

HOLD UP! SO YOU WANNA BE A COP?

A counter-police recruitment workshop

Time: 45 Minutes

Facilitator note: Please read attached Facilitator's Guide before workshop

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Projector + speakers

Papers + pens

Small prize

Wall chart paper + markers for definitions + note-taking

Scrap paper + writing utensils

Print, cut & shuffle beforehand attached *Behind Blue Lies* matching cards

Printouts or projections of sample recruitment flyers: [Example 1](#), [Example 2](#), [Example 3](#)

A stack of [So You Wanna Be A Cop](#) brochures

GOALS FOR WORKSHOP:

- Participants understand police departments across the country have powerful branding projects, and think about how to recruit you.
- Participants understand the common myths told about becoming a cop.
- Participants think critically about why you want to join the police force, and what other ways of helping your community are.
- Participants desire to lead this workshop yourselves in the role of the facilitator in your communities!

AGENDA:

5 minutes	OPENING CIRCLE	What we want in a career: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ideally in a circle, have everyone say & finish the following sentence: I wanna job that....<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ If a group of strangers, can also introduce themselves + finish with this prompt.○ <i>Examples:</i> I wanna job that pays a lot of money, helps people, is close to where I grew up, gets me famous, etc
10 minutes	BREAKOUT BRAINSTORM	Why do people become cops? <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Break off into groups of 2-4, depending on group size. You want at least 3 groups. Give each group a few pieces of scrap paper

		<p>+ something to write with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Instruct:</i> “You will have 2 minutes to brainstorm as a group as many reasons as you can think that people decide to become police officers. Don’t be too loud, as you don’t want the other groups to overhear your ideas. Make sure you have 1 person assigned to write down all of your ideas. Are there any questions?” ● Set timer for 2 minutes + allow groups to brainstorm ● <i>Instruct:</i> “Stop! Pencils down. Who think they got the most?” Allow each group to count + see who had the most. Congratulate the winner, offer a small prize if you want. “Well let’s see what we came up with.” ● Cold call people to share 1-2 from their list. For each one, write it down on board/anchor chart and ask “did any other groups have this?” Star one’s that came up on multiple groups list. Do this until all ideas are accounted for or you have passed 3 minutes ● <i>Ask:</i> what do you suspect are the strongest reasons people decide to become a cop? Call on 2-3 people + ask them why they think that. Other follow up questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Raise your hand if you agree? ○ Raise your hand if this is a factor that has made you consider becoming a police officer before?
5 minutes	THE PROBLEM	<p>A PR Crisis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Come back to whole group sitting ● <i>Ask:</i> “What if I told you that less and less people are signing up to become cops in many places around the country, how many of you would believe me?” ● <i>Say:</i> “Well it is true for police departments around the US. Why do you think that is?” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allow 2-3 people to respond. ● <i>Explain that</i> “Due to recent nationwide outrage over racist police violence, cops are facing a huge PR crisis. What is a PR crisis?” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solicit 2-3 responses ○ Reveal the definition + ask 1 person to read out loud. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public Relations Crisis: <i>when an individual, company or organization is facing a public challenge to its reputation.</i> ○ <i>Ask:</i> Are there any questions ○ <i>Explain:</i> “The people are losing trust in the police. People don’t believe the whole “officer friendly” bit anymore. Every day, more and more people are questioning whether or not the police actually keep people safe, and what alternatives we might need to invest in to help our communities get what they need.” ● What do you think the police are doing to try to fix this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solicit 1-2 responses. Push participants to think of specific recruitment strategies police departments may be using.

10 minutes	RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain that for the next 10 minutes, we are going to look at some examples of materials that police recruitment officers use to try to hook people into applying. Show one example at a time and discuss. For each you should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pass out the image (You can project or pass out copies) and have participants silently study it for 10-15 seconds ○ Ask: What are we looking at? Who can describe this to me? ○ Ask: What is the pitch? What are they saying is the reason YOU want to become a police officer? ○ Write the pitch on the board/anchor chart ● Example 1: Great salary ● Example 2: Be the change, if not you then who? ● Example 3: Police need more diversity
3 minutes	WHAT DO YOU THINK?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask: “What do you think? Is this really what you can expect if you become a cop? Why or why not?”
10 minutes	BEHIND BLUE LIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain that everyone will have 1 card with either a Recruitment “LIE” or “TRUTH” card. There are 8 common “recruitment pitches” + 8 matching “truths” that directly challenge the lie. Your task is to try to find your match. Pair the truth with the lie. When you’re done, stand in a circle. ● Pass out cards (make sure they are all mixed up). Have participants start walking around, not talking, count to 5 then say “go” ● When everyone has been paired, go around in a circle and have “recruiter” go first, then say the truth. When done, have everyone sit down. ● Pass out the “<i>So You Wanna Be A Cop</i>” brochure. Explain that we are gonna break this down a bit more. Ask: What 3 lies are most important or convincing do you think?” Ask for a few volunteers to offer their pick + read. ● Discussion: Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What did you think? ○ Was anyone surprised by anything? Why or why not?
2 minutes	CLOSING	<p>Dream job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Young people need options. Other than police, what’s a job you might be interested in that could help the people in your community?

BEHIND BLUE LIES MATCHING CARDS

Print, cut + shuffle before hand!

<p>THE LIE</p> <p><i>“Help us get the bad guys off the street.”</i></p>	<p>THE TRUTH</p> <p>The vast majority of arrests are for marijuana possession or parole violation--more than murder, rape & other violent crimes combined.</p>
<p>THE LIE</p> <p><i>“This job will help you make a real difference in your community.”</i></p>	<p>THE TRUTH</p> <p>Our communities are safe and strong when they’re resourced, not policed.</p>
<p>THE LIE</p> <p><i>“We need more honest cops like you, to help fix the problems in our police department from the inside out.”</i></p>	<p>THE TRUTH</p> <p>If you call out the problems and corruption, you will be met with retaliation.</p>
<p>THE LIE</p> <p><i>“It’s a career you can financially support your family with.”</i></p>	<p>THE TRUTH</p> <p>Cops often experience mental, physical & moral instability</p>
<p>THE LIE</p> <p><i>“Increasing diversity in our police departments will decrease their racism: We need more people of color like you to join.”</i></p>	<p>THE TRUTH</p> <p>Adding more officers of color to police departments is like putting a band-aid on a broken leg: It might hide the problem but it won’t fix it.</p>
<p>THE LIE</p>	<p>THE TRUTH</p>

“If we have more police who look like the communities they police, there will be less police violence.”

The pressure to prove yourself combined with the toxic environment of policing means that cops of color use force on our communities just as much as white ones:

THE LIE

“It’s an honorable job with a great salary and benefits”

THE TRUTH

Policing is built on fear, not honor.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR *HOLD UP: SO YOU WANNA BE A COP*

Before the workshop:

- ❑ Read through goals: Frequently look back to them to ground yourself during the workshop
- ❑ Read the workshop thoroughly: Be clear about your political framework during the workshop so you are helping to shape where you want participants to land after each section
- ❑ Prepare yourself: Be familiar with what you are going to lead workshop participants through it is the responsibility of the facilitator to hold the feelings that come up, and also move folks through the hard ones. Since this workshop is about policing, hard feelings might come up for folks. Be ready for that. The more you prepare for the workshop, the more grounded you will feel during it.
- ❑ Read the below “Recommended Readings” and make sure you feel comfortable with the subject matter. If you feel you might not be able to answer tough questions, ask a friend who is knowledgeable about policing and militarism to support you by being willing to answer.

Recommended Readings:

- ❑ *So You Wanna Be A Cop?* Brochure, November 2017 - War Resisters League:
www.warresisters.org/store/so-you-wanna-be-cop
- ❑ *As quest for new police recruits continues, Philly department scraps college-credit requirement*, May 2016 - News Works: bit.ly/2iKpMLx
- ❑ *Police Departments Struggle to Recruit Enough Officers*, January 2017 - The Economist:
<http://econ.st/2AQa9qu>
- ❑ Police department websites + social media to understand branding + recruitment:
 - LA PD: <http://www.joinlapd.com/recruitment.cfm>
 - Chicago PD: <https://home.chicagopolice.org/bethechange/>
 - Dallas PD: <https://www.facebook.com/DallasPDCareers>
 - Philly PD: <https://joinphillypd.com/>
 - NY PD: <https://www.facebook.com/NYPDRECRUIT>

Things to keep in mind during the workshop:

- ❑ Set up your physical space well to encourage participation & folks feeling comfortable, especially if they do not know one another. If someone is particularly new to the topic, arrange for them to have a buddy beforehand that can help guide them through the workshop so they aren't lost.
- ❑ BALANCE: Make sure you are helping the conversation and process along, but balance that with allowing folks to feel empowered in their experience and knowledge. Facilitate, don't dominate.
- ❑ Be calm, don't push through the agenda if people are lost. Make sure people are clear about activity instructions.

EVALUATION: "HOLD UP: SO YOU WANNA BE A COP"

Name:

Email address:

Group (if any):

What aspects of the workshop were most useful or helpful to you?

Please comment on the flow & depth of information about police department branding and recruitment:

Do you feel that this workshop has helped you think critically about joining the police force and how else to help your community?

What would you change, if anything, about *Hold Up: So You Wanna Be A Cop* workshop?