

# Top Tips for Recruiting and Maintaining Volunteers



## Tips for Recruiting Direct Service Volunteers

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- Be as descriptive as possible about the volunteer role
- Highlight the social need
- Outline the impact the activity will have—no matter how small
- Mention location
- List precise timing
- Language matters
- Show images / visuals of activity
- Official onboarding
- Understand the environment
- Outline volunteer safety requirements
- Provide protective gear
- Develop ‘virtual’ opportunities

## Tips for Recruiting Skills-based Volunteers

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- Treat the process like paid position
- Create detailed job description
- Outline the impact the work will have on the organization
- Include hours per month
- Set a time frame
- Conduct interviews
- Issue confidentiality agreement
- Leverage digital channels for interview and meetings
- Enable work from home



## Top Tips on Recruiting and Maintaining Volunteers

Having plenty of volunteers is valuable but you also want to make sure that you have loyal, quality volunteers and lifelong supporters because of your volunteer recruitment program. Follow the tips below to build relationships, set expectations, and clearly communicate the vision and mission of your organisation. In no time you will have volunteers who are a perfect match for your cause!

### 1. Ask Questions

During your first interaction with new volunteers, it is important to get to know them. By taking the time to build relationships with your new volunteers, you can understand why they want to be a part of your organization. Here are a few questions you could ask:

- Do they have a special connection with our cause?
- Do they have a special expertise our organization could use?
- Are they seeking to develop a certain skill by working with our organization?
- Are they willing to dedicate their time consistently?
- What type of experience are they looking for while working with our nonprofit?

You may not want to bombard your new volunteers with questions, which could be overwhelming. Keep these questions in the back of your mind when you are interacting with your volunteers. This will help you understand their motivation for giving their time to your cause.

### 2. Establish Expectations

During your training program, establishing expectations is important. You want your volunteers to know what you are looking for when they give their time. No one likes to waste time, especially if it is their own. This will give them the opportunity to walk away if they cannot meet your guidelines.

Make your expectations simple and clear. By clearly communicating what you expect from your volunteers you are establishing a great foundation for the future.

### 3. Create a Consistent Tone and Message

By creating consistency with your messaging, volunteers will associate certain words or phrases with your cause. If they connect with your messaging, your organization has the potential to attract more like-minded individuals.

Make sure all of your communications are consistent on the following:

- Social media
- Emails and newsletters
- Marketing efforts
- Promotional flyers

#### **4. Effective Training Program**

An effective training program doesn't only consist of a booklet with guidelines, expectations, and procedures. Properly screening your volunteers before they give their time can ensure they are who they say they are. It will protect them as well as your nonprofit.

#### **5. Build Relationships**

Strengthening relationships with your volunteers takes time. This is not something that happens overnight. However, you want to make relationships with your volunteers a priority. This can ensure that you have quality volunteers that are the right match for your cause.

#### **6. Request Feedback to Strengthen Volunteer Recruitment**

There may be times where you are missing out on opportunities to connect with your supporters. Requesting feedback is a great way to make sure you stay in line with your mission and the expectations you set for your nonprofit.

This is also another great way to connect with your volunteers. If they feel that you are listening to their needs, it could encourage them to spend more time with your organization.

#### **7. Encourage Transparency**

Volunteering isn't only for your nonprofit's benefit but for your volunteers' as well. You want to make sure that your volunteers are receiving the experience they are looking for. By encouraging transparency with your staff team, it will make sure your volunteers feel comfortable and trust your organization.

Another way to be transparent with your volunteers is by communicating how their time is helping your organisation to achieve your mission. Volunteers want to know that their contribution to your organization is growing or strengthening your cause. Show them how they are making a difference and you could create lasting supporters.

***Adapted from Volunteerhub.com***