



FINDING AND MANAGING VOLUNTEERS

From time to time all volunteer organizations will find that they are short on volunteer help. This guide can help find, inspire and manage volunteers.

1. RECRUITMENT:

“What is it for? Why should I help? Will it be worth my time?”

These are common considerations a potential volunteer will consider. You are far more likely to recruit a volunteer if they fully understand why their participation matters. Have a clear concise overview of the direct and indirect benefits that their efforts can achieve. Explain what the service project or fundraising drive will bring to the community or how it will help elsewhere. Make sure what is expected of the volunteer is realistic and be thorough in your description. When volunteers know what to do and why it matters they are more likely to feel their volunteering was a worthwhile experience and made good use of their time.

2. TRAINING:

Be prepared to spend time in helping new volunteers to learn and understand their volunteer responsibility and duties. Share information and resources that detail what it is they will be doing. A casual conversation is a great way to learn how much a volunteer may know about the cause. Try to thoroughly answer any initial questions they may have.

Fundraising sales, fundraising events and service projects require very different skills and approaches.

Sales: Posture, hand gestures, eye-contact, opening lines, appeal and thank you.
Projects, Events: Physical requirements, equipment usage, special clothing or skills.

Positive feedback during training will help your volunteers overcome any fear of failure. If someone seems discouraged trying to master a new skill remind them to look at the effort it took to learn to walk, or learning to ride a bike, in math or spelling... we failed many times on our way to mastering those skills. Trial and error is a part of the learning progress. We try, we fail, we learn, we try again, we succeed. It's always been that way. Don't mess with a perfect formula.



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3. MOTIVATION:

The number one motivator for any volunteer is the level of enthusiasm of the fellow volunteers, especially that of the leaders.

When you're performing volunteer coordinator responsibilities, always do so with as much enthusiasm as you can.

As a leader you are responsible for building the confidence of your volunteers, especially when they're doing something new. The only way to build their confidence is to encourage them to practice. What happens when we practice is we learn by our mistakes, we refine our skills and try again. As our successes begin to outnumber our failures our confidence builds.

Share examples of what other volunteers have tried, failed and achieved and what skills they learned that boosted their confidence.

Look after your volunteers. This helps to keep them motivated. As a leader you should make a point of praising them publicly at every opportunity. Share their efforts in your club newsletter, school and local press, on social media and website.

4. ORGANIZATION:

"Many Hands Make Light Work" – John Heywood (1497-1580)

It is recommended that a service club that relies on volunteers establishes a committee to coordinate the efforts of volunteers. This committee should have a minimum of three but no more than five members. Additionally, a club President is a de-facto member of all club committees. Try to involve all who express an interest in serving on a committee, whether it is for volunteer coordination or something else. New committee members are taking the first steps of leadership.

Have a good mix of people on the committee in terms of grade level, experience, male and female. Consider pairing new members with more experienced ones. Often you'll find new committee members will have new, fresh ideas.

A committee should establish goals and targets to measure their progress. The committee chair should be selected who reports to the Club Officers as needed.

5. PLANNING:

A lack of planning will have a very demoralizing effect on volunteers, which can have a negative effect on your club's organizational development and public image.

