

# RECRUITING, RETAINING AND REWARDING

Some organisations find it much easier to attract volunteers than others due to the type of services provided, the nature of the duties expected of volunteers and issues of accessibility, timing required and support received.

If your organisation has had a history of conflict, negative public profile or a track record of a high turnover of volunteers it would be wise to embark on the evaluation process set out in Fact Sheet No 10. After the evaluation you may think it is wise to invest energy into revamping and repackaging the programme and then start from the beginning again having learned much in the process.

## WHAT IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO RECRUIT?

- Word of mouth
- Individual approach at a social gathering
- Advertise on community boards, community radio or local papers.
- Personal approach may require volunteers with good communication skills. Satisfied clients/members/spectators may make the best volunteers.
- Volunteers rarely volunteer - they need to be approached and invited to contribute.

## USING TECHNOLOGY

SEATTLE VOLUNTEER conducted an informal study in 1997 and discovered that while only 10% of readers of their bi-monthly print publication followed through with a phone call to a volunteer organisation, fully 60% of those looking at their Web page did.

If you use your web page to recruit volunteers, be sure people can find it. Get it listed on the various search engines. Always put an e-mail address in whatever recruitment effort you make on the internet. People who use the internet are far more likely to follow through if they can send you an e-mail or fill out an electronic form. If you're afraid you'll get too many e-mails, you are not ready for responses. Would you leave your phone number off a flyer for fear of getting too many calls? If you can't handle the e-mail, don't advertise on the internet.

Remember that with the growth of organisations like SeniorNet and the number of older people now using computers this avenue is well worth pursuing.

## **RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

The stages of recruitment are:

- Advertise
- Respond to initial enquiry about volunteering with your organisation
- Provide follow up information with an invitation to make a time to talk about the position further
- Interview
- Acceptance
- Follow up with orientation and training programme
- Job description and contract completed.

During this process you will have plenty of time to get to know your volunteers and match them with suitable opportunities within your organisation.

## **THE INTERVIEW**

Before you start interviewing volunteers devise a score sheet which will give you a level to refer to. For instance score each question say 1 - 5 (5 being the most satisfactory answer, 1 being the least satisfactory answer). After you have interviewed 4 or 5 people it will be very difficult to remember specifically what each person has said, if you do not have a score sheet

This is a very important part of the recruitment process. The interview should provide a balanced non threatening opportunity for the organisation to find out more about the volunteer and the volunteer about the organisation. Keep the interview reasonably low key and informal but make sure you ask questions that will give you the information you want.

### **Suggestions for non-direct interviewing:**

- What have you enjoyed most in previous volunteer assignments? What have you enjoyed least? (Attitudes).
- What kind of people do you work with best as co-workers? What kind of people are you most interested in as clients and why? Are there types of people you feel you would be unable to work with? (Interpersonal relations).
- What would you consider to be the ideal volunteer job for you?
- What things have you done that have given you greatest satisfaction. (Motivations and values).
- What do you like to do in your leisure time? (Values).

- What is your “energy” or “activity level” and how would you describe your work habits? (Work habits).
- Thinking back, what are the most significant decisions you have made in your life and how do you feel about them? (Decision making).
- Describe your temperament. What do you like best about yourself? If you could, what would you improve? (Emotional stability).

## **RETAINING VOLUNTEERS**

### **MOTIVATION FACTORS**

In order to retain your volunteers they will need to feel loved and motivated. Certain motivating factors and the presence of these factors will both satisfy and motivate.

- **Achievement:** The worker needs to feel that he/she accomplishes something.
- **Recognition:** The worker needs to feel that their achievement has been noticed.
- **Interesting duties:** The worker needs to feel interested in the work itself/
- **Responsibility:** The worker needs to feel that he/she is responsible for himself/herself and for his/her own work.
- **Opportunity for growth:** The worker needs to feel that he/she has the potential to grow within the organisation.

### **MAINTENANCE FACTORS**

The presence of these factors causes satisfaction; their absence causes dissatisfaction. Their presence or absence has no effect on motivation however. The factors:

- **Supervision:** The worker feels that the manager is willing to teach and delegate responsibility.
- **Administration:** The worker feels that management has good communication with the worker, also the worker feels good about the organisation and personnel policies.
- **Working condition:** The worker feels good about the physical conditions at work.
- **Interrelationships:** The worker feels good about his/her relations with peers, subordinates and superiors.
- **Status:** The worker feels secure about his/her job.
- **Personal life:** The worker feels that the job does not adversely affect his/her personal life.

## RECOGNITION

Recognition of volunteers is a much discussed subject. There is great agreement as to its importance but great diversity in its implementation. One thing is agreed on though and that is volunteers like to be recognised in different ways. A birthday card to one may be really special but mean nothing to another. By knowing your volunteers well you will be able to decide on something special to that person. It does not need to be expensive, in fact, often the most inexpensive things mean the most like a personal telephone call to say thank you, a smile, invitation for a cup of tea. It is important to note on a volunteers file how they have been recognised so you don't repeat the same thank you again and again and again!

## IDEAS FOR RECOGNITION

Volunteer of the week, month, year	Give them a day off on their birthday
Accommodate personal needs and problems	Include volunteers in your planning day and staff socialising
Say good morning	Pick some flowers from your garden
Give service badges	Offer them a ride home
Send impromptu fun cards	Remember the names of their family
Instigate planned surprises	Respect their time and don't abuse it
If your organisation has access to discounts offer these	Pay for a babysitter (if they have young children)
Have a picnic	Recognition in the agency newsletter

## FURTHER READING

### A Guide for Volunteers and their Organisations by Mary Woods

If you would like a list of our other community resources, or to be put on our mailing list, contact us at:



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