

R - RECRUIT
A - AFFIRM
T - TRAIN
E - EMPOWER
D - DISMISS

R A T E D represents a shift in how we seek new ministers! This is a “method” for **nurturing** ministries.

First we should take a brief analysis of how we have sought “volunteers” in the past, asking the question...”What worked for me and produced the desired response?”

- The pastor stands at the door after Mass and “grabs a victim” from the greeting line.
- You put an “advertisement” in the weekly bulletin.
- You have a once a year parish ministry fair and provide handouts for people to read.
- When you were really desperate, you mailed postcards to all the registered parishioners.

Next, ask the question... “How effective has this been? Are all of our ministries overflowing?”

If this brief analysis results in the same answer... “Nothing I tried has produced the desired results”...then

STOP doing what hasn’t worked before... there is no miracle that will change the truth... **We need a new system!!** (Repeating **old methods** only repeats **old results!**)

So...out with the old and in with the new: R A T E D

RECRUIT: Recruiting members for various parish ministries or committees should **not** be done through the parish bulletin or a mailing, but through **personal contact**. **Recruit** intentionally and joyfully. When recruiting, tell a person why you are recruiting them. Tell them what strengths they bring.

AFFIRM: After the recruiting process, it is time to affirm what caused you to recruit the person. Tell the person why he or she is being personally asked. An example of this would be recruiting a cantor; as a member of the body during Mass, you listen to the people around you and notice the singing of a person near you each week. Find out the name and phone number of the person with the great voice. Then make a call, saying, “Gosh, I couldn’t help but hearing how wonderful you sing. Why don’t you come with me to choir practice on Thursday. We have training sessions, etc, for all choir members.” Be prepared to answer questions, and be available to greet and introduce the recruited person at the meeting.

TRAIN: For any program or ministry to succeed, training is not only required, it is essential. Make sure that all individuals understand what the goals of the program are and give them the means to achieve the goals. There is nothing that discourages a new person or ends a program quicker than “just wing it”. There may be additional training resources available through the diocese, to supplement parish programs.

EMPOWER: After training, empower the new ministers by formally installing at a special ceremony. Involve everyone in the program. There are two sides to empowerment. It is the responsibility of the leader to facilitate and direct new recruits. It is up to the new recruit to be committed and take ownership of their responsibilities. There are some warnings for leaders:

- Don't do it all yourself
- Find out who is not involved and **get them involved.**
- Don't dictate, but delegate
- Don't get stale, but listen to new ideas
- Don't say "we tried that before and it didn't work" when someone offers an idea after they have been part of the ministry for a period of time! Remember we live in a dynamic society, what did not work ten years ago may work today!!

DISMISS:

Ecclesiastes Ch 3: "There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant."

God has an appointed time for each ministry... a time to plant... and a time to uproot! Often, God uproots from one ministry so that we can move to another ministry for which God has been preparing us. We must honor God's plan, often not the one we have for ourselves!

Publicly thank people in the bulletin for a job well done. Have an exit interview that you request suggestions and criticisms of the program. A common barrier in getting new recruits is the demand on their time and the misconception that participation is a lifetime commitment. Leaders should train new leaders to take their place. Participation should become a process where the end of the process is dismissal. The goal is to recruit people for a specific ministry to be committed to that ministry for a given period of time. The length of time depends on the ministry. For example, your commitment of time for a Ministry Information Fair is hours to a few days, whereas a commitment as a Lector is from one to three years.