

# Create, Sustain and Grow Your Volunteer Support



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## Where to Begin: A Volunteer Needs Assessment

**Identify the society's operational needs** to determine where volunteers are needed, such as organizing events, conducting research, digitizing records, technology expertise, or marketing and communications.

**Consider skills, experience, and knowledge** that are required for each role.

**Define tasks and time commitments**, first for existing volunteer roles and responsibilities, then for current and future projects, events, and initiatives that would benefit from volunteer involvement.

**Consider surveying the society's members** to gauge their interests, skills, and volunteer availability to better match their abilities with the appropriate tasks.

## What Do Volunteers Want?

**Personal fulfillment and a sense of purpose** through engaging in activities that make a tangible difference and align with their values, passions, skills, and interests.

**Learning and growth** Acquiring new skills, knowledge, and experiences with opportunities for personal and professional development — new techniques, leadership skills, or expanding their networks.

**Training and Skill Development** to enhance their effectiveness in their volunteer roles.

**Clear expectations and communication** on goals and instructions for their volunteer roles. They appreciate transparent communication, regular updates, and opportunities for feedback.

**Collaboration and connection in a positive and supportive environment** give volunteers the opportunity to build relationships and connect with others who share their interests and values. It makes them feel valued, respected, and supported by the organization and fellow volunteers.

**Flexibility and convenience** in terms of scheduling and commitment. They value volunteer opportunities that can accommodate their availability around work, family, or education.

**Recognition and appreciation** for their contributions through expressing gratitude, acknowledging their impact publicly, or providing opportunities for advancement or increased responsibilities within the organization.

## Who are Good Candidates for Volunteers?

**Passionate individuals:** People who are deeply passionate about a particular cause or social issue are often motivated to volunteer. Their genuine enthusiasm and dedication can fuel their commitment.

**Skilled professionals:** Professionals with specific skills, such as doctors, teachers, lawyers, accountants, or IT specialists, can contribute their expertise to organizations that can benefit from their knowledge.

**Retirees:** Retired individuals often have flexible schedules and a wealth of knowledge and experience.

**Students and young adults:** Volunteering can provide valuable learning experiences and personal growth opportunities for students and young adults. They can gain practical skills, expand their networks, and develop a sense of social responsibility while contributing to causes they care about.

**Community members:** Residents who have a deep connection to their community and a desire to give back can make excellent volunteers.

**Corporate employees:** Many organizations encourage their employees to engage in corporate volunteering programs. Employees can volunteer individually or as part of a team, leveraging their skills and resources to support community initiatives.

**Empty nesters:** Individuals whose children have grown up and left home often find themselves with more available time and a desire to contribute to their communities. They can dedicate their energy and expertise to volunteer work and become valuable assets to organizations.

## Attracting Volunteers

**Reach Out to Your Community:** at local synagogues, community centers, and online forums. Seek a diverse range of people to attract a variety of skills and backgrounds.

**Make it Easy to Get Involved:** Be prepared to engage them once interest is expressed.

**Provide clear instructions on what is expected and offer training and support.** When members feel equipped and supported in their roles, they are more likely to engage actively and feel confident in their ability to contribute effectively.

**Clearly articulate the value of volunteering.** Emphasize the positive impact on the community, the organization, and volunteers. Show how their contributions can improve the lives of others.

**Make it convenient and flexible.** Offer a range of options, accommodating different schedules, time commitments and abilities.

**Provide recognition and appreciation.** Acknowledge their efforts publicly, express gratitude, and highlight the impact of their work. This recognition not only validates their efforts but also encourages others to get involved.

**Foster a sense of community** by cultivating a supportive and inclusive environment where members feel connected to each other and the organization. Encourage social interactions, organize team-building activities, and create opportunities for volunteers to network and build relationships.

**Communicate regularly** and keep members informed about volunteer opportunities, upcoming events, and the impact of their contributions. Utilize various communication channels such as email, social media, newsletters, and meetings to maintain engagement and provide updates.

**Lead by example.** Demonstrate a commitment to volunteering at the organizational level. When leaders and influential members actively participate in volunteering, it sets a positive example and encourages others to follow suit.

**Regularly assess and adapt your strategies** based on feedback and observations to create a vibrant and engaged volunteer community.

## Acquiring Volunteers

**Asking someone in person to volunteer can indeed be one of the best and most effective methods. Face-to-face communication allows for a personal connection and conveys genuine enthusiasm.**

**A personal connection** builds rapport, addresses any questions or concerns, and conveys the importance of the volunteer opportunity. Your sincerity and passion can be more effectively conveyed through facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language.

**Instant feedback and clarification** allow you to address any reservations or doubts the person may have and provide additional information or reassurance. This real-time interaction enables you to gauge the person's level of interest and address any potential barriers to volunteering.

**Relationship building** is possible in face-to-face conversations. By taking the time to engage in a meaningful dialogue, you can create a foundation of trust and connection. This relationship can further motivate individuals to volunteer and foster a sense of belonging within the organization or cause.

**Leveraging word-of-mouth and referrals can be an effective strategy. Trust and credibility are associated with recommendations and referrals from friends, family members, or colleagues.**

**Personal connections and networks** can more easily be accessed. Volunteers who have had positive experiences are more likely to share their stories and encourage others to get involved. This organic spreading of information reaches individuals who may not have been aware of the volunteering opportunity otherwise, expanding the potential pool of volunteers.

**Social proof and motivation** are created by seeing others engaged in volunteering and hearing about their positive experiences.

**Acquiring volunteers by attending community events is a proactive and effective approach.**

**Targeted audiences** are more probable at community events that attract individuals who are already interested in local causes, initiatives, or community engagement.

**Increased visibility** at community events provides an opportunity to raise awareness about your organization and its volunteer opportunities. Setting up a booth or having a presence at these events allows you to showcase your work, display informational materials, and engage in conversations with attendees who may not have been aware of your organization or the volunteering opportunities it offers.

**Networking opportunities** are more likely at community events that bring together various individuals and organizations with shared interests. By attending these events, you can network with other like-minded organizations, community leaders, or influencers who may be able to refer potential volunteers or collaborate on future projects. Building these relationships can open doors to new volunteer recruitment channels and partnerships.

**Acquiring volunteers through advertising and social media can be a powerful and far-reaching method.**

**Broad reach** to a large and diverse audience can be achieved through advertising and social media platforms. You can target specific demographics, interests, or geographic locations, ensuring that your volunteer opportunities reach the right people. This wide reach increases the chances of attracting individuals who are genuinely interested in your cause and willing to volunteer.

**Engaging content** through advertising and social media, can showcase the impact of volunteering and highlight the value of getting involved. Engaging videos, photos, and stories can capture the attention of potential volunteers and inspire them to act.

**Direct calls to action** can be made through online platforms with advertisements and social media posts. By providing links to volunteer sign-up forms, application portals, or your organization's website, you make it easy for interested individuals to express their interest and take the next steps towards becoming a volunteer.

**Amplification through sharing** can be accessed through social media. When you create compelling volunteer-related content, your existing supporters and followers can share it with their networks, further expanding your reach and potentially attracting new volunteers. This organic sharing extends the impact of your recruitment efforts beyond your immediate audience.

**Targeted messaging and retargeting** through social media allow you to tailor your messages to specific audiences. You can segment your advertisements based on interests, demographics, or behaviors, ensuring that the right messages reach the right people. Additionally, retargeting can reconnect with individuals who have previously shown interest in volunteering but have not acted, reminding them of the opportunity.