

Seven Steps to Volunteer Management Success



1. Truly and openly value volunteering

Make volunteering the reason why you involve volunteers, not the answer to a problem you need solved. Consider the reasons why and how volunteers add value to your organisation and create opportunities to share these regularly.



2. Let volunteers steer the ship

Communicate effectively and involve volunteers in the work that they do. Look for opportunities for volunteers to guide their engagement with the organisation and find meaning in what they're doing.



3. Strive for clarity

Clearly define volunteer roles, expectations and responsibilities and communicate these effectively from day one. Providing volunteers with clear structures and processes ensures understanding and can avoid challenging situations further down the track.



4. Invest in your volunteers

Provide opportunities for volunteers to learn from each other and develop skills that are of interest and benefit to them. Common sense is not always that common, and making assumptions about volunteers' skills or knowledge of their role can create challenges.



5. Get organised and seek support

Strong processes and systems for volunteer management can alleviate the logistical challenges involved in coordinating large numbers of volunteers. Effective communication builds relationships, but a lack of coordination can dismantle them.



6. Review, revise and re-evaluate

Check in regularly with volunteers, clients, staff and processes to ensure needs are being met. As the nature of volunteering and the community sector at large changes rapidly, outdated processes or ways of working can stall progress and prevent a volunteer program from expanding.



7. Recognise and reward consistently and often

Volunteers often don't seek out thanks and recognition, but that doesn't mean they don't appreciate it. Volunteers who feel valued in their roles will remain engaged for far longer than those who don't – and what's stopping a volunteer from walking out the door and seeking roles elsewhere?