Tips for Recruiting Committee Volunteers

- Include committee descriptions on your website.
- Ask current committee members to help recruit. Make this part of their committee member job description.
- Use your volunteer survey form- include committee volunteer opportunities on the form.
- Invite committee chairs to your volunteer orientations and have them describe their committee.
- Host a Committee Open House once a year. Invite volunteers to preview committees that they could get involved with at your affiliate.
- Make a list of the skills needed for the committee so you know what type of people you are looking for.
- Analyze all of your committees. Does the committee need a new name? Is the committee necessary? Could the affiliate get the work done by another committee? Would a task force work?
- Ask current committee members why they joined the committee. Use this information to help in your marketing.
- Recognize the contributions of your current committee volunteers. You can never say thank you too many times!
- Ask an individual you want to get involved to take on a shorter, defined task. “Hook them” with a smaller project.
- Highlight your committees in your newsletter. Select a committee of the month or quarter to spotlight.
- Consider targeting past board members whose interest might have diminished.
- Pay attention to individuals that you might see at multiple events that are not tapped into a regular volunteer opportunity.
What's our Volunteer Recruitment Message?

by Nan Hawthorne, Editor-in-Chief
Volunteer Management Review

A succinct, straightforward recruitment ad will draw more and better volunteers to your program. Let the ad do half your screening for you by anticipating and answering common questions!

This exercise will give you a great "10-second selling proposition" for posters, newspaper ads, radio spots or simply word of mouth.

Pattern for recruitment blurb:

[Motivational appeal/goal] by [task] for [persons or goal] for [time required] in/at [location]. [Reward]. Training provided. [Any requirements/qualifications]. For more information call [recruiter's name] at [organization/program] at [phone number].

Motivational appeal/goal
Your program has a mission, one that community members may want to share. Translate that into immediate, concrete terms and you are in business.

Task
Everyone wants to know what work they will be doing. Don't be mysterious. Don't "bait and switch." If this means you must recruit separately for different jobs, it will be worth your time to target people interested in doing the task described.

Persons or goal
This can be your client population, a cause, a candidate, an event or any other specific project.

Time required
This will either reassure people afraid of "commitment quicksand" or screen out people unable to give the time you request.

Location
This can be a specific location ("St. Matthew's Hospital"), a specific area ("downtown Duluth") or a general but relative area ("your neighborhood park").

Reward
If you haven't thought through what volunteers will get out of volunteering for you, you are not ready to recruit! Ask your happiest volunteers what they get out of being with you. Make sure you look outside the "fuzzies" box to find practical rewards as well, like job experience, exercise, meeting new people, or an opportunity to share a special interest.

"Training provided."
Don't provide any kind of training? Well, start! This part of the ad reassures prospective volunteers that you will not allow them to take this leap of faith unprepared.

Any requirements/qualifications
Driver's license, experience, lack of criminal background education, etc. But be sure your requirements do not violate any anti-discrimination laws.
Recruiter's name
Full name, first and last! Volunteers deserve at least that much respect from you. Giving only your first name sounds childish or informal. Volunteers wanting to give to their communities want to know you take them seriously enough to be a grownup about it.

Phone number and e-mail address
Make it as easy as possible for volunteer prospects to contact you. There are people who will only use the phone and others who will only use e-mail.

Web address
Your web site can sell your volunteer opportunities for you. Besides this message you can have everything from complete position descriptions, spotlights on current volunteers and your newsletter to an automated application form.

Examples

Example 1: You can help seniors remain independent in their homes by delivering meals three days a week in your neighborhood. Here's a chance to put in a great day's work helping others! Training provided. Must have car. For more information call Jane Doe at Meals for Seniors at 555-1234 or jdoe@mfs.org. Web: www.mfs.org

Example 2: Brighten the day and share a meal! Help prepare and serve lunches at the Parkhurst Adult Day Care in Ballard one to three days a week! We're looking for "people" people who like to visit and have fun. Training provided. To receive more information about joining the team, call John Smith at 555-5678 or john.smith@parkhurstadultdaycare.org. Web: www.parkhurstadultdaycare.org

Example 3: Do you want to help create a better life for our seniors? Community agency advocating for senior rights is looking for "just do it!" individual to spearhead public information campaign. We want your firm handshake, persuasive tongue and about ten hours of your time per month! Training provided. To learn more about this exciting opportunity, call Georgia Brown at Eldervoice at 555-9876 or e-mail g_brown@eldervoice.org. Web: www.eldervoice.org

Example 4: Earn the smile and appreciation from a homebound neighbor simply by stopping by once a week with flowers, your child's school artwork and an hour of your time. Neighbor's Keeper is a program offered by The Old Stone Church in West Seattle. We value our volunteers and provide them with all the help they need to bring companionship into the lives of lonely seniors and disabled people. Training provided. Call Sara Sotta at 555-4321 or e-mail volunteers@nbrskeepers.org for information. Web: www.nbrskeepers.org
More Helpful Tips from a Champion Recruiter

1. Don't tell them what you need. Tell them what they want.

2. Start your ad with sentences that start with verbs like "teach," "help," "save," "read," or "befriend" to serve as a motivator and/or task description.

3. Never never never use the word "desperate."

4. Recruit "wanna-be's" not "have-been's."

5. Recruit via the Internet for motivated volunteers.

6. Stay away from clichés like "make a difference."

7. Look to underutilized groups such as qualified disabled people to boost your numbers and diversity.

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Volunteer Relations Committee Mandate

Purpose:
The Volunteer Relations committee exists to identify, recruit, orient, utilize, retain and recognize volunteers in order to carry out the ministry of Habitat for Humanity. The committee is responsible for ensuring that the program is volunteer-friendly and conducive to a rewarding experience to maintain the highest possible level of participation.

Members should:
• have worked as a volunteer before
• have good "people skills" and be able to work with all different kinds of people
• be familiar with their community resources and potential sources of volunteers
• be comfortable sharing the HFH mission and ministry with large and small groups of potential volunteers
• understand the HFH mission and have the desire to promote it
• know the different reasons people volunteer and the reasons HFH chooses to build houses with volunteers

The Committee will:
• establish a breakdown of the pool of volunteers available to the affiliate by group (i.e. corporations, individuals, churches, homeowners, professionals, etc.)
• develop an annual plan for targeting new volunteers from untapped sources and groups
• submit to the Board an annual budget
• provide the Board with an annual report of committee actions and volunteer participation data
• maintain a database of volunteers who have served and those who are interested in volunteering in the future, including their skill level and areas of interest(s)
• work with other committees to organize an annual volunteer recognition program
• maintain a record of # of hours volunteered

Position: Chair of the Volunteer Relations Committee

Accountable to: Board of Directors

Description:
The chairperson is committed to carrying out the stated purpose of the committee and Habitat for Humanity. The chairperson will supervise the work of the committee, delegate responsibilities to accomplish its goals and report back to the full board.
Expected Commitment:
1. Remain active a minimum of one year after which you may continue or train a board appointed replacement.
2. Attend monthly committee meetings.

Responsibilities:
1. Call and preside over meetings of the committee.
2. Set the agenda for committee meetings.
3. Consult with the Board of Directors and past chairperson in choosing for the committee; ask members to serve; outline committee responsibilities.
4. Prepare reports to the board on committee activities and actions.
5. Oversee the development of an annual plan for targeting currently untapped sources of volunteers.
6. Welcome and orient new committee members on their tasks and Habitat for Humanity’s ministry.
7. Develop a training program for new committee members.
8. Delegate responsibilities to other committee members and encourage their full participation.
   a. Coordinate work and see that it gets done.
   b. Give credit and recognition for accomplishments.
9. See that committee proceedings are recorded and distributed to committee members and directors.
10. Attend meetings of the affiliate.
11. Direct the writing of an annual report of all committee activities with recommendations for next year.
12. Meet with your successor and transfer records, files, etc.
13. Ensure that a volunteer database is kept up-to-date.
14. Direct the development of an annual plan and submit budget request to the Board.
15. Meet with your successor and transfer records, files, etc.

Qualifications:
1. Understand the Habitat for Humanity philosophy and the desire to promote it.
2. Know the many different reasons people volunteer and the reasons HFH chooses to build houses with volunteers.
3. Understand the difference between "doing for" and "doing with."
4. Understand the difference between "enabling" and "empowering."
5. Have good “people skills” and be a clear communicator.
Volunteer Relations Committee Checklist

- Orientation program for all volunteers
- Create Volunteer Handbook
- "Skills and Interest Assessment" forms
- Database of volunteers
- Diversified pool that includes homeowners, groups and individuals
- Information sheet with instructions to give to volunteers
- System for calling and organizing volunteer work times
- "Waiver of Liability" forms
- Formal recognition program
- Decision on whether to host work camps and plan
- Determination of whether or not to provide meals and, if so, how
- Thank-you / follow-up process
- A "Welcome to the Work Site" devotion/HFHC principles/global view of the mission of HFH message.
- Outreach / advertising brochures, pamphlets, fliers
- An annual targeting plan for recruiting new volunteers from untapped sources
- Ongoing recruitment process for all volunteers