



Gender Initiative Recruitment and Retention Strategies

- ◆ Request Computer Science, Math and Science teachers to encourage female students to enroll in the Cisco Networking™ Academy program.
- ◆ Involve female role models! Schedule a “pizza lunch” in the Networking classroom & invite IT professionals & female students.
- ◆ Invite female IT professionals to serve as mentors and recruit female instructors.
- ◆ Ask guidance counselors to promote the Networking Academy program, especially among female students.
- ◆ Ask current female students to write an article for the school newspaper or website, highlighting her experience in the Networking Academy program.
- ◆ Hold Open Houses for parents & guidance counselors, highlighting academic & career opportunities.
- ◆ Establish a girls’ computing club.
- ◆ Provide a female-only Open House or tour of the lab.
- ◆ Recruit from female-only programs or clubs, or those with high percentage of females.
- ◆ Schedule a “Bring a Friend Day” & encourage students to bring a female friend to the Networking Academy program class.
- ◆ On recruitment materials, perhaps include messages that specifically target females, such as “Women/girls are encouraged to apply/enroll”.
- ◆ During orientations and promotional sessions for prospective students, include female students & graduates as guest speakers.
- ◆ Display information about computer pioneers, such as Grace Hopper & Ada Lovelace, in the classroom.

- ◆ Schedule a school assembly about computing careers, highlighting the social relevance & opportunities for females.
- ◆ Work with local chapters of women's organizations: invite them to the recruiting sessions; ask them to help identify prospective students.
- ◆ Schedule a Human Resources/Recruiter event, where you invite local employers, perhaps co-hosting with a local chapter of Women in Technology International (WITI).
- ◆ Inform female students about organizations that promote women & IT.
- ◆ Provide information regarding salary levels; one option is to have female students do research on different career opportunities and compare starting salaries.
- ◆ Encourage female Networking Academy program students at the high school level to make presentations at K-8 "feeder" schools. Such projects often provide credit towards service projects required of high school seniors.
- ◆ Establish all-female Academies and all-female classes, where appropriate.
- ◆ Offer the Networking Academy program in academic departments where there is already high female enrollment, such as Information Technology, Business, or Women's Studies.
- ◆ Ensure the Academy program is taught in a safe, accessible location and at a convenient time for both women and men.
- ◆ Ensure female instructors take leadership roles at your Academy.
- ◆ Ensure female and male students assume a variety of roles when doing group work, and that female students take on leadership roles.
- ◆ Assign female students to work together in pairs, as appropriate.

For more information on the Gender Initiative, visit:

<http://gender.ciscolearning.org>

Additional information regarding recruitment and retention strategies is available in the gender module, accessible in the Academy Start Guides, and at

<http://cisco.netacad-currdev.net/gender>

For more information on the Cisco Networking Academy Program, visit:

<http://www.cisco.com/edu>