



Managing Volunteers

Volunteers are the lifeblood of any nonprofit organization. Without volunteers needed services and events would not be possible. Yet few nonprofits have truly learned how to manage their volunteer staff.

Here are some tips to help recruit, maintain, and retain volunteers.

1. Volunteer positions should have a title and job description with responsibilities, tasks, and who they are to report to.
2. Let volunteers know when they are doing a great job and let them know when they are not doing a great job.
3. Volunteer positions should be applied for and interviews should happen. Not every volunteer is going to be the right person or a great fit for your organization. Learn to say no and redirect them to an agency where they will be a better fit.
4. Everyone wants to feel appreciated. Creating a volunteer schedule, ensuring you don't overuse any volunteers and setting limits on what volunteers can do will help your volunteers see their value.
5. Volunteer annual reviews are a must. Work with volunteers to set goals within the agency and personal goals, and then work with them to help them achieve these goals. Volunteers should get something for their time, such as mastering a new skill or growing in a particular area.
6. Volunteers should have a file with an application, copies of certificates of training, copies of annual reviews and background checks.
7. Volunteers can be fired. It is best to try to avoid this as nonprofits are more reliant on the goodwill of the community than for profits, but if a volunteer is not a good fit, they are just not a good fit. A great solution is to redirect them to a different non-profit organization who needs their skills.
8. Thank volunteers annually. This does not need to be costly, but it is vital volunteers see the positive impact they are making and feel appreciated.