



Recruiting Volunteers

Recruitment Quick Tips

- When recruiting, you may find it useful to create a mini-project plan to keep you organized! Remember, recruitment is one of the most vital components of your service project.
- Create a very detailed recruitment plan before you start, to ensure you're focusing your efforts in the right direction.
- Remember to be as creative as possible when recruiting and engaging volunteers. Don't be afraid to think outside the box as much as you want. Remember, the more people you get to sign up the bigger the impact you'll be able to make, and the more likely your organization will be able to retain volunteers for future projects.
- Streamline your recruitment message. How can you best market your volunteer opportunities in a way that conveys the most information in the most concise way possible? Always remember to make your mission clear and upfront.
- Be visible and make your information as accessible as possible.
- Understand your target audience, and recruit to them specifically.
- Help potential volunteers connect with something larger, be prepared with plenty of information on your organization's mission and the overall need for the project they will be working on.
- Employ multi-faceted recruitment strategies. Different people want to volunteer for different reasons, and your recruitment plan should be flexible and prepared to address as many different types of volunteer motivations as there are different types of volunteers.
- Don't forget to leverage your own connections, either within your organization, among other organizations in the community, or amongst your colleagues or peers in the field, and don't hesitate to adopt strategies or lessons that they have learned.
- Leverage viral marketing. Viral Marketing is about letting the people spread the word for you, using word of mouth techniques, e-mail blurbs, online blog and calendar blurbs, radio spots, etc is a great and cost-effective way to call for potential volunteers.

Creating a Successful Recruitment Plan

The Basics:

- What's the substance? What is the issue you are recruiting for?
- What's the volunteer time commitment you are asking for?
- What is it you want? What would you be expecting the volunteers to be doing? What is your target number of volunteers to sign up?
- Who cares? Who might be interested in the issue that you're addressing with your service opportunity? How can you tap into the interests of a local university or nearby retirement community?
- Who might not know they care? Think about other groups in the community and creatively of the different aspects of your service issue.
- Who's got the skills? Consider the tasks involved in your volunteer project. What are the physical, emotional, and intellectual expectations you would have from your volunteers, and are they clearly defined?
- Who can commit?

The Details of the Recruitment Process

Virtual/Real Community Details

- Community: What is the community like? Lots of traffic or parks?
- Targeted Locations: Where are the types of people you are recruiting likely to be found in the community?
- Campus/Community Center Activities: Is there a local community events calendar posted online or somewhere locally?
- Do the schools or organizations you've already identified have websites, newsletters, or regular meetings that you know of?
- Who are some of the obvious community leaders that you can identify?

Rules and Regulations

- Where can you 'table'?
- Where can you post or hand out fliers, posters, etc?
- What are the newspaper, e-mail, community calendar submission rules
- What are the deadlines for any local meeting agenda submissions?

Capacity

- How many people will be recruiting?
- What, if any, is the recruitment budget?
- Time - how long do you have to achieve to reach your recruitment goals?

The Approach

- Materials: Will you make posters or fliers to hand out? Will you need a table or incentives to give away?
- Messaging: What information will you have on your printed material? Do you have photographs of volunteers? If you are partnering with another organization, do you have information about that organization on your materials? Do you have permission to use their logo?
- Contact Information: What method will you use to allow volunteers to sign up? Make sure this information is clearly stated on all of your material.

Recruitment Barriers Activity: Students

A group activity to help volunteer-based organizations and volunteer leaders think outside the box about recruiting students as volunteers

With your small group, discuss the following questions:

What are some of the most unique volunteer recruitment methods you've ever seen?
What made them interesting?

What are the major barriers to student volunteer recruitment *on* campuses?

What are the major barriers to volunteer recruitment of students *off* campus?

What are some creative ways to overcome these barriers?

As a group, draw a picture of a student. On the drawing of the student, identify possible barriers to engaging this student as a volunteer leader. Discuss how these barriers could be overcome.

Recruitment Barriers Activity: Baby Boomers

A group activity to help volunteer-based organizations and volunteer leaders think outside the box about recruiting students as volunteers

With your small group, discuss the following questions:

What are some of the most unique volunteer recruitment methods you've ever seen?
What made them interesting?

What are the major barriers to recruiting Baby Boomers in your community?

What are the some creative ways to overcome these barriers?

As a group, draw a picture of a student. On the drawing of the student, identify possible barriers to engaging this student as a volunteer leader. Discuss how these barriers could be overcome.