

How to Select High-Quality PNMs

A Guide for High Quality Fraternities/Sororities



TechniPhi



phiredup.com



695 Pro-Med Lane, Suite 205
Carmel, Indiana 46032



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Nearly every chapter member says they prioritize QUALITY over quantity when selecting new members. Yet, few chapters turn away more people than they bid; too few have written selection criteria or a well defined process. This FREE resource from the recruitment education team at Phired Up reveals the 3 step formula used to measurably select QUALITY new members who are...

- 1) **Aligned** with the organization's purpose, values, and goals. They qualify for membership.
- 2) **Fit** with the group. We know them, trust them, and think they belong with us.
- 3) **Risk** assessed for quality control, to minimize/avoid high risk members.

Let's be clear. There is no fool-proof way to know with 100% certainty that every new member will be a lifelong, engaged member who never causes any problems. This is true for sports teams, corporations, military, admissions departments, and even fraternities/sororities. That said, high performing groups do their best to make smart, informed decisions and systemize the new member selection process to get a little better every year. Guessing, gut feel, or delaying selection into the new member period are irresponsible strategies that have failed in the past.

The selection formula that will dramatically improve any chapter's selection process looks like this:



Step 1: Qualification & Alignment

Start with the core values of the organization. The organization probably has 3-7 words that highlight core beliefs, highest ideals, virtues, or top priorities. These words provide valuable guidance in finding new members who believe what you believe and align with your organization's purpose.

Can't find your organization's values? Check the (inter/national organization's) website, the ritual, reason for being, creed, or mission statement. If you're still not sure, poll the members and decide as a chapter on the 3-7 values that make your organization purposeful and unique.

Example: Scholarship + Faith + Service + Leadership + Excellence

Next, write down a few objective "standards" for each value that will assess if a PNM aligns with your ideals. [Click here](#) for an example. Remember, the standards must be measurable never subjective.

Bad Standard: Scholarship = Studies hard and earns good grades

Good Standard: Scholarship = Minimum 2.9 GPA (or) minimum 2.75 GPA and enrolled in academic support with school

Every PNM is assessed to make sure they meet the organization's minimum standards before they are eligible for an official bid vote. This can be done informally (e.g. conversation) or formally (e.g. application, interview).

Generally speaking, if the chapter's only criteria for membership is the required minimum GPA and someone in the bid vote meeting yelling out that the PNM is "chill ... legit ... cool ... cute ... nice ... good guy ... super fun ... has potential... great kid" then let's at least admit that measurable QUALITY is NOT a real priority of the group.



Pro Tip: [Use ChapterBuilder™](#)

There are already built in features to select your standards, measure quality, and compare your PNMs.

Step 2: Culture Fit

Offering a bid is a big ask – a lifetime commitment to membership. The members have to agree that this is a PNM who they want to call a member for life; to believe they will be there for him/her in the best of times and worst of times ... and that s/he will be there for them; a person to hold members accountable; to represent them with integrity and excellence at all times; a person worthy of wearing the letters -- carrying on the traditions and history of the organization while making it better for future generations.

While each organization's invitation for membership is a unique process, a common thread is that the current members need to bring forward a PNM and agree that that person is a fit to join the membership. Some chapters do this through a selection committee, some ask alumni to choose/confirm, some empower a single undergraduate officer to make the decision, others vote as a group on each PNM, and some slate PNMs for a vote.

Whatever process you use, it makes no sense to bid vote strangers into your lifelong bond. Consider requiring a specific number of members to endorse the PNM; to personally vouch for the PNM as a candidate for membership. If the minimum number of member endorsements is not met, the PNM should not be eligible for membership.

Sample definition of a member endorsement (thumbs up):

"My endorsement confirms that I know the candidate, vouch for the PNM's character, will stand by him/her through the new member process, have talked to the PNM about the obligations of membership, and go on record as believing the PNM to be a person who will join, lead, and remain active for a lifetime."

Determine how many members need to endorse a PNM. This is your culture fit filter.



Pro Tip: [Use ChapterBuilder™](#)

There is already a "thumbs up" feature that makes this easy for members to do from the mobile app or website. Members can see every PNM status, up votes, down votes, and comments before the official membership selection process begins.

Step 3: Risk Assessment

Congratulations. You've done the work to know that your PNMs are qualified / aligned and a culture fit. There's one more critical step. Defense. As the saying goes, "one bad apple can spoil the bunch."

Greek Life is under the magnifying glass. It only takes one bad choice by one member to bring down the whole group. Choose safe, high quality new members and the group will become a safer, higher quality chapter. Here are some recommendations to help with Risk Assessment.

Determine the risks you want to assess. You may know about mistakes made by past members or members of another chapter. Don't repeat those mistakes. Start there. Examples:

Finances – Has the PNM demonstrated that s/he knows all of the financial commitments and has agreed in writing to fulfill financial commitments to the organization? Is there evidence of the PNM not fulfilling financial obligations in the past?

Behavior / Aggression – Has the PNM been in fights or altercations? If so, what were the circumstances, outcomes, and what did the PNM learn? How many times and how frequent are these behaviors? Does s/he demonstrate self control and discipline ... respect personal space, property, and boundaries ... respect and care for self and others at all times? How does the PNM treat his/her grandmother, mother, sister, waitress, female teachers, girlfriend, or other women? Does s/he talk about people with words of love, respect, and honor or does s/he use words that are demeaning, disrespectful, and dishonorable?

Hazing – Has the PNM confirmed that s/he knows and acknowledges the legal definition of hazing and our anti-hazing policy? Has the PNM experienced hazing, participated in hazing, or hazed someone else? What are the PNMs expectations about rights of passage associated with membership?

Alcohol & Drugs – Has the PNM demonstrated that s/he knows our policy on alcohol and drugs and has s/he agreed in writing to live daily within the boundaries of that policy? Does the PNM have a history of substance use/abuse? Does the PNM currently drink alcohol or use drugs?

Academics – Has the PNM demonstrated that s/he knows our policy on academic performance and has s/he agreed in writing to the policy? What is the PNMs current GPA, SAT/ACT, academic workload, and study habits? Support System – Is the PNM's family, friends, and partner aware of his/her desire to join and are they supportive?

Expectations – What fraternity/sorority experience is the PNM expecting or most excited about? Are the PNMs intentions centered on self, the group, or a greater good? How did the PNM react to the document outlining new member rights, the document on new member expectations, and the document of chapter goals?

Step 3: Risk Assessment (continued...)

It is up to the organization to determine what risks to assess, how to assess risk, and how much risk can be managed. That said, here is a system to assess each risk category:

-  White Flag: Not enough information to assess
-  Green Flag: Very low or no risk
-  Yellow Flag: Risk present but manageable
-  Red Flag: Risk too high to offer membership

Consider giving each flag a point value. Create a minimum number of points a PNM must achieve to be eligible for membership. See picture below for a point value example.

Risk assessments can be done formally (e.g. interview, application, policy form) or informally (conversation), but they should always end with written evidence demonstrating mutual agreements and should always involve more than one member of the chapter talking to the PNM.



Pro Tip: [Use ChapterBuilder™](#)

Quality PNM Selection Looks Like This...

Selection Assessment for PNM *D. EVANS*

Culture Fit

-  Casey Smith
-  Taylor Dean
-  J.C. Ramirez

Requirement: 5 "ups" to bid vote



Qualified/Aligned

-  Scholarship 3.0 GPA or enrolled in academic support
-  Faith Believes and participates actively in something bigger than self
-  Service 2+ hours/month or 24+ hours/year volunteering
-  Leadership Officer in high school or college organization
-  Excellence Recognized accomplishment in something s/he cares about

Requirement: 3+ standards to bid vote

Risk Assessment

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">  White Flag: Not enough information to assess  Green Flag: Very low or no risk  Yellow Flag: Risk present but manageable  Red Flag: Risk too high to offer membership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⁵  Finances ⁵  Behavior ⁻¹⁰  Academics ²  Support ⁵  Expectations |
|--|--|

Requirement: 15+ points to bid vote

Selection System = Key to Recruiting “Quality” PNMs

Now you have the secret ingredients of the formula to select high quality new members.

- 1) **Aligned** with the organization’s purpose, values, and goals. They qualify for membership.
- 2) **Fit** with the group. We know them, trust them, and think they belong with us.
- 3) **Risk** assessed for quality control, to minimize/avoid high risk members.

Evaluate based on all three of these things, then you can say with 100% confidence that your chapter is about “Quality.” Because you’ve done the work to prove it.



Pro Tip:

Aim for the center! See picture below. PNMs who plot in the center of the chapter’s customized selection system are just right for your organization. See diagram below.

The Selection Formula



-  **Culture Fit**
-  **Qualified / Aligned**
-  **Risk Assessment**

About Us

Phired Up (along with TechniPhi) delivers **TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATION,** and **STRATEGY** to help transform the way people join fraternities and sororities. Our team of passionate fraternity/sorority professionals are engineers of a growth system that makes fraternities and sororities safer, healthier, and stronger. We want to help every chapter and every potential member feel the impact of that system.

Want to learn more about how we can help your Organization, Community, or Chapter? Visit our website at phiredup.com or click on the link below.

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