

How To Turn Reluctant Sisters Into Enthusiastic Officer Recruits

Put me in Coach!

2025 POI– (Centerfield by John Forgerty, Play song during transitions:

Kristin: (wearing a baseball hat and glove/ball or bat in hand) This year I served as the Organizer of the Montana State Chapter. If you are wondering what the Organizer does, think of me as a **coach**. I had the privilege to coordinate the official visit to half of our chapters this year and to make many visits personally over the three years I have been on the board. A common thread in many chapters, concerns sisters' reluctance to become a chapter officer. Many chapters have officers who have had the same person in the same Office for 10-15 years. International recommends that officer turnover should be every two years.

Over the years, the Executive Board has heard the following comments about recruiting officers:

"President is an especially tough ask."

"Many of our members are older and feel they've already 'paid their dues.'"

"People are really busy."

"Many officer jobs require computers, which many of our sisters resist."

"Some think being an officer is too much work."

Sound familiar?

Many of us may have had moments of doubt, unsure if we could handle the responsibilities of an officer role.

Struggling is not why we love to be in P.E.O., is it? We're here to enjoy our sisters and work together to motivate, educate and celebrate women!

Back in the day, there was an assertion that "you don't say no to P.E.O." Well, sisters, it seems that has changed, as it has nationally for all organizations seeking volunteers. How do we get from a no to a yes? How do we make the case that being an officer is an excellent opportunity so that more sisters will say, "Put me in, Coach; I'm ready to play!"

Hopefully, you had the opportunity to attend Jane Hodges' workshop on developing an officer shadowing/pipeline program. In this short period of instruction, we hope to build on

that program by giving you some tips you can take to your chapter to make it an easier “ask” for your nominating committees. We'll start with the why, then how, and finally, the who.

Thanks to our sisters in the Connecticut State Chapter, who developed a top 10 list of why you should be a chapter officer, and Gail Corvette, South Carolina State Chapter Organizer, for writing the script. Like David Letterman, we'll present it to you in reverse order. If you printed the handout from on the Montana State website in the PreConvention print package, you could take that out and follow along.

Your state officers will be performing a short skit to highlight the 10 reasons to be a chapter officer. The characters for our skit are taken from the Movie: “A League of Their Own” It is about the Women Baseball team in the 1940’s and 50’s. Staring Thomas Hanks, Geena Davis, Lori Petty, Madonna, and Ann Cusack.

Catcher: Dottie Hinson, played by Geena Davis, I mean Linda Meine

Pitcher: Kit Keller, played by Nanci Schoenfelder

Center Fielder: Mae Mordabito, by played Kelly Paladino

Left Fielder: Shirley Baker, played by Jeanie Peterson

Coach: Jimmy Dugan, played by Kristin Hope

Slide One: Play Music

Coach Dugan (Kristin) **Come on in girls, we have work to do. Line up and be ready to play.** Other officers run in and line up.

Slide Two

Kristin: **Catcher Dottie will take us through four reasons to dispel the concern we hear that sisters don't think they CAN be an officer (Passing the baseball)**

Slide Three:

Dottie (Linda): **The Number 10 reason to be a chapter officer answers that concern that someone thinks they can't do the job: Think "THE PLAYBOOK." You can because excellent instructions are on the International website, including officer training modules for nearly every Office. There are also detailed instructions in the Instructions for Officers of Local Chapters (IOLC) on the International website.**

Slide Four:

What is the Number 9 reason for being a chapter officer? SPRING TRAINING. You can be an officer because your chapter will have an Officer Transition Meeting where you

will meet with the outgoing and incoming officers to make plans for the coming year and discuss your chapter's health. You will have time with your predecessor to receive and review supplies, receive her helpful hints to make the experience more manageable, and simply ask questions.

Slide Five

The Number 8 reason: PINCH HITTERS. You can because, when necessary, sisters are willing and able to serve as helpers. So many sisters in our chapters have already served in many offices.

Slide Six

Number 7: COACHES. You can because our state officers are accessible to answer questions and offer help. In addition, the organizer or her proxy will visit your chapter and spend time with the chapter officers to provide further support. You can attend the Spring Local Officer Zoom Workshops to meet your fellow officers and learn from everyone. You are not alone in this journey.

Slide Seven

Coach (Kristin): **Now, let's hear from Kit about the next three reasons why a sister should say yes. Kit, it's your ball!** (pass the ball)

Slide Eight

Kit (Nanci): **Number 6: JUST LIKE THE NATIONAL ANTHEM RITUAL.** You should because participating in the Ceremony of Initiation is a special gift you can share with the initiate. Memorization is no longer required; you can read your part from the official initiation booklet. And many chapters have initiation teams to perform the ceremony.

Slide Nine

Number 5: INSIDE BASEBALL You should because undertaking an officer's responsibilities helps deepen your understanding of the workings of your chapter. The more you learn, the more streamlined your meetings will be, which can result in extra time to visit with your sisters.

Slide Ten

Number 4: BATTING PRACTICE. You should consider being an officer because it sharpens your leadership skills and often takes you to a new level in your comfort zone. It is an excellent opportunity for personal growth and enrichment. The loving

support and encouragement of your chapter sisters make fulfilling the responsibilities of an office a rewarding opportunity.

Slide Eleven

Coach (Kristin): **Love it, Kit. Mae—are there any reasons why someone REALLY SHOULD be an officer?** (pass the ball)

Slide Twelve

Mae (Kelly): **Number 3: BE THE MVP** You really should because helping your chapter in this way gives you a sense of purpose and accomplishment that is worthwhile and fulfilling. The personal benefits you receive will be far greater than the small amount of extra time and effort you expend.

Slide Thirteen

Number 2: GIVE BACK You really should because agreeing to be an officer provides an opportunity to give back to your chapter and the Sisterhood for all the rewards membership has offered you.

Coach (Kristin): **And, Shirley, bring it to home plate (ball):**

Slide Fourteen

Shirley (Jeanie): **And the Number 1 reason you really, really should be a chapter officer...is because IT'S IN YOUR CONTRACT!** When you became a member, you promised to give a due share of your interest, time, and energy to the Sisterhood!

Coach (Kristin): **Thank you, ladies, you make a great team! You put in hard work today and your dedication is getting the job done. Go hit the shower, you deserve it.**

Kristin: **Some of you may be thinking, this sounds great, but it will not be that easy to implement. Please remember a famous quote from the movie: “It’s supposed to be hard. If it wasn’t everyone would do it. The hard is what makes it great.” Let’s have a show of hands, if these "whys" resonate with you?**

Slide Fifteen

How about the "how's" of how and when you ask? Just like baseball, we have four bases to touch on before you can score.

First, the expectations from the very beginning should be set in the [Preacceptance counseling](#) and [PostInitiation counseling](#). The [Guide for When You Become Invited](#), available on the International website, states that one of the benefits of P.E.O. membership

is that members "are involved in opportunities for personal growth and developing leadership skills." "Members may be asked to serve as officers" is on page 11 of the Preacceptance counseling PowerPoint."

Second, remind all your officers that they're role models for others. Show that the roles aren't complicated, and act like you're having fun! Because: "There's no crying in P.E.O.!" (Ha! We all know that isn't true. But let's make them tears of joy.) Ensure everyone sees that so many in the chapter appreciate the service of each of your current officers. They may be showered with appreciation if they step into an officer role.

Third, encourage everyone that they can be an officer. In fact, the easiest is the President: everything you need to say in a meeting is written in our beloved President's Book! Using Jane Hodges' example of an officer shadow, have a sister serve as assistant to an officer for a year so that she is comfortable stepping into the role and has been fully trained. How about an Assistant Treasurer if someone is reluctant to be treasurer? Treasurer is an office many of the chapters we visited this year said is hard to fill.

And fourth, make her feel special: is someone more likely to say yes when you tell her we think she'd be good at the job or that she is our last hope?

Slide Sixteen

Kristin: So, "who" can and should be an officer?

(With baseball hats on, PSPs stand up and face the delegation) **Anyone and everyone!**

Why do we tend to assume someone can't be an officer? Consider some of these scenarios.

... One of our day chapters might have thought that their sister, who works during the day, could not be the corresponding secretary, but she has been for three years. She zooms into the meetings to save time away from her job.

...A sister with a journalism degree has served as treasurer!

...A working sister with no time to devote to P.E.O. outside of meetings brought her laptop to the meetings and served as recording secretary.

Slide 17

There are a host of other examples that defy your assumptions. Just ask her! She just might say YES to the Office! She might just ASK the nominating committee to put her in the starting lineup of your chapter for the coming year.

This Period of Instruction will be posted on the Montana website after convention, if you would like to use it for a chapter program. If you didn't get to hear Jane's workshop, it too will be posted on the website. There's also a great video in the Resource section of the P.E.O International website, "[Creating a Flowing Pipeline of Chapter Leaders](#)", to help your chapter's leadership team create a strong leadership culture in your chapter so that you can field your dream team of eager officer recruits and develop the very best batting order for your future champion chapter.

New board members, running into the room: **"Put me in Coach, we're ready to play".**

Kristin: **Thank you, ladies, you are now part of the team!**

Slide 18: Play song

Handout