**RECRUITING YOUR VOLUNTEERS**

Successful recruitment is not about getting as many volunteers as possible, it is about finding the right number, of the right type of volunteers. Thus, it is important to plan ahead.

Well-defined roles are the basis of all good recruitment efforts. If you know what’s on offer you are more likely to follow it up.

**Who To Recruit**

Volunteers often become your ambassadors so it is important to recruit people that are not only passionate, but will take direction, follow guidelines and represent your organisation accordingly. Before accepting a volunteer, consider this checklist:

* Why do they want to volunteer?
* Will they add benefit to the organisation?
* Are they committed to volunteering?
* Do they meet the criteria of the volunteer position they are applying for?
* Are they available for the required shifts/time commitments?
* Do they have the skills and experience necessary for the role? If not, is there another role they could fill?
* Are they aware of the tasks required of the role?

**Overcoming Barriers**

One of the key barriers to volunteering is a fear of the commitment that would be expected. Giving people the change to try out volunteering, have a chat with an existing volunteer or someone from the organisation can be useful ways of letting people try volunteering before they commit.

Less formal language to describe the recruitment process can be more attractive to potential volunteers i.e. registration form rather than application form, informal chat rather than interview.

Below are some of the barriers and possible solutions:

| **Barrier** | **Solutions** |
| --- | --- |
| Lack of knowledge about your organisation | Lots of positive publicityMake information available in a variety of formatsArrange open days/visits |
| Lack of experience of volunteering | Offer ‘settling in’ periodProvide training |
| Previous negative experience(s) of volunteering | Emphasis benefits of volunteeringExplain how volunteer involvement is organised and managed in your organisation |
| Fear of over commitment | Indicate length of commitment required in recruitment materialsOffer short-term and/or ‘taster’ assignmentsOffer a ‘settling in’ period |
| Care for dependants | Provision of day care facilitiesAdvice/informationOffer to reimburse such expenses |
| Don’t know anyone that volunteers / don’t think they have skills to offer | Specifically target marketing messages to under-represented groupsSet out skills, experience, aptitudes that you are looking for. |
| Difficulties with timing or transport | Organise transport options e.g. car poolsBuild in greater flexibility to roles |
| Can’t afford to volunteer | Reimburse out-of-pocket expenses |
| Problems with physical or cultural access | Improve physical access to premiseOffer voluntary work at other locationsTarget excluded groups in recruitment campaigns |
| Fear of discriminations | Implement equal opportunities and harassment policiesUse targeted marketing at under-represented groups |
| Not wanting to work on own | Create opportunities to work in pairs or groups |

*Source : VolunteerNow As Good as They Give Workbook Two – Attracting and Selecting Volunteers*

References :

1. As Good as They Give Workbook Two – Attracting and Selecting Volunteers