
Weathering the drought: Rethinking law enforcement recruiting strategies for a withering pool

Discussion/shared strategies: In our webinar, we asked attendees, “Implementing proactive hiring strategies has been identified as the initiative most likely to be successful in addressing law enforcement recruiting gaps. What are some examples of initiatives that your agency has, or plans to implement?”

Here is what they had to say:

- We've been using social media platforms younger folks are using in an effort to reach more applicants.
 - We were also featured on the COPS TV show and that peaked interest in applicants
 - Money talks....for our agency, adding a hiring incentive/referral bonus has seemed to open the gates
 - We do career faires and referral programs
 - Feeder systems with community liaisons as stakeholders along with officer referral awards
 - We have created Career Interest Cards that we hand out at various functions, in the lobby or place in the Career Center for interested folks to fill out. We notify them when a position in our department is opening.
 - We meet weekly to discuss our hiring strategies and collaborate with community liaisons. However, we need a designated recruitment team year-round, not just during the hiring campaign.
 - The majority of departments use job recruiting fairs as well as word-of-mouth in an attempt to gain qualified applicants. A feeder program would help in planting a seed to generate interest.
 - Nationwide social media campaign
 - We are getting applicants. The struggle is getting them to follow through with taking and submitting
 - Written test scores and following through by submitting required documentation to begin backgrounds.
 - Out-of-area recruiting
 - Attending academies, employee referral incentives, networking within law enforcement community, public presence, three-pronged officer hiring approach (trainee, ACT, lateral)
 - Advertising in minority-owned publications and holding job fairs at minority-based education facilities.
 - We have had many new officers referred from other agencies from our current employees.
 - Out-of-area recruiting, internships, working with a local college training program to have student do work study at agency.
 - Have students do work study at agency.
 - We don't have an academy. We're a smaller agency. But I was thinking that we could reach out to one to bring cadets – invite them on-site to see how a small agency works.
 - Create a recruitment video to show on the department website, include a demonstration of the physical ability.
 - Current proactive practice is planning the testing process a year in advance.
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- Targeting younger potential future applicants through a cadet program.
- Simplified communication emails and moving toward online testing and forms.
- We have streamlined our hiring process to make it more efficient and oriented toward the applicant.
- We provide incentive to current employees for recruiting experienced officers.
- One of the big pulls for us is a community resource officer, which is a civilian unit that takes reports. They work with our officers every day and see what it's like. They are also very successful in going through the academy.
- Using a smartphone-friendly application that is shorter than a regular application.
- Recording short (1-2 minute) recruitment vignettes that show the exciting, fun, and specialized tools (boats, helicopters, technology tools such as tablets and laptops) that are used in my agency. Show the heroic and honorable nature of the career.
- With the Sheriff Department we are offering tuition reimbursement for the Deputy themselves or a family member.
- Trying to diversify force, going into college sports programs for women.
- We are using social media to extend our reach beyond our area and to reach a younger generation.
- We get good results from job fairs - potential candidates can meet and chat with police officers and deputies, a personal connection that reduces some of the mystery and provides a human touch - as opposed to the high-tech approach.
- We post jobs on all job sites.