

Good Volunteer Management Practice

Guidance Overview & Checklist

DECIDING HOW VOLUNTEERS CAN HELP OR BE INVOLVED

If you rush into recruiting volunteers without carefully thinking through what you want them to accomplish you may end up with volunteers who are performing work that is not critical to the mission or purpose of your organisation or project. This creates two problems:

1. Wasting organisational resources: since volunteers require an investment of your resources in terms of time, training, supervision, equipment etc, it is desirable that this investment should accomplish as much as possible.
2. Difficulties in recruiting and retaining volunteers. Volunteers prefer to spend their time on worthwhile activities that meet their own needs, thus the more significant the work done by the volunteers is to your organisation the more meaningful it will be to the volunteers.

Having meaningful work is the primary requirement for any volunteer effort. People volunteer to do something useful for others and to meet their own needs. This means that you must give serious thought to what you will ask volunteers to do.



BEST PRACTICE TIPS

Volunteers are capable of helping in a number of different ways:

- organisational governance
- fundraising
- advocacy
- administrative and management support
- building bridges to new populations and clients
- linking clients to resources and benefits
- community education and marketing
- client counselling and mentoring
- direct support to clients and their families (visiting, transporting, etc.)
- allowing quick reaction to changing situations
- being responsible for routine tasks

Volunteers can perform any type of work needed (see also page 3):

In organisations with staff that have specific professional skills the roles of volunteers are often designed to allow the staff to spend their time doing the professional work for which they have been trained.

In other organisations volunteers can provide supplementary services outside and beyond the areas of expertise of paid staff, including managing entire projects or events and maybe involves them supervising other volunteers themselves.

Remember: the Four Principles of Volunteering (see page 5) includes CHOICE – people do what they want to do in order to meet their own needs whether they are social, competency-led, philanthropic, and so on.