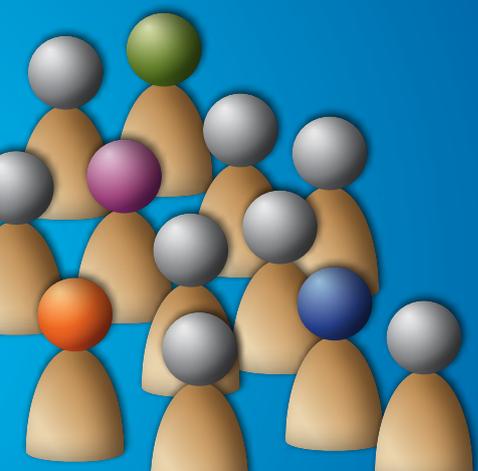




RECRUIT. MOTIVATE. RETAIN VOLUNTEERS



Acknowledging Youths CIC

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Part I

INTRODUCTION

About Organisation

Acknowledging Youths CIC delivers high-quality training courses, and provides support with internships and work experience for young people who want to succeed in the world of work. We know about the challenges facing young people in the modern job market, and we know how to make the most of their strengths to overcome them.

Our organisation aims to fully involve volunteers in the work of the organisation. Volunteers can be part of different sectors such as out reach work, business administration, sales, marketing, fund-raising, HR, accounts etc. Acknowledging Youths CIC recognises that participation by volunteers is an essential and complementary element to the work of paid staff. The principle objective is to improve the effectiveness and extend the services of the centre.

Opportunities for Development

Volunteering provides significant opportunities for personal development. This can include learning new skills, gaining confidence or gaining a better understanding of the wider world around you.

Research highlighted that 85% of employers value volunteering on an individual's CV and that those who have volunteered felt that it had helped with skills such as time management and team building.

Not all volunteers are looking for development in their role but for those that are you should try to tailor your support to meet their needs.

The key is understanding what motivates your volunteers and ensuring that the volunteering you offer will help to support this motivation, where feasible.

But remember that the vast majority of people volunteer because they want to do something good for others. Helping them to understand how their role is having an impact on the wider world and what difference they are making can be a huge buzz – so it's always worth taking some time to let them know what difference they are making.



Part I

RECRUIT

Volunteer Recruitment an Overview

Be sure that you have good reasons to involve volunteers and are not doing it to take on the work of a paid member of staff

Volunteers should be there to enhance a staff members work not replace it!

Not every organisation has or needs volunteers, you should have a clear reason for involving volunteers, know what they will do and how you will manage them.

- All volunteer roles should either help to create functions that would not exist in the absence of volunteers, or enhance an existing function in a way that would not happen without volunteers.*
- All volunteer roles should provide volunteers with high levels of satisfaction, and the chance to gain new, or enhance existing, skills and experiences.*
- Organisations must ensure that they provide appropriate volunteer insurance cover.*
- Volunteers should always receive an induction or introduction to the organisation, and any training that is relevant to their role. This should ensure that volunteers understand their responsibilities and that they can carry out their role safely. You should include Health & Safety, outline of roles and responsibilities, practicalities of the role, identify a contact in the organisation as well as support and supervision arrangements.*
- Wherever possible volunteers should be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses incurred while volunteering. This may include travel expenses or refreshments. The volunteer must always be informed before they start the role whether expenses are being reimbursed. The volunteer role description should be transparent around this issue.*
- Organisations must provide access to an identified support person who will be the main point of contact for the volunteers.*
- Organisations should have a problem solving procedure in place for when things go wrong.*
- Adaptable-in terms of what they do, the time they give and how they cope with changes of tasks and expectations.
- Contribute new ideas and a fresh perspective-staff members are often too busy to introduce new ideas
- Specific in-depth pieces of work- they can dedicate their time to a specific project that you would like to do but do not have the time or resources such as updating your database, surveys, a piece of research.
- Specialist skills-fundraiser, IT expert.

**source: <http://volunteerteam.london.gov.uk> - Managing volunteers - best practice*



Part I

RECRUIT

Types of Volunteer Roles

Volunteers can fulfil a vast range of roles and functions, falling under different categories such as:

Service provision

Volunteers can participate in the work in which your organisation engages this can include:

- Client support
- Befriending
- Drivers
- Helpline operators
- Advisors

Fundraisers

Volunteers can assist with your fundraising activities they can act as:

- Networkers
- Fundraising committee members
- Collectors
- Event organisers

Administration

Volunteers particularly those with specialist skills can undertake a number of administrative activities, they can help with:

- Finance such as bookkeeping and IT
- Office tasks-reception, stuffing envelopes, data management and input

Guidance

The key roles here that volunteers play are as trustees, directors or other governing roles, they can also be:

- Mentoring
- Ambassadors
- Advocates
- Experts
- Consultants
- Advisors



Part I

RECRUIT

Setting up a Volunteer Programme

Having decided to have a volunteers programme a number of issues must be considered and addressed

Senior Management and Trustees

SMT & Trustees need to understand how volunteers can contribute to the organisation and they should give volunteers as much attention as they give paid staff. Failure to obtain the support of senior staff and trustees can seriously impede or derail a potentially worthwhile programme.

Volunteering and Diversity

Don't create barriers! Many VIO'S fail to attract significant sections of the community and many groups are underrepresented as volunteers. Be careful not to create a vol policy which either discriminates or puts off specific groups from getting involved.

Staffing

Which paid staff member will coordinate volunteer efforts? Will you need to hire someone whose sole role is to look after the volunteers or will you appoint someone who is already a member of staff to handle this responsibility part time or as part of his/her other responsibilities? Where will the

volunteer coordinator fit in the organisations chart?

Resources

What resources will be allocated to support volunteers? Are you able to provide out of pocket expenses? A budget will be necessary to deal with these ranging from printing and postage to transportation reimbursement and insurance. Beyond money other resources that may be needed are space, IT equipment, training and staff time for supervision

Legal requirements

Check out how local legislation affects the VIO regarding volunteers. Some areas to look carefully at are health and safety legislation-you need to identify what legislation if any affects volunteers and take appropriate steps to comply. Insurance coverage-identify insurance policies your organisation has and whether they can or should be extended to volunteers. Financial Safeguards- Any volunteer involved with the organisations funds should be subject to at least the policies that are in place for paid staff.

Risk assessments

Each volunteer role should have been thoroughly risk assessed before involving volunteers. You will need to identify what the risks are whether these are high, medium or low risks and take necessary steps to minimise these risks.



Part I

RECRUIT

Volunteers Policies

Why have a policy?

A volunteers policy demonstrates commitment to volunteers and helps both staff and volunteers know what is expected.

Drawing up a volunteers policy is the ideal time to evaluate and document how volunteers will be involved in your organisation.

Don't forget to keep reviewing the policy regularly so that it stays relevant and workable.

It is often useful to introduce this with a meeting which gives a chance to thoroughly explain its importance and answer any questions. All staff volunteers and prospective volunteers should receive a copy. Display a copy in prominent places in the building.

What should be in a volunteers policy?

There is no set format for volunteers policies because each VIO will have its own needs. Its probably best to have a short volunteers policy which refers to other separate documents for example covering health and safety. A long document can be very overwhelming. There are however some areas that should definitely be included.

A statement of intent

Start the policy by explaining what the organisation does and why it involves volunteers in its work.

This statement will help to clarify intentions both for the organisation writing the policy and the volunteers reading it.

Recruitment

Document how your organisation will advertise for, interview and process volunteers. Will references be taken and what other checks will be made? How will recruitment materials be made accessible to as many people as possible?

Sample volunteers policy

- Induction and Training
- Expenses
- Supervision and Support
- Insurance
- Legislation
- Grievance and Disciplinary procedures
- Confidentiality



Part I

RECRUIT

Role Descriptions

Written role descriptions are crucial to creating understandings and clarity both for staff in your organisation and for volunteers .

Other benefits include:

Giving more detailed information about the role than is possible or desirable at the interview.

Providing a context to show how valuable the activity or task is and how it fits within the work of the organisation

Providing a list against which a volunteers skills and expectations can be measured

Providing a basis against which to measure the volunteers performance and activity levels

Helping others to understand how the volunteer will work with them

Offering a reference point when confusion arises or the volunteers stops adhering to the prescribed tasks.

Role Descriptions should include the following details:

- Title for the role
- Objectives for the role
- Broad outline of the tasks and activities to be undertaken

- Supervisor / person for the volunteer to report to
- Location and hours of work
- Standards of behaviour and dress (if appropriate)
- Skills and qualifications
- Necessary personal qualities (if appropriate)

Recruitment

Volunteers should be recruited by way of a recruitment drive with sufficient resources being put into it. It should be clear what audiences are being targeted. When you have established, why you want volunteers and what roles volunteers will undertake you, then need to determine what qualities or qualifications the volunteer needs to have to undertake these tasks.

Specific types

- May represent your clients or audiences

Special skills

- Those with special skills or those willing or able to undertake a variety of roles

Diversity

- Gender, age, race or other characteristics.



Part I

RECRUIT

Methods of Recruiting Volunteers

Organisations can get their recruitment messages out through:

- Advertising aimed at particular groups (e.g. women, young people, ethnic minorities)
- Outreach (schools, colleges, libraries, other service providers)
- Events (presence at public events such as today's volunteers fair)
- Websites
- Word of mouth
- Volunteer Centres!

Recruitment Process

- Application procedures
- In person
- By telephone
- By email
- By letter

Screening and Interviewing

The Interview process should reflect the role that the volunteer is going to undertake. The larger the role, the more specialised and the longer the job will last all require a more formal detailed discussion with the prospective person.

References

References are useful as another opportunity to identify unsuitable candidates. It is useful to telephone references for information whenever possible (keeping a careful record of what was said) because written references can be out of date, irrelevant or simply inaccurate.

Although it is best to obtain references before taking on a new volunteer, some volunteers are unable to provide these. They may not have worked before or may be new to the country. To limit the barriers to volunteering, we suggest offering such volunteers a trial period for say 4-6 weeks. Review their role after this period if they are suitable inform them that you would like them to stay. If they are unsuitable can you offer them another role in the org? If not explain to them why they are unsuitable and offer ways to support them in finding another voluntary role. We will cover how to dismiss volunteers in a little while.

DBS checks

For some roles DBS checks are obligatory, particularly if volunteers will be working with vulnerable clients.

Bear in mind that many roles DO NOT require DBS checks and asking for one could create a barrier to volunteering.

If a volunteer has previously offended consider the type of offence, whether they have reoffended, how long since they offended.

If someone committed a minor offence as a teenager (shoplifting) and they haven't reoffended since should they be stopped from volunteering working with young people as a youth worker?

Good practice to have a recruitment of ex-offenders policy in place.

Handouts of template policy-recruitment of ex-offenders

Handout on different roles requiring DBS checks.



Part 1

RECRUIT

Agreements

Volunteers agreements

The organisation can set out what they expect from the volunteer and what the volunteer can expect from the organisation.

Many organisations do not use volunteers agreements, the reason for this is you have to be particularly careful with the terminology. Do not use any language that can be considered contractual as

the volunteer can be considered an employee rather than a volunteer. This could lead to the volunteer taking the organisation to a tribunal. If you want to use volunteers agreements keep the language as simple and non legal as possible.

Confidentiality agreements

Will the volunteer be handling confidential information? If so it is a good idea to have not only a confidentiality policy but an agreement that the volunteer needs to sign as well.

Induction

Introduce to staff members and other volunteers

When a new volunteer starts there should be someone to meet them, introduce them to other volunteers or staff and show them around. Where possible provide volunteers with a welcome packet that contains material about the volunteers role and

contact details of staff/other volunteers who can and will answer questions. Put it in a format that can be easily updated.

Organisation policies and procedures

Give the volunteer time to familiarise themselves with the work, practices, expectations and organisations culture.

Other Training Courses on Offer

- DBS Checks and Screening Volunteers
- Avoiding Volunteering Disasters
- Volunteers and the Law
- Setting up a Volunteering Scheme



Part II

MOTIVATION

Motivations for Volunteering

Motivations is a useful tool to have, as it can help to steer the volunteer's journey during their time with your organisation. An informal chat at the recruitment stage can be a helpful way of discovering a person's motivations for wanting to volunteer with you.

Create an Esteem Producing Climate

The key to retaining volunteers is to make sure they are getting their particular complex of motivational needs met through their volunteer experience.

When this is occurring across the volunteer programme a positive, enthusiastic climate is created which in turn encourages people to continue to volunteer. When the work environment boosts a person's self-esteem s/he feels good about their job, be it paid or unpaid. They look forward to going to the workplace.

Studies done by psychologists Harris Clams and Reynold Bean have found that people with high self-esteem are people who simultaneously satisfy three particular motivational needs. They enjoy a sense of connectedness, a sense of uniqueness and a sense of power of effectiveness.

Sense of connectedness

When people feel connected, they feel a sense of belonging, a sense of being part of a relationship

with others. In a highly mobile society where friends and loved ones may live 100s of miles away and the next door neighbour is often a stranger, this need is often unmet, leaving people with a sense of isolation, dissatisfaction and loneliness. A sense of identification with a work group can meet, this need producing healthier, happier individuals. People with a sense of connectedness have a sense of 'we' as well as a sense of 'I'. The more special 'we' is the more special the individual feels as part of the group and the greater the self-esteem that is generated. This is why it is important to have high standards for becoming a group member.

Volunteer managers should be on the look out for comments that people make about the expectations they have of themselves and their co-workers. If people say things like 'I'm just a volunteer', or 'what do they expect for free?' it should cause

alarms bells to ring. People's self-esteem drops when they regard themselves as part of a below average group. This negative sense of connectedness leads to high turnover of staff and volunteers. When they hear negative comments such as this, volunteer managers should try to generate positive ideas for improving the connectedness situation. They might ask 'what makes you say that?' 'What can you do to improve this situation', 'what kind of place would you like to volunteer in'. Positive feelings of connectedness can be enhanced in many ways.

- The volunteer manager can work with staff to make sure that there is a common goal for the team. Nothing is as fundamental to a team being effective as a common sense of what they are trying to achieve together. Both staff and volunteers should see themselves as equal partners in pursuing this goal.
- In developing jobs for



Part II

MOTIVATION

volunteers (other than one-off volunteers who you don't expect to retain) staff should avoid setting performance standards that are too low. If the expectations are too easy to meet, people will not feel special about their participation. Volunteers should not have lower standards than paid staff.

- The volunteer manager should make sure that staff and volunteers are treated equally. The volunteer manager should be on the lookout for inadvertent behaviour. Which makes volunteers feel excluded, a common example of this is volunteers not being invited to staff meetings. This is not deliberate exclusion but instead because no one thought to give them the option to attend. Such a situation can make volunteers feel like second-class citizens.
- When working with staff to develop jobs for volunteers, the volunteer manager should make sure that volunteers (or teams of volunteers) have a sense of ownership of a client or project. Fragmentation of ownership generates blame and criticism-this is an enemy of connectedness.

Volunteer managers should spread the word about positive

accomplishments. They should talk about the values and standards of the organisation and what it means to be part of the group. Volunteer managers should look for opportunities to promote interaction among group members. This is particularly important where there are few natural opportunities for people to share their common experiences. For example befriending schemes and literacy programmes. Volunteers will be working with the client and in their own schedule. Volunteers work with little daily supervision and rarely appear in the office. Effective volunteer managers know its 'lonely out there' and take the opportunity to bring their people together for training, meetings, social activities and sharing of stories.

Uniqueness

A second characteristic of people with high self esteem is a feeling of uniqueness, a feeling that 'there is no one in the world quite like me'. This means that I have a sense that I am special in some way, I have a unique combination of talent and personal qualities. Volunteer managers build feelings of uniqueness by recognising the achievements of individual group members and praising them for

their individual qualities. They encourage individuals to express themselves and by giving them the authority to think explore alternative ways to achieve their results. Peoples uniqueness can also be enhanced by giving them challenging assignments that take advantage of their individual strengths. A volunteer manager may hand a volunteer a challenging task by saying 'this is a difficult responsibility that requires your special talents'. This should of course be the volunteer managers sincere belief. This need to feel unique is sometimes in conflict with a persons need to feel connected. All of us tend to make sacrifices in our uniqueness in order to be more connected and sacrifice more connectedness in order to feel more unique. Creating a positive environment is often difficult. It cannot be done without lots of interaction among group members. It cannot be done without shared values and a common purpose. It may require the services of an expert facilitator to lead a retreat in which people explore their differences and gain an understanding of each persons unique point of view. This is enhanced by volunteer managers.



Part II

MOTIVATION

Effectiveness

Another aspect of positive self esteem is a feeling that the volunteer is making a difference. This feeling is often throttled by traditional volunteer jobs. If people work in fragmented

systems doing menial tasks not connected to a final outcome, it is difficult for them to feel that they are making much of a difference. The self esteem of people in such circumstances are reduced. To feel effective volunteer need to work on things that matter. If they

are engaged in support activities for example stuffing envelopes they should be told the purpose of the mailing and the results that are achieved from it so they can feel they are having an effect on something worthwhile.

Keep It Flexible

Think about your own job, how important is flexibility to you, would you stay within your role if it was rigid and didn't allow you to develop?

Many volunteers want to learn new skills, remember this when

creating volunteer roles. Involve volunteers in different areas of the organisation.

E.g our reception volunteers often do additional tasks such as following up new volunteers who have registered using

our brokerage service. We've involved them in events and outreach, some are now volunteer advocates who attend events to speak to other potential volunteers about how volunteering has benefitted them.

Say Thank You!

Volunteers are often humble souls and will say that they don't seek recognition - they do what they do because they believe in it. Whilst this is often the case it is still important to find ways to say thank you.

We all like to feel appreciated. There are various different ways that you can show your volunteers that their contribution is valued.

Listed below are some suggestions:

- Say thank you - no, we're not

repeating ourselves (!) but the simple gesture of saying thank you to volunteers at the end of their contribution will go a long way.

- Organise social and/or networking events - some volunteers are motivated by the opportunity to meet new people that volunteering can provide. Try to find ways to bring people together.
- Remember their birthdays if you can, especially if they volunteer

for you on them!

- Include them in team away days, events etc where appropriate
- Carry out volunteer surveys - provide them with opportunities to feed back on their experiences
- Offer references and support their education and career aspirations
- Nominate volunteers for external awards either locally or nationally

**source: www.do-it.org, Managing and Supporting Volunteers*



Part III

RETENTION

Recruitment Treadmill

Volunteer managers can often end up on a recruitment treadmill, constantly looking for more volunteers and better ways to recruit.

This means that it can be very easy to ignore the other end of the process – the fact that volunteers are leaving. Although it's not always possible (or desirable) to keep the same volunteers for a long period of time, it is worth looking at what you can do to reduce the turnover of volunteers in your organisation. After all, you've already gone through

the process of recruiting, inducting, training and supporting the volunteers. In addition to this, when they leave they will in all likelihood take a wealth of knowledge and experience with them, and you will be left to fill the gaps by starting the recruitment process all over again. There are certain steps you can take to help make your volunteering opportunities a valuable enough experience to make existing volunteers want to stay with you?

Creating Rewarding Volunteer Roles

Building retention into your volunteer programme starts long before volunteers are even recruited. The need for volunteers should be based on the tasks that they could reasonably perform within the organisation. However, very few people are going to stay long in volunteer roles where the tasks are boring or lack a challenge or a chance to develop. So, the key is to think creatively about how you can design interesting and rewarding roles around these tasks that will make volunteers want to stay.

E.g a volunteer who simply comes in to photocopy – while some volunteers may be happy with this – especially those who are new to admin. Others may not be therefore find out where there other skills lie and use them. If they do not have many existing skills what skills would they like to develop? We all start somewhere we weren't born with all of the skills that we have now. That photocopying role could turn into office administrator that could include various other tasks.



Part III

RETENTION

Applying Retention Strategies to Short Term Volunteers

- Short term volunteer placements = less rewarding
- Provide volunteer tasters or starter jobs
- Don't forget the obvious

For many reasons short term volunteering is not as rewarding as long-term. It doesn't provide the emotional satisfaction of really being an integral part of something. Short term volunteering is to long term as fast food is to a real meal. Many short termers may re-engaging in sporadic volunteering as a sampling technique until they find the volunteer position which is right for them. While this is useful for the volunteer it often isn't for the organisation.

Provide volunteer tasters or starter jobs.

To take advantage of this volunteer coordinators should develop a series of entry-level, short-term jobs which provide the volunteer with the opportunity to see how they like working with the organisation its staff and clientele. Once the volunteer is working in these jobs the volunteer coordinator can start to work on retention, slowly grooming the volunteer for more work and ensuring that the volunteer truly enjoys the work they are doing.

Don't forget the obvious.

Since volunteers are there because they want to help, give them something to do asap. Under utilisation creates serious retention problems because motivated volunteers who are trying to be of assistance will feel useless if they are not actually involved in doing something. They will also lose any sense of relationship with the organisation over long periods of non-involvement. When in doubt ask the volunteer what they would like to be doing, this includes identifying the right job for the volunteer but it also includes identifying what it would take for the volunteer to feel successful in their role. Ask questions like: How can we show you that we care? What would it take for you to feel successful in this role? Who would you like to know about your accomplishments??

Support and Supervision

- Regular
- Two way feedback
- Keep a record

Another area that might be lacking could be the level of supervision volunteers receive. These sessions should be regular we recommend

every 6-8 weeks with the same person.

Providing feedback

It's very important that volunteers have good quality feedback and support. On top of this, if they do have concerns it's better if they have a chance to express them, rather than having to bottle them up until it's too late and they've decided to leave. Proper supervision also helps you keep aware of how volunteers are feeling in general. Problems with their work, or with their colleagues may be making them unhappy. Or they may need to change their level of commitment to meet other needs. The earlier you know about such problems the easier it is to find an acceptable solution to them. Providing feedback and recognition also contributes to sustaining volunteers enthusiasm. Finding ways to measure the outcome of their work will help everyone to understand clearly the difference that they are making as well as prompt them to think about how they could be more effective. Volunteers are more likely to feel recognised and appreciated if they receive regular updates in the impact of their



Part III

RETENTION

work, on your services or cause.

Keep a record of these sessions, this is useful as if you need to go back to a particular issue then you have a record of what was previously discussed and any agreed actions.

Word of Mouth

- Volunteers will tell others about their experiences
- Positive experiences
- Negative experiences

Whether these experiences are positive or negative –if a volunteer really enjoys what they are doing they will tell others about it. If a volunteer really hates what they are doing they will tell others about that too. Your existing volunteers can either be your greatest ambassadors or your biggest critics. Take the time to make people feel good about their volunteering and they will tell their friends about it. One way or another they will help to create locally the image of your volunteer programme. If you work at giving them a rewarding and satisfying experience they will help to attract new people as volunteers.

Many of VCW's volunteers have come via word of mouth, friends, relatives and class mates.

Diversify your Volunteers

- Make changes to your volunteer programme
- Not just lip service
- Have valid reasons

Paying lip service to diversity is order to appear politically correct will not get you anywhere.

However widening the range of your volunteers requires commitment, time, effort and expense. You'll also need to be able to justify this within your organisation.

Different orgs have different reasons for wanting to attract a wider variety of volunteers. For some the quest for better diversity aims to produce volunteers who are more representative of the service users in the community in which they operate or the services that they provide. E.g. a team of white staff delivering neighbourhood services to a largely west African community. In other cases certain types of volunteers may bring a particular quality to your volunteer programme. People over 50 for example are more likely to serve for longer than younger volunteers who relocate more frequently.

Recognition

- Recognising volunteers
- Formal Recognition systems
- Informal Recognition practices

Volunteers must receive a sense of appreciation and reward for their contribution. This sense can be conveyed through a number of processes, including formal and informal recognition systems.

Formal recognition systems are comprised of the awards certificates, plaques, pins and recognition dinners or receptions to honour volunteer achievement. Many organisations hold an annual ceremony in which individual volunteers are singled out for their achievement. When you are determining whether or not to establish formal ceremony consider the following:

- Is this being done to honour the volunteer or so that staff can feel involved and can feel that they are involved and have shown their appreciation for volunteers?
- Is it real and not stale or mechanical?
- Does it fit? Would the volunteers feel better if you spent the money on the needs of the clients rather than obligatory lunch with dubious food?



Part III

RETENTION

Informal Recognition practices

The most effective volunteer recognition occurs in the day to day interchange between the volunteer and the organisation through the staff giving their sincere appreciation and thanks for the work being done by the volunteer. This type of recognition is more powerful in part because it is much more frequent. A once a year dinner doesn't carry the same impact as 365 days a year of good working relationships.

Recognition can begin quite early. A card of welcome sent to a new volunteer or a small welcome party conveys an immediate sense of appreciation.

Drop Outs

- Recruited
- Inducted
- Trained
- Failed to attend

The volunteer has been recruited has attended their induction.

Has attended in-depth on the job training sessions including shadowing a member of staff. When it was time for their first shift failed to show up.

The volunteer coordinator has done everything they can think of and wonders why this has happened.

She contacts the volunteer it turns out they were scared and didn't think they would be able to do the tasks associated with the role.

The volunteer coordinator explains that they did very well and they would be a valuable addition to the team.

The volunteer then decides she would like to give it a go and is still volunteering now over a year later.

Exit Interviews

- A tool for improving volunteer management programme
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Make changes if necessary



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