**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 publicity  Make information available in a variety of formats  Arrange open days/visits |
| Lack of experience of volunteering | Offer ‘settling in’ period  Provide training |
| Previous negative experience(s) of volunteering | Emphasis benefits of volunteering  Explain how volunteer involvement is organised and managed in your organisation |
| Fear of over commitment | Indicate length of commitment required in recruitment materials  Offer short-term and/or ‘taster’ assignments  Offer a ‘settling in’ period |
| Care for dependants | Provision of day care facilities  Advice/information  Offer 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 groups  Set out skills, experience, aptitudes that you are looking for. |
| Difficulties with timing or transport | Organise transport options e.g. car pools  Build 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 premise  Offer voluntary work at other locations  Target excluded groups in recruitment campaigns |
| Fear of discriminations | Implement equal opportunities and harassment policies  Use 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