have announcer make the announcements
  - Include dates of upcoming officials clinics in meet programs
  - Make copies of officials clinics flyers available at check-in desk

# RECRUITING

## Recruit during other LSC events...

### ❖ INFORMATION MEETINGS/BOOTHS

- **CLINICS and SWIM CAMPS** for swimmers are conducted through out the year. Invite parents to stay for discussion on becoming an official. Invite parents as guests to all your clinics. This is the low-pressure model.
- **ORGANIZE SWIMPOSIUMS** in your LSC. Setup an information booth and invite parents.

# RECRUITING

## Get your officials involved in recruiting...

### ❖ OFFICIALS

- **YOU** are the best recruiting tools.
- **YOU** recruit by example:
  - Being professional at all times
  - Welcome all new interested parents
  - Being friendly
  - Being knowledgeable
  - Showing your enjoyment of being an official
  - Promoting officialdom at all time

## RECRUITING

**Get the coaches involved in recruiting...**

### ❖ Coaches

- They are key persons in recruiting officials
- They are central to the lives of both the swimmer and the swimmer's parents
- Invite coaches to participate in officials clinics
  - allows them to know what new officials have been told
  - allows them to be able to tell parents what to expect

## RECRUITING

**Minimum officials requirement may work - be careful with the enforcement policy...**

- ❖ Some LSC's require minimum numbers of officials at a meet from teams based on the number of participants in the meet.
  - This does emphasize the responsibility of all teams to participate in officiating for all the swimmers.
  - Make sure that you pay attention to the quality of all such officials as they may resent being drafted into service.
  - **CAUTION**: If the swimmer is otherwise eligible to swim in a meet, then any rule that does not apply to the swimmer individually that prohibits the swimmer from competing in the meet is a violation of the rules of USA Swimming

# RECRUITING

## More tips on recruiting...

- ❖ Copy the Technical Rules (2 pages!) and give it to parents. It is less intimidating!
- ❖ Recruit masters swimmers and former swimmers
  - give back to the sport of swimming
- ❖ No limits except common sense and monetary constraints!?

# RETENTION

## Why is Retention so Important?

- ❖ **Your new officials are the best recruiting tools**
  - They bring in their friends
  - They can relate better to their peers
  - They provide great support to new recruits
- ❖ **It took a major investment to train an official**
  - It makes sense to invest in the retention effort

**An unhappy official who quits can have a negative impact on recruitment**

## RETENTION

### Retaining new recruits...

- ❖ **We were able to get people to try their hand at officiating... but very few stay**
  - They attended clinics
  - They shadowed another official on deck
  - They quit after working a couple of sessions

**TO FIND OUT WHY...  
TRY EXIT INTERVIEW**

## RETENTION

### Leadership Quality and Recruitment/Retention...

- ❖ **A recent study (interviewing over 10,000 “high value” employees) of why employees quit indicated:**
  - **Manager’s quality** is the single most important factor in career decision
  - Employees will “trade away” any other factors - including compensation - to work for the best managers in the company

**PEOPLE DO NOT LEAVE THEIR COMPANY –  
THEY LEAVE THEIR BOSS!!**

**DID YOUR OFFICIALS LEAVE BECAUSE OF LEADERSHIP PROBLEMS?**



## **RETENTION**

### **An important retention key-building relationship..**

- ❖ **The first law of building a relationship is spending time with the person**
  - Get to know your people - your fellow officials
  - Let them know how you feel about them
  - Let them know that they are making a difference
- ❖ **People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care**
- ❖ **Re-Recruiting**
  - Pay as much attention to those you have recruited years ago as those you are recruiting now

## **RETENTION**

### **Another retention key - effective communication...**

- ❖ **The single biggest hurdle to effective communication is the assumption that it has been taking place**
  - Not everybody has email or internet connection
  - Some people may have missed your last clinic
- ❖ **People tend to support or defend that which they help create or decide**
  - Ask: "What do you think..."
- ❖ **Keys to giving feedback:**
  - Make sure it is specific, sincere, and timely
  - With negative feedback, separate the person from the act - Condemn the act, reinforce the person - dignity must be kept intact

## **RETENTION**

### **Retention Guidelines...**

- Treat **ALL** officials equal and with respect
- Be sensitive to their needs and other responsibilities
- Be flexible and accommodating
- Be patient and allow time for an official to develop
- Provide opportunities for your officials to advance
- Pay attention to the workload of your officials
- Initiate and maintain good communication
- Seek feedback periodically
- Breakdown barriers - work the line sometimes
- Consider holding social functions for officials
  - Holiday parties; coaches/officials socials
  - Pay attention to hospitality and meeting the needs of officials during meets and clinics
- Use incentives such as service award pins, etc.

## **RETENTION**

### **Retention Strategies...**

- Overcome the tendencies toward “cliques” and work on making all your officials feel welcome
- Continuous Training opportunities
- Praise a good job
  - Thank you cards
- Follow through with problems
  - Call them and talk it through
- Create mentoring relationships that are personal as well professional
- Recertification is an opportunity for professional and social renewal in building community among your officials

## **RETENTION**

### **Remember...**

- You cannot motivate someone else – you can only motivate yourself – you can, however, create an environment to enhance self-motivation
- The LSC Officials Committee should establish policies with officials retention in mind
- The referee, starters, and chief judges must assume the responsibilities of retaining officials every time they work on a meet

## **RECIPROCITY**

### **Basic Foundation of the Policy on Reciprocity...**

- **Reciprocity is based on the existing national policies on Minimum Standards for Certification**

## **RECIPROCITY**

### **Policy Proposal...**

- Officials certified in LSC who conform to the Minimum Standards for Certification will have their certified status recognized by the LSC they move to or visit.
- Reciprocity requires that each LSC develop a reasonable policy for integrating them into the pool of working officials in the LSC.
  - This includes both transferring officials and officials visiting the LSC.

## **RECIPROCITY**

### **Policy Clarification...**

- The intent is to ease the process for the officials when they transfer to or visit other LSCs.
- Every effort shall be made to integrate visiting officials into the meet in an officiating capacity.
  - The official is responsible for presenting their credentials and informing the meet referee of their availability.

# RECIPROCIITY

## Officials Certification Card -

### Recommended information:

- **LSC Certification levels & expiration dates**
  - Referee, Starter, Stroke & Turn, etc.
- **Meet attendance record**
  - Date, sessions, position worked, meet type
  - Signed by meet referee or chief judge
- **Clinics attendance record**
  - Date, type (Referee, Starter, S&T, etc.)
  - Signed by clinic instructor

# RECIPROCIITY

## Sample Officials Certification Card (tri-fold):

### Front

Officials Certification/Recertification Clinic attended/conducted:  
DATE HOST POSITION(S) SESSIONS INSTR. SIGNATURE

|       |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |



This is to certify that

\_\_\_\_\_ has been approved as a swimming official  
by PACIFIC SWIMMING

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pacific Officials Chair

| Position(s) certified | Level     | Expires on last day of |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Referee               | 1 2 3 4 5 | 2000 2001 2002 2003    |
| Starter               | 1 2 3 4 5 | 2000 2001 2002 2003    |
| S & T Judge           | 1 2 3 4 5 | 2000 2001 2002 2003    |
| Chief S & T Judge     | 1 2 3 4 5 | 2000 2001 2002 2003    |

Administrative Referee \_\_\_\_\_ Chief Timer \_\_\_\_\_ Timer \_\_\_\_\_  
Meet Director \_\_\_\_\_ Clerk of Course \_\_\_\_\_ Announcer \_\_\_\_\_  
Equipment Operator \_\_\_\_\_ Marshall \_\_\_\_\_ Timing Judge \_\_\_\_\_  
Head Desk \_\_\_\_\_ Desk \_\_\_\_\_

### Back

PACIFIC SWIMMING - 2001  
RECORD OF OFFICIATING SERVICE AND CERTIFICATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE \_\_\_\_\_

Bring this card to every USA Swimming meet at which you serve.  
Have the Meet Referee or his/her designee sign for the sessions  
that you work to verify your service.

DATE HOST POSITION(S) SESSIONS REF. SIGNATURE

|       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Record clinics attended on other side.  
Send to Officials Chair when complete or at end of the year.

