

Ten Tips for Success with Volunteers

1. **Stick to your mission and share it!** Your mission or purpose will help you focus on the needs of the organization and the reason for having volunteers.
2. **Integrate a volunteer program into your organization.** Volunteers are vital. To grow a strong, useful and happy volunteer crew you must make volunteer management an integral component of your organization.
3. **Have task or job descriptions.** These descriptions will set up clear expectations for managers and volunteers, clarify what training is necessary and provide a basis for evaluation.
4. **Have an application and interview process.** The application will provide the opportunity to collect valuable information like emergency contacts, skills, interests, available times, etc. The interview process will provide the opportunity to get more detailed information and discuss task options. Sometimes people don't know all of the opportunities available and they will discover a new interest.
5. **Have a tracking system.** You must be able to track contact information, task assignments, recognition, so you don't lose anyone in the shuffle.
6. **Training.** Set people up to succeed, feel welcome, and gain a sense of accomplishment. Have a general orientation when they become a volunteer, train for each task they take on, and have a clear plan to implement for events and one-time volunteer opportunities. Also, include training for others to work with volunteers.
7. **Evaluation.** Have, at least, annual evaluations or follow up to specific projects. Use the task description as the basis for the evaluation. Find out what worked and didn't for them, support they would like, new interests, potential tasks for the future. Remember you can fire volunteers, but it is best to communicate to support them and find the right task for them.
8. **Constant recruitment.** You can't have a recruitment drive and expect to keep a full, active program. Every event, newsletter, partnership is an opportunity to recruit volunteers.
9. **Communication, communication, communication, communication!** As with anything this is the key to working with people.
10. **Recognition!** Keep it simple and creative. Verbal – thank you from coordinator, sub committee leader, team leader, board member! Written – card or post card, letter to the editor, website, newsletter. Awards – local, state, national and silly ones. Events – celebrations, debriefs, commemorations, etc.

Building a Successful Framework for Volunteer Recruitment, Retention & Recognition Worksheet

Mission – If you have formal statement or just a general approach, put it here!

Foundation – Have a program and consider it part of your organization, list components of a strong program here.

Frame – Recruitment is key for the program, you must be constantly recruiting.

Organization Motivation

Mission _____

Needs – Think beyond events.

Volunteer Motivation – Why do people volunteer & who are they?
