



## TIGER'S TOP TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

1. Think of your recruitment challenge in **simple** terms. If each of your existing members recruited just one new member – what effect would that have on your roster?  
*You do the math.*
2. Be careful what you wish for. More members equal more help, more people to manage and more people issues to deal with. However, this can't deter you from recruiting more.  
**Plan for volunteers.**
3. Behind every good leader is a bunch of good followers. You're *already* in a leadership position if you've learned to be a **good follower**. Learn your position and play it well.
4. Be courteous, kind and forgiving ... or at least establish a minimum standard for human relations. Treat your fellow members with the same basic level of **respect** that you would give to a first acquaintance. It goes a long way towards retention.
5. **Know your competition** and pounce at every opportunity to recruit: at church, at work, in your neighborhood and even at an emergency scene. Fire prevention shouldn't be practiced just one week of the year – neither should recruitment.
6. Whose job is it to recruit new members? Everyone's - not just the chief or the membership committee. **Work as a team** to build a bigger, better team.
7. Peace at home = peace at the firehouse. Make sure you're targeting the right audience with your **recognition and incentives** programs.
8. If it's quantity you *need* – take a shotgun approach to recruiting. If it's **quality** you *want* – make it a target shoot. You might need to do both.
9. Outward success cannot be achieved without inward change. Look at the way you do everything. Leverage what's good about your department. **Change** what's bad.
10. When searching for the ultimate recruit – think of the person you would want to serve with ... or be saved by. Then **go out and get 'em**.

---

*Tiger Schmittendorf is an author, grant writer, emergency manager and a frequent presenter on the subjects of leadership, safety, public relations, recruitment and retention. He serves the County of Erie (Buffalo NY) Department of Emergency Services as Deputy Fire Coordinator and created a recruitment effort that doubled his own fire department's membership and helped to net 525+ new volunteers countywide. He is a nationally certified fire instructor and has been a firefighter since 1980. He suffers from an extremely dry sense of humor and routinely makes an ass of himself, often in public. Visit his blog at: [www.TigerSchmittendorf.com](http://www.TigerSchmittendorf.com).*

---