

This document will help you recruit participants in your National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) lifestyle change program to be Program Champions.

You can also adapt this information to reach out to past participants who might be effective Program Champions.

Introducing The Program Champion Strategy

You can introduce the Program Champion Strategy (Champion Strategy, for short) at any time. CDC recommends that you do it about 6 months into the lifestyle change program. By then, participants will have completed the program's core content, and many will have successfully made lifestyle changes. They may be ready to become Program Champions as they enter the second half of the program, which is the maintenance phase.

Identifying Potential Program Champions

Select participants who are interested in becoming Program Champions. They should be able to effectively share their stories, accurately convey information about your lifestyle change program, and represent your lifestyle change program well. You may find that all participants would be effective Program Champions or that only some participants would be a good fit for this role.

What Makes A Good Program Champion

The elements that make a good Program Champion depend on the needs of your program and the community in which you're recruiting new participants. These characteristics are a good starting point:

- Excited about the lifestyle change program.
- Successful in making lifestyle changes and overcoming barriers.
- Positive attitude about making lifestyle changes.
- Good listener and clear communicator.
- Comfortable talking with people.
- Willing to share their story about the lifestyle change program.
- Seen as a member of the community you serve (to help build trust).

Consider asking all participants to write down what they have gotten out of the program—for example, how they have benefited, what changes they have made, and how they feel now compared to when they started. This information will help you identify participants who communicate well and have a positive story to tell. For those selected as Program Champions, these written



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pieces can help them frame their story before they share it with others.

You may also be able to use these written pieces for testimonials in outreach materials.

What About People Who Are Not A Good Fit for A Champion?

Consider whether and how to involve people who are interested in becoming a Program Champion but who are not a good fit. For example, you might ask them to hand out brochures to friends or family members or help with administrative tasks.

Recruiting Program Champions

There is no perfect number of Program Champions needed to use the Champion Strategy. Set the number of Program Champions you want to recruit according to your program's size and needs and the staffing and other resources available to support them. The number can change along the way. For example, you might start with one or two Program Champions today and recruit more later.

Methods for Recruiting Program Champions

Just as the number of Program Champions will vary by program, so will the strategies for recruiting them. Your program may want to try the following:

- Reach out to prospective Program Champions in person, by phone, or by e-mail. Assess interest and set a time to share more details. You can do this one-on-one or in a group setting.
- Discuss the Champion Strategy in detail with current participants during a program session and ask for volunteers. Do this only if you think all participants would make good Program Champions.
- Hand out or e-mail an invitation to participants asking them to become a Program Champion. Ask those who are interested to complete a screening or participation form. This form may include a brief questionnaire with 10 to 15 questions about their interests, skills, and availability.

Messages for Potential Program Champions

When introducing the Champion Strategy, you may wish to use or adapt the following language:

To help us recruit participants for our next lifestyle change program, we'd like you to consider becoming a Program Champion. As a Program Champion, you'll tell friends, family members, and others how you have benefited from the lifestyle change program. You will also encourage people who might benefit from the program to sign up.

We will provide all the information and resources you need to be a Program Champion, and we will support you in your outreach activities. We don't expect that everyone will want to become a Program Champion, and we won't pressure you to do so. These efforts are voluntary, and you will work on activities at your own pace. We estimate that Program Champion activities will take about 1 hour a week, but some may take more or less time.

Think about it. If you're interested, we'll share more information. In the meantime, if you have questions, please come talk to me.

Benefits for Champions

As participants think about becoming a Program Champion, they may wonder,

"What's in it for me?" It may be helpful to share these benefits with potential Champions:

- Program Champions are more likely to stick to their own goals while encouraging others.
- Talking about their experiences in the program may reinforce positive behaviors.
- Sharing their own successes with current and prospective program participants can be a form of celebration and help them remember how far they've come.
- Program Champions can feel a sense of pride by being a leader and having others view them as a "success story."
- Program Champions can help friends, family members, and others find the help they need to make healthy lifestyle changes.