



// Promoting + Developing Volunteering

// EFIL: european federation for intercultural learning // Sara Borgiattino

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the Federation of



Organisations in Europe

This handbook has been realised thanks to the generous support of the



// INTRODUCTION

This manual has been realised in order to give an overview of volunteer recruitment and strategies that might be adopted in volunteer work.

More and more, volunteer based organisations face difficulties in building and keeping a solid volunteer base. This handbook aims at providing international and intercultural volunteer organisations with a tool to enlarge and improve their volunteers' base. Although recognising that each organisation has a unique mission, strategic goals, and a distinct style of operation, this handbook attempts to provide information and suggestions for an issue – volunteer development – that non-profit organisations share in common.

As a consequence it will be articulated in two distinct sections, namely a principal section dealing with the issues of volunteer recruitment, retaining and motivation relevant for non-profit organisations and a second more specific part focused on the activities of AFS, an international youth exchange organisation.

After an introduction on volunteering, the first part is divided into three main chapters that aim to answer three fundamental issues:

- How to engage volunteers? How does the process of recruitment work?
- How to foster volunteer motivation? How to retain volunteers?
- How can you make your organisation develop? How to train and support volunteers?

The second section of the handbook will follow the same structure of the former, providing a collection of experiences and practical suggestions from an AFS perspective. Volunteers and staff readers from the AFS organisations will find practical tips while other readers might find it of a particular interest as a case study.

Throughout this manual you will find activities, strategies and good practices implemented by organisations on a very practical level, ideas and tips to improve volunteer development, as well as some theory. The volunteering models are adjustable to the specific character of your own organisation.

This handbook is based on the consolidation of information taken from EFIL training materials, contents and tools developed in the past 4 years. Besides using theoretical material, an attempt has been made to compare tools and methodologies concretely adopted by several organisations, focusing on best practices in order to attract more volunteers and to keep the existing ones within the organisation.

The purpose of this handbook is to contribute to the growth and development of the local organisations.

The target group is youth leaders and trainers interested in supporting their local or national structures to encourage participation of young people in youth organisations.

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VOLUNTEERING

1.

// Volunteering – A Definition

Any activity which involves spending time, unpaid, doing something which aims to provide services benefiting someone (individuals or groups) other than or in addition to close relatives or to benefit the environment including animals¹.

1.1 Three Criteria for Volunteering²

The three criteria given below are broad enough to include virtually all forms of volunteering found around the world, yet they effectively distinguish volunteering from other forms of behaviour that may superficially resemble it.

It is not undertaken primarily for financial gain. If the monetary reimbursement that people receive for the work they do is equal to, or greater than the 'market value' of the work, this cannot be regarded as volunteering. However, anyone who volunteers should certainly have all legitimate expenses arising out of their activities reimbursed by the organisation that involves them. This is important, as it prevents them from being out of pocket as a consequence of their involvement – and therefore helps to ensure that people with limited financial resources are not excluded from volunteering.

It is undertaken on one's free will. Free will is basic tenet of voluntary action, but sometimes people who volunteer are under some pressure, either from their peers or from their own feelings of social obligation.

It brings benefit to a third party as well as to the people who volunteer. This criterion helps to distinguish volunteering from a purely leisure activity such as playing football (although playing football for a good cause might fall within the definition). Adopting a broad interpretation of beneficiaries we can include friends, neighbours, and such abstract notions as 'society' or the 'environment', only excluding the immediate family of the person who volunteers. Mutual aid and participation in a political party or single-issue campaign can represent forms of volunteering that are just as valid as providing services.

These three criteria provide ample space for the full range of volunteering.

1.2 Volunteer Profile and Trends³

Recipients of voluntary services include all types of organisational structure. Most volunteers work with non-profit agencies.

Volunteers come from all age groups, educational backgrounds, income levels, genders, and types of employment. It is quite correct to say that almost everyone can be looked upon as a potential volunteer. Nevertheless it is interesting to go a bit deeper into the profile of the volunteers highlighted by recent studies.

¹ National Centre for Volunteering, UK.

² Adapted from the 2001 NAFSA pre-conference workshop Volunteer Management 101 for International Educators, by Darlene E. Grega and Barbara Lamb; Recruitment and Management of Volunteers in Educational Advising Centres, A Manual, NAFSA: Association of International Educators Annual Conference - San Antonio, Texas, May 26-31, 2002.

³ Data from the European Volunteer Centre. The CEV is an umbrella association of National and Regional Volunteer Centres across Europe promoting voluntary activity. CEV channels collective concerns of its member organisations to the institutions of the European Union and acts as a central forum for the exchange of policy, practice and information on volunteerism. The CEV Facts and Figures research study is an on-going project aiming to provide comprehensive statistical data and information about volunteering and volunteers in the different European Union Member States. Data refer to 2005.

Volunteers out of 100 inhabitants

European Community	14.4
France	17.6
Netherlands	25.3
Belgium	9.8
United Kingdom	19.2
Germany	36
Poland	18

Share of the population dedicating to each category (percentages)

	Britain	Canada	France	Spain	USA
Social welfare Includes housing, elderly and human services	14	11	2	39	8
Religion	16	29	6	22	33
Medicine and health	23	29	11	6	7
Civic and social associations Includes community action and human rights	5	10	4	3	7
Youth development	5	10	1	2	9
Education, training and employment	8	7	1	2	7
Arts, culture, and humanities	2	5	1	1	2
Animals and wildlife	7	4	1	2	1
International aid	13	3	2	1	1

Source: 1997 survey by Canadian Found Raiser

Volunteer involvement by sector

	Belgium	France ⁴	Germany
Sport	17.2	28.1	11
Leisure activities		16	5
Social action	17.2	13.1	5.5
Opinion, expression, defence		11.5	2.5
Professional associations	10.7		2.5
Training, education, integration	10	6.4	9.5
Culture	9.1	13.5	5.5
Caritative action		5.4	
Health		4.2	1
Religion			6
Environment			2.5
Others		1.8	5.5

⁴ Figures of September 2002.

Around 50% of volunteers dedicate their time to associations that reflects their own personal leisure interests. Next in popularity are associations advocating for a humanitarian cause.

Talking about voluntarism, the Polish report⁶ points out that the influence of the communist regime on how people perceive voluntary work and engage in such activities, should not be omitted. According to the report, there is a general reluctance to become involved in mass membership organisations and for collective action resulting from a legacy of communism and compulsory collectivism⁷. In the words of Siciński, compulsory work on a voluntary basis in the communist period produced the term “social activist” which is sometimes considered in a negative way⁸. This perception seems to be widespread in former communist countries in general, although the trend is changing.

The emergence of the non-profit sector has been significant in the last 15 years. In particular, the growing percentage of young people involved, lead to the assumption that volunteering is perceived as professional experience gained while studying because it enhances employability of young graduates⁹. Volunteering is somehow considered as a stepping stone to a professional career.

Some organisations such as the national Red Cross and Caritas play an important role in supporting volunteering. However, their focus is to encourage people to volunteer rather than to promote the idea of volunteerism.

In which activities are volunteers involved?

- Fundraising
- Managing events
- Serving on committees
- Support
- Help for recreational activities
- Campaigning, advocacy, training
- Administration
- Others

Proportion of men-women

	Men	Women
Belgium ¹⁰	50	50
France ¹¹	55	45
Germany	44	56
Ireland ¹²	28	40
Poland	21	16
Spain	43	57
UK	32	41

The volunteer distribution by gender varies in every country with an overall balance.

Nonetheless, not only women and men are differently involved in volunteering in terms of time and tasks; they also favour different areas of volunteering. In general women make the majority in fields such as schools, religious organisations and health sector, while men dominate in all other areas. According to a national survey made in Germany in 1999, men were also more likely to occupy positions of responsibility. Regarding family life, volunteering is stronger in families with young children than those in other household circumstances¹³.

⁶ Voluntary Activity in Poland – Facts and Figures, CEV, 2005

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Siciński A., Volunteers at the Heart of Culture: Culture, Civil Society and Voluntarism in Europe, conference reader, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2001. Only 18% of Poles volunteered in 2004

⁹ Voluntary Activity in Poland – Facts and Figures, CEV, 2005

¹⁰ This figure refers to the Flemish community. In the French one the proportions are 60% women and 40% men.

¹¹ In rural areas however there are more women than men volunteering, according to the report Voluntary Activity in France – Facts and Figures, CEV, 2005, this is largely due to the fact that there are lower levels of formal employment among women. Therefore women have more time to devote to volunteering.

¹² Percentage of men and women in the country considering themselves as volunteers.

¹³ Rosenblatt, Bernhard, Volunteering in Germany - Results of the 1999 Representative Survey on Volunteering and Civic Engagement, Vol.1: General Report, Munich, 2000

Age of volunteers

	Belgium ¹⁴	France	Germany	Ireland	Poland
< 18	1	27	15	24	12
19-24	10				73 ¹⁵
25-34	24	49	14	16	
35-44	20		17	17	
45-54	20		17	18	9
55-64	16	24	17	15	
65-70	6		21		6
> 70					

The different age groups are not engaged in the same way in the different countries in Europe. Whereas in Spain member organisations report that candidates for the yearly volunteer award are hardly aged below 50, the tendency in some of the new European Member States seem to be the contrary: older persons sometimes tend to link volunteering with their experience under the socialist regimes where they were more or less compulsory, thus having a negative opinion about volunteering, whereas the younger population seems to be much more excited about becoming active as volunteers.

In Western Europe, the fastest growing group of volunteers are older people: longer life expectations and shorter working periods raise the importance of what can be called a post-work phase.

In the Eastern European countries in general the concept of volunteer is very new and has especially with older persons still a very negative connotation. In the last decades the number of young people involved in volunteering has increased steadily in Romania and Hungary, while middle aged persons with less opportunities and a worse educational background need to be a special target. The second age group is very often involved in charity organisations for religious reasons. Volunteer activity is still seen as a “luxury” given the economic difficulties of many people – it is rarely perceived as a means of acquiring skills or a contribution to society.

Hours devoted to voluntary activities (per week, considering age)

Belgium ¹⁷	5
France	1-3
Germany	
Ireland	1-3
Poland	1
Spain	
UK	2.7

¹⁴ Figures released by the Association pour le Volontariat regarding the French community. 1557% of volunteers are between 18 and 29 years old, 16% between 30 and 45.

¹⁵ 57% of volunteers are between 18 and 29 years old, 16% between 30 and 45.

¹⁶ Volunteering for all ages – Summit of Generations, Cluj Napoca, Romania - 21 May 2005 - CEV Conference.

¹⁷ The average Belgian devotes 5 hours per week to volunteering.

Education of volunteers

	Belgium ¹⁸	Poland	Spain
University	32	26	36
High school	29	20.7	40
Secondary school	16		20
Technical & professional education	11	14.6	
Other	12	12.8	4

According to a study, those with a higher level of educational attainment are more likely to volunteer¹⁹.

Who volunteers? (Percentages of volunteers in different categories)

	Belgium ¹⁸	France	Germany	Ireland	Poland	Spain	UK
Young people / Students	25	27	38	46	34	40	89
Professionals	16	29	40	44.3	31	60	44.6
Unemployed	20		27	18	9	12	
Retired/over 65	17	58	28	28	12	27	
Others			37		14	4	

It seems also that a higher level of income increases the likelihood of people willing to volunteer. People with a higher education tend to have better opportunities to engage in active citizenship. This can be for any number of reasons, including the social and cultural environment they live in and their ability, due to their stronger position, to organise and stand-up for themselves.

A survey conducted in Germany²⁰ shows that young people form an active group within society. Volunteering mainly takes place within traditional organisations; however, there has been little change. Young people prefer concrete projects and non-formal organisations. Boys are generally still dominating in performing voluntary activities in clubs and societies dealing with sports and recreation, rescue and voluntary fire services. Girls on the other hand mostly volunteer in school, churches and social activities, where they are responsible for pupil committees or youth clubs.

The same survey states that 35% of the young people interviewed are steadily performing voluntary work; only 24% are without any active participation, while 44% of the students are likely to volunteer²¹.

Regarding the social class of volunteers, a Spanish survey²² shows that medium and high social classes tend to volunteer in cultural, sports and leisure organisations, whereas medium-low and lower classes tend to be more involved in social, civic and religious associations.

¹⁸ The average Belgian devotes 5 hours per week to volunteering.

¹⁹ Data are released again by the Association pour le Volontariat. In general, just under 15% of volunteers hold primary education only, while those with a secondary education make up over 30% of volunteers.

²⁰ Archimbault E., Boumendil J., Les dons et le Bénévolat en France, Fondation de France, Paris, 1997 – Pour le Volontariat, l'Association pour le Volontariat, Fondation Roi Baudouin, in Volontariat, Paris, 1999. Cited in Voluntary Activity in Belgium – Facts and Figures, CEV, 2005. See also Voluntary Activity in France – Facts and Figures, CEV, 2005.

²¹ Shell Jugendstudie (Survey among 2515 young people between 14 and 24 in the country, 2002).

²² Voluntary Action in Germany – Facts and Figures, CEV, 2005.

²³ Marbán and Rodríguez Cabrero, 2001.

In general, the degree of volunteering varies with different focuses in the different population groups. There are specific aspects of social inclusion and position that clearly seem to be in correlation with the willingness for voluntary work. These are for instance some factors to apply to those who actively participate:

- a large circle of friends and acquaintances
- close links to the church
- gainful employment
- higher education
- higher professional position

Different kinds of volunteers

Long term volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - person who is dedicated to a cause or a group - strong sense of affiliation - emotional investment - sense of personal worth and identity gained from participation - self-recruitment because of existing commitment to the cause - growth from within, increasing connection over time - close connection with existing group of volunteers - shape job, time and energies to whatever is necessary to make the cause succeed - generalist, willing to do whatever type of work is required - motivation: matter of achievement and affiliation - recognition: best expressed as greater involvement or advancement in the cause of the organisation
Short term volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general interest in organisation or cause - involvement in the organisation is not central in his/her life - actively recruited through participation in specific events or asked by a friend to volunteer - may want a well-defined job of limited duration - specialist, willing/able to perform one kind of work - recognition of personal achievement, not status within the group
Episodic volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - go from organisation to organisation - involved in one-off events
Transitional volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - person who is changing lifestyle (housewives re-entering the job market, disables learning new skills) - often undertaking volunteering as activity to forge a path back into the community
Employer supported-volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there is a company that voluntarily supports its employees' involvement in the community - typically, employer-supported volunteer initiatives are integrated into the workplace
Professional volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encouraged by his/her association of professionals to perform community work

An increasing number of organisations find it difficult to recruit and that the attitude of volunteers has changed in a way that one can distinguish between traditional and new volunteers²³.

The trend (for the population as a whole and considering several countries) is more towards project based short-term engagement. This is probably the biggest change that has occurred in volunteering in the last twenty years. The shift has been caused by a variety of reasons, including greater portions of working adults (especially women) and a greater demand by organisations for the available volunteers.

According to the Belgian report on volunteering, 15-30 year olds volunteer more and more within specific short-term projects that interest them, they volunteer in order to have a good time and to do something worthwhile and not necessarily to do

²³ Voluntary Activity in Belgium – Facts and Figures, CEV, 2005.

it regularly. Some people are changing their voluntary activity, or which association they are volunteering for, more often²⁴. Moreover, not all volunteers engage in a formal way within an organisation, since there are other kinds of volunteering to be taken into account, such as volunteering as a response to emergency events, ecological and humanitarian crises²⁵.

In conclusion, over the recent years the nature of voluntarism has slightly changed. The sector of the organisations based on volunteers is turning its attention towards the diversity of volunteering.

It has now become necessary to pay much greater attention to the needs and requirements of the volunteers, including providing assignments which require small amount of time and greater flexibility in scheduling; more organisations are developing a more active policy towards their volunteers using management skills and working with projects more than before.

2.

// Planning and Organisation

Planning for your volunteer programme gives you the opportunity to elaborate the purpose of the activities, the role of volunteers in the organisation, the programme's contribution to the organisation's mission, and how the volunteer programme fits into the structure of the organisation. A thorough planning process will include the following elements:

Mission Statement: Why do you work with volunteers?

Every organisation has aims: broad statements about a general direction or purpose of the project. A volunteer programme's mission statement should impart this sense of purpose among volunteers, helping each to understand the importance of the work they do, and how each complements the other.

Vision Statement: What will the future be like because of the volunteer activity?

A vision statement provides a description of what the world will look like when the mission is accomplished. It should address everything the organisation strives to change, for example, the larger community, the environment of the organisation, and the well-being of the clients.

Needs Assessment: What needs will the volunteer programme address?

Formal and informal input from community members, staff, and clients... will help to focus the talents of volunteers where they can be of most assistance.

Goals and Objectives: What will be the impact of the volunteer activities?

Defining measurable goals and objectives gives your volunteers a clear picture of what needs to be accomplished and provides the organisation with a way to evaluate its own activities.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Voluntary Activity in Spain – Facts and Figures, CEV, 2005.

Measurable goals incorporate what will be accomplished, by whom, how often, and to what extent.

Objectives are the steps to be taken to reach the aim or satisfy the purpose. They are more specific, support the aim, can be seen as steps along the way or (better) as a set of results that together will ensure the aim is achieved.

It is strongly recommended that an organisation should have clear and concise aims and objectives. They can't be too many.

This way people involved will be required to think specifically about what they are trying to achieve. It helps everyone's commitment and aids in decision making and prioritising.

Objectives should be...

- Simple
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Concrete
- Multiple
- Assessable
- Timed
- Realistic
- Flexible
- Recognisable (in the activities or tasks)

Remember - Objectives are NOT activities!

Objectives might be expressed in sentences beginning for instance with: "To increase... To decrease... To discover... To raise awareness about... To enhance... To reduce..."

Everybody, volunteers and staff, should be involved as fully as possible in the objective setting process.

Budget: What is the budget for the volunteer programme?

'Volunteer' does not mean 'free'. Be sure to determine the financial, in-kind, and human resource support necessary to develop and sustain the volunteer programme. Include in the budget expenses for developing policies and procedures, producing and disseminating recruitment materials, conducting background checks, obtaining training supplies, and hosting recognition events.

Position Descriptions: What will volunteers do?

As we will examine in the next chapter, position descriptions are critical to the success of your volunteer programme. Your organisation is most likely to be able to recruit and retain volunteers if you offer clearly defined positions that take into account a volunteer's needs as well as yours. Every volunteer should receive a description that includes: his/her title, the purpose of the assignment, the results to be achieved, suggested activities, evaluation criteria, qualifications, time frame, the site where the volunteer will work, supervision, and benefits.

Think about what people can learn/acquire from being a volunteer: knowledge, abilities, ideas...

3.

// Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are the nuts and bolts of the volunteer programme. A policy is a principle, a plan, or a course of action. Policies tell people what to do.

A procedure is a series of steps that direct people how to do what they must do²⁶.

Reasons to define policies

- Connects the volunteer programme to the larger organisation and its mission
- Provides structure for sound management
- Formalises decisions that have already been made
- Ensures continuity over time and promotes equity and standardisation
- Articulates the importance of volunteers and provides an ongoing element of volunteer recognition
- Contributes to increased volunteer satisfaction, productiveness, and retention

Types of written policies that should be developed

- Statements of belief/position/value of organisation
- Mechanisms for managing risks (e.g., background checks)
- Rules to specify expectations, regulations, and guides to action (e.g., confidentiality, time and training commitments, customer service)
- Aids to programme effectiveness (e.g., personnel policies) modified for the volunteer programme

Six steps in policy development for volunteer programmes

1. Recognise the volunteer involvement already existing within the organisation
2. Acknowledge the importance of volunteers within the organisation
3. Acknowledge that volunteer involvement warrants the attention of senior management
4. Develop policies about volunteer involvement
5. Develop operational guidelines, standards, and procedures for volunteer involvement
6. Ensure volunteer programme evaluation, compliance with established policies and standards, and regular policy review

²⁶ Cited from: By Definition: Policies for Volunteer Programs, Volunteer Ontario, spring 1993.

4.1 Phases of Organisational Growth

Organisations grow and develop over time as every other natural social system. According to Chiku Malunga, author of *Understanding Organisational Sustainability through African Proverbs*, organisations normally go through three phases although they may not be so distinct²⁷. Understanding the current phase of your organisation and its peculiarities will help you to face the inherent challenges.

4.1.1 Pioneer Phase

Organisations normally start as the idea of someone who, with the help of a few friends implements the idea. This is the pioneer phase.

- The strength of the organisation rests on the charisma of its leader: he/she is a magnetic person who informs the organisation's identity, vision, values, commitment and solidarity; he/she is the source of identity and stability
- The existence of the organisation depends on the pioneer leader
- The culture is informal and often run like a family
- Relationships are usually warm and satisfying
- Personalised relationships and shared tasks (e.g. rotating leadership positions)
- Undefined roles and responsibilities
- High level of trust and loyalty; shared values
- No strategic plan or clear structure; few and informal policies, systems, procedures
- Verbal communication and rapid consensus
- Normally the organisation doesn't have a lot of money or resources and it is small
- High levels of energy and commitment, sense of ownership
- Lack of critic
- Learning by imitating

Transition from this stage is often precipitated by crisis that cause power shifts in the organisation. These may occur because of:

- Loss of leadership: the leader leaves creating a vacuum; it is necessary to clarify roles, policies and procedures
- Rapid growth: new people with contrasting values may join the organisation, or the leader can lose the control; order is to be re-established
- Radical shift in the environment

Crisis can kill the organisation; nevertheless if the transition process is managed successfully it can lead to an evolution of the organisation that enters its independent phase.

4.1.2 Independent Phase

When a loss of control happens, plans are made to introduce more order.

- More order, policies, procedures and systems are established
- More professionalism (job descriptions and specialisation)
- Less personalisation
- More hierarchy and formality, control is increasingly shifted to the top

The following crisis is normally due to:

- Bureaucracy
- Increased isolation and alienation, impersonal contacts
- Failure to identify with the purpose of the organisation, lack of commitment and motivation

In order to overcome this situation, the organisation has to focus on communication, team dynamics and conflict management.

²⁷ Malunga C., Banda C., *Understanding Organisational Sustainability through African Proverbs*, Impact Alliance Press, Washington, 2004.

4.1.3 Interdependent Phase

The organisation reaches this stage when it effectively combines the positive aspects of the two previous phases.

- Members work in a symbiotic and interdependent way while retaining their autonomy
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Sense of “we” replaces individualism
- Strong value base
- The organisation is inclusive and effective

Once the organisation has shifted to a new stage there is no way to go back. Crisis can develop new potentials but they are also a challenge and the organisation has to be prepared for them or at least aware. Evolution cannot be forced but the current stage of the organisation will require different actions when a crisis occurs.

For an organisation to be effective and sustainable it can't be simply based on the charismatic personality of an individual nor on policies and system alone. It has indeed to be based on the human spirit: respectful, responsible, using its talents, supporting others. Human values are the fuel for running the organisation.

Further challenges: leaders wanting to stay on after their term limits are over, failure to peacefully coexist with people who hold different views and the difficulty to replace charismatic leaders.

4.2 Organisational Sustainability

Focusing on some elements already mentioned in the paragraphs above, an organisation needs:

- Clear and effectively communicated **vision**. The organisation has to serve a real and felt need of the society. Many organisations do not take time to communicate their vision to beneficiaries and members while they go on with projects and activities.
- **Strategy**
- Structure to carry out roles and responsibilities effectively. Flexibility to motivate people. In order to be effective structures should evolve naturally. Organisations have to reflect on their structure.
- **Relationships** have to be good. People have to work well together cooperating.
- **Policies, systems and procedures**. Among them a key area is monitoring and evaluation.
- **Skills and competencies**
- **Resources**
- **External relations**. The difference between where the organisation is today and where you want it to be tomorrow may be strongly affected by the synergy with its stakeholders. Organisations have to seek to add value to any relationship to which they commit and make certain that their relationships are adding value.
- **Culture and values**. The image and the identity the organisations create over time is a major determinant of their sustainability. Stakeholders must consider the organisation credible, trustworthy, responsive and professional to support it.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND MANAGEMENT

1.

// Overview on Volunteer Recruitment

...Basic principles...

Anyone can volunteer

65% of people who don't volunteer at present say they would be willing to use some of their spare time for voluntary work

Powell, Fred & Guerin Donal, 1997, Civil society and social policy, University College Cork



What would non-profit organisations be without volunteers?

Future growth and development of local structures and indirectly of the main organisation itself as a whole depend on the work of volunteers.

Not surprisingly, volunteers are the basic ingredient of most non-profit organisations. These citizens bring more than just manpower to the programme — they also bring their passion. There are limits to the coverage the staff can provide. Volunteers can supplement this work.

This chapter discusses how to recruit, train, and retain top-notch volunteers.

As an organisation involving volunteers, you probably have an on-going need to find the right people. Recruitment is

a basic challenge and an ongoing concern for every organisation; a constant turnover of volunteers is inevitable, as people's circumstances and their ability to volunteer change over time. An increasing number of organisations are now looking for people to help them on a voluntary basis, at the same time as the demands on individuals' free time are getting greater.

Usually, people don't come knocking on your door offering their time and expertise. Thus recruitment should never rest. You never know when you are going to meet a person that might become a volunteer.

People most often volunteer when they feel they are being asked to get involved personally. Don't assume a general advertisement in a newspaper will attract all or most of the volunteers you need. People need to be asked again and again! Recruit for specific projects and programmes throughout the year rather than during a once-a-year campaign. An on-going action is vital to keeping our volunteer pool replenished and healthy.

Recruiting volunteers is a challenging job. It is challenging because it takes a plan, time and patience. It is the ongoing process of securing individuals to do the assignments that you have identified for volunteers within your organisation. Regardless of the type of work to be performed, the basic steps of the process remain the same.

This chapter aims at giving some suggestions for finding volunteers and keeping them happy.

1.1 What is Recruitment?

...To get more volunteers...

...Future...

...Work together...

...To keep the organisation alive...

...Finding the right person for the right job...

...To include...

...For growth in programme...

...To get new people involved...

...Diversity...

Recruitment is a constant, year-round process of keeping your organisation's name and its available volunteer opportunities in front of people

Ellis, Susan J. *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*, Philadelphia: Energize, 1994, p. 102.

"Recruitment is a constant process", thus, it needs **constant investment**. And it might well be that you will only see the results one year after or so, so is it basically about having faith? No, it is also about careful planning, knowing that different moments and different people mean different opportunities that have to be grasped.

"... keeping the organisation's name and its available volunteer opportunities in front of people". How many times has someone been recruited just because you mentioned what you were doing at that moment? Because most of the times recruiting is not about the personal characteristics (everyone can volunteer), the tasks your organisation has to offer and the information about these are a determining factor. So you should always keep the organisation's name and what it has to offer to people in their minds through **constant communication**.

Recruitment is the ongoing process of securing individuals to do the assignments that you have identified for volunteers within your agency or organisation. These assignments can be:

- individual or group activities
- direct or indirect service positions
- committee or advisory board task
- fundraising assignments
- advocacy efforts

Regardless of the type of work to be performed, the basic steps of the recruitment process remain the same. Before looking at these steps, however, let's define what we mean by recruitment.

For many people, the distinction between public relations, marketing and recruitment is unclear.

Public relations are the art of helping the public to understand what your organisation does and encouraging the public to regard your efforts positively. It is designed to influence as large a segment of the public as possible at any one time with the message you have selected to share.

Marketing involves determining the needs of select or target audiences and then designing goods, services and opportunities that respond to those needs. It relies heavily on designing the organisation's offering in terms of the target markets' needs and desires, and on using effective pricing, communication, and distribution to inform, motivate, and service the markets²⁸.

Recruitment is the act of identifying groups and individuals for service, and then actually asking them to volunteer. It is also a matter of locating new volunteers.

While public relations, marketing and recruitment are not synonymous, they do support each other and benefit the overall mission of the organisation. When the public knows the name and service provided by the organisation, people are more likely to remember the organisation when they think about serving. When employed properly, marketing strategies can help target the recruitment campaign to the people who are most likely to say "Yes!".

Volunteer recruitment means attracting and inviting people to consider involvement with your organisation.

As you recruit volunteers, it is helpful to understand what **motivates** people to donate their time and energy to a volunteer effort. Citizens may commit not only because of their conviction in the merits of the cause, but also because they will personally benefit from the experience. Many people volunteer for service reasons; they believe in the cause and want to help. Others hope for new friendships and enjoy the social interaction with like-minded individuals. People are also interested in personal and career growth, and enjoy meaningful work that gives them new skills and knowledge.

In addition to reasons why people initially volunteer for a project, there are important reasons why they continue with the programme year after year—recognition, respect, and a sense of accomplishment. Volunteers must feel that their efforts are appreciated and recognised, that the group respects their skills, and that their work produces results. Keep these motivational factors in mind as you create your recruitment materials and as you develop a plan to recognise the efforts of long-term volunteers.

²⁸ Kotler, P. *Marketing for non-profit organisations*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ Prentice-Hall, 1975.

Volunteers become involved for a variety of reasons, depending upon both the individual and the cause they are considering.

The basic motivations that are often cited include:

- Helping others
- Wanted to learn and gain experience
- Devoted to the cause
- Religious concerns
- Interest in the work or activity
- Had a lot of free time
- Know someone who was involved

The potential reasons stretch across the entire range of human motivation. We will examine the issue of motivation in a specific chapter.

It is particularly important in operating a volunteer organisation to retain a broad view of potential volunteer involvement. Do not assume that the only people who are likely to volunteer for the programme are the same types of people who previously volunteered for it. If you limit your focus in this way you are likely to create a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The experience of other programmes is that practically everyone can be persuaded to volunteer for a programme if the right techniques are utilised. By retaining the broad view you will greatly expand your potential targets in volunteer recruitment.

A volunteer programme requires the same type of managerial effort that any other programme operation would require. All of the basic steps in programme development and design apply to it, with some additional care.

It is worth to invest organisational resources in the volunteer development effort.

Some organisations make the mistake of beginning their recruiting before they have an idea of why they are recruiting and what for. The most important step for recruitment is planning and design. In order to do this, you must spend time learning about your organisation from the inside as well as how your organisation is perceived by the community and public at large.

There are some basic stages in the design of volunteer recruitment:

1. Planning and job development
2. Recruitment
3. Screening and Interviewing
4. Recognition
5. Supervision
6. Orientation and Training

A properly designed volunteer programme will proceed through these steps; rushing to recruit volunteers before developing jobs for the volunteers to perform, only leads to confusion for both the new volunteers and the members of the organisation.

The handbook will consider all the above mentioned topics.

2.

// The Recruitment Plan

Too often, the recruitment of volunteers is an ad-hoc procedure: a volunteer joins spontaneously but the organisation is NOT prepared for this.

Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (TxCVCS) / www.txserve.org

2.1 Develop the Recruitment Plan

Once specific goals and measurable objectives of your volunteer activity are set, you can develop a recruiting plan, the 'road map' that guides the process. It defines the structure, personnel, resources, and volunteer position needs. The plan answers questions like: Does the current volunteer management structure support a recruitment process? What volunteer positions are currently unfilled? What new volunteer positions are needed?

Finding volunteers to meet your agency's or organisation's needs requires careful thinking and planning before an appeal is made. Prior to actually going out and asking people to help, you must:

- Determine your needs
- Who will do the recruiting (volunteer management, individual assignments)
- Develop a simple role description for each different volunteer position, outlining the benefits and costs to potential volunteers. Be sure to include information on the objectives of the programme and describe the benefits to the volunteer
- Develop a short person specification for each role. Also explain what will be expected of the recruits
- Decide how to recruit (use of mass media, personal contacts, etc.), what publicity strategies will be used
- Set time limits or the length of the campaign
- Establish a plan for orientation and training of new volunteers soon after they commit

Once the groundwork has been laid, you are ready to implement your plan and make the appeal.
Implementation of the Recruitment Plan:

- Prepare someone to respond positively to new volunteers calling or coming in
- Make personal contacts as planned – ASK, ASK, ASK!
- Meet possible volunteers, orient and place them according to their interests, skills and time available

Remember that most people who currently do not volunteer would consider doing so if they were asked, so it is up to you to promote volunteering opportunities available within your organisation. But there is nothing as frustrating as arriving at a volunteer job only to find disorganisation and chaos.

Development of a recruitment plan will also be helpful to ensure that you find the most suitable volunteers.

2.2 Define why you need Volunteers

Before you recruit, define why you want or need volunteers. Are you looking for volunteers to enhance the services that you provide, to strengthen your community involvement, to enrich your exposure to certain communities? Before you begin beating the bushes for people to help, be sure you know what you want them to do. Spend time organising the task before you bring people in the door.

At the initial stage, it is also essential to establish desired outcomes for volunteer involvement. Establishing these outcome objectives early in the process will help to guide the types of volunteers that you recruit, and the way that you manage them once they have come on board²⁹.

You need to be clear-sighted, creative and determined if you want to be successful. It is essential to think strategically and to be prepared. You will have to devote some resources for recruitment, both in terms of time and money, and you will have to do some background research. You need to know:

- why do you want volunteers?
- how many people do you need?
- how long will you need them?
- what will they be doing?
- is it a one-time job or will you need to schedule volunteers on an ongoing basis?
- what will their role be?
- what type of people are you looking for?
- are any special skills needed?
- will you select/screen potential volunteers? if so how?
- how will you support them once they start volunteering with you?

These aspects will be examined throughout the following paragraphs.

2.3 Who should Recruit?

To keep volunteers, the organisation should have a system in place to welcome, orient, train, use, involve, recognise and evaluate volunteers. To recruit volunteers without an adequate system is like advertising a product and then not being able to deliver it when people order it.

Develop an infrastructure, that is, a volunteer management system. Infrastructure is the organised system of recruiting, training and supporting volunteers. The system defines how, who, where and when to recruit volunteers and has mechanisms in

²⁹ Seven steps to achieve effective volunteer support, Canadian Fundraiser

place to send out and receive job announcements and applications, meet prospective candidates, train, support, recognise and retain volunteers.

It is helpful to involve as many people as possible in the recruitment process and it may be appropriate to set up a recruitment team or subcommittee. It is essential that you involve all the other current volunteers in the recruitment process, provided that they are trained.

2.4 Prepare your Organisation for Volunteer Involvement

It is essential to make sure that the organisation is really ready for new volunteers. To do so, it is important to discuss:

- The understanding of volunteering for the organisation (why should people volunteer? How will this fit in the mission of the local branch of the organisation?)
- The impact of the arrival of new volunteers on the existing volunteers and on the local branch of the organisation as a whole: is the local branch of the organisation ready for the natural changes generated by new volunteers? How will the relations between the 'old' volunteers and the 'new' ones be?
- The roles and positions of future volunteers: will they be helpers of the existing volunteers or will they have a real space for initiatives and ideas?

Pre-Recruitment Checklist:

- Volunteer coordinator and staff have shown their support for volunteer placements and initiatives
- They are prepared to assist in the interviewing, screening, orienting, training and supervising volunteers
- Everyone is fully trained and knowledgeable about their role in volunteer placements
- Volunteer materials (flyers, brochures, job descriptions, handbooks, etc.) have been developed and produced
- There is a place for volunteers to work
- Policies, procedures and record keeping systems are in place
- Legal and liability issues pertaining to volunteer involvement have been resolved
- Staff is ready to respond to the inquiries of potential volunteers
- Volunteer recruiter(s) can speak knowledgeably and enthusiastically about the mission and work of the organisation
- Staff knows how to handle and direct calls from potential volunteers
- Systems are in place for evaluating the performance of volunteers and the outcomes of volunteer initiatives

To ensure that the potential volunteer's first impression of your organisation is positive, staff must be trained and a volunteer management system must be in place before any recruitment effort is made.

Interview and screening procedures, orientation and training plans, evaluation processes and record-keeping systems must all be established prior to making your appeal. Similarly, your organisation's staff needs to be trained and ready to work with volunteers.

Even when no specific recruiting has been done, the organisation may receive inquiries from potential volunteers. Everyone in the office who receives calls from people who express an interest in volunteering should know who key volunteer management staff are and be prepared to transfer the call or forward a message. Never ask a volunteer to call back! By the same token, you might be in contact with potential volunteers every day. Make sure that they know about the range of service opportunities available throughout your organisation and where to refer individuals who express an interest in volunteering.

It is important that all current volunteers are prepared to welcome new volunteers, as full members of the local branch of the organisation, with their ideas and qualities but also their challenges and difficulties.

Co-ordination is vital in many activities! It must also play a crucial role in the recruitment of volunteers. In some local branches of the organisations a volunteer could be in charge of the volunteer co-ordination. This function could include:

- Co-ordination of the recruitment efforts;
- Co-ordination of the volunteer guides, brochures for volunteers, etc.;
- Welcome and introduction for all new volunteers.

Every recruitment campaign must have a compelling message. This message is your explanation of why your organisation is worthy of the donation of volunteer time that is being requested.

The recruitment message should be inviting and encourage people to become involved with your organisation.

Always keep the message as clear, simple, direct and upbeat as possible. Communicate to the volunteer the need that exists for their services and the good that they can do by volunteering. Be sure in this message that you strive to stress the needs of the community and the needs/benefits of the volunteer and not simply the need of your organisation.

3.1 Job Description

Volunteers need clearly defined jobs that have been thoughtfully prepared. The keys to recruiting, motivating and supervising a volunteer are built into the job description.

A job description is a definition of a person's duties and responsibilities within the organisation. It is the final product of the job design process. This process should reflect four basic elements, which once defined will promote greater efficiency and require less management effort. These elements are:

- **Responsibility:** This is the actual task that the volunteers are expected to perform. It should include both the goal toward which volunteers are working and types of activities which volunteers will be performing.
- **Authority:** This defines the parameters that volunteers must work within and explains the extent to which volunteers can make decisions about how work is to be carried out.
- **Accountability:** Volunteers need to have a goal that is oriented toward results. Not holding the volunteers responsible for producing results is a subtle way of indicating that the work is valueless and unimportant.
- **Measurements:** These define how volunteers will know if they have successfully achieved the results. These should be discussed and agreed upon in advance with them.

Job description was to have a nice title and very concrete duties. General requirements included: being responsible, straight and enterprising; maturity and communication skills.

Lyubov Kitchigina, American Education Information Center, Tomsk, Russia Volunteering in AEIC, Volunteering at Vilnius Educational Advising Center, Vilnius, Lithuania

This results-oriented approach to job design has definite benefits for you, your volunteers, and your organisation:

- You can manage a well-defined programme easier than a loosely-defined one.
- Your volunteers will have some of their need for a sense of achievement satisfied.
- Your organisation will be more effective because people are clear about what they are supposed to accomplish and therefore more likely to do so.

The job description is your planning tool to help your volunteers understand the results to be accomplished, what tasks are involved, what skills are required and other important details about the job. A job description provides an organised means of creating continuity in a job from one volunteer to the next. It is also a living document that should be revised as your programme changes, or as the volunteer develops during their service with the organisation.

3.1.1 Characteristics of a Good Job Description

Job descriptions are the building blocks of your volunteer programme.

By designing valuable volunteer assignments you provide volunteers with challenge and motivation for continued success.

The key to a good job description is to keep it short, succinct and clear.

The opening of the job description is interesting enough to entice the potential volunteer to continue reading or listening. The body of the job description is appealing enough to interest the potential volunteer in considering the volunteer opportunity or, at least, in contacting the organisation to get more information. Boring job descriptions are only likely to appeal to boring people.

The body of the job description presents information in an order that psychologically matches how people will think about the offer. Each job description should identify:

Specific need (of clients and/or organisation); social or other need that the organisation is trying to tackle	Is there a problem?
Solution	Can this job help solve it? How can the volunteer alleviate the need?
Fears/Questions: "I wouldn't be able to do that", "why would they want me?", "would it mean travelling home late at night?", etc	Will I be capable of helping with it? What does the voluntary work consist of?
Benefits	What's in it for me?
Contact Point	How do I get involved? How can the potential volunteer find out more; what is the next step they should take?

The message is easily understood. The message is intelligible and avoids jargon, unless it is included for a specific reason. The message has been tested for ease of comprehension by someone other than its author.

Remember: What Can be Misunderstood, Will Be.

The job description gives a complete picture: problem, type of work, requirements, timeframe, person to talk with.

The contact information for the Job description gives the name of a person, including their first name, not just the name of the organisation. Volunteering is a personal decision and people like to talk with other people about it³⁰.

In evaluating your recruitment message, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does the message honour the volunteer?
- Do I know why some people might not say yes?
- Is the message tailored to a target audience?
- Does my invitation include the needs of our clients?
- Who in the organisation can best deliver this message?

An organisation may need multiple recruitment messages tailored to the volunteers being sought, such as students, professionals, neighbourhood residents, or client family members.

Create a diverse portfolio of volunteer opportunities. Different pieces of work or types of service attract different types of people. Some volunteers are looking for positions that tap their creativity, present a challenge or provide the opportunity to learn new skills. Other individuals may want to support your cause, but need a break from the demands of their 'day' jobs.

By identifying a range of positions requiring different skills, abilities, inclinations, backgrounds and levels of commitment, you can appeal to a wider array of potential volunteers.

³⁰ Rick Lynch and Steve McCurley, *Essential Volunteer Management*, Heritage Arts Press. Downers Grove, IL: Heritage Arts/VMSystems, 1989.

3.2 Look at Things from the Perspective of the Potential Volunteer

It is easy to get so caught up in your day-to-day activities that you lose the ability to express what you do, or even why you do it, to people who do not know about your work. Never assume that people know anything. You must learn to take into account the potential volunteer's perspective if recruitment is going to be a success. Putting yourself forward as a volunteer can be daunting. Organisations should make it easy for people to volunteer, by being as approachable, undemanding and unbureaucratic as possible, and not to expect too much too soon. If you give people the opportunity to do an easy job before progressing on to something more demanding, people are less likely to be scared off.

What is it about the work that is likely to appeal to people? Is the work meaningful and will it be enjoyable?

If the answer is 'no', you are unlikely to find volunteers. It is also important to remember that people volunteer for different reasons. If you can tap into what motivates different people, you can 'segment' the potential pool of volunteers and adapt your recruitment message accordingly.

4. // The Recruitment Campaign – The Methods

There are different methods of planning a recruitment campaign. All of the campaign systems produce different types of return for different types of effort. Picking the correct campaign system starts with identifying what you are trying to accomplish. During the lifetime of your organisation you will probably need each of these approaches.

4.1 Warm Body Recruitment

The warm body recruitment or broad-based recruitment is utilised when the volunteer positions you are attempting to fill fit one of two characteristics:

- A very large number of volunteers will be required for a short period of time (as in a special event).
- The volunteer job to be done lacks any special qualifications, and is one that most people can do if given some training.

Warm body recruitment consists of spreading the message about the potential volunteer position to as broad an audience as possible.

The basic methods for this warm body recruitment all involve simple dissemination of information about your organisation and its activities.

These include distribution of printed advertising, organisation brochures or posters. The intent is to place brochures in locations where people are likely to pick them up and read them. Possible sites include: job counseling office, libraries, post offices, tourist information bureau, school counsellors, church bulletin boards, community centres, volunteer centres, hospital waiting rooms, shopping malls. Some programmes might best benefit from a simple 'door-to-door' distribution campaign.

Develop and distribute eye-catching flyers, pamphlets or brochures describing the organisation and the benefits people would receive from volunteering with it.

Keep a high media profile: use public service announcements on television or radio, or newspaper advertisements.

Make a clear and straightforward public service announcement on a community cable channel, local radio station, or write a good classified ad in a newspaper that reaches a large number of potential volunteers. Make sure to clearly state your organisation's name and contact information.

Perhaps only 0.1% of the population would be interested in your volunteer job, but if over one million people see the ad this could result in 100 applicants.

4.1.1 Evaluating Warm Body Recruitment

Of course, despite many current new efforts to involve volunteers by mass media processes, it is difficult to count on this method to solve all of your problems. It may be difficult for you to adequately describe your organisation in a format which fits the short framework of a newspaper ad or a radio or television public service announcement.

It is important to realize that even if a good ad attracts a volunteer, it will not by itself guarantee that recruitment is successful. You will still need to individually motivate the potential volunteer about the job and the organisation. The mass media techniques will simply serve to get you close enough to the volunteer to make the actual recruitment pitch.

Nevertheless warm body recruitment works. This may seem strange, but the difficulty lies in that warm body recruitment will effectively recruit people if you distribute enough information, but it will do so in a way that gives the volunteer manager control over neither quantity nor quality. A warm body campaign will bring in potential volunteers but you will not be able to predict their inclinations, and you will have to do a lot of juggling to make things fit well together, sorting through the possible volunteers.

4.1.2 Speaking to Community Groups

One of the best methods for warm body recruitment is speaking to community groups. Arrange presentations to local clubs and other groups. Such presentations can serve both to inform the public about what your organisation does and to recruit new volunteers.

In following this method of recruitment, be sure to:

Deliberately select the groups before whom you wish to speak. There are two types who are most helpful: those groups whose membership regularly participates in helping out in the community (Rotary, service clubs, etc.), and those groups whose membership as individuals are likely to have a common interest with your cause. Schedule these types of groups first.

In seeking entry to speak to the group, consider going through a group member. The member can serve as your authenticator to his/her peer group, paving your way to a more receptive audience. They can also make it more likely that you will be invited to speak.

Try to time your speaking to meet with the group's processes and your needs. Find out what other projects the group is already committed to and time your talk to coincide with their need to develop a new project.

Pick your presenters carefully. Make sure the person who is speaking can explain what your organisation does and exactly what is needed from the group. Consider sending a volunteer who can speak forcefully about the worth of the effort.

Present your organisation and its programmes in an honest, positive, and enthusiastic manner.

If possible, utilise a visual presentation, with slides, pictures, etc. to increase interest. If your presentation is boring, the group may assume that your jobs will be too.

Be prepared for people to offer their services. Take along brochures. If someone expresses interest, don't leave without their name and phone number, and commit yourself to following up with them. Do a follow-up as quickly as possible.

Remember that at some point during your presentation you should **directly and unequivocally ask the audience to volunteer.** Very few people will insist on volunteering for your programme without being asked to do so.

4.2 Targeted Recruitment

The Targeted Recruitment is the process of consciously planning a campaign; the result of which is the delivery of your recruitment message to a selected/particular audience. Targeted recruitment is a desirable method when the job for which you are attempting to recruit volunteers requires some special skills or some characteristics that are not commonly found.

Targeted recruitment tends to work somewhat with sufficiently identifiable psychological characteristics, such as a love for children or a liking for sports. You can also utilise targeted recruitment in some cases if you are trying to find individuals who possess the degree of commitment needed by your organisation.

Planning a targeted recruitment campaign involves asking a series of questions:

- What is the position?
- What are the skills/attitudes needed to do this job? A person of particular age, sex, hobbies, possible occupations, related interests, and whatever else is more suitable than another for the position you want him/her to cover?
- Who could provide this? Who do you want to do this?
- How can we communicate with them? Think about work setting, educational background, leisure time organisations and activities, publications they might read, parts of town in which they are likely to live, etc.
- Where can we find these types of people?
Here are some questions you can use to help answer this question:
Who currently does it?
Who once did it and has now quit or retired?
Who would like to be doing it, but is now in a job where it is not possible?
Who was educated in this?
Who could learn to do it?
Who is now learning to do it and intends to do it more in the future?
What schools teach this subject?
Who can get someone else who is qualified to do it?
Can we find a teacher or a senior practitioner in this skill that can recommend and encourage others in their field to help us?
Who has such a radically different job that this would be an exciting novelty?
- How will you get them to volunteer with your organisation?
- What will motivate them to come on board with you? Why will they volunteer for you?
Start by examining the motivations and backgrounds of current volunteers in the position to find out if there are any common factors:
Do they all have the same type of motivation?
Do they have similar backgrounds or education or experiences or occupations? Do they come from similar groups?
Did they all hear about the organisation in the same way?

// An example of a targeted campaign towards schools

In order to make volunteering more attractive to students, teachers are invited to organise a lesson on volunteering.

Steps taken:

- Contact with schools in the region to detect interest in the 'volunteering lesson'.
- Arrange appointments with one school, the director and some teachers.
- A lesson about volunteering was given by an experienced volunteer for a group of approximately 60 students.
Content of the lesson: general overview of volunteering.
- At the end every student could make clear in which kind of activity he/she was interested for a volunteering experience.
- Practical contacts.

Materials needed:

- Scenario of a lesson on volunteering to approach the subject with teachers and students
- Video with some testimonies on volunteering
- Educational games to introduce youngsters in volunteering, with some 'plays', with information, facts and figures as well.

4.2.1 Evaluating Targeted Recruitment

Targeted recruitment is a highly efficient form of recruiting. In its ultimate form, the volunteer coordinator literally identifies people by name to approach about volunteering. Targeted recruitment also tends to work because it helps you to think about possible motivations that can be used in persuading a potential volunteer to become involved.

Targeted recruitment is the ideal process for seeking involvement of new types of volunteers, because it forces you to begin to think through the needs and interests of that new population, and leads you to pro-actively seek that new group instead of waiting for them to come to you.

The limitation of targeted recruitment is that it is labour intensive, requiring thinking, tracking and tailoring for each volunteer

position. This means that it probably is best selected when you are trying to fill a volunteer position that has a high value for the organisation and which cannot be filled by simpler means.

Finally you can combine targeted and warm body recruitment:

- by carefully wording your mass media communication you can actually make use of targeted wording to appeal to a certain audience;
- by utilising targeted recruitment techniques to identify the motivations of likely volunteers you can design a mass media campaign which will generate a greater number of qualified and interested applicants.

4.3 Word of Mouth Recruitment

The word of mouth recruitment is the lazy (but still very effective) way to have a flow of replacement volunteers applying to work at your organisation. It works off of the simple theory that those people who are already connected to you and your organisation are the best targets for a recruitment campaign.

This technique is also called 'concentric circles recruitment' because of the image of ripples in a pond when a rock is thrown in. Starting in the centre of contact, the ripples spread outwards, with each successive wave striking another, getting larger with each following wave. Word of mouth volunteer recruitment operates in the same manner.

A clear strength of word of mouth is that the target groups are already familiar with your organisation or with the field of your activity. In short, any population group which has already been favourably exposed to your programme makes an excellent target for a word of mouth recruitment effort. These people may already have a good reason for helping out, either because they have received services themselves or they have seen the impact of the services on others. They have become convinced both of the need for the services and of the validity of your programme.

It remains to demonstrate to them that they are capable of helping. Help them in knowing the types of volunteer activities and look for the ways in which they can assist you or be involved in the organisation.

The target populations already in contact with you might include:

1. Participants to your programmes, their families and relatives
2. The population your organisation exists to serve
3. Friends of your volunteers
4. People in the neighbourhood in which you operate
5. Donors
6. Retirees in your field or subject

Your organisation should have a directory of past volunteers or volunteer applicants to whom you may want to refer. People who have volunteered in the past may be willing to volunteer again. There may also be people who applied to volunteer with the organisation in the past and were never contacted.

Since word of mouth recruitment often involves face-to-face recruitment by those who already know the people whom they are approaching, one of its strengths is the personal testimony of the asking volunteer. During the conversation the volunteer can say, either directly or indirectly, 'This is a good volunteer job with a good organisation. I know this because I worked there and I think it is worth your time to work there too.' This is a very credible and a very persuasive argument that mass media techniques and appeals from strangers have a hard time equalling.

Appeal to your current volunteers to recruit their friends. Sponsor a "Bring a Friend" introductory luncheon.

You might look among former participants or your current volunteers for a replacement. This approach will make it more likely to get a positive response, because the group of potential volunteers with whom you will be talking will already be favourably disposed toward your organisation, or least will be informed about it and what it does. Write to all former volunteers a motivation letter in which you tell them that you'd like to use their knowledge again, etc.

Word of mouth is still the most effective means to promote your organisation. Make sure to take advantage of any opportunities you may have to tell others about the services your organisation provides and the volunteer positions available.

4.3.1 Evaluating Word of Mouth Recruitment

Although a lot of effective person-to-person recruiting 'just happens,' we can make a lot more of it happens by systematically encouraging it. Everyone involved in the organisation should understand what their recruitment responsibilities are within the framework of the overall plan.

The primary advantage of word of mouth recruitment is that, once established, it will provide you with a steady supply of 'replenishment' volunteers to compensate for attrition and will do so with remarkably little work.

The disadvantage of word of mouth recruitment is that it can be very limiting, and if it is the only method of recruitment that you utilise will lead to a process of 'cloning.' Since much of it works off recruiting 'friends' it has a natural tendency to create an in-bred group, all of whom look and think the same way.

If you are a new organisation you will probably not be able to take advantage of word of mouth recruitment, and will have to rely on the less effective methods of mass media and targeting. In time, however, you will build up the good will among a sufficient population group to take advantage of this simplest and most efficient method of recruitment.

4.4 Networking with other community groups

The networking with other community groups is a recruitment method designed for a 'closed system,' a group or people who have already a sense of self-identification, view themselves as related to other members and view the values of the community as personally important and meaningful to themselves.

This method is also defined ambient recruitment and it might work in:

- schools
- corporations
- professions
- church congregations
- neighbourhoods

Representatives from your organisation can become familiar with other communities in the area. By doing so, you can share information and promote each others volunteer opportunities.

This method is also called 'ambient recruitment campaign' and it seeks to create a 'culture of involvement' among the members of the community and the acceptance of volunteering as a value of the community:

- developing a philosophy of involvement, creating a statement which explains that becoming involved is an important value of the group, stressing on the importance of participating substantially and responsibly in the society;
- educating members of the community, thus telling stories about volunteer activity, creating role models that exemplify the cultural value, and in creating ways of recognising individuals who carry out the value.

Get lists of other organisations in your area to see if they can help your recruitment effort by advertising your activities, offering you time on their meeting agendas, distributing written information about the organisation to their members, posting notices on bulletin boards, etc. You can sometimes get entire groups to help you with a project such as the Scouts.

Have someone do research on clubs, groups, schools, etc., who have as part of their activities a project similar to yours. Keep regular contact with groups and schools which have activities or values similar to yours, by sending your newsletter for instance.

Work with other volunteer groups in your community to sponsor a volunteer fair.

5.

// The Recruitment Techniques

There are many techniques available for recruiting volunteers. You must decide which one is the best for disseminating the recruitment message for your organisation and for your volunteer positions.

To recruit volunteers, you should have a variety of actions, hopefully well prepared and co-ordinated, that will attract many volunteers.

There is no one correct technique; **creativity** and imagination are the keys. The type of person you are looking for will inform what it is the appropriate recruitment medium. For example, if you need to find a volunteer with specialist skills, such as a professionally qualified counsellor, you will have to target your methods much more than if you are simply looking for lots of people to assist you in your fundraising event. Always think of where the type of people you are looking for are likely to be found.

Also remember the general rule: the more people you reach through a certain medium and the less the personal contact, the lower the response rate is likely to be, and vice versa; the more you focus, the greater your chance of success. You will of course have to balance the resources you have available to you with the likely response you are going to get. Therefore **do not miss any opportunities, especially free ones, of advertising the fact that you are recruiting volunteers.** A final word of comfort: **sincerity and belief in your cause will always win over technique!**

Use the things we are good at, for example intercultural learning, to make the organisation more known.

5.1 Marketing your Organisation

Someone is unlikely to take the step of enquiring about volunteering with you immediately after first hearing about your organisation. Usually they need to have built up a positive mental image of you over time. It is therefore crucial that you promote your organisation on an ongoing basis and that you are professional in all aspects of your work. You must project the right image at all times, not just when recruiting volunteers. This simply means doing the job you set out to do, and doing it well.

Remember that you are competing with thousands of other agencies and that potential volunteers will need to be convinced about the worth of volunteering with your particular organisation (fortunately, this is completely subjective and will therefore differ for everybody).

It should always be borne in mind that whilst public relations (PR) and volunteer recruitment are closely related, they are not the same. You cannot rely on PR to get you volunteers; you must ask people directly to volunteer with you.

5.1.1 Prerequisites for successful operating:

1. press list creation and maintenance
2. database of contacts for outreach activities
3. tracking system (important news and press clipping archives)
4. recognisable visual identity of the centre (logo, letterhead, business cards, banner)
5. promotional materials (posters and fliers)

5.2 Personal Contact

As seen in the previous paragraphs, the vast majority of volunteers are recruited by word of mouth. Therefore make sure everyone who is involved with your organisation is aware that you are trying to recruit volunteers. Consider running a brainstorming session identifying all the people your organisation knows and/or ask people to introduce a friend or family member to the organisation. Potential volunteers can be approached face-to-face, over the telephone or in writing.

5.3 Public Speaking

Church groups, women's groups, active retirement associations and similar groups are often looking for speakers! So accept invitations to contribute.

In addition, you could approach employers (particularly large ones that run pre-retirement courses) and schools (particularly transition year students) and whoever else you can think of, and offer to do a talk about your work and to request volunteers. If you are concerned about issues like tolerance, address minority organisations.

It is important to be well-briefed, interesting and to consider what is likely to appeal to the group about volunteering with you. Provide local branch of the organisations or other organisations with publicity packs. If you have a video or slides of your work, show them. Bring printed information to support your talk and details that people can take away with them. Short slide presentations or videos that describe the programmes can be a very effective recruitment tool. This will make it easier for potential volunteers to determine if they would be interested in volunteering and if they are capable of carrying out the activities requested of them³¹.

And when you do a presentation about the organisation...

- Make sure you collect the names and contact details of all those who expressed their interest and get back to them within a week;
- Take other volunteers with you to share their own experiences if you are making a presentation to a big group. They will help you dealing with interested applicants and answering questions in smaller groups;
- When trying to attract a teacher or leader of any other group, take one of their members who is already linked to the organisation with you. This will help you to persuade them. Make sure this person is both committed to and informed about your organisation;
- When doing a presentation for a specific group, look up its mission statement and use some of their wording in your presentation. It is important to speak the language of your interlocutor;
- Always personalise your presentation: you can explain why you are personally committed to your work, give concrete stories of real people in the organisation (not necessarily from your local branch of the organisation). It is important to use colourful language that catches the imagination;
- Always clearly explain what the job of a volunteer is: offer a simple description of the work to be performed, so that people understand the assignment they are being asked to take;

5.4 Promotional events and exhibitions

In order to ensure promotion of your organisation you can organise various public events:

- International Student Fair
- International Week
- Open House³²: you can consider having an open day at your organisation to which you invite members of your local community
- if you have an exhibition which shows the work that you do, you could display it in-house or in a public space
- check if it is possible to have a recruitment stand in a shopping centre or library, at festivals or careers fairs, or at any other appropriate event.

Community meetings which bring together prospective volunteers can be successful recruitment tools. Inviting potential volunteers to local activities and events and getting them involved is also effective.

5.5 Media

Media include:

- national, regional and local press (including the free press);
- specialist press (including other voluntary organisations magazines and newsletters);
- national and local radio stations (including community radio) television (including cable). Often the radio wants people to call for any kind of reason. Use the organisation as a reason!

The media for the local area signal confidentiality and seriousness, so use it for finding host families.

The media for a bigger region are good at making organisations better known.

Organisations should try for a steady stream of coverage in the media, especially the local media.

³¹ Marti Thomson, Regional Educational Advising Coordinator for East Asia, Advising for Study in the United States, A Manual for Educational Advising Professionals, Volunteer Recruitment and Management

³² Ibid.

If possible, you should try to open lines of communications with local radio stations and editors of local newspapers to promote the image of your organisation. This will involve building up a good relationship with people who may cover stories, including sending press releases, holding news conferences, providing photos and photo opportunities, sending letters to the editor, and so on.

Remember always to contact the press when any kind of organisation-thing is going on.

You can also directly place recruitment advertisements in newspapers and magazines and/or do volunteer appeals on radio and television. Ask your local newspaper, for instance, to donate space in its ads section. Local newspapers often will publish a "call for volunteers" as a community service.

Advertisement has to be constant throughout the year, and not when the situation is critical.

Points to consider when writing for newspapers or preparing a radio piece:

- start off with something memorable, a 'hook', to catch the attention of the editor or producer
- provide key information based on the five Ws: Who? What? Where? When? Why?
- keep your piece short and interesting and make sure that the recruitment message doesn't get lost in the middle

5.6 Print

Printed materials can be in the form of leaflets, flyers, brochures, posters, newsletters, postcards, promotional posters and so on. You can make cool fun-cards to put in pubs so people take them.

Always keep them simple and clear, but at the same time make them attractive and eye-catching. Put them where people will see them, such as notice boards and leaflet dispensers in schools, colleges, universities, libraries, council offices, hospitals, doctors' and dentists' waiting rooms, sport centres, churches, shop windows, supermarkets, launderettes, restaurants, bars, Citizens Information Centres, Youth Information Centres, community centres, etc.

You could also hand them out in the street and at events, insert them into magazines or newsletters, and you could even try mailing materials directly to people.

Well-resourced organisations can consider billboards, advertising on public transport, advertising on the back of supermarket till receipts, etc.

5.7 Internet

If you have internet access, you can use a web page or sites managed by local communities.

E-mails are quite effective and cheap marketing and volunteer recruitment tools. Through an e-mail network you can effectively develop a sense of belonging and identity.

In addition, there are various web sites which you can exploit even if you do not have your own page. One example is www.idealists.org which is a worldwide listing of not-for-profit organisations, including any volunteering vacancies that they have. You can add your organisation for free.

Having a newsletter of the local branch of your organisation does also increase the sense of belonging of your volunteers.

Recruit carefully. Recruit those who are truly interested in the project. Be honest about the workload and time commitment involved in the project. Above all, ask for help but don't plead if you want volunteers who want to be there. Do not recruit more volunteers than are actually needed. Volunteers will lose interest if they have offered their help, but there is not enough adequate work available for everyone.

Keep good records. Create a 'Resource Inventory' file of groups, individuals, media, clubs, businesses, etc. List name, contact information, past history of collaboration, publications, and all other useful information. Have a dossier for every volunteer/contact, including name, address, phone/fax e-mail, school/company/contact, job description, comments...

Develop a pool of volunteers that can be used for filling future volunteer jobs. Be sure they get your newsletter and offer them an opportunity to support your organisation with a contribution.

Make volunteers comfortable. Help them do the job right. Provide the proper tools and a comfortable workplace. Above all, be sure they understand the job they are being asked to do. Offer information sessions on your organisation. These are extremely popular, especially when you offer free treats like food and drinks.

Show your interest in potential volunteers as individuals, not only as volunteer workers.

Explain why you are approaching the particular person - what skills or personality traits he or she has that makes her/him a good candidate for the position you are offering.

Make recruitment a team effort. Brainstorm with current volunteers on how to recruit others. They may have some creative ideas to share. Ask them to think about what interests them personally in volunteering.

Be honest and up front with people when trying to recruit. Do not lie about or minimize the work or the time needed. Do not speak with a 'forked tongue.' Be careful of phrases like: 'this will only take a few hours a month' or 'try it for a while and then we'll see.'

If you need someone with availability several hours a week or for a full year, say so. It may take longer to find someone to say yes, but once you have that person you'll have the right person.

Be specific. The more specific you can be, the better. If you ask: "Who wants to volunteer?" how can someone decide on the basis of no information? On the other hand, if you ask: "Who wants to prepare for the legislative hearing next month?" you allow people to self-screen their interests.

Do volunteers want an ongoing, regularly-scheduled assignment, or a short-term assignment, or a one-time assignment? Some volunteer assignments do require a lot of time. But others can be accomplished in a short period of time, even one day. More and more organisations are designing volunteer work that can be done in the evenings and on weekends, and in short bursts of intensive time. Ask volunteers to be honest about their availability and start from there. Break large volunteer jobs down into smaller components, then recruit people for these lesser time-consuming jobs.

Use titles for volunteer assignments. The word 'volunteer' is a pay category, not a function! Define the training and supervision the person will have. Many people are cautious of being thrown in to sink or swim. If they believe they will have help while they learn the ropes, they may be more likely to give something a try. Also, it is reassuring to know that you do not expect them to start the job fully informed or trained. Remember that you're trying to eliminate people's reasons to say 'NO', not twist their arms into volunteering. Always recruit volunteers on the basis of the service to others, not the needs of the organisation. People work for people, not things.

Identify and express the benefits to the volunteer from accomplishing the task. Every job has 'payoffs' and it is legitimate to discuss these openly. Volunteering does not have to be totally altruistic or martyring. In fact, in the best volunteer situations, the giver receives as much benefit as the recipient.

Don't have mental conversations. The way to recruit volunteers is to ask people!

³³ Mitchell, B. Planning and Implementation of a Volunteer Recruitment Campaign, Utah from The Red Taxi, xxxx. Other tips on volunteers are available at: <http://vp.libertynet.org/>

Finally remember to paint an upbeat picture of the work. Volunteering is a leisure time activity. You are not competing with salaried employment when you recruit volunteers. Your competition is also jogging and time with the kids! So the volunteer work should be fun at some level (and everyone defines fun differently).

What wouldn't a person want to do as a volunteer? It's OK to identify things that someone wants to avoid as a volunteer. The happier a new volunteer is about what he/she will be doing, the better he/she will be as a volunteer. They don't have to say 'yes' to any assignment offered. They should feel free to negotiate.

7.

// Recruiting for Diversity

Diversity should be an essential element in your recruitment plan. In addition to race and ethnicity, consider other components of diversity, such as age, gender, education, income levels, religious beliefs, physical abilities, and skills. Know the demographics of the community your organisation serves. The organisation will be more effective if members reflect the community. This demonstrates to the community that people are assets, and it tells your consumers that you value them as partners, not just as clients.

Strive to recruit volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds. This diversity helps establish the credibility of the programme, ensures cooperation within the community, and provides the bonus of educating a greater variety of citizens in the community.

Certain types of individuals or groups may be more suitable than others, but everyone has something to offer, and your organisation may be in an ideal position to bring out the best in those who are rarely asked to volunteer.

7.1 Age-mix

The over 60 population in Europe will increase to 35,1% in 2050.

2/3 of the EU population in 2030 won't belong to the working cohort (children under 14 years, adults older than 65).

General characteristics of generation born in 1945 – 1964:

- better educated, healthier, wealthier than previous generations
- higher expectations / demands
- interested in lifelong learning
- more individualistic
- in most countries: less active as volunteers

Taking into account that any age and profile can be adapted for the volunteers, organisations themselves have to know how to adapt the offer of determinate tasks and programs, which often are intergenerational, to volunteers belonging to different age groups.

A lot of organisations try to achieve a better age-diversity of the people volunteering. They develop initiatives on volunteering on specific target groups, or to stimulate better cooperation between age groups. Unfortunately, the volunteer centres are not always able to launch instruments, toolkits and initiatives to advance things more, because they miss human and/or financial resources.

Addressing volunteers of different age groups needs different approaches. But what are these approaches? How can volunteering be accessible to all ages?

7.1.1 What are the barriers that volunteers of different age groups face?

- A bad image of volunteering
- Lack of communication and information on volunteering opportunities
- A lack of campaigns specifically targeting volunteers: Some might not be aware that their skills are needed (and that they do have valuable skills)
- The gap between generations
- Age discrimination
- Bad volunteer management – once badly treated volunteers do not come back
- Lack of information about the immense benefits that volunteering can bring in terms of personal and skills development, strengthened social networks and improved chances of getting employment
- Mentalities; this can be overcome through education and information
- Most organisations tend towards a “generational” grouping, so while the very young tend to be absent in most organisations, the few organisations based on young volunteers almost totally exclude older persons.

Organisations seem to suffer in two main domains in this subject of volunteering and age groups.

On the one hand some organisations are nearly unable to attract ‘fresh blood’, so the existing team of volunteers becomes older and sometimes bitter towards young people; they don’t allow initiatives, new points of views, and so on. To deal with this problem support has to be given on the level of volunteer policy and organisation developments. The structure has to be examined.

On the other hand organisations that open up to all age groups, and make big efforts to develop a good internal cooperation between younger and older people, suffer the problem that the two worlds are too distinct, so different, sometimes fed by prejudices on both sides that it is hard integrate all the groups in a way that everybody remains happy.

7.1.2 Why people in middle age group might not volunteer and why might they be difficult to address?

- This age group is massive and very heterogeneous just as society as a whole (in terms of their employment status, their economic and social background, their motivations etc.)
- Many people over 55 did never volunteer and hesitate to begin and to become volunteers.
- Barrier of skills – especially regarding new media tools and IT skills or special skills demanded by organisations
- Time budget – many “middle aged” volunteers work and do not have spare time, volunteering is still often seen to be a “luxury”

France Benevolat has identified among the retired people, 4 ways of successful transition between job and retirement (by volunteering):

1. Transition reproduction: people try to repeat in the volunteer action the job they had previously in their professional life, i.e., teachers who volunteer in teaching.
2. Transition transposition: well determined volunteer engagement that needs a good knowledge of the volunteering world and a good evaluation of the capacities of the volunteer. It is mostly taken by people who were volunteering before, while still at work.
3. Transition rupture: events can happen that bring people to change completely their way of life and volunteering can be the answer to a new situation. It can be their opportunity to realise what he has previously dreamt of.
4. Badly done transition: for some people it is just a way to be busy. Volunteering is not really chosen but integrated among family obligations³⁴.

Therefore the organisation can try to accompany the transition to its best through information, advices and contacts with new retired volunteers and new candidates in order to identify and promote the volunteering thought.

7.1.3 What are the barriers that prevent young people from getting involved in volunteering?

- Financial considerations
- Individualistic approach to life
- Lack of time. Academic workload and other leisure time activities such as sports limit time for volunteering.
- Many students are looking for part-time paid jobs (such as helping young people to succeed in their examinations).
- Many young people are more interested in international working-groups and projects.
- Ecological and civil protection associations and Third World initiatives are more attractive.
- False impression of volunteering not being ‘cool’ or interesting. Many students have a traditional look to volunteering as connected to the sector of welfare and care. The image of volunteering is rather ‘conservative’, not seen as something modern.

³⁴ Volunteering for all ages – Summit of Generations, Cluj Napoca, Romania - 21 May 2005 - CEV Conference

Student volunteering is complex and unique, crossing both the education and voluntary sectors. By its very nature it has a high turnover and a lack of continuity which contributes to its transient nature. Time is the biggest barrier to individuals becoming involved as volunteers and this is no different for students. However, young people want to feel useful, to learn new things and to feel that they are part of the society they are living in. The volunteering activities help them achieve all these.

7.1.4 Good practices to overcome barriers:

There is a need for different approaches to recruit, manage and follow-up different age groups of volunteers.

- Sometimes different approaches in relation with different age groups are needed for specific activities.
- For general volunteering, intergenerational approaches are suited.
- Different groups will have different objectives in mind, different motivations, different social groups can be created - so taking diversity into consideration is important.
- It also depends on how people perceive themselves - maybe older people don't see themselves as old, so they will react to a message that was addressed to youth, therefore in these cases, different approaches are not necessary.
- The motivation is more important than the age.
- Natural selection can also happen when a more task-oriented approach is used³⁵.

The challenge is very much to make opportunities more widely available and to improve recognition.

- Addressing financial barriers is perhaps the most difficult, since volunteers are by definition meant to be completely unpaid. Yet in practical terms, for young people (indeed for most people) it is important not to be out of pocket, that is, to have to spend money to be able to give time.
- Enhancing the quality and quantity of opportunities on offer proposing a more widely available range of volunteering choices. Volunteers would be able to choose between a range of time commitments depending on the situation they found themselves in, and their experience.
- Achieving a better diversity of the type of young people volunteering and to create more interest in volunteering. Creating a database of opportunities.
- Many young people might be extremely interested in low commitment, one-off events or part-time opportunities, which may then increase their appetites to commit to further and more extensive volunteering once they have the taste.
- A better emphasis on recognising the achievements of volunteers: clear policy on recognition and awarding volunteers certificates, awards and vocational qualifications.
- Far more importance should be attached by educational institutions and among employers to the positive role that volunteering activity can play in young people's personal and skills development.
- Targeted advisers to spread the message of the benefits. There is a need to build an evidence base of the benefits both to individuals (in terms of skills etc) and to communities and society.
- Ensuring that academic institutions are aware of the benefits of volunteering and willing to support students as volunteers.
- Modifying organisational structures in NGOs.
- Developing policies on volunteer training, advise and support both for young and old people.
- Identifying motivations of volunteers and act accordingly.
- For young people volunteering should be attractive and modern in the same time. Each age group should be approached in a different way. It is easier to work with each age group once the motivations have been clearly identified.
- A clear recruitment policy that will differ according the targeted age group.
- A strategic skills development is needed in order to make volunteering accessible to all.
- Promoting a positive image of the elderly for further integration and recognition.
- The activities for volunteers need to be designed according to their age and life style, need to be flexible in terms of schedule, working place and contents.
- Creating new voluntary roles for seniors; offer them new social networks.
- Elder people's leadership skills, experience and knowledge can be strategic resources for NGOs and communities.
- Retired people lose the frame that work gave their lives; volunteering will have to organised in a way to give a similar frame.
- Volunteering is not mainly about repeating tasks that have been done in professional life, but it has to do with participation, solidarity, active citizenship - values that are not usually found in professional skills and that should be highlighted.

- Family volunteerism can be a way of attracting middle aged volunteers.
- Using peers and family members to promote volunteering: young persons involved can activate their parents (in countries with a very active young population) and parents or other family members can try and motivate youngsters in countries with a rather poor volunteering rate in this age group. Family attraction works: kids form volunteering parents are more likely to volunteer themselves.
- Those who do not get engaged very often prefer focusing on their family – that’s why young volunteers can play an important role to activate family members.
- Elder people need to be made aware of the value they can add to NGOs and society.
- A practical idea is an exhibition with panels reporting experiences of real volunteers to show what elder people can do as active volunteers. The knowledge, the experiences and the capacities of these persons that pass to retirement or to a certain liberation of familiar duties constitute a huge human capital. Capital which the organisations of volunteers have to know how to promote, have to incorporate and have to manage³⁶.
- Elder people need more knowledge about computer, the basics of internet and text-software. Young volunteers can help them.
- When dialogue between the generations takes place, prejudices are reduced.
- It is important to identify the informal leaders of each group inside the community because they have much more influence among teenagers. “Peer to peer” motivation is crucial.
- When it comes to policy making, there must be a distinction between age groups and the respective approaches.
- Rotation of professional staff happens, besides that of volunteers - so an organisation can be tired just by investing in human capital - they must be strengthened from within.
- Intergenerational volunteer projects have benefits: young people can teach the elderly how to use the computer, bring new energy and enthusiasm; old people might have a lot to teach.
- Have tasks for different age groups, e.g. family contact person (25+), peer contact person.

7.1.5 Conclusions about Age-mix

The problem of discrimination against older volunteers has to be tackled.

Volunteer tasks should be flexible to make accommodations for the different volunteers.

Everyone wishing to volunteer should be able to do so, regardless of age and that selection should be based on objective criteria relating to the tasks performed and on volunteers' performance.

One major question is “Do we need to approach all age groups – and be as inclusive as possible?

Or should we focus on the volunteer groups we have (young, elderly, etc) and build our strategy on them?”

The answer depends on the policy of volunteer centres and their funds and capacities to widen the scope or to be obliged to be focused and targeted. An inclusive approach, however, should ideally be applied.

Some of the above mentioned barriers and solutions are clearly common to all age groups. However, the answers to the questions raised above will differ amongst the aged groups: the policy and strategies of volunteer organisations will need to take into account specificities of “middle aged” volunteers. There is no “one for all solution” for all ages – but neither within age groups as employees, unemployed, family mothers or fathers etc have themselves very different motivations and life styles that have to be taken into account.

³⁶ Federació Catalana de Voluntariat - Social Catalan Federation of Social Voluntarism: Volunteering for all ages

8. // What to do when people show an interest

Once you have implemented recruitment methods, you will start getting some enquiries. It is important that you follow these up quickly and professionally. Consider having an information pack ready containing background information on your project, details of the voluntary work and any useful information. Try to meet with potential volunteers as soon as possible after they first make contact!

Evaluate the success of your recruitment campaign so that you can learn for the future, what was and what was not successful. And remember - recruitment is only the beginning; keeping hold of volunteers is much harder!

8.1 Screening and Selection³⁷

Screening and interviewing potential volunteers facilitates their commitment to the organisation or to the project at hand. It shows potential volunteers that you take both the project and their time seriously. Screening also gives you an opportunity to match qualifications and skills with your needs and the needs of your volunteers. An interview is also the best time to define availability and schedule activities that fit both the organisation and volunteers.

8.1.1 Do you need to select?

Screening and selection are not a concern for every organisation that involves volunteers. Especially those whose main reason for existence is to involve the local community or to encourage participation by those with a particular interest or concern, welcome anyone who wants to join in.

There may be instances, however, where an organisation will need to make an informed decision about who it will and will not accept as a volunteer. Examples include:

- if volunteers will be working with vulnerable people
- if volunteers are going to be doing a lot of unsupervised work
- if volunteers need any particular skills, such as driving or command of a language
- if volunteers will be handling money, or will be put in similar positions of trust.

8.1.2 Some basics

There is no screening device in the world that comes with a guarantee.

Having checks in place, and advertising this, is in itself a good screening technique, but be careful about putting off potentially good volunteers and only use methods which are appropriate to the nature of the voluntary work.

Be clear and fair; tell people what checks you are planning to carry out and get their consent beforehand.

Don't acquire any more information than you actually need to know about the volunteer.

Store all confidential information securely; restrict access to those who really need it.

Be consistent; check every volunteer in the same way, even if you already know him/her.

Never rely on 'gut instinct' alone; a combination of screening tools (see below) is always preferable than relying on only one, and only use methods which are appropriate to the nature of the voluntary work.

³⁷ Dulcie Schackman and Ed Battle, *The Three R's of Volunteers: Recruitment, Retention, Recognition*, AQ, *The Advising Quarterly*, Review for Professional of International Education, 1991, International Education / New York's Information Centre.

8.2 Personal Profiles & Interviews

You could keep an archive with files about your volunteers and potential volunteers as well.

Explain that this tool helps to determine how best to use and train the volunteer.

It is not aimed at getting into personal information, but rather it is useful to keep all together not only administrative details (name, address etc) but also information about skills and abilities (such as driving, operating a computer, having certain academic or professional qualifications) and availabilities (are they students? retired? ...). Are they keen on interacting with young people? Do they agree with the scope of the organisation?

Therefore when you meet a 'candidate' you can ask questions about people's present or previous business affiliation, volunteer experience, related experience, and language proficiency, and also about their reasons for wanting to volunteer. You could also take notes to fill a sort of application form.

Organising **interviews**, which can be individual or group sessions, should always be regarded as a two-way process, in which the organisation and the volunteer can find out about each other's suitability.

Make interviews as informal as possible (consider calling them 'chats'), putting people at ease in order to get the best out of them without pressure. They have to be relaxed meeting.

Make it clear that the purpose of the 'chat' is not just evaluating the person, but responding to his/her questions and concerns as well.

Moreover the interview should provide a clear understanding about mutual expectations. Make sure that you give and receive clear information.

Define who would be best suited to do the work.

What you need to know:

- the skills and experience of your potential volunteer
- motives for volunteering (this information should match the application form details)
- the volunteer's expectations
- suitability for the volunteering role

What you need to convey:

- necessary information about your organisation
- details of the volunteering role
- available support and training opportunities
- details of supervision
- when you will contact the interviewee again

It is helpful for assessment purposes to have more than one member of your organisation present when interviewing for volunteering roles.

8.3 Difficult Decisions

8.3.1 Refusing volunteers

Inevitably, sometimes you have to say 'no' to a potential volunteer, in order to protect your organisation and the welfare of 'clients'.

How to say no:

- face-to face interview or make a telephone call
- if you think the volunteer is not ready yet, say so
- offer suggestions on building experience/skills
- if appropriate, offer alternative volunteering roles within your organisation

Remember that just because a volunteer might not be suitable for one task, it does not mean that he/she cannot volunteer at all. Try to find something that suits the person.

The key to success for a good candidate are his/her interpersonal skills: ability to interact, coupled with a willingness to learn.

9.

// Orientation of new Volunteers

Orientation involves giving volunteers an adequate background on the organisation, its operation, and its procedures. Orientation is required because the volunteer needs to understand what the organisation is and how it operates. Plan training and support programmes to facilitate volunteer learning and development, and ensure that volunteers are aware of the goals and outcome objectives for their involvement.

An initial orientation prepares volunteers to perform their duties efficiently and effectively. Volunteers who understand what is expected of them do a better job and feel satisfied by performing their duties and serving your organisation.

Orientation to your organisation helps volunteers see their service within the context of the organisation. Even the most menial tasks can become meaningful if presented in such a way that the volunteer understands how the task fits.

You can show slides presentations to make it easier for potential volunteers to determine if they would be interested in volunteering and if they are capable of carrying out the activities requested of them.

A good orientation programme will provide the volunteer with the following information about your organisations:

Organisation Overview

- description and history of the organisation
- mission, goals, and objectives
- how and why you are unique
- description of the organisation, local structure, positioning within the local community (how you relate to other organisations)
- explanation of who's who and who does what; introduction of key figures, Board of Directors/Steering Committee and Director
- description of activities, programmes and clients of the organisation
- time lines and descriptions of major organisational events and activities
- description of volunteer management system
- role of volunteers in your organisation; how this particulate volunteer job helps the organisation reach its goal
- how do clients come to you and what a typical client is like
- funding base and budget
- basic organisation relations policies (whom to call if sick, etc)
- emergency procedures and telephone numbers
- confidentiality procedures

Context of the work

- presentation of the different types of tasks and functions in the local branch of the organisation; ways in which volunteers contribute
- is this a special job?
- possible profile of the volunteers, as well as the skills and skills they develop 'on the job'
- will the volunteer work as part of a team?
- calendar of activities with the key dates

Time commitment

- how many hours per day, week, month
- travelling time
- will there be a strict schedule?

Information on training/qualifications/support/costs

- any training opportunities
- requirement of particular qualifications/skills support/supervision provided
- evaluation procedures / recordkeeping
- payment of out-of-pocket expenses

Culture and Language of the Organisation

- handbook of policies and procedures
- glossary of terms
- index to codes and abbreviations

The purpose is to provide the volunteer with a context within which to work. The better the volunteer understands what the organisation is and how it operates, the better the volunteer will be able to fit his or her own actions into proper methods of behaviour and to display initiative in developing further ways to be helpful to the organisation.

To ensure understanding of and compliance with activities, it is helpful to provide each volunteer with a written resource in the form of a volunteer handbook, orientation packet, or other reference guides. This written resource may be provided during the volunteer's orientation. The resource reinforces the information presented in training, helps to address questions that arise during service, and can prove useful as a supervisory tool in dealing with performance issues. A simple document in Word with a nice layout could be sufficient, as it would need regular updates.

Volunteers might not know where to start, help and train them!

9.1 Being professional

Treat the volunteer as a professional from the beginning.

Volunteers should be given a memo, a calendar that spells out clearly expectations and tasks. Equally important, volunteers should be aware of what they can get from the organisation in terms of tutoring and training, but also insurance coverage during their activities.

Does this sound very formal? Maybe, but do not make the mistake of being casual about the 'job' aspects of your volunteer programme because you think of it as a 'free' service. There are expenses in terms of energy of expert volunteers related to training and, clearly, on the other hand responsibilities to assume for the new volunteer. A volunteer is not a casual investment. It takes time, staff, thought, and sensitivity.

You might require people to undergo a training course before assigning new volunteers special tasks.

It could be suitable to provide the fresh volunteers a tutor who looks after them and supports them to their tasks.

Provide volunteers with the opportunity to learn from each other and to vary their contacts with other volunteers.

10. // Bill of Volunteers' Rights and Responsibilities

When new volunteers join your organisation you can provide them with a clear description of their rights and responsibilities as volunteers. Details will vary according to the nature of the organisation: some elements of a typical roles and responsibilities document are listed below:

A volunteer has the **RIGHT** to:

- know as much about the organisation as possible – receive information about its purpose, policies, its programs, its people, its values and its policy on volunteers
- a clearly written description of the work he/she will undertake and of assigned tasks within the organisation
- a assignment with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education, and employment background
- be treated as co-worker, not just as free help, not as a prima donna
- be seen as a valued part of the organisation through inclusion at training sessions, meeting, social functions, etc.
- receive appropriate (thoughtfully planned and effectively presented) training
- know who to turn to with problems and difficulties
- sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient and thoughtful and who has time to invest in giving guidance
- be appreciated and have his/her work valued by the organisation
- make mistakes and learn from them
- express his/her view, opinions, on a subject
- recognition, in the form of promotion of awards, through day to day expressions of appreciation
- be listened to and taken seriously by other members of staff
- have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, to have respect shown from an honest opinion
- receive regular and constructive feedback on performance
- work in a safe environment
- be covered by insurance
- have choices and be able to negotiate on those choices
- be able to say no
- carry out voluntary work without being exploited
- be reimbursed for any agreed travel expenses
- be consulted on matters which directly or indirectly affect work
- be free from discrimination
- privacy and confidentiality
- promotion and variety of experiences – through advancement to assignments of more responsibilities, through transfer from one activity to another, through special assignments

A Volunteer has the **RESPONSIBILITY** to:

- be reliable
- carry out work to the best of his/her ability and do so in a way that corresponds to the aims and values of the organisation
- attend the place of work at the times agreed
- notify the appropriate person if he/she is unable to attend for some reason or are running late
- agree to the organisation's volunteer policy
- respect confidentiality
- respect the rights for users and other workers within the organisation
- be honest if there are problems
- attend training sessions, support meetings if these are agreed as part of the volunteering role
- give feedback, communicating relevant and important information to an appropriate staff member
- be committed to the work but also to recognise that there are personal and external limitations on time commitment
- acknowledge decisions made by others
- ask for help or support when needed³⁸

³⁸ Adapted from Managing Volunteers - Rights and Responsibilities, Barnardo's, http://www.comhairle.ie/providers/providers_voluntary.html; American Red Cross, The Bill of Rights for Volunteers, Fund-Raising Management, August, 1982, p. 26.

RETAINING & MOTIVATION

1.

// Retaining Volunteers

Finding qualified volunteers and training them takes work, so losing volunteers on a regular basis can be a drain on resources. You should try to keep volunteers continue to feel that supporting your efforts is worth their time. Show them that the benefits of volunteering outweigh the costs. Satisfied volunteers will become advocates for your mission and will help recruit additional support.

The following are some basics to keep in mind in order to retain your volunteers and make them happy and satisfied both about what they are doing and about you.

1.1 Communication

Value others through communication. It is through communication that people are motivated. The way we express ourselves can either 'turn people on' or it can 'turn them off'. It can either gain their support or discourage their participation.

Keep direct lines of communication open at all times using the telephone, personal memos... E-mail or Web sites are easily accessible for questions and requests. Give volunteers a phone number where they can always leave a message, then respond to calls promptly³⁹.

1.1.1 Clearly define and communicate your goals

You motivate people by selling ideas, programs and results - not membership. A group with a set of goals, which are clearly understood and mutually accepted by its membership, has an achieving force that is almost irresistible. Many groups, however, lack a clear sense of direction and as a result they wander in their efforts with limited accomplishment.

1.1.2 Look at yourself

The ability to understand others begins with an understanding of ones' self. Ask yourself these three questions:

- How did I get to be the person that I am?
- What motivates me to do the things I do?
- Why do I react in different ways to different people, situations and things? Honest answers to these three questions can give you insight into what motivates others.

1.1.3 Listen to your volunteers: Allow your volunteers to provide feedback/input

This provides the volunteer with a sense of ownership of belonging in the organisation. By encouraging feedback from volunteers, the organisation is in fact aiding in the retention of volunteers by valuing their contribution and ideas. They will then most likely promote volunteerism and the organisation to others.

Provide volunteers with opportunities for feedback. Encourage volunteers to bring their concerns to staff and also to use the workshops for this purpose. They may tell you things you need to know about gaps and areas you should cover in training.

Getting feedback is also a major reason for periodic evaluations of volunteers about attendance, reliability, performance, cooperation with other volunteers, and coordination with staff.

At first, it may seem difficult to evaluate someone who is giving time in this manner. However, volunteers respect this approach and find it motivating to be treated seriously. Periodic evaluation also provides a means to discuss real problems with the volunteer. The evaluation is not a chance to criticize but rather an opportunity to work toward a constructive joint resolution. You have to be good listeners and know how to frame questions in a non-confrontational manner.

Explore the issue in order to resolve it.

People want to be listened to. A person is motivated to achieve when he/she feels his/her ideas and suggestions are listened to and respected. The biggest cause of group 'apathy' is the failure of you and me to really listen.

³⁹ Building Strong Boards & Councils, in How to Motivate People in Volunteer Groups, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Arizona, Community Guide Motivation Series.

1.1.4 Conduct meetings that stimulate

Nothing is more discouraging than a poorly organised, rambling, unproductive meeting. Yet most of our meetings are exactly that. Productive meetings require more than a powerful leader.

You can organise:

- Weekly meetings 'by sector'
- Monthly meetings; all volunteers meet. For this occasion everyone has to prepare a short report on her/his activities in the past period. This is an excellent opportunity for everyone to get to know more about each other's activities. The monthly meeting is also a place for evaluating each other's work, giving comments, praises and criticism. In that way this meeting serves as a motivation factor, since it creates team spirit, everyone gets a bigger picture of what are the different activities the centre is involved in, and what impact it makes in our community.

1.1.5 In/effective communication

Activity

Balloon game: Take it or blow it!

The participants are divided in groups. Some participants (one per group) volunteer to be the game facilitators. The other participants are given some balloons and very limited instructions on what to do:

Fill in the balloons and hand them in to the facilitator of the game. This is a competition.

When the participants start giving the balloons to the facilitator, he or she has to either accept the balloon or reject it, by blowing it up with a needle according to certain rules. Different rules can be created for each game. In this case, balloons should be accepted except...

- all the blue balloons
- all the balloons delivered with the left hand
- ...

Wrap-up

Several participants argued that they did not understand the purpose of the game and that they felt frustrated because the instructions were not clear. Since they had in mind it was a competition, they simply rushed to finish the game as quickly as possible (as they concluded that the winning criteria would be time), instead of focusing on why were some balloons blown and others not. This game served to prove that effective communication and in particular clear instructions for the facilitator are essential in achieving goals and motivating those who are involved in the process.

1.2 Managing Conflicts

Disagreement and conflict can be very destructive forces if not dealt with constructively. At the same time, the suppressing of disagreement discourages new ideas and, in turn, the very vitality the group so badly needs. Try to handle conflict creatively.

Moreover, there are various hazards involved in group participation - being imposed upon by others, feeling insecure, being criticised, taking responsibility for decisions made, etc⁴⁰. Be aware of the fact that these elements affect the personal interaction within your organisation and try to reduce these 'risks of participation'.

Conflicts can rise from frustration about tasks and goals. When starting an activity, be frank about the chances of success. Start with small purposes that you can easily handle.

Work with the strengths and interests of your volunteers and search for ways to make the most of your available resources. Be flexible, open and realistic.

If you want to keep volunteers over a period of years, you cannot overload them or allow them to overload themselves.

⁴⁰ Keys to Effective Motivation in Volunteer Groups

Steps in dealing with a conflict:

- Unmask it
- Analyse it
- Try to free those involved from aggressiveness and anxiety
- Transform it in a development or growing opportunity

Resources to use:

- Creative response
- Empathy, listening and trying to be in others' shoes
- Appropriate assertiveness: be tough with the problem, soft with the person
- Co-operation
- Managing emotions
- Willingness to resolve without leaving resentment
- Mapping the conflict in neutral terms
- Designing options
- Negotiation skills
- Mediation
- Broadening perspectives

1.3 Educational Opportunities

The highest reward for a person's work is not what they get for it, but what they become because of it.

John Ruskin

One thing that is a continual problem is creating a diverse and stimulating job for each volunteer. A lot of the tasks are manual and repetitive. People want to learn and use their skills at every stage of life.

Provide volunteers with educational opportunities so that they can continue to 'grow'. Have meetings and regular workshops where guest speakers can provide information.

Several volunteers give their time to no-profit organisations because they enjoy being really involved in their volunteer job⁴¹. Assignment of harder and more demanding tasks is sometimes perceived as a sign of work appreciation for one volunteer. The more challenging responsibilities you give a volunteer the better he/she works. He is more likely to think that his/her abilities are used worthily. Not being underestimated.

Give volunteers substantive positions and treat them as any other staff members, attending staff meetings, writing reports, managing other volunteer... Treating volunteers as part of your organisation's staff helps them feel they are part of a team and fosters commitment and retention. The more they know and understand about the nature of your organisation the more they can contribute to public relations, marketing, and advocacy.

The key to retention is to treat the volunteer as a professional who is doing an important job. Sometimes a job that can be done on a casual basis is not perceived as very significant⁴².

⁴¹ Dulcie Schackman and Ed Battle, The Three R's of Volunteers: Recruitment, Retention, Recognition, AQ, The Advising Quarterly, Review for Professional of International Education, 1991, International Education / New York's Information Center. The article is based on Marti Thomson's discussion of the issues involved in organising a volunteer program.

⁴² Ibid.

Recognition is how an organisation tells volunteers that their efforts are important. Expressing thanks for donated time, energy, and expertise makes volunteers feel valued and appreciated. Praising individual volunteers, as well as the group, is a key volunteer retention strategy.

Recognition should be frequent and personal. Being sensitive to what volunteers expect helps the program administrator to design appropriate recognition activities. For example, volunteers seeking power may enjoy being thanked by the executive director and board of directors. A simple thank you from the staff may be appropriate for volunteers motivated by achievement. A party is right for the folks who volunteer to socialize.

The intangible rewards of volunteering are major. Volunteerism builds a sense of self-worth, involves people of all ages in useful service, and provides an environment for social interaction.

At the same time, always remember that the volunteer is freely giving time. Give volunteers praise and recognition — it is the psychological equivalent of a salary!

But how to award them? Should volunteers receive tangible expressions of gratitude, such as a plaque to hang on the wall, or should they simply be given a warm handshake? Should there be grades of acknowledgment linked to individual performance? Does competing for a prize not somehow diminish the sense of satisfaction for those volunteers who aren't at the top of the list? Why should a publicly well-known volunteer get a testimonial dinner thrown in his/her honour while a less-known volunteer who has worked just as hard, is virtually ignored? From time to time, everyone wants to receive a pat on the back. Most people go through their entire life with very few opportunities to be singled out in front of others and credited for something they have done.

Volunteers are paid in six figures... S-M-I-L-E-S

Gayla LeMaire

To be appreciated, to feel important and needed is a prime motivator in all of us. Encouragement and recognition are essential in order to stimulate and maintain active involvement in volunteer groups.

2.1 The Recognition Process

There are two basic types of volunteer recognition efforts:

Awards are the periodic provision of tokens of recognition to volunteers, both in a group and a one-to-one basis. Awards are particularly useful in generating a sense of group involvement among volunteers who do not often have an opportunity to gather together.

Awards generally fall into two categories:

- Things: certificates, pins, group photographs, items of clothing, such as T-shirts, caps, etc., small gifts
- Events: lunches and dinners, picnics, parties and celebrations, field trips, National Volunteer Week celebration

Rewards are the more intangible day-to-day activities of recognition and motivation that are given to volunteers.

These include:

- Saying 'Thank You'
- Giving respect and equal status to volunteers
- Involving volunteers in staff meetings on a regular basis
- Maintaining a personal interest in the volunteer H Spending time and effort in supervision
- Giving the volunteer more responsibility

Rewards tend to be more effective long-run motivators of volunteers

In conducting both the above systems of recognition, there are a number of principles to keep in mind.

These include:

- Granting recognition in a public forum, preferably among the peer group of the volunteer.
- Timing recognition so that it is as close as possible to the achievement of the volunteer that is being recognised. Recognition delayed is a much less effective form of reward. It is this factor that makes day-to-day rewards for good behaviour so important.
- Tailoring recognition to the individual. Attempt to determine what type of recognition would be most meaningful to the particular individual. Some will prefer the more public type of 'thank you'; others will better appreciate the smaller private recognition.
- Making sure that recognition is given sincerely. An artificial or 'slick' ceremony will be detected and resented. If you don't really mean it, don't do it.
- Making sure that recognition is fair. If you reward volunteers who are not performing well you will de-motivate the volunteers who are performing well.

2.2 Don't forget to say thank you

Many people, even volunteers themselves, forget that just because a volunteer doesn't receive any coin of the realm in return for the time he/she donates, it doesn't follow that the donated time has no real value nor that the person donating that time can be treated as "free labour" to whom normal business and personal courtesies need not be extended. This consideration becomes critically important in the area of thanking volunteers after their work is done⁴³.

All the small things like saying 'thank you' or smiling are important. Show your appreciation to volunteers. Saying 'thank you' or 'you're doing a great job' boosts morale and increases the volunteer's desire to stay with the organisation. Volunteers are also more likely to promote the organisation to other people if they are having a pleasant experience.

Gifts are not necessary, but saying thanks is. A verbal expression of thanks at the end of the job is easy to do but sometimes it shouldn't be the only thanks a volunteer receives. Send a thank-you letter maybe outlining the results of the project. People like to know they made a difference.

2.2.1 Matching the "Thank-you" to the volunteer⁴⁴

Many people believe that the best way to recognise volunteers is to throw them a party or hold a similar recognition event during National Volunteer Week. However, your efforts may be ineffective if you don't say 'thank-you' in a way that your volunteers can relate to.

To truly show your appreciation, it is far better to customise your recognition to the individual volunteer. To do this, you must first come to understand why people volunteer. According to Nan Hawthorne of Sound Volunteer Management, there are four typical motivators for volunteers, corresponding to different kinds of recognition.

Once you have discovered what motivates your volunteers (either by observation or by asking them directly), you can choose which recognition items will make them feel most appreciated.

⁴³ Bruce Raymond, Seven Golden How-To Rules for Volunteers, or How to get the most out of doing for nothing what you wouldn't do for money (1996). <http://www.charityvillage.com/charityvillage/research/rvol1.html>

⁴⁴ Cfr. www.sound-volunteer.com <http://www.charityvillage.com/charityvillage/research/rvol1.html>

Motivator	Effective for volunteers who...	How to say thank-you
Praise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enjoy recognition for their talents and accomplishments; - like being thanked, given gifts, and singled out for achievement; - find situations where there is little or no feedback frustrating; - enjoy a volunteer program where others readily see the results of their efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - small gifts - a recognition spot on your web site or in your newsletter - public recognition at an event - a reference letter for a job or another volunteer position.
Affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enjoy being part of an organisation, club or team; - enjoy opportunities to get together with others with similar beliefs, backgrounds, goals, and being associated with a well-known cause or group; - don't find working alone or for an obscure organisation very satisfying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social get-togethers - organisation t-shirts - name-badges - posting a list of all organisation volunteers in a public area.
Accomplishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enjoy seeing concrete evidence of their work, such as piles of finished paperwork or names checked off on a list; like practical, tangible projects - don't like working on projects where abstract goals are pursued or achievements are hard-won. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - certificates of accomplishment at specific stages in their work - continuing education - credential credits - a special place to put completed projects
Power and Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - like persuading people to see or do things their way, or enjoy showing people a better, easier way of accomplishing an objective; - don't want to be in an insignificant position, but like positions where they help make decisions or train people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - titles or rank insignia - involvement as a speaker at organisation workshops

2.2.2 Teambuilding

Here it is a simple activity that can stimulate teambuilding and at the same time give each volunteer in the organisation a better idea of how he/she is perceived and to boost his/her 'self-confidence'.

The activity can take place at the end of a chapter meeting. Each participant receives a sheet of paper with the names of all the chapter volunteers. Each has to think about one good quality of all the others and write it in front of each name. The coordinators collect all the filled sheets and can then create for each volunteer in the chapter a diploma-like document stating: 'The chapter volunteers would like to warm-heartedly thank you for being' and add all the different comments made on the person. Ideally the certificates would be distributed at the last party at the end of the year.

This can also be used as a 'goodbye activity' at the end of a chapter activity or seminar.

2.3 Simple and rewarding ways of thanking volunteers

When someone does something well, tell them so. The feeling of being capable of doing something is essential. Give volunteers compliments and do not take their efforts for granted.

A 1992 survey asked volunteers to indicate what type of recognition they preferred for their volunteer work⁴⁵. Here are the results:

Discounts on memberships, etc.	81.4%
Additional training	81.2%
Personal development training	69.2%
Luncheon with volunteers	68.9%
Employee privileges	68.5%
Volunteer job enhancement	68.0%
Participation in staff activities	64.0%
Individual lunch with agency	60.4%
Social event with volunteers	60.4%
Gift item with agency logo	59.0%
Community recognition	55.6%
Personalised gift item	55.1%
Award pin	52.2%
Award certificate	49.5%
Gift item with universal volunteer logo	46.8%
participation in organised sports event	22.2%

Express your gratitude to the volunteers in an official way and make them feel what they are: Important!

Recognise volunteer accomplishments through:

- Thank you notes, letters of appreciation
- Small presents; people enjoy receiving small gifts. A nice idea can be to find gifts that remind participants of an activity and of the good times they had during that activity.
- Awards, e.g. election of volunteer of the year, giving titles...
- Business cards
- Certificates of achievement
- Recognition events, e.g. ceremony where a 'senior' can present volunteers and offers the thanks of the organisation as a whole for their service; an annual thank-you party to recognise the work of volunteers throughout the year... Explain how great it has been to work all together.
- Fun moments or other organised activities: parties, monthly walks, visits, trips, a day at the beach or a picnic in the forest or you could go to the cinema, a camping activity. All these are also an excellent opportunity for people to mingle and get to know each other in a different context)
- Name the people who contributed to a project, a meeting, for instance, in a newsletter
- After organising an event, you can make CDs with photos of the participants or music played during the meeting or related to the event. Give it as a present for the participants to remember the event.
- Organise exchanges and twinning with other local branches of your organisation in your country or even from other foreign partners. There are great opportunities to learn from others and to get a wider perspective of the organisation network.

If at all possible, recognise the expertise of experienced volunteers by encouraging them to shoulder increased responsibilities such as becoming team leaders or coordinators, carrying out more advanced tests, or helping with data analyses, being delegated important tasks.

⁴⁵ Toronto Volunteer Centre's Survey about what volunteers most want as tokens of recognition.

Awards for Volunteer Service

Each year many local, state, and national organisations present awards to individuals and groups for their outstanding volunteer service. The award recipient may attend a ceremony, receive a written commendation, or have a donation made in his or her name to the organisation that nominated him or her. Many organisations hold events to recognise volunteers during National Volunteer Week, although time lines vary.

You may discover volunteer award programmes sponsored by local government or civic groups. Some businesses sponsor volunteer recognition programmes. Other organisations sponsor award programs to recognise specific categories of volunteers, such as youth or seniors.

3.

// Defining Motivation

What does the word motivation actually mean?

If you check the dictionary, first you have to realise that the word motivation is derived from the word motive.

In the dictionary, motivation is defined as 'that what causes action'.

Motivation is the driving force within oneself to do something

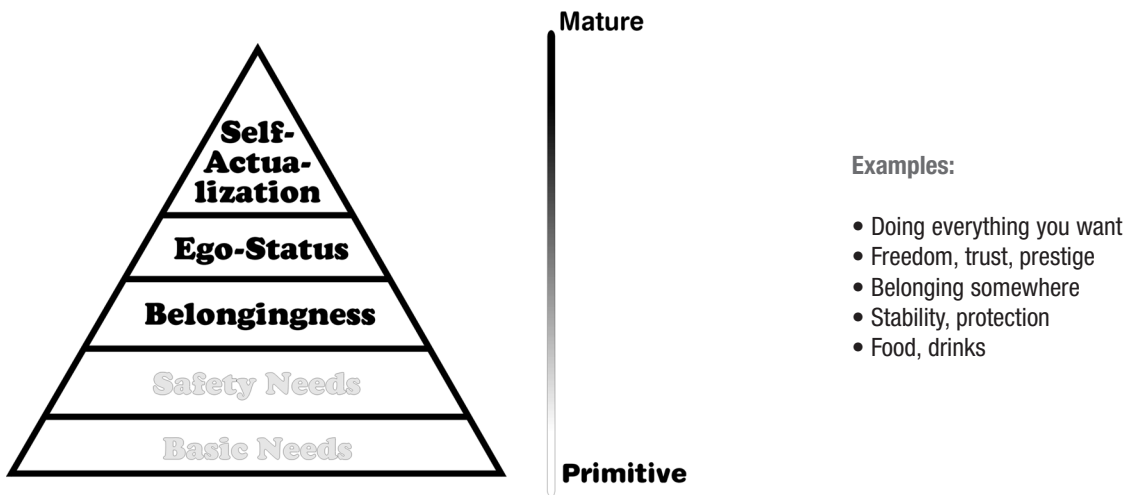
3.1 Maslow's definition of motivation

The psychologist Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) was mainly interested in what makes people act the way they do in different situations. He based his explanation on needs. People can have an unsatisfied need, which will create a tension. The person will then have the need to eliminate the tension and has to choose from various possibilities what to do to reduce the tension. In other words, the motivation behind one's deeds is to ease the tension.

This theory has been criticised in several ways. One remark made is that in this form, it would mean that motivation only exists when there are unsatisfied needs. Another remark is that motivation is not the same for everyone.

3.1.1 Pyramid of needs

Another important theory of Maslow is the pyramid of needs.



Everybody has different needs. Maslow defined these needs in a hierarchy (fig.1). The pyramid shows that some needs are more basic than others. You need to satisfy a need (at least partially) before you can move up to another need. For example, you don't worry about a new car when you don't have food to eat. The order and interpretations of the needs are not the same for every human being. It can vary among cultures, social stability and from person to person. Another thing that can vary is the level needed to be reached until a person is satisfied. Not everyone has the need to go to the top. Some people are satisfied before reaching that level. In most western countries, people are not conscious of the first two levels. For that reason, the two lowest levels are coloured differently. If these needs are attacked in some way, people will get confused, and react in a different way than expected.

3.2 Herzberg's definition of motivation

Another psychologist that did research in the same field was Frederick Herzberg. He used Maslow's theory as a basis. Numerous researches with companies made him conclude that there are two different ways to activate motivation.

On the one hand, there is the negative 'KITA' (Kick in the ass) and on the other hand the positive 'KITA'. The negative KITA is the use of threat to intimidate an employee before starting a project. Through threat the employee gets motivated to fulfil his/her task successfully. The positive KITA is the reinforcing of the positive aspects of a completed task, motivating the employee to achieve more results, or results better than those achieved.

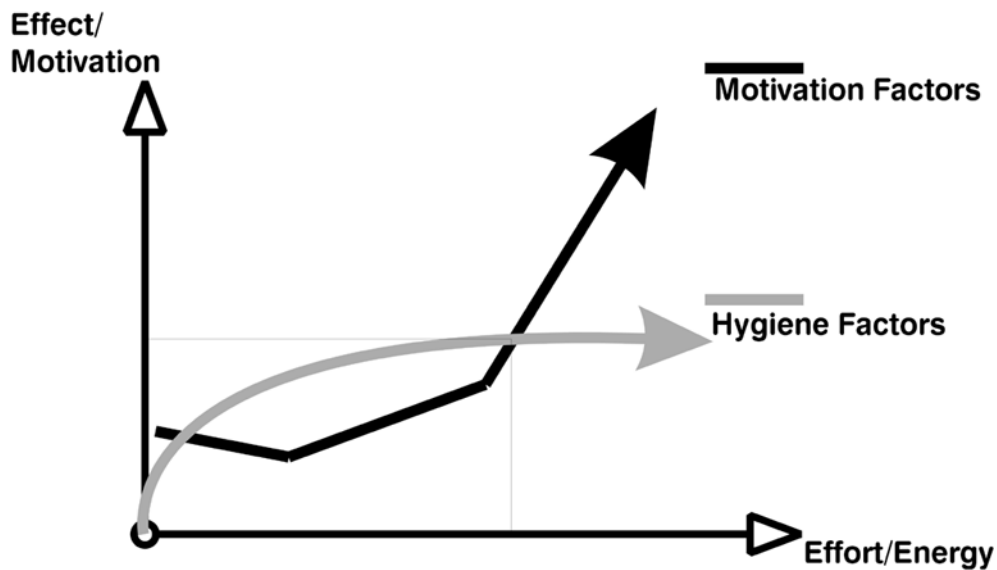
Furthermore, Herzberg described two different groups of motivating factors (table II):

Motivation factors	Hygiene factors
1. Achievement	1. Administration
2. Recognition	2. Leadership
3. Work itself	3. Physical working conditions
4. Responsibility	4. Contact to co-workers
5. Progress/promotion	5. Salary
6. Personal growth/development	6. Status
	7. Job security
	8. Private life

The motivation factors, if fulfilled, will stimulate a person's motivation. The hygiene factors on the other hand will demotivate a person if they aren't satisfactory. As long as the hygiene factors are satisfied, people don't notice them, but as soon as they aren't fulfilled properly, people will get upset and demotivated. So in order for someone to get motivated the hygiene factors need to be satisfied and a couple of the motivation factors need to be satisfied.

The reason that hygiene factors are called that way is because it is similar to 'hygiene': as long as a person's hygiene is good, you don't notice it. As soon as someone begins to smell or in some other way has neglected his/her hygiene, it is irritating. In other words, as long as they are fine, you don't notice them.

3.2.1 Herzberg's graphic on motivation



3.3 Matti Straub's definition of motivation

Most of us have probably asked ourselves how we can motivate others. The first thing Matti Straub pointed out was that one couldn't motivate other people⁴⁶.

Motivation is an inner burning for a task or a mission

This definition shows that motivation is already within a person. It is not a thing that one can create or wake up in people. So, it's impossible to motivate other people. Everybody basically is motivated to do a meaningful job; every person has an inner motivation to live, a will to work and a will to do a good job. Motivation is connected with your personal vision – the work you are doing must be meaningful. In case you need other people to reach your goals, as you can't motivate them, involve them

The real substance of volunteer motivation is the work we offer people, the job itself

When we think about motivation, the idea of manipulating a person's mind might occur, as if you would be selling an idea. The surprise is that the motivation to work that each person brings is the energy that will power the organisation's engine. This leads us to assume that one cannot motivate people. Motivation is there. It is all about meeting people's needs and giving them the opportunity to fulfil themselves by engaging in tasks for which they are already motivated. It is, therefore, important that local organisation leaders spend some time to understand why their volunteers do such a job as well as to talk to potential volunteers and try to find out what could be a motivating factor for them.

Because volunteers leave the organisation, the organisation spends its resources on always training new volunteers. The question is then how the organisation can keep the volunteers for a longer time.

⁴⁶ Matti Straub, special guest speaker during the Volunteerism: Motivating Young People seminar of AFS organisation in Plentzia (Spain), November 1998.

4.

// Why do people volunteer?

The following are some figures on volunteer motivations, according to a study on volunteering in some European countries⁴⁷.

Percentage of people surveyed stated that they volunteered:

	Belgium	Ireland	Poland
To give help	27	14	21.5
To be useful	18		
To use their skills, remain active	15		
To get professional experience, new skills and personal development	14		13.1
To meet interesting people, make new friends	10	10.7	
To give free time	7	7.9	
To defend a cause	4	15.4	
To give meaning to their life	4		
For enjoyment		7.1	18.3
Because they knew or liked people already involved		10.3	9.6

I do get paid for my voluntary work. I just don't get paid money

a young volunteer

People volunteer for a wide variety of reasons. They mainly contribute their time in order to help or because of their conviction in the merits of the cause. However personal benefits, self-development and advancement are also valued. For some people volunteering is a way to give added meaning to their lives, develop new competences, increase their self-confidence, make new friends, be involved and better themselves, enjoy the social interaction with like-minded individuals. Moreover some volunteer in order to have a better understanding of their local community and remain part of its social structure.

Some people are uncomfortable with the notion that a volunteer 'benefits' from doing volunteer work. There is a long tradition of seeing volunteering as a form of charity, based on altruism and selflessness. The best volunteering does involve the desire to serve others, but this does not exclude other motivations, as well⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ Data from Voluntary Activity Reports – Facts and Figures, CEV, 2005.

⁴⁸ Giving and Volunteering in the United States, Findings from the 1998 National Survey.

4.1 How do we get people to volunteer?



We give them dollars, we give them order, or we give them reasons⁴⁹

This means we can either pay people to work, put some pressure or persuade them. It is probably a combination of all three that most commonly prompts people to work. For volunteer-based organisations it is only the last option that is possible.

Many would think about rewards outside the work itself such as organisation badges, caps, T-Shirts or even fancy 'Best Volunteer' diplomas. However, taking a look at a Gallup poll⁵⁰ about the main reason Americans give for volunteering, out of eight most frequently mention reasons, the top three were:

- Like doing something useful, helping others
- Interested in the activity
- Enjoy doing work, feel needed

The conclusion is that 'the real substance of volunteer motivation is the work we offer people, the job itself'. As the ancient saying goes 'The wise leader knows that reward for doing work arises naturally out of the work.'

The work itself is the main motivator of volunteers

When we think about motivation, the idea of manipulating a person's mind might occur, as if you would be selling an idea. The surprise is that the motivation to work that each person brings is the energy that will power the organisation's engine. This leads us to assume that one cannot motivate people. Motivation is there! It is all about meeting people's needs and giving them the opportunity to fulfil themselves by engaging in tasks for which they are already motivated.

In adult human beings we do not create motivation; we identify it, accept it, and then connect it creatively to organisational and community needs⁵¹.

It is, therefore, important that local organisation leaders spend some time to understand why their volunteers do such a job as well as to talk to potential volunteers and try to find out what could be a motivating factor for them.

⁴⁹ Adapted from Scheier, Ivan H. (1996) Building Volunteer/Staff Relations, 2nd Printing, ENERGIZE Inc.

⁵⁰ www.gallup.com

⁵¹ Scheier.

4.2 What motivates you and the others?

You will probably have some special reasons of your own to be a volunteer.

Remember that the motivations people have to choose the place to offer their services may not be the reasons why they stay. Once they're on the volunteer job, they will continue to serve as long as they feel that their efforts are accomplishing something, that their talents are appreciated, and that they make a difference. And if they also like the people with whom you work, so much the better!

In fact, it tends to strengthen their commitment to volunteering when they can see the benefits to both the recipient of their efforts and to themselves. And it is much more comfortable than 'charity' because it upholds the self-esteem of those with whom you volunteer.

As you deal with volunteers, it is helpful to understand what motivates people to donate their time and energy to a volunteer effort. In addition to reasons why people initially volunteer for a project, there are important reasons why they continue with the program year after year: recognition, respect, and a sense of accomplishment. As we already said, volunteers must feel that their efforts are appreciated and recognised, that the group respects their skills, and that their work produces results. Keep these motivational factors in mind as you develop a plan to recognise the efforts of long-term volunteers.

If someone accepts a volunteer job or task, it is because this person is getting something out of it that motivates him/her. One cannot motivate people artificially. Yet, this something can be very different from one person to the next. The hard part is not to motivate this person, but rather to understand what the person enjoys from the work and to increase the conditions for this person to commit to it.

To create a motivated team, start by yourself! In order to motivate others, it is essential that you are motivated yourself.

4.2.1 Who/what motivates you?

- What motivates me? Who motivates me?
- List who and what in separate lists
- If the who list is bigger than the what list, start there
- Identify some areas where you feel that you could be motivated by the who identified
- Help these people to motivate you. In this way, helping them to have the right attitude towards you can greatly increase your own motivation⁵³.

4.2.2 What motivates the others?

In a local organisation meeting or training session, ask each member to write down what they think motivates them / makes them lack motivation in the chapter work. Then ask everybody to share their ideas with the rest of the group and discuss a bit. Finally, all together think of ideas on how to keep people motivated and reduce the factors that generate lack of motivation⁵⁴.

You can for instance arrange a meeting with potential volunteers for your local organisation and ask them to list what may personally motivate them to work (as volunteers). Then, try to match their interests with possible roles in your local structure. By identifying the motivating factors, you will then be able to act upon them and make your local structure more attractive.

⁵³ Adapted from Council of Europe and European Commission Organisational Management T-Kit (2000)

⁵⁴ Suggestion for training based on Council of Europe and European Commission Organisational Management T-Kit (2000)

4.2.3 Volunteering as wish fulfilment⁶⁵

One of the exceptional things about volunteering is that it allows people to live out their fantasies. Many of us secretly wish we could spend our days on Broadway, or taming lions, or saving lives. But our career paths, and maybe our true talents, led us in more mundane directions. Volunteering is a way to make your dreams come true.

Everyone's dreams are different, but there is a volunteer opportunity to match each one. You can give people a chance to follow theirs.

Do they love show business? If they can't act or sing, they might stage manage, sew costumes, or make the bookings. You can encourage a theatre performance for promotion and fund raising!

They may desire the chance to be a manager or a leader. By chairing a volunteer committee, coordinating a special event, or being a team captain of other volunteers, they will finally be in charge!

4.2.4 Volunteering as a way to explore a career

Volunteering is a good way to explore possible career options. It is relatively risk-free in that you can sample a work field or setting without making a long-term commitment to it. This allows a person to discover whether or not he/she likes the work or is good at it - and if he/she discovers it's not for you, can move on.

On the other hand, if the volunteer finds the work exciting, he/she can increase the commitment learning more and more about the new job field and his/her talent for it. Eventually, volunteering can lead to a paying job - by providing contacts, references...

For new graduates, volunteering will demonstrate that they have practical skills, can function in a work environment, and care about the community.

For those who are tired of their present job, volunteering is a welcome change of pace. It allows them to test themselves in new situations and to see what truly interests them. It gives them the chance to risk doing something you've never done before and to learn from it even if it doesn't work out.

For people who have been out of the work force while raising a family, or took a leave due to illness or bereavement, volunteering is a way back into the work place. It gives them the opportunity to develop self-confidence and prove that their skills are still alive.

For the active retiree, volunteering is a second (or third or fourth) career - the chance finally to do what they thought was closed off to you because of job choices you made long ago. Experimenting with volunteering they keep their talents youthful.

Volunteering is only career exploration if volunteers consciously select assignments that:

- place themselves in the type of setting they want to learn about;
- let them work side by side with 'professionals' they can observe and who can answer questions they may have;
- ask for as much training as you can get;
- ask to be 'promoted' to tasks of greater challenge so that they can truly use the volunteer experience to document their accomplishments to a prospective employer.

They will learn the most by involving themselves in causes and organisations they want to help succeed.

While people gain career exploration, the organisation gains a great volunteer you - a win-win situation.

4.2.5 Volunteering to put it on the résumé

Looking for a job, the resume gets people's foot in the door. One way to capture the interest of an employer is to show that you are an involved citizen, someone who works to make the community a better place to live.

Sometimes paid work history may not be as important as what a person has done as a volunteer in demonstrating that he/she has the necessary job skills.

Many people add a section to their resumes called 'Community Service' or 'Volunteer Work'. They list the highlights of their volunteering here, to show that they have interests outside of their employment history already described.

Volunteer work could actually be included into the section of the resume called 'Work Experience'. Even if not paid, it is a work and an experience. The key is to translate what you gain from the volunteer activity into the language of the paid work world. Instead of using 'volunteer' as a job title, use the title Tutor, Project Coordinator...

Describe the volunteer work in terms of your achievements, highlighting the skills that you can learn and demonstrate. What would be important to the work world about what you did? For example, did you manage a budget or accomplish goals on schedule? Did you supervise a staff of people? Even if they, too, were volunteers, your success required the ability to be a motivating leader. All these sorts of things impress an employer. Describe your activities and achievements fully.

⁶⁵ This and following paragraphs adapted from Susan J. Ellis, Energize, Inc.

Take the time to analyse what you learned as a volunteer. Did you have the chance to practice public speaking? Write reports, news releases, newsletters? Plan projects, coordinate sub-committees, train others to do the work? Such skills are applicable to just about any setting.

For students seeking their first real job, being able to show volunteer work on a resume demonstrates that they have interests beyond the classroom. For people returning to the paid work force after some time away, some volunteer activities prove that they kept themselves sharp and involved. For those who want to change career fields, it may be volunteer work in the new field that tells a prospective employer they are worth the risk, even if all their paid employment history is in some other field.

5. // Strategies for Motivating Volunteers

The better you get to know a volunteer, the better you'll be able to identify that volunteer's motivation. Ongoing and open communication is the key to keeping volunteers engaged with your organisation.

Think of a volunteer 'career path' at your organisation. A volunteer for an event, for example, might be recruited to become a volunteer for a sustained position.

Match volunteer interests and skills with appropriate jobs. Invite top volunteers to take on leadership responsibilities. Experienced volunteers can help with training and organisation. Create different 'layers' of volunteers.

Trained volunteers can serve an irreplaceable role as community educators as they conduct their duties and share their knowledge with others⁵⁶.

Be motivated yourself! Sincerity succeeds over technique every time.

Some strategies for keeping abreast of a volunteer's satisfaction include:

- involve the person, sharing regularly new developments in the program, the organisation, and the field
- solicit the volunteer's suggestions about the activities
- give time and space
- value other intercultural experiences than a specific organisation
- give opportunities to do new things
- organise time and adjust time to tasks
- find out what the real problem is
- talk about the problem
- show that a specific organisation has a positive impact on society
- give personal feedback
- give new self-challenging tasks
- give responsibility
- give recognition
- find the right place for the right person
- find out what volunteers like most about her/his assignment and, if possible, move them to a position that includes more of what they enjoy
- give support / show that the person is not alone
- provide meaningful trainings
- provide and promote a variety of activities
- provide chances to interact at local, national and international level
- make learning possibilities visible

⁵⁶ Excerpted and adapted from Calessio, 1999; Closson, 1999; Davies, 1999; Fitzgibbons, 1999; Gerosa, 1999; and Sims, 1999.

5.1 Conditions to Increase Commitment

The framework below gives a more detailed idea of the elements that can increase the motivation and commitment of volunteers:



5.1.1 To know what it is all about (information, training, knowledge)

A volunteer who wants to be involved in a local office would need to understand very clearly where he/she can fit into the chapter. To do so, you would need to provide concrete information about the chapter and its structure as well as some training about the tasks he/she would perform.

Information transfer should be a continuous process. However, it is especially important for **newly arrived volunteers**. You should provide them with:

- A volunteer handbook (or any other type of information about their role and importance of their work)
- Information material about the organisation as a whole, highlighting values and making clear why it might make sense for the volunteer to work for you
- A welcome pack with the description of the chapter and of available tasks
- Clear instructions for tasks
- The possibility to learn from doing something together with someone or a team that already has some experience (learning on the job)
- A clear indication that other chapter elements are there to help and integrate the new volunteer, whose ideas and/or questions are welcome.

5.1.2 To find it meaningful (own input, linked to goals)

Very often we are scared about speaking up and presenting the mission and the goals of the organisation. However, it is important to discuss these because people do have aspirations or personal values, which can be fulfilled by doing voluntary work for an organisation with the same values. By sharing the organisation's values, you might be able to connect with the values of the volunteers and keep them interested.

- Discuss the mission of the organisation
- Make sure that the organisation's values are translated into your activities and the way you put things into motion.

5.1.3 Provide a reason to participate

People must perceive a reason for becoming involved. They, not you, must perceive the reason. Individuals will participate in different issues, activities and groups only to the extent that their personal needs and interests are appealed to and met.

5.1.4 To be asked to play a role (participate)

People joining a group need to know that their presence is important and valued. They should also be given an incentive to participate actively in the life of the chapter. Otherwise they might feel their ideas or proposals do not fit what other people have in mind, and might not feel they have the right or space to express themselves.

- Let volunteers know that their work is important and appreciated
- Let people do what they want to do - never force anybody to do things
- Give responsibility
- Let volunteers create their own projects
- Make volunteers feel they are part of a team.

5.1.5 To feel supported in the role (information, facilities, coaching, learning from mistakes)

It is important that volunteers feel supported by the chapter to do their work and they have the necessary resources and facilities.

- Make sure that inexperienced volunteers have some kind of 'mentor/counsellor', someone who is available to give them support
- Make constructive feedback a common feature in your team
- Ask how people feel and talk about concerns they might have
- Give volunteers the possibility to learn and to feel confident in their tasks: use training sessions, suggest readings, discussions, etc.
- Inform the National Office about the needs of your chapter.

5.1.6 To see results and progress (information, feedback)

Make clear where the organisation is going and what progress is being made. It is important to see the improvements in order to keep motivation up.

Among the aspects to be considered there are:

- Group participation
- Effectiveness of methods
- Fulfilment of objectives
- Results obtained
- Information shared
- Strengths
- Weaknesses

To give a good feedback:

- Focus on the positive, when possible, give positive feedback first and last
- Be descriptive, not evaluative
- Talk about specific behaviour and give examples
- When feedback is negative, suggest alternatives if appropriate
- Ask yourself: why am I giving this feedback? For me or to help the person concerned?
- Give negative feedback when things can be changed
- Give feedback when it is requested and accepted

To receive feedback:

- Listen
- Assume feedback is constructive
- Consider and use carefully the constructive elements of the feedback
- Pause and think before responding
- Ask for explanation and examples if it is unclear or unsupported
- Accept positive and negative feedback positively for consideration, rather than dismissively for your protection
- Ask for suggestion to modify your behaviour
- Respect the person giving feedback and thank him/her

5.1.7 Create a good working environment

Working in a healthy atmosphere and pleasant environment is important. Create an atmosphere of respect and honesty. Make sure that 'old' volunteers are open and helpful to new ones. Create a relaxed working atmosphere and give opportunities for social interaction. Make sure you have enough breaks during meetings so that people can breathe and interact in an informal way. To increase the possibilities for volunteers to exchange, discuss, increase the cohesiveness you could propose activities where everyone can be involved, such as going out for a walk, preparing a meal together, etc.

5.2 Inspirational Quotations

5.2.1 Commitment

How wonderful that no one need wait a single moment to improve the world.

Anne Frank

If you don't believe one person can make a difference,
you have never been in bed with a mosquito.

Anita Roddick, founder of The Body Shop

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

Chinese Proverb

Not being able to do everything is no excuse for not doing everything you can.

Ashleigh Brilliant

Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.

Edmond Burke

I wondered why somebody didn't do something. Then I realized I am somebody.

Source Unknown

5.2.2 Staying Motivated

Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.

Will Rogers

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead, anthropologist

Being defeated is often a temporary condition. Giving up is what makes it permanent.

Marlene vos Savant

With a sweet tongue and kindness, you can drag an elephant by a hair.

Persian Proverb

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.

Aesop

Here is a test to find whether your mission on earth is finished: if you are alive, it isn't.

Richard Bach

// A beach filled with Starfish

A woman was walking along a beach filled with starfish. As she walked, she would stoop down, pick one up at random, and throw it back into the ocean. A man came upon her and asked why she was bothering with throwing some back when there were so many - how could it possibly make a difference? She picked up another starfish, threw it back into the ocean, and said, 'It made a difference to that one.'

The first factor that enables the sustainability of an organisation is its culture and it is fundamental that its members are aware of it. Culture shapes the identity and the image of an organisation. If the organisation is seen as trustworthy, credible, responsive and professional, it will gain more support.

Organisations, as human beings, are tripartite, made up of body, mind and spirits⁵⁷. Normally organisations are more conscious of their bodies (financial and material resources) and minds (skills and competencies, policies, systems and procedures, structures, roles and responsibilities) than of their spiritual aspects: vision, leadership, beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviours that are the inner traits of an organisation. Organisational culture relates to all these elements. Culture is unconscious; nonetheless it can affect profoundly an organisation, its identity, image and reputation.

Building a strong and clear identity does not happen accidentally. It is rather a deliberate effort that requires consciousness and time. Some organisations fail to balance their growth with identity or quality.

The important issue is not only 'who we think we are' but 'who they see us to be'. The organisation has to be aware of how it is perceived in order to build its own identity.

6.1 Aspects of the organisational culture that can affect negatively its sustainability

6.1.1 Bad communication

Discussion and dialogue within the organisation lead to healthy relationships. In order to respond appropriately to challenges, the organisation has to identify the root causes and that requires that members discuss with honesty and transparency, considering others' opinions and recognising good ideas.

The lack of capacity to communicate leads to a waste of energy and resources: people may perceive that their opinion is not valued or that decisions are predetermined and thus stop contributing.

A possible and dangerous outcome of this situation is the spreading of gossip. Gossip originates a destructive factionalism within the organisation.

Another reaction that people can have, when they feel that they would not be considered just through frank communication, is flattery to gain the favour of the leaders. Such behaviours create a suspicious and hostile climate.

Silencing constructive negative feedback is also destructive: the people involved in the organisation have to learn how to handle with negative feedback and work on them, accepting to discuss about the issues that cause such feedback.

6.1.2 Secrecy and fear

Some organisations don't necessarily admit their weaknesses. Sometimes members fear to speak about challenges but fear is one of the major obstacles to realising organisational potential. People must be empowered to express what they truly feel and should be able to talk about both the good and bad sides of the organisation.

Another aspect of the culture of fear is when leaders of an organisation deliberately block its development so that they can keep the control on it. Key members of the organisation have to be able to develop themselves as their organisation develops, without being afraid of involving other charismatic members.

6.1.3 Time pressure

In our society time is one of the most sacred resources. Organisations are often measured by their performances and this can put the people involved under pressure. Despite all the activities and the time-pressure, a lot of time has to be dedicated to learning and reflection too. Continuous activities without periodic breaks for reflection lead to stress, burnout and exhaustion.

To maintain the quality of the organisation's work it is necessary a certain introspection about activities and the reasons to implement them, about achievements and failures, about what they teach and about how the evaluation can help to improve the organisation.

⁵⁷ Malunga C., Banda C., Understanding Organisational Sustainability through African Proverbs, Impact Alliance Press, Washington, 2004.

Organisations need to find the time for reflecting to be effective and sustainable. In this way they learn from their actions and reconnect with one another and cultivate team spirit. Therefore it is recommendable to conduct these moments of reflection in a relaxed climate, combining them with a lunch for instance.

Time pressure is also caused by the fact that sometimes they have to manage with too much work that is beyond their capacity in terms of skills or simply of people. Volunteers play other roles in their life, such as students, parents, employees etc. Being under pressure with their voluntary job makes them just feel without a breathing space. It is important for people to find a balance between their different roles, work, personal life and volunteerism. They receive increasing pressures on volunteer's time. Sometimes a volunteer sabbaticals would be appropriate, or at least the chance to do something new different or less demanding.

On the other hand volunteering can be a venue for putting balance in life. It can be an outlet for restless energy. Volunteering can stretch a stagnant individual or allow a weary person an opportunity to regroup and recharge.

SUPPORT

1. // Volunteering: Six elements for success

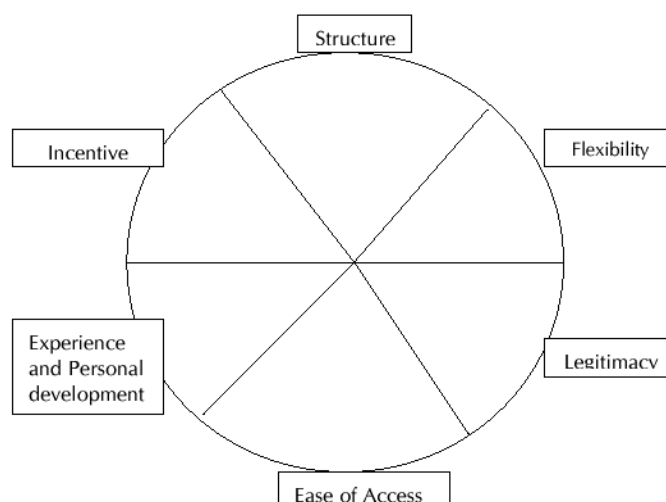
In order to increase the participation of people in society, six elements have to be considered:

- .1 **Flexibility**
degree of commitment, activities adapted, motivation rather than discipline...
- .2 **Legitimacy**
- .3 **Ease of access**
“where are the volunteers?” “where is the organisation?”
- .4 **Experience and personal development**
self-awareness, listening and empathy for others, overcoming discrimination and racism, involvement in social activism, developing skills in communication, management and group training, useful in social and professional life...
- .5 **Incentive**
 - **Motivation**
 - **Variety** (selection of candidates; team coaching; seeking partners; fundraising)
- .6 **Functional structure**

1.1 The wheel of development

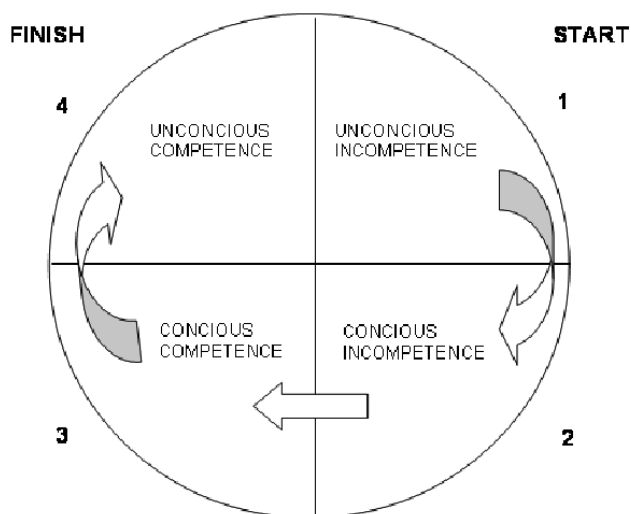
During the EFIL seminar “Increasing the Conditions for Participation at Local Level” (Strasburg, 2004), this wheel was given to participants, who were requested to fill it in by putting a dot on a spot between the border and the centre of the wheel.

The outcome showed the overall participants’ impressions concerning AFS Chapters: they believed that AFS chapters were doing well in terms of flexibility and legitimacy. The categories where participants considered there was a need for improvement were those related to the organisation’s structure and opportunities for personal development.



1.2 (Un)Conscious (in)competences

Another wheel shows the mental process that you can go through to overcome your incompetence.



The first step is to acknowledge of one's own incompetence, thus transforming it from an unconscious incompetence into a conscious incompetence. Then you have to learn the necessary skills. When this competence is learnt, you become consciously aware when using it in order to overcome incompetence (phase of conscious competence).

After a while, conscious competences become unconscious competences (e.g. knowing how to drive becomes an automatic process in which drivers are not always conscious of all the different movements they use).

2. // Supporting, recognising and challenging volunteers⁵⁸

Supporting, recognising, and challenging volunteers are all separate tasks, but together they can provide a strong volunteer programme with satisfied volunteers. The following three issues are not separated. Maintaining volunteers is one of the most difficult and integral parts of any volunteer based organisation.

2.1 Volunteer Support

Supporting volunteers means different things for different organisations. Indeed, volunteers at a sexual assault crisis centre will need different types of support than volunteer librarians, or volunteers with a sports organisation. Volunteer support involves a variety of things, including:

- Communication among volunteers, and between volunteers and staff
- "Debriefing" - talking about the work
- Acknowledging and using volunteer input
- Recognising "burnout", or when a volunteer is feeling stressed (either from volunteering, or because of personal matters, etc.)
- Keeping in touch through newsletters, meetings, celebrations, in-services

⁵⁸ Excerpt from Monika Penner, Volunteer Synchronicity, June 2002

// Example of Volunteer Support

Sarah, a volunteer coordinator notices that Linda, a normally cheerful and upbeat person, has been looking 'under the weather'. Sarah schedules time to meet with Linda and learns that Linda feels overwhelmed by the work she has taken upon herself for the organisation. To top it off, Linda's child has been sick, so she is not been sleeping well at night, and is feeling really isolated and depressed.

Sarah, being an attentive volunteer coordinator, asks Linda, "What can we do to help you?" Linda is surprised; she never thought of it that way. After some discussion, Linda and Sarah agree that Linda should take two weeks off from volunteering, to care for her child and herself. Sarah offers some self-care suggestions (i.e. relaxation techniques, doing things "just for you" such as reading a book, having a relaxing bath with bubbles and candles) and encourages Linda to call her if she needs to talk. Linda agrees to call Sarah near the end of the two weeks to see if she is ready to come back - or if she needs a little more time.

As a result of this support, Linda feels validated. Her concerns and stresses are real, and she has a right to look after herself. Sarah is appreciative that Linda shared this information, and wants to encourage Linda the best way she can.

In some situations, such as when doing outreach work, some volunteers may be quite isolated from the organisation or programme they are working with. In these cases, it is integral for coordinators and other volunteers to keep in constant contact - to see how things are going, to discuss any changes the volunteer is facing, and to maintain a sense of solidarity with the organisation.

Even when the volunteer works on the premises, how often do staff and volunteers get together to discuss the work, any challenges or celebrations, and other meaningful contact? Not-for-profits are notorious for having a large workload, and 'making time' can be difficult. It is fundamental to check in with volunteers. Scheduling times to meet with the volunteers shows that their input is valued, their well-being and what they are doing are matters of concern. Ask volunteers if they feel supported in the organisation. Doing an anonymous evaluation (where volunteers do not reveal who they are) may solicit more candid reactions.

Some possible questions to include in an evaluation are:

1. What do you enjoy about volunteering?
2. What are some of the strengths of the volunteer activities and/or coordinator?
3. What are some changes that would make the volunteer team better?
4. Do you receive enough support as a volunteer?
5. What are some of the ways that you feel supported as a volunteer?
6. Do you regularly debrief with other volunteers and/or the coordinator? If so, how often?
7. How difficult/easy is it to get a hold of the volunteer coordinator?
8. What recommendations do you have in terms of supporting volunteers?
9. Which support services do you find most useful, and why: newsletters, in-services, monthly calls, debrief session, other (please specify)?

2.1.1 Coaching & Support

What is a coach supposed to be? Someone who is aware of the other's potential and who supports the other in his or her process of development, helping the person become what he or she wants to become, avoiding to project the coach's own personality in the process.

A Coach is...	A Coach is not...
Facilitator	Teacher
Counsellor	Expert
Awareness raiser	Instructor
Sound board	Adviser

Coaching: The art of facilitating the unleashing of people's potential to reach meaningful, important objectives.

Mentorship: A supportive and teaching relationship between a more experienced and less experienced colleague. It is a process of seeking guidance from someone who has three advantages: experience, perspective and distance.

Growing in coaching is about:

- Goal setting for the sessions as well as short and long term
- Reality checking to explore the current situation
- Options and alternatives strategies of courses of action
- What is to be done, When, by Whom and the WILL to do it⁵⁹

During another EFIL seminar, “Youth Participation: AFS as an active element of the local community”, the participants were involved in a discussion about support and coaching. Here are the results of the brainstorming:

What is support & coaching?	What is support & coaching not?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- training- giving advice/offering advice- constructive feedback- knowledge- mission- crisis management- thank you's/appreciation- communication- skills- motivation- guiding- a helping hand- to read between the lines- paying attention/listening- passing on knowledge, information/teaching- needs- financial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- lack of everything above- giving orders/ 'dictatorship'- negative pressure- being passive- doing everything yourself- not trusting others- negative feedback- lack of appreciation- no time- burn out- impression that the coach is always right- work without fun- financial support

2.2 Who is responsible for Support?

As part of your organisation's support structure, each volunteer needs to have a clearly identified person they can turn to if he/she has a problem or question. A volunteer coordinator, or the individual responsible for training might take on the roles of support and supervision (see below). An alternative might be to provide training in support skills for experienced volunteers including listening, leadership and counselling skills. Supporting others can be very draining, so whoever is responsible for support in your organisation, needs to have access to support themselves to avoid burn out.

2.2.2 Peer support

Your organisation could decide to encourage volunteers to support each other thus creating a less formal support system. You might try to promote some informal structure to support volunteer meetings, e.g. by providing a private room for volunteers, suggesting a regular time for meetings and encouraging a rule of confidentiality. With this facility in place, volunteers will feel free to discuss their roles and experiences and talk freely about any difficulties they might encounter with the volunteering role.

2.3 Volunteer Recognition

Recognition provides a motivation for continuing commitment from your volunteers. Recognition should be both formal and informal, with events supported by the organisation, as well as personal notes and communication.

Recognising volunteers in a unique way is a challenge for many coordinators of volunteers. We want to show volunteers just how much they mean to us - without sounding corny, or blowing the budget. Keep in mind that volunteer recognition does not need to be a costly event.

⁵⁹ Further information on EPTO website: <http://www.epto.org>

Share ideas with other organisation staff, other coordinators and volunteers. You may discover some terrific ideas! We have already written about recognition in the previous chapter. **Just to remind you, here are a few more ideas:**

- A **volunteer celebration** (i.e. barbecue, lunch, coffee/tea and treats). Invite staff and volunteers. This is a fun way to appreciate volunteers, maybe at someone's home - so that it feels personal.
- A **plaque** to display at the organisation recognising volunteers who have been involved for a number of years.
- **When a volunteer has done something really great, remember** to write down the impact so that when you write a card or give a speech, you will be able to specify exactly how the volunteer has contributed great things to the organisation⁶⁰.
- Creating **personalised 'thank you' magnets** with the person's name and the name of the organisation. These need not be done professionally; simply laminate the message and attach a magnetic strip to the back.
- **Volunteers of the Month**. This can be displayed at the organisation, with a certificate given to the volunteer. If your organisation has a newsletter, volunteers of the month can be featured, with personal glimpses into the contributions the person has made.
- Use **candles** and wrap them up nicely with a note stating, "You light up the lives of so many".
- Thank you **hand-drawn posters by children** of the organisation⁶¹.
- Create **thank you bookmarks** with the volunteer's name and a personalised message. Attach fancy yarn at the top.
- **Pictures**. For two months before a recognition event, the director of volunteers of a mental health centre began taking photographs of volunteers while they were working. At the event, each volunteer received a photo of him/herself in a matte frame imprinted with a thank you message.
- **Random gifts and thank you letters** letting volunteers know how much they are appreciated.
- Offer volunteers the chance of professional development; send them to **seminars** or as representatives of the organisation to special events.
- **T-shirts or coffee mugs** with the organisation's logo.
- **Pens** with organisation's name on.
- Submitting media releases on outstanding volunteers, to encourage a **newspaper article or television story**.
- **"Thanks for Raisin' All Those Funds"**. One idea to recognise volunteers involved with fundraising is to take a small box of raisins, attach a strip of magnetic tape to the back and attach a small note saying "Thanks for raisin' all those funds." These can be put on refrigerators or filing cabinets and work.
- **Free coffee** and treats for on-site volunteers.
- **Individualised certificates and cards**. These can be made using such programmes as Microsoft Greetings. Personalised mementos are always so much more special than a standard card or certificate where one simply fills in a name.

2.4 Challenging Volunteers

Many volunteers are lost due to under-utilisation rather than burnout. The secret is to challenge them according to their abilities.

Lori Hoffert, Manager of Volunteers, Senior Friendship Centers, Florida, USA

Volunteers who remain in the same positions, with no chance of change or variety, may become bored. While many volunteers are happy doing the same work, it is important to check-in with individuals to see if they want to try something new, or have increased responsibility. Encourage volunteers to try new things, and to be honest with you, in terms of their levels of interest and desires to 'move on'.

You may decide during your annual programme/staff/volunteer evaluation to bring this topic up with volunteers. Or, you can post new volunteer opportunities and challenges for individuals to try out. Nothing feels worse than feeling like your skills are not being used or enhanced. Volunteer coordinators should keep in touch with volunteers to ensure individuals are satisfied with their volunteering experience.

⁶⁰ Volunteer Canada

⁶¹ Ibid

Volunteers need support to perform their duties. They should have a designated supervisor to whom they can turn for advice, guidance, encouragement, and feedback. The supervisor also needs to provide the materials, training, and direction to enable the volunteer to perform assigned tasks.

Supervision is the right of every volunteer as part of the on-going support structure provided by your organisation. Even at its most fundamental, effective supervision will enable your organisation to provide any information the volunteer needs in order to fulfil his/her role, while allowing you to monitor volunteer performance. With good communication in place, volunteers can work effectively and problems can be quickly identified and corrective action taken.

Forms of supervision vary according to the nature of the volunteering role. For example, a volunteer who provides some direct service to client groups needs individual supervision to give him/her support while allowing your organisation to evaluate his/her performance.

A supervisor is responsible for getting the job done by enabling others to do the work. The most important responsibility of a supervisor of volunteers is creating an environment that empowers the volunteers to perform their duties. Empowered volunteers are willing to take responsibility for what they are doing, contribute more than expected, and perceive themselves to be important members of the organisation.

Empower volunteers by providing:

- Sufficient orientation to the organisation
- Clear and appropriate expectations
- Proper training and equipment
- Evaluation of performance
- Regular reinforcement and recognition

Volunteers want and need to be held accountable for their performance by their supervisors. An effective supervisor should be concerned that volunteers have confidence in themselves, are satisfied with their level of contribution, and have the opportunity to grow personally and professionally through their service.

Some aspects of supervision need an extra emphasis in the volunteer relationship.

These include:

1. Who Provides the Supervision?

It is essential to make sure that peoples involved agree upon whom the responsibility for day-to-day supervision and management lays.

2. Flexible Management:

volunteers are individuals; their motivations are different and their styles are different. The supervisor must be able to accommodate individual variations.

3. Allocating Time for Management:

The pervasive myth that volunteers are a totally 'free' resource will only cause trouble.

3.1 Who is responsible for Supervision?

Every volunteer needs to have a clearly identified supervisor so he/she will know who to go to with questions or problems. If your organisation has a volunteer coordinator, or an individual responsible for training and support, he/she might take on the role of supervisor. Alternatively, another more experienced volunteer could, with adequate training, be delegated to supervise the work of a new member of the team. Whatever form of supervision you use, a clause should be included in your volunteer policy so the procedure remains the same for all volunteers.

This clause might include the following:

- why your organisation provides supervision
- guidelines on confidentiality between supervisor and volunteer
- procedures in cases of conflict
- skills and training necessary for supervisors
- overall supervision procedures within your organisation, stating who has ultimate responsibility, e.g. volunteer coordinator or management committee.

The supervisor should be both willing and able to manage volunteers. Not everyone knows how to work with and motivate volunteers. Managing volunteers effectively takes special effort to see that volunteers' need for satisfaction with their assigned duties is met.

The supervisor needs to have a clear understanding of the aims and activities of your organisation as well as of the volunteer role under supervision. He/she should be a good communicator, a good planner and evaluator and be able to provide constructive feedback both to the volunteer and to the volunteer coordinator or management committee.

Supervision of volunteers requires care and skills for interpersonal relations.

Finally the responsible for volunteer supervision must recognise that his/her own time must be allocated to relating to, managing and dealing with the volunteers. He/she must have time to be available to volunteers, in order to relate to them on both a professional and a personal basis.

3.2 Volunteer evaluation

Volunteers add value to an organisation; evaluating their performance is one way to quantify their contributions toward achieving the mission of the organisation. The volunteer program administrator and the supervisor conduct periodic evaluations to give volunteers feedback on how they are performing assigned duties and tasks and meeting current objectives. These evaluations also give the administrator and the supervisor opportunities to set new goals for the volunteer, identify additional training needs the volunteer may have, and determine the effectiveness of the volunteer program procedures. A volunteer evaluation procedure can be developed involving reports from supervisors and feedback from your volunteers. This will help to ensure that your organisation and your volunteers are working in harmony and to a common goal. Evaluation should be a positive experience for both the organisation and the volunteer. Once it is accepted as part of your standard procedure, questionnaires can be circulated among volunteers every 6 or 12 months without causing upset. The supervisor can then arrange a meeting with his/her volunteer to discuss issues based on the questionnaire and on the supervisor's own observations. In this way, volunteers are encouraged to play an active role in their own on-going evaluation. On completion of successful evaluation you will find that both you and your volunteers feel that ideas for development of volunteering within your organisation have been identified.

An evaluation questionnaire can include the following:

- name of the volunteer
- title of the volunteer role
- the period being reassessed
- what the volunteer role objectives have been over the past 6/12 months
- to what extent objectives have been achieved
- reasons why objectives might not have been achieved
- how the volunteer's performance might be improved
- whether or not the role description accurately describes the work being carried out
- how the organisation might help to improve the volunteer's work
- what further training the volunteer is interested in
- which ideas the volunteer has for improving or developing his/her work, or that of the organisation.

3.2.1 Performance Criteria

When you evaluate your volunteers, performance criteria should address both skills and accomplishments.

Criteria used may include:

Skills	Accomplishments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- dependability- cooperation- effective communication- problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- supports organisational vision and mission- meets goals and objectives of position- completes assigned tasks

3.2.2 Tips for effective evaluation

Effective evaluation is conducted at regular intervals and draws information from a variety of sources:

- Feedback
- Self-evaluations
- Program records

This information presents a picture of the volunteer's effectiveness.

The information should be shared with the volunteer in such a way that it:

- Reinforces the volunteer's contributions
- Emphasizes the volunteer's impact on the organisation
- Focuses on the volunteer's skills and accomplishments

3.2.3 What if things don't work out?

Depending on the findings of your evaluation, some corrective actions might be needed. When volunteers are performing below expectations or their service is no longer in the best interest of your organisation, it may become necessary to take corrective action. You may consider:

- Re-training and further training
- Reassignment of the volunteer to a different role or to a new assignment
- Disciplinary action
- Support from your organisation if a volunteer needs to make the decision to leave.

There are circumstances, difficult and often uncomfortable for both parties, when the dismissal of a volunteer is necessary to maintain the credibility and integrity of your organisation. Volunteers should understand from their initial induction into your program that they may be terminated with or without cause. Spell out in advance that infractions and regulations, violations of the law, and other unsafe or inappropriate conduct are all grounds for termination.

For the protection of your organisation, all dismissals should be discussed with the volunteer, put in writing and the volunteer should be given the opportunity to appeal your decision.

Problems leading to dismissal include:

- breaches of confidentiality
- abuse of clients and/or fellow workers
- dishonesty or unreliability.

Alternatives to dismissal include:

- offering the volunteer the opportunity to appeal
- offering a transfer to a less stressful area
- providing additional training
- helping the volunteer to make the decision to leave.

Understanding volunteers' motivations and remaining sensitive to their needs are essential to retaining volunteers.

People's reasons for volunteering can differ dramatically. Regular and open communication will help determine the motivating element specific to each volunteer. Remember, also, that personal motivations can change over time.

3.2.4 Exit interviews

When a volunteer leaves your organisation, you can organise an informal exit interview to ascertain why the volunteer is leaving. This interview also allows the supervisor to gain feedback on the volunteering experience and receive suggestions for improvements to your system.

3.2.5 Volunteer references

It is useful if your organisation has a clear policy in place covering the provision of references for volunteers who are leaving.

Volunteer references can include the following information:

- name and nature of your organisation
- volunteer's name and role
- duration of volunteer's commitment
- standard of his/her work
- overall attitude (towards team work, training, supervision etc.)

4.

// Training Volunteers

4.1 Aims

There is only one thing worse than training your volunteers and having them leave - and that's not training them, and having them stay.

Both new and old volunteers appreciate the training sessions. They refresh skills for the more experienced volunteer in addition to providing new information. Just as important, they provide a means for volunteers to develop an esprit de corps, make new friendships, and have social and professional interaction with their colleagues. The opportunity to interact with people is an important reward of volunteering.

Orientation and Training are the twin processes of providing volunteers with the information which they require to perform their work effectively.

Training is the process of instructing volunteers in the specific job-related skills and behaviour that they will need to perform their particular volunteer job.

Through training activities designed to equip your volunteers with essential skills, knowledge and attitudes, your organisation can ensure that the highest possible level of service is provided. Training is essential both when volunteers first join your organisation, and on an on-going basis, if assigned tasks are to be carried out effectively.

A successful organisation requires well-trained volunteers, so adequate time and money should be budgeted annually. Without volunteer training, volunteers will soon grow frustrated. Training citizen volunteers is time consuming and demanding. Nevertheless, successful training sessions are the key to a long-term and effective activity. It is well worth the effort to devote this time to train the volunteers.

The training will also introduce new volunteers to the organisation and its objectives, and will create a positive social climate for the volunteers. Such a climate enhances the exchange of information among participants and the volunteer coordinator. Training provides the volunteer with the critical information necessary to "do the job right" and encourage a "team effort" attitude.

4.1.1 Bring them on board with training

Training is also a form of recognition and serves to keep a volunteer motivated, committed, and performing the quality of service you expect. Sending a volunteer to a conference or an international training course can be a reward for service, even if it is not directly related to the volunteer's assignment but is of broad interest to your organisation, such as public speaking, conflict resolution, or team building.

Comprehensive orientation and volunteer training programmes give volunteers a feeling of belonging and status. It shows that your organisation values them enough to make an investment in them and, again, helps to reinforce their commitment to the cause. Orientation also helps set the tone of the work area and allows volunteers to adapt more easily to the organisation's surroundings⁶².

4.2 Characteristics of a Good Training ⁶³

4.2.1 The training strategy

The missions, objectives and strategies of your organisation should shape the development of your training policies and implementation plans. A training policy will guide your organisation's training activities and clarify who is responsible for training, e.g. a trainer, volunteer coordinator or training team. It will also identify what resources are available for training. A training plan explains what will be done in order to implement the policy in a practical way.

4.2.2 The training policy

The training policy can contain statements about the following:

- your organisation's mission and a summary of your strategic plan
- your organisation's recognition of the importance of training as a means of achieving goals
- recognition of training to facilitate the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes.
This can include formal as well as in/non-formal learning opportunities
- the values underpinning training which can include:
 - the promotion of development of your organisation and its volunteers
 - volunteer involvement in the identification, design and delivery of training
 - overcoming barriers which might prevent access to training
 - implementation of training in a supportive atmosphere
 - periodic review of policy and evaluation of programmes.

4.2.3 Training needs

An effective training program operates by identifying those skills, knowledge and behaviour which would be essential in good job performance and then designing a training format which instructs the volunteer.

It should be practical, experiential, and tailored to the individual needs of the volunteer.

Training needs can be analysed on 3 levels: organisational, role description and volunteer support.

Some ways of identifying these needs are included below:

- list the skills or areas of expertise needed by your organisation
- consider your organisation's strategy, identify new activities or changes and skills/knowledge needed for them, e.g. organisational development/change
- identify areas of weakness in the organisation e.g. insufficient number of new volunteers in a certain area
- examine volunteer role descriptions
- list the skills that volunteers already have
- ask volunteers what training they need to fulfil their role well
- identify personal development needs of volunteers
- involve volunteers in agreeing strategy and objectives for your organisation and the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to meet these.

⁶² Based on a presentation at the 1997 Annual CCAE Conference by Diane Morrison, Vice President of Patient Programmes at Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital in Fredericton, NB - <http://www.charityvillage.com/charityvillage/research/rvol16.html>

⁶³ Training for Trainers, Matri Austria, 24-30 March 2003

4.2.4 The training plan

Training is typically provided by the staff in the area of the organisation where the volunteer is assigned. A local volunteer coordinator plays a very important role in the success of the entire effort.

Once you have identified the training needs of your organisation and volunteers you can devise a general training plan using the following guidelines:

- Priority/objective
- Task: what has to be done
- How the task will be achieved/process
- Timescale: start dates, duration, finishing date
- Costs

The following can help you to clarify that the requirements of both your volunteers and the organisation are being met. A training plan can cover the following elements:

- Contacting interested people, groups...
- Make arrangements for a place to conduct a training session
- Timetable of events for specific period to link with volunteers' availability
- Design an individual or team with overall responsibility for volunteer training
- Distribute training information to all relevant people within your organisation
- Identify outside training opportunities, e.g. conferences, seminars, etc.
- Think about the training of any volunteers who are unable to attend the training session
- Keep in close touch with individuals. Answer any questions volunteers may have
- Provide feedback, involving reports and articles
- Request reports from volunteers on all training events attended, outlining content and relevance to their volunteering role
- Regular (annual) evaluation of volunteer training
- Keep records of all training provided which will be a useful reference point for both your organisation and your volunteers
- Identify available accreditation for training.

In general, training should:

- Be specific to the requirements of the volunteer position
- Be geared to the skill level of the volunteer
- Be on-going and address needs identified by both volunteer and supervisor
- Be periodically evaluated to determine if it is on track
- Involve motivational sessions to encourage information exchange, identify problems
- Provide a social atmosphere for participants.

4.2.5 Environment

Many elements can affect your session when you least expect them. These elements cannot always be known in advance, but will play a big role in the success of the event.

Analysing Factors:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| - Time/ Duration of the workshop: | - Experience of the trainers |
| - Seriousness of the subject | - Number of participants |
| - Budget | - Location/ Environment |
| - Number of trainers | - Tools, etc. |

Examples:

Do always try to prepare for "the worst"... You need chairs and tables; have you arranged everything with the training centre?

Keep in the back of your mind the possibility that they give you less or smaller tables than expected, etc.

Always prepare a "back-up plan", especially if you decide to work outside.

4.3 The Target Group

Who are we talking to? Who is the training designed for?

It is of utmost importance to know your target group. The better you know who will attend the training, the better you can tailor your training material and activities to their needs. Sometimes it will be possible to identify **beforehand** who will attend (hosted students, schools, etc.) the training. In some cases, you will only be able to guess who your participants will be. In that case, you have to be more flexible and “sense” your audience.

Some key factors will help you analyse your target group and be prepared for your audience.

Analysing Factors:

- Calm or not, tired or not
- Gender
- Their positions: volunteers, staff
- Experience/ Level of knowledge
- Age
- Motivation/ Interest: if they are obliged to attend or if they volunteered, etc.

Examples:

You would not address very young volunteers with the same training methodologies as older and more experienced ones. The younger would maybe (not always...) prefer dynamic methods to lectures and working groups.

Likewise, you would not address motivated and dynamic participants the same way you would with less enthusiastic ones (e.g. if they have been “forced” to participate).

4.3.1 Understanding Volunteers as Learners

You tell me and I forget. You teach me and I remember. You involve me and I learn.

Ben Franklin

Adult volunteers require a peculiar tact when it comes to education. If some or all of your volunteers are adults, then the trainer needs to appreciate the learning process for adults and design training activities accordingly.

- **Volunteers are mature and need to control their learning.**
Participants have a key role in directing the learning process. Get to know your volunteers before or during the training. Find out why they are participating and try to design an ‘ad hoc’ training.
- **Volunteer learning requires a climate that is collaborative, respectful, mutual, and informal.**
Adults bring vast personal experiences to the learning process. It is essential that the trainer recognise and use this experience. Retention is increased when we become actively involved in the learning process. Training sessions should be paced to allow time for volunteers to hear about the activities, to reflect by asking and answering questions, simulating situations, playing. Provide opportunities for group work. Use your experienced volunteers to mentor newer volunteers. Reinforce your instruction by designing problem-solving exercises for groups to work on. Learning styles are very individualized, and group exercises can be designed to provide a variety of learning environments. Encourage volunteers to share experiences and expertise, and provide them with additional learning materials.
- **Volunteers need to test their learning as they go along, rather than receive background theory and general information.**
Adults need clear connections between content and application so that they can anticipate how they will use their learning. Provide time in the training to discuss how the volunteers will use their new knowledge. Use role-playing to build their confidence so that they can educate their communities about what they just learnt. Use other volunteers as trainers, and provide opportunities for volunteers to take on new challenges.
- **Volunteers expect performance improvements to result from their learning.**
Adult learning needs to be clearly focused in the present and be “problem centred”. Help volunteers evaluate your training and their own performance. Train volunteers in groups. Encourage them to set goals for themselves and then mentor each other to achieve those goals.

4.3.2 New volunteers - Induction training - Describing the volunteers' duties

All new volunteers should receive an induction training to introduce them to the purpose, ethos and structure of your organisation and clarify the volunteer role they are to fill.

This training is specifically designed to tell the volunteer:

- How they are supposed to perform their particular job
- What they are not supposed to do in their job
- What to do if an emergency or unforeseen situation arises

The trainer has to develop a detailed blueprint of each volunteer task.

There are some critical questions that need to be answered as you create standard operating procedures, or written protocols to be used by the volunteers.

Many organisations provide their volunteers with a handbook or manual, a readily available reference that additionally helps to minimize the number of times the volunteer coordinator has to answer the same questions.

Volunteer coordinators can also use a handbook to:

- recruit new volunteers
- evaluate the ability of volunteers to complete their tasks accurately

Writing the monitoring tasks provides volunteer coordinators with the opportunity to fully evaluate the job at hand and improve potentially troublesome areas. Volunteer coordinators and key volunteers should re-evaluate the handbook regularly, especially as the organisation expands.

Induction information can include:

- an outline of your organisation's aims and activities
- brief history and future plans of your organisation
- funding sources
- services provided
- outline of other organisations working in similar areas
- policies and procedures used by your organisation
- importance of volunteer confidentiality
- introduction to supervision and support for volunteers
- introduction to colleagues
- description of volunteer requirements and benefits
- introduction to facilities
- what to do if something goes wrong.

Volunteer training may be broken down into four separate steps, which are described below.

4.4 Planning the Training

In some situations individual instruction may be the only feasible option. Nonetheless group sessions are preferred for trainings because they are generally efficient, they encourage interaction among the volunteers, and foster enthusiasm.

The training sessions should be scheduled according to the needs and availability of your volunteers.

If your volunteers are mainly people who work during the day, schedule training sessions in the evenings or weekends.

The ideal option would be to offer a variety of training times and let your volunteers pick the time that fits best into their schedules.

When volunteers live over a widely scattered area, require assistance for a special problem, or are unable to attend a group session because of work or family obligations, a volunteer coordinator may need to meet with them individually.

One-on-one training is certainly more time consuming and expensive, but it allows to focus on the particular problems or needs of a single volunteer. In return, this individual attention may help maintain the volunteer's dedication to the organisation.

Too much information presented at a single session may overwhelm and eventually discourage the volunteers.

4.5 Presenting the Training

A well-conceived plan for instruction along with simple handouts is the key for a useful training presentation. Instructors should make the most effective use of participants' time. Volunteers appreciate a well-organised training.

Major steps constitute an effective and lively training session:

4.5.1 Preparation

- With the basic information in hand, tailor the lesson to the audience
- Try to anticipate those portions of the lesson that may cause confusion and be prepared to clarify these areas
- Invite volunteers to ask questions throughout the session
- Make appropriate use of audiovisual materials to enhance the presentation
- All equipment should be in the room at the start of the session
- Slides are a good teaching device and tend to hold an audience's attention

4.5.2 Presentation

Knowing the material thoroughly and having the information well organised are critical to an effective presentation.

Ensure a successful session by using these tips:

- Be enthusiastic about the subject! Enthusiasm inspires dedication
- Establish a good rapport with the audience
- Get the audience involved in the talk and keep the presentation lively
- Utilise visual aids
- Speak loudly enough to be heard throughout the room and enunciate clearly
- Be humorous
- Use eye contact
- Encourage questions and comments
- Use anecdotes throughout the presentation
- Maintain good posture and positive body language

If the pace drags because one or two volunteers are slow, the rest of the volunteers may quickly become annoyed and bored. Slower learners may require individualised attention at a later date.

4.5.3 Review

A good learning session should end with a review of the information. Summarizing reinforces the salient points and assists the volunteers in retaining the information. As in the training exercise, volunteers should be invited to ask questions during the review. At the close of the session, the instructor can inform participants about upcoming events and future training opportunities and reiterate the importance of volunteers' activity.

4.6 Evaluating the Training

Evaluation of volunteer training is a vital element in your overall plan helping you to identify the kinds of training needed to develop your organisation. You can also consider measuring the impact of training in terms of resulting changes at organisation level and in your volunteers' abilities. When planning your training, it is useful to apply the why, what, how, who and when questions to evaluation.

To ensure that the learning sessions are effective and successful, include written evaluations as an integral part of the training process. While an instructor may feel that the sessions are adequate, only the volunteers know how much they have learned and retained.

Evaluation of the training should include an assessment of:

- training techniques and style
- atmosphere
- information presented
- use of handouts and audiovisual aids

Volunteers may provide feedback at the end of the sessions. The true test of an effective session, however, is how well the volunteers will perform afterwards. A follow-up evaluation form, sent to participants after a few weeks, may pinpoint any weaknesses in the presentation.

Experienced volunteers may also want to accompany volunteers in the activities in order to assist and identify areas in which the volunteers are encountering difficulties.

4.7 Follow-up Training – Providing motivation and feedback

While the initial training sessions are designed to give volunteers all the basic skills to successfully complete their activities, training does not stop there. A final element of a successful volunteer programme is continual follow-up and evaluation.

Effective follow-up provides feedback to volunteers and staff and opportunities to improve service to both. Follow-up advanced training sessions, either through one-on-one interaction or with a group of volunteers, is imperative to keep volunteers enthusiastic, motivated, and doing a good job. In some organisations, volunteer coordinators conduct visits to the local branch of the organisation shortly after the training session in order to spend time with volunteers. In addition to building a closer relationship between the volunteer and the coordinator, these visits can answer questions about the activities.

With a careful plan, and continuous volunteer communication and training, it should be possible to evaluate your success and improve your activity with time.

A follow-up training can take place in the form of:

- Mandatory little workshop
- Papers, presentations, articles
- Individualized training:
 - permits the volunteer to ask questions
 - allows the instructor to solve specific problems in the field
 - indicates to the volunteer that his/her actions are important
 - gives the instructor feedback on training effectiveness
 - enhances communication between the volunteer coordinator and the volunteer
 - motivates the volunteer
 - provides a forum for introducing new methods.

Continuous communication with volunteers is critical. In addition to going into the field with specific volunteers, the volunteer coordinator should also consider phoning other volunteers who may not require face-to-face contact. A phone call lets volunteers know that the volunteer coordinator is interested in their progress and gives them an opportunity to ask questions. Informal gatherings, such as dinners and slide shows, also give volunteer coordinators an opportunity to check on the progress of the participants and answer questions. Newsletters or updates by way of e-mail are also excellent ways to keep volunteers informed.

The success of the organisation is highly dependent on maintaining volunteer motivation and enthusiasm. An apathetic volunteer will likely not do a good job and may drop out of the organisation. The next section provides suggestions for retaining volunteers.

4.7.1 On-going training

Further training opportunities can take a variety of formats, e.g. in-house training, when tasks are specific to your organisation, or training with outside agencies for more general skills. The trainers might be people from within your organisation, or might be invited in from outside agencies to provide courses or give talks.

Some of the most frequently used methods of training include:

- practical demonstrations
- action learning/learning by doing
- training sessions (which can last a couple of hours or up to a number of weeks)
- workshops, seminars and discussion groups
- open or distance learning
- mentoring
- lectures and conferences
- visits to other organisations
- invitations for other organisations to visit you
- courses leading to a qualification/accreditation

Volunteers should always be encouraged to identify training courses, seminars and conferences which will help them to develop the skills required for their volunteer role.

4.8 Training costs & Funding

Depending on resources, your organisation might be in a position to fund all volunteer training, e.g. paying for outside courses or guest speakers.

Whoever has the responsibility for training in your organisation can keep a file of all information about training grants from newspaper advertisements, brochures, guides, press cuttings, etc. For example, some funding may become available from time to time for the publication of materials. Your organisation could apply for such a grant to fund the production of induction packs, or promotional material to use when recruiting volunteers.

Before making any applications for funding you need to have a clear understanding of the following:

- why funding is needed
- what your project is (e.g. training or publications)
- what results you expect
- who will benefit
- what your organisation's track record is

AFS

The following section follows the same path of the rest of the handbook – recruitment, retaining and training – adding some elements that are more specific to the AFS context.

RECRUITMENT

1.

// How can you get volunteers?

Here are the ideas that came up during a brainstorming during an EFIL seminar ⁶⁴:

- Bring people together (team & friends)
- Updated list of names and contact information
- Clear leadership
- All (also potential) volunteers need to know who is in charge and who to contact
- Make structures visible even to the new volunteers ‡ how can I fit in there?
- Who wants to do what ‡ Be precise about how much you're asking for people to do for AFS and try to
- Questionnaires, lists, calendar/timetable showing when volunteers are available
- List of possible tasks where you can choose
- Creating a feeling of community (group-feeling) to make it more personal
- No anonymity ‡ volunteers feel more responsible
- One person in charge of an area (hosting, sending, etc.), who delegates and motivates volunteers to do the tasks
- Flexibility
- Act locally
- Be patient, it takes time to get active volunteers and offer them support as well
- Don't be too realistic! Do your best even though the goal sometimes feels impossible to achieve
- First it is important to ask the volunteers what communication-channel that they use. Do they often read their mails? Do they prefer phone or sms...?
- Organise something in which you include training and partying, for example a boat cruise between two countries or a bus trip around Europe with many volunteers together, a week skiing, Training camps
- Invite them to 'coffee-meetings', cocktail-party (set time and place; open to everyone)
- Create a healthy age mix ‡ Get the addresses from the office and contact the 'oldies': old participants, ex-host families...
- Ask people outside AFS to give presentations, it's interesting to volunteers and gives outsiders a chance to hear about AFS as well
- Promote volunteering for AFS in other intercultural clubs e.g. get to know people in other organisations that might be interested in volunteering with us
- Workshops at schools that fit the schools' interests
- Let the new volunteers only do what they are comfortable doing. Don't throw them in the deep end.
- Give them the space to say no, and let them know that it is better to say no than to say yes and then not commit to it Don't be afraid to say no!
- Call them, call them, and call them...
- Human resources coordinator/responsible who makes sure new volunteers have proper introduction to the organisation
- See what works and what does not work
- Evaluation in the end of the year/cycle: Where is our organisation standing? What is wrong?
- Meetings must be fun and volunteers need to feel that their contribution is important
- Inform volunteers about the agenda but give them the possibility to influence on the contents
- Feeling of making a difference

⁶⁴ Increasing the Conditions for Participation at Local Level, Strasbourg, 15-22 February 2004 - Seminar report.

1.1 AFS Job Description

What?	Pre-arrival	During-the-sojourn	Post-return
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Info about AFS and the persons involved (who does what) Administrative matters (insurance, visa, school, schedules, finances, rules) Information on the culture the AFS-student is coming from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative matters (travel rules) Detailed schedule (events, meetings, camps) Information about the departure Global Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFS activities for families to show them that they are part of AFS and to make them become volunteers or host family again
Emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing expectations down to realistic levels Feeling curves (students and families) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counsellor/Office call at least twice a month, just to check Informal meetings/parties to make people talk about problems and share experiences News-letter (info + emotional link) Preparation for departure + evaluation (two times a year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation form Managing expectations (frustrations) Meetings and activities to let families talk about their threats and problems Activities for families that didn't go all the way until the end (heal scars and prevent resentment at AFS)
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem-solving-skills Communication, culture, tolerance, cultural relativism Teach to ask for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaching problems and solving them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills to help other families – how to use their experience

1.2 Tasks

It is useful for each area coordinator (e.g. sending, hosting, school-relations, communication) to think about the possible tasks that a fresh volunteer could do, including regular training and increased responsibilities. At the same time, the coordinators could also be prepared to welcome volunteers with different availabilities.

Below you can find the typical volunteer task of the AFS organisation:

How much time do you have?	Typical AFS volunteer task
<p>No Time! Do not ask me! Short, time-limited tasks that do not require a long-term commitment (max. 2 hours per month)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talk about your experience with potential host families and sending students. - Write an article for your local/school paper about your experience. - Form a college "AFS Returnee" group and get together for a social hour or lunch once in a while. Support fund-raising activities. - Be a representative at a school: put up posters that AFS send you, help publicise the organisation in school paper, hold a returnee reunion event.
<p>Up to 2 hours per week Short, time-limited, but more challenging tasks</p>	<p><i>Any of above, plus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jobs with limited time commitments: publicity, helping at events, etc. - Help interview potential host families and sending students. - Help out at weekend orientation events for sending and hosting students and families - Be an 'aunt/uncle' for hosted students for a day, evening, social time. - Be a student/family liaison for hosted students. - School Co-ordinators - involve your local school and help promote the organisation with the students, families and faculty of that school.
<p>More time Up to 15 hours per month</p>	<p><i>Any of above, plus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be a temporary host family for short-term emergencies or weekend exchanges. - Take a key position: support hosting and sending co-ordinators, fund-raising and gathering community support.
<p>Some more time ... Less than your whole life, we promise!</p>	<p><i>Any of above, plus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be a host family. - Take a key leadership role in your local branch of the organisation (Chair, Hosting co-ordinator, Sending co-ordinator, Treasurer, etc.).

Adapted from Dana Renschler, Waco Center for Youth

By providing accurate information about your organisation and the tasks to be done, you enable potential volunteers to undertake a process of self-selection to see if they would be interested in, and suitable for, working with you.

2.

// Recruitment from different target groups

Who can be a volunteer in your local branch of the organisation?

There are different groups from which volunteers can be recruited. Their specific characteristics are an important issue to have in mind when recruiting. Each target group may need a different approach. The interest and needs of each target group should be considered by the local branch of the organisation's recruitment activities.

2.1 Applicants / participants / returnees

Programme participants are undoubtedly the biggest target group in the organisation. Their motivation and energy often comes from their will to share and let others experience the same thing that they have been through or want to be part of. Use it in a positive manner!

Recruitment can start at the very first contact. Local branches of the organisations tend to do the mistake of only inviting programme participants when they return, but the key for motivation and incentive in volunteering is to include the participant in the local branch of the organisation's life from the moment he/she applies to go away. Try to build relationships as early as possible. The local orientations before participants leave offer a good moment to start: if you work well on it you will get in return sense of belonging and trust.

Applied to the case of AFS, the organisation is not only for programme participants, it is for anyone who believes in inter-cultural awareness and programmes are just a way to promote it. Through your activity you are giving a model.

To give you some hints about how to include AFS participants in your local branch of the organisation's life:

Sending Student Stage	Local branch of the organisation Role	Tasks
Before going abroad	Recruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ask returnees to help find candidates by talking to friends, school presentations, school contacts
	Prepare (orientations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Link returnees to sending students- Use orientations to encourage future exchange students to volunteer when they return- Ask returnees to help at orientations
While away	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Assign big brother/sister to correspond with future exchange students- Send a newsletter, holiday card, birthday card, etc.- Ask Regional Office for list of students' arrival dates- Ask participants how AFS works in other countries (give them a role)- Ask them for reports to publish on your newsletter
Upon re-entry	Integrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Welcome back at airport- "Welcome home" letter/call Reunion event - schedule a meeting where they have the chance to tell their story- Organise debriefing meeting- Design less complex volunteer jobs - partner-up, share tasks
Now that they're returnees ...	Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reunion events- Send area/local newsletter- Volunteer needs plan - annual 'update letter'- Involve returnees with students away & hosted students

2.1.1 Ways to keep the organisation on the participants' mind

It is good to have regular contact with the participants. You can also start an e-group, so they can share their experiences with other participants that are on the other side of the world. They start knowing each other, before they start volunteering.

- Organise internal camps for only volunteers
- Activities to create a good atmosphere that are just for fun and have nothing to do with AFS matters
- Contact new returnees who are still excited about their year
- Make them sign up over the internet and also fill a form in which they check the activities they're interested in during the returning camp
 - Get to know them – socialise and keep records!
 - Sponsor a pizza party, movie, international pot-luck
 - Keep contact through the year
 - Send birthday cards, letters
 - Inform them with the latest news (e-mails, newspapers, letters, sms...)
 - Interview returnees for the newsletter
 - Contact their parents for addresses, etc.
 - Invite them to meetings
 - Organise an event around Christmas time for returnees to help with gift wrapping, sending cards to students who are abroad at present
 - Ask if they can refer anyone for host families or potential participants

Ask them to volunteer!

// Case Study: Fun weekend

In the Saarbrücken local branch of AFS organisation, a fun weekend is organised for returnees only a few weeks after they return from the year abroad. They provide information packs as well as a training day for fresh returnees. They also propose international evenings in schools where host students prepare international food gathering all host students, families, AFSers and students from the school visited. The following day a presentation of the countries and of AFS is made.

2.1.2 Great volunteer roles for returnees⁶⁵

- Let returnees hold orientations for people going to countries they have come back from, ask for feedback and ideas
- Give information about their host country (not like guide books because we can read them if we want to) – they can do this at schools, orientations and training camps.
- Motivate them to work together for success
- Invite them to a camp at the right time
- Send them to an EFIL seminar (Intercultural Learning and motivation)
- Show them examples of 'AFS careers' so they can see the opportunities
- Give them small activities to organise, e.g. camps, parties
- Put up posters in schools, presentations
- Do more trainings for them
- Let them use their imagination – a thing does not always have to be done the same way
- Reorientation camp – workshop/seminar: “why was it so good”, “what went wrong”, “would you like that others make the same mistakes”, your experience can make a difference (reward, recruit)
- Make them responsible - underline and clarify the mission
- Give them an opportunity to specialise
- Involve them in committees
- Provide publicity for the organisation in your community
- Create partnerships with other community organisations
- Start a local returnee organisation or a club in your community
- Deliver and display materials in your community
- Interview high school students
- Be a mentor for organisation candidates and their parents
- Phone candidates for follow-up

⁶⁵ Adapted from Recruitment Workshop - EFIL seminar Empowering Grass-root volunteer structures, European Youth Centre Budapest, Hungary, Feb 19-25, 2004 by Maaïke Rundberg.

- Write confidential recommendation forms
- Help at orientations
- Lead a group session
- Drive students to meetings
- Be available for questions afterwards
- Share your story
- Sit at a community booth (such as a fair)
- Be available for students to call with questions about "what is going abroad like?"
- Help at a get-together for hosted students
- Give a hosted student a lift
- Help with mailing
- Interview host families
- Help with end-of-year activities: Bus trip, orientations, departure days
- Write articles about experience for a newsletter or newspaper

Also⁶⁶:

- Have follow ups through the exchange year
- Do social gatherings first
- Get returnees from other similar organisations – e.g. STS, EF, YFU, Rotary, CISV
- Get volunteers from student organisations - Erasmus – Socrates - national student organisations, schools – teachers, counsellors, universities, classmate, boy - girlfriends, retired people, red cross & other NGOs
- Create a social atmosphere
- Follow up and hand out information for all involved
- Recruit from host families – older volunteers, sending families
- Use the orientation camp and create a forum for participants to keep contacts
- Recruit friends. Mothers who stay home with kids and might be in need of social contact. Managers
- Make the organisation "Bollywood" film
- Write on public toilet walls
- Leave info on bus or at train stations/seats, make posters.
- Spread info material in libraries/schools etc.
- Summer camps for all ages
- Organise a conference with prime citizens in a city – organise a trip
- Exchange week – for volunteers
- Fall in love with somebody who is a volunteer
- Make nice girls recruit boys and vice versa
- Have one-day seminars for interested people
- Information stands in main streets, shopping malls, etc.
- learn from other youth movements e.g. environmental organisations that have a lot of media training

2.2 Families

Here follow some methods to find hosting families and to improve the family finding process. Make families involved in the sending and hosting programmes feel that they are not just participants but also an active and vital part of the organisation; they can turn into great volunteers!

Sustainability is the key to success in the family finding process.

There has to be continuity in what you do when looking for host families. It is important to set-up an annual plan, so that the volunteers and other people involved know what to do at what time.

⁶⁶ Proposals from a seminar brainstorming

2.2.1 Methods to rank families

- Information events about hosting at the school (for students)
- Article/ads about the organisation in the local/regional newspaper
- Get the local radio station to do an interview/story with a volunteer
- Telephone campaigns: call potential host families by phone
- Talk to neighbours
- Distribute advertisements and leave leaflets/information sheets about hosting in places where people normally just sit and wait, like at the doctor's or dentist's, hair studio, etc. randomly in trains, busses, etc. (remember to ask in advance)
- Organise info evenings with former host families
- Send leaflets with information on incoming students to potential host families
- Posters in public places
- Leave leaflets/brochures at fitness clubs, libraries, sports centres, community, buildings, etc.
- Put a little poster on company bulletin board

...with people you have already contacted...

- Make sure that when you talk about the organisation, you give the impression that the organisation can do the family a favour, and not the opposite, that the family is doing a favour to the organisation
- Keep participants' parents involved through information and support
- Provide a guardian angel (coach –information/support)
- Submit a questionnaire about their experience
- Try to recruit people as volunteers by asking to help at an arrangement; maybe by asking a person to come and cook for a weekend, he/she gets some experience in what he/she is studying: we get something to eat - and maybe gain another volunteer
- Connect the family finding to the sending programme; bring up hosting topics at the sending activities
- Invite families to make speeches
- It is good when young volunteers appeal to the children of a family, and then the children convince the parents that it is a good idea to host an exchange student. It might be difficult for a young volunteer to convince an older couple with more life experience
- Info/food/drink-stands in public surroundings
- Family events for everybody
- Use parents via their job
- Take care of potential families as soon as they are interested (provide them with information)

2.2.2 Natural families

Natural families may have a wide range of different motivations in volunteering in the organisation. Some families are linked to the organisation during the exchange period through their child, when they realise the importance of the organisation support for a successful experience. This may be a starting point for making members of the family become volunteers. Brothers and sisters usually get enthusiastic with the family member's participation and like to get involved. Be the first contact for sending families, make them trust in you.

Many parents would have loved to go abroad and have an intercultural experience. Local branch of the organisations can offer intercultural opportunities by organising events such as, for instance, dinners with exchange students and natural families to bring these closer to your organisation.

In the case of this target group, it is important to think that the parents as well as the siblings can be invited to many events, where other parents share their experience.

2.2.3 Host families

Host families are already volunteers the moment they choose to have a foreign student in their homes. Still, there are very important roles that can be performed by their members. To keep them as volunteers it is of extreme importance that a good preparation, orientation and counselling is provided to the participant and the family during the exchange.

The intercultural experiences are very intense and bring emotions up front. It is the organisations' task to help manage these emotions and make the participants' experience a fluid and fulfilling one. When this is guaranteed, families are likely to feel linked to the organisation, sometimes grateful for giving them the chance of living such an important experience. Then, often they want to help others to have the same opportunity. Keep contact with families by speaking to them in schools, parents' meetings, etc...

Former host family members make excellent counsellors. Ideally they should be in a counselling team together with a younger volunteer. With this diversity of age, the team can better establish bridges between the student and the family. Counselling is also a way to recognise the value of their experience once it is finished.

While hosting, families need to share their fears and their joys with other hosting families. Thus, you could organise gathering evenings for hosting families and let them share their stories. Include them in the process of planning these meetings or, if possible, let them prepare them. You should invite former and future (or potential) hosting families to gatherings. Former families will have the wisdom and the tranquillity to transmit to others who fear or have doubts; future (potential) hosting families will have the questions or the curiosity. You should try to mediate the meeting to make the most out of each of these aspects.

- Give them a chance to participate after hosting.
- Create and adapt a host family info pack, counsellors = well trained.
- How to thank them
- Use parents who work in companies or organisations to organise visits, training night for host families.
- Recognising, making visible the importance of their experience and why it should progress – (how: organise events, news in TV radio – use their experience e.g. web designer).
- Provide information to the families so they may recruit future host families
- Include the old host families, e.g. send Christmas cards (maybe they will host again).
- Ask for feedback and ideas.
- Use them as trainers: let them tell the students who are going abroad what host families are like – what they may expect from the student – how to solve conflicts – support/coaching.

// Case Study: Seinajoki's country evenings (Finland)

In Finland, AFS organisation organises 'Country evenings' where one family invites all the host students to their place for a nice evening, with food from their host student's country. During the year, each family invites once all people involved to their homes. They take responsibility and start socialising with others in the organisation. The result is that Seinajoki recruits most of their volunteers from host families.

// Case study: Activities in Budapest with host brothers and sisters

In Budapest, AFS organisation host students are always invited to different activities (playing games, excursions, etc.) with their host brothers/sisters and friends. This results in many of their volunteers coming from this group.

2.3 Other target groups

Many people are interested in the idea of volunteering in general and for the organisation in particular. Provided that the local branch of the organisation itself is ready to include their specificities. These would include retired teachers or professionals, young people from different backgrounds, etc. It is important here to value their contribution: the local branch of the organisation's structure should be encompassing to allow for this.

2.3.1 Recruiting from schools

Teachers are a very important target group.

They are in direct contact with many of the important people in the organisation scene:

- Students who are potential participants;
- Student's families who are potential hosting families;
- Schools are an important environment to promote the organisation programmes.

If you can convince teachers of the value of the organisation programmes, you gain very good allies, with privileged access to those you want to attract. And, in fact, you can offer teachers something in return: an interesting and dynamic lesson on issues of interest to them. This will offer teachers the opportunity to focus on the organisation programmes as well as a lesson that is different from usual and led by peer students - and, thus, quite attractive to their pupils.

To recruit teachers, you should think on how your organisation can contribute offer added value to the teacher's work, motivating her/him to cooperate with the local branch of the organisation.

How?

- Use the national educational network
- Go personally to schools
- Offer many opportunities e.g. national exchanges, teacher seminars, Global Education ...
- Organise special events in schools e.g. Intercultural Learning activities/weeks
- Have specific orientation and preparation for teachers
- Give them a chance to work as the contact person
- Show them that being part of this organisation will improve their own skills.
Create certified programs that may help them progress in their careers (reward)
- Ask them to train volunteers on their area of specialisation.
- To attract language teachers, your local branch of the organisation can offer to organise intercultural learning sessions in certain languages or the visit of a foreign student to discuss a certain topic with the class in her/his native language;
- To attract history/geography teachers, you can propose to bring an exchange pupil to speak about his/her country in a class;
- If there is a teacher interested in personal development, your local branch of the organisation can develop sessions on prejudices and stereotyping;
- You can organise a training session on non-formal education activities, covering several subjects in schools.
Invite a group of teachers to participate and share your knowledge.

Students:

- Local, national and international camps – organised with teachers, volunteers and exchange students
- International cooking classes
- Inform them about what kind of experience they will have as a volunteer (introducing the volunteer work)
- Create intercultural clubs inside schools with programs involving other subjects besides the organisation exchanging
- Short term exchanges
- Making the organisation “mission” visible – at this age they are the biggest dreamers (workshops in schools).
Show what Intercultural Learning is concretely about.
- Ask them to become a host family (they can talk their parents into it)
- Offer them specific activities. Invite them to have fun with the exchange students.

2.3.2 Professionals

Very often, a local branch of the organisation is confronted with a new task and does not have the skills to perform it. Here, it needs to think creatively and draw on its networking skills.

If a local branch of the organisation is planning to create a website, a t-shirt, or new publication materials, the best would be to ask the support of professionals: these can be parents or 'friends of friends' but it can also be useful to contact universities or schools. Many students have to do a school project. It might be easy to find someone with the skills who would support the local branch of the organisation!

Should the local branch of the organisation be interested in being more present in the local media? What about contacting journalism students who could spare a couple of hours explaining what they would have just learnt at school about news releases, articles, contact with the press, etc.

3. // Calendar of Activities as a way to attract Volunteers

A calendar of activities is a very powerful tool. It can be designed at the last meeting before the end of the AFS year (June for instance). All planned activities are put in a simple table with 2 columns with activities and possible helpers.

It could look as follows:

Month	Activities	Possible Helpers
September	Welcome picnic or barbecue for arriving students as well as returnees, host families, volunteers and other 'friends of AFS' in your community or area.	- Former host family - Volunteers with little experience
October	Information evenings	- Natural and host parents - Returnees
November		
December	Holiday parties throughout your area	- Hosted students - Host parents - Prospective AFSers ('hopees')

The activities and dates should be as concrete as possible, as well as all potential helpers. One should not hesitate to ask professionals to help with some specific tasks: redesigning the local chapter brochures, updating the website, writing press releases and stories about the volunteers, etc. Having the concrete dates in a calendar can, on the one hand, facilitate the planning for the whole chapter and at the same time, provide motivating tasks for all types of volunteers who can in turn plan their own agenda.

You can also structure your activities as in the following examples:

A campaign for recruiting host families

Why	Enables volunteers to commit for a limited period of time. Volunteers get to do the things they like and are good at.
Who	Volunteers interested in PR and marketing
How	Gather people together to brainstorm. Those who want to participate in the project plan and organise the project in more detail later. Action, remember delegation.

RETAINING VOLUNTEERS

4.

// How can you keep volunteers?

There is the case of volunteers committed to volunteering for many years, often involving family and friends and assuming a key role in the local branch of the organisation. At some point they can feel that AFS is becoming too much for them. That is the moment when they decide to completely cut AFS out of their life. Some of them just quit but for many volunteers AFS is actually part of their personal identity, like an extended family. Therefore they might commit as volunteers again once learned to say no when necessary and make choices.

Even people that are really involved need their organisations to make retention efforts and that retention of volunteers requires constant work.



- How can volunteers stay happy, motivated and committed people working for AFS?
- How can we keep them committed?
- What does the chapter offer these persons?
- What do they need to stay committed?
- Are there any good procedures that we can share?

4.1 Necessary factors to retain volunteers⁶⁷

4.1.1 Support

Volunteers face many challenging tasks and they often encounter problems that are not easy to deal with. Therefore support is an essential element in order to keep your volunteers motivated and committed.

Support can be given in different ways:

- Offering advice;
- Giving a constructive feedback;
- A simple phone call or an informal chat does a lot;
- Online support e.g. an e-group where you put handbooks, meeting reports etc.
- Crisis management;
- Counselling for volunteers such as the buddy, guardian angel or junior-senior system;
- Trust: Giving and receiving;
- Only positive pressure, Encouragement;
- Paying attention, listening to people!
- Provide individuals with an organised structure in order for them to grow in a 'safe zone';
- Take time to help people and to make them understand;
- Give volunteers what they want / need to be productive;
- Give the volunteers all kinds of support that they need from the organisation so that they can fulfil their mission as volunteers for AFS

Things to keep in mind:

- Give space to people so that they can understand what they learn
- Have one person in the chapter in charge of the volunteer force and training
- Coaching: experienced volunteers that support younger volunteers
- Calling prep team and asking how things were at the camp / workshop
- Every feedback may be positive and negative at the same time. Develop a technique and train
- Personal talks – feedback
- Train people on how to give feedback / quality feedback
- Smile to people
- Ask them (volunteers) if they need help (asking them in advance)
- Ask for feedback about yourself
- Include feedback methodology during trainings of Chapter Presidents or other task-oriented trainings.
- Share experiences on support with other chapters at regional / national level

⁶⁷ Youth Participation: AFS as an active element of the local community, European Youth Centre Strasbourg, 2003.

- Ask volunteers about things they want to change, what they need, what they lack, and give them time to think about it as well
- Make sure that the team is working / support through environment
- If somebody in your chapter is organising something call him / her on a regular basis to find out how they are doing and support them
- The office should always listen to volunteers
- Support from office with: Information, Technical resources, Materials, Contacts, and Trainings

The “Chief Foreign Countries” applied by many Belgian chapters gives you a practical example of support activity:

What	A volunteer or a group of volunteers that stay in touch with the applicants of their chapter when they are abroad
Who	Ideal task for starting volunteers
How	Any means of communication is allowed
Why	Exchange students that are abroad sometimes forget their own chapter. They are completely absorbed by their new environment. By informing them from time to time about the situation in their chapter of origin you “support” and “supply” them with valuable information. This is also an excellent recruitment tool, because the students are informed about all the fun (and work of course) in their chapter of origin. They might become enticed to becoming involved when they read the exciting stories.

In some countries, an intermediate figure acts between the office staff and the volunteers in order to give support to the local branches of AFS while strengthening the network among them. **This is the example of the Italian Regional Animateurs.**

// Role of the Regional Animateur

Areas of participation:

- Volunteer basic trainings
- Monitoring of the Local Chapters in order to guarantee the continuity of the activities and the key figures
- Support of the Local Chapters in difficulties
- Opening new Local Chapters
- Planning of the activities that involve more Local Chapters (regional Conferences, meetings to introduce Intercultura, Seminars for School Directors, etc.)
- Coordination of some activities of the programs that are involved more Centers (selections, distribution of the folders about foreign students, Orientation Camps, End of Stay, etc.), evaluation
- ‘Emergency’ net in exceptional cases for some aspects of the programs

Points of strength:

- The Regional Animateur is basically the local delegate of the national office.
- He/she monitors and coordinates the activities of the established branches of the organisation. The introduction of this paid figure proved to make a big difference particularly in areas where there weren’t many volunteers. The number of local chapters has considerably increased. The Animateur disposes of time and budget to contact up to 50 participants for a meeting using the list of the old participants, his/her contacts with the schools, etc. He/she encourages meetings, participation to trainings and occasions for gathering.

4.1.2 Appropriate Tasks

There is a right task for each volunteer. It is important to identify the correct match between skills, expectations and desires of a volunteer with the tasks to be accomplished. This is important for people involved to be satisfied and fit within the organisation.

The following are some ideas to identify the appropriate tasks for each volunteer:

- Use a questionnaire
- Two people sharing the same job
- Projects
- Give space
- Create ad hoc teams around a certain issue
- Don't do the same job for too long
- Give task descriptions
- Let people be creative
- Have meetings on chapter planning where people state what they are interested in

4.1.3 Recognition

Make volunteers feel needed, important for AFS as an organisation and for his/her local community. Show them your appreciation, that you see their value for the organisation.

Why?

- Volunteers have a status within the group
- Volunteers feel that their work is important
- Volunteers feel that others appreciate their work
- Volunteers get something back

Suggestions:

- Giving volunteers a cool title (business cards)
- Report of every activity done in the Newsletter/paper
- 'Volunteer of the year'
- Let volunteers train others in his/her area of specialisation (so that they feel that their knowledge is recognised)
- Give the person the feeling that he/she is needed & ask for help even though you could do it on your own
- Tell the whole group what the person successfully did
- Send a nice postcard to say 'Thank you' (e.g. After a orientation)
- Give flowers to host families after their experience as a sign of appreciation
- Name all volunteers at meetings
- Best volunteers contests
- Certificates of recognition
- Party for volunteers
- Call them more often, not only e-mails
- After camps say 'thank you very much' to the volunteers wondering about the job they did
- After camps someone from the office should ask the persons involved for feedback
- At the end of the 'AFS year' have a party where the volunteers get more attention about what they did during the year, maybe some kind of certificate or something stating what, where, how and when they were active, great and important volunteers
- Fun weekend
- Giving titles
- Give the volunteers their own responsibility e.g. counselling, organising events etc...

// Case Study: Antwerp 's VIPs

In the South Antwerp local structure of AFS organisation, the idea of a VIP treatment for the volunteer who find most host families was introduced. This gives recognition of this person in a nice way, while not creating too much of a distance from the others as everyone is invited to the Barbecue party!

In the Tampere local structure, the criteria used are for media contacts. A prize is given to the volunteer who gets most media contacts during the year.

Work certificate for volunteers: AFS Switzerland Volunteer Award

AFS Switzerland uses a certificate that is not an AFS specific one. It was created 2001 during the International Year of Volunteers by an official organisation, Dossier Bénévolat, Suisse. Standards were created and official paper and folders supplied.

Application Form

Please send to: AFS Intercultural Programs Switzerland...
Candidate for the AFS Switzerland Volunteer Award

Name _____

Address _____

Nomination

Description of the outstanding engagement in volunteering for AFS Switzerland

Attach, if possible, pictures, newspaper articles, videos, etc.

Nominating Committee

Name, AFS affiliation

Signature

Date

4.1.4 Fun - Socialising

Fun is a very important element for recruiting and retaining. A group of volunteers work better together when they have fun together. The activities a chapter can organise in order to have fun are different according to the different ages of the volunteer and of the people who are invited to take part in them.

A typical first activity would be the sport trips (going skiing, hiking etc.) where you create a close group by sharing common interests outside of AFS.

Other activities we thought could be organised and involve many different target groups (all volunteers, host families, sending families, AFSers, applicants and whoever has interest in intercultural learning).

1. Trips

The chapter can organise them during the whole year. They could be historical or cultural (visiting cities, national parks...), also involving adults or they could be trips to amusement parks.

The chapter can also organise picnics in the countryside (pot luck).

2. Game evenings

The chapter can organise social activities where you play board games, bingo, quiz show...

3. Regular host family parties: Evenings with host families where they can socialize and share different experiences.

You could have a barbeque and even do a fundraising (maybe selling drinks or cakes or whatever else).

4. Dinner for active volunteers

5. International parties

The chapter can actually invite everyone, even people who are not involved with yet. It is a good way to increase the chapter visibility, to show how AFS works, who the volunteers are and also to create a close group of volunteers.

Everyone could bring something to eat. Games could be played and the AFSers could make a presentation of their countries. At Christmas the chapter can also have Santa come bringing presents.

At Carnival the chapter can invite everyone to a dress up party (maybe even giving them a theme).

Why To create a close group of volunteers

Who

- Everyone
- Host families
- Returnees and families
- Applicants and families
- Sending families
- AFSers
- Volunteers

How

- Social committee
- Games (bingo, quiz show?)
- Presentation of AFSers

4.1.5 Training

- Training needs to be organised, sometime it happens randomly
- Long preparation of activities – prep team meetings
- Meet the needs of the volunteers
- Mentoring (counsellors)
- Role-play
- Share own knowledge with the rest of the group
- National level: Training camps and days
- Regional seminars involving different local chapters with: hosting, sending, co-ordinator, contact / counsellor
- Handbooks

Day training, camp weekend in chapter or in the organisation

What - Meeting

Who

- Volunteers
- Host families
- Sending families
- Staff

Why

- Make volunteers feel more comfortable
- Share info with other chapters
- Learn new methods, concepts
- How to teach
- How to behave in different settings

How - To be organised by trainers and volunteers together

4.2 Concrete problems to work on to retain volunteers and actions to deal with them

4.2.1 Feeling of being needed

Problem: not feeling needed, valued, recognised, respected, trusted - **Feeling forgotten!**

- Social events as a reward after hard work, not only work
- Interest in the person – “How are you?”
- Concentrate on seeing the individuals
- What has he or she done lately?
- Remember personal data, birthdays, anniversaries...
- What are they expected to do?
- Recognise individual work (“How are we”)
- Attitude g grateful, thank you

- Improve communication
- Pats on the back – see the small parts in the big picture
- See and respect volunteers' interests and needs. Chapter has to come second
- Recognition not only from the chapter/fellow volunteers but also from the students!!
Students are not always aware of the hard work of the volunteers
- Need for respect vs. feeling of being a slave
- Not too much work
- Focus on volunteers needs
- Treat the volunteers "right"
- See the individuals, personal interests, communicate, trust

4.2.2 Guidance

Problem: not knowing the individual volunteers needs and interests.

- Volunteers may need occasional reminders that they represent your organisation's goals, not personal agendas
- Workshops to grow/develop on interesting topics
- Key volunteers responsible for a "guardian angel" system: mentor, guides, coaches to help them progress, develop, take care of them
- The guidance system will also increase communication
- Good definition of different tasks. Ask volunteers what they prefer
- Give them written information with an overview of the organisation – adapt information to the needs and the situation of your chapter
- Show the "career" opportunities and provide them
- Opportunities for progression and personal development
- Personal approach "We need your skills"
- The right to say "no" g The chapter has to respect that the volunteers have their own lives.
Respect for personal / professional life
- "Hidden agenda": saying yes to a little task leads to a big pile of work g Be honest about workload; separate tasks
- Trust in relationships
- Conflict between recruiting/retaining g Delegation of tasks/responsibilities; balance; nice jobs to newcomers for retaining "bureaucratic" work for the committed volunteers
- Human Resources management g Taking care of the persons; what do I / the others need?
- Continuous motivation g See all volunteers as individuals – What are his/her skills, qualities, and experience? Give appropriate tasks!!
- Simplify
- Be concrete/direct
- Ask!
- Knowledge of the AFS mission g Inspiring, important to channel their work in the right direction
- Delegation of tasks. Divide the responsibility. Volunteers can become over-involved

4.2.3 Social activities

Problem: when the volunteers are only confronted with problems – they easily drop out...

- Balance in success, joy and problems
- Training in conflict management
- Support! (Fellow volunteers + chapter)

4.3 Important areas to work on and examples of how to deal with them

4.3.1 Freedom of decision

- Find the balance between individual needs and organisational needs
- Make it possible to say NO but at the same time you can not always say no because saying yes is part of being a volunteer.
- Make clear the organisational needs
- Chapter Calendar
- Newsletter
- Give a variation of responsibilities and opportunities
- Give the possibility of self-expression

4.3.2 Environment

There are external factors that rise volunteer motivation g Give volunteers an environment in which they are comfortable. Make it possible to say NO but at the same time you can not always say no because saying yes is part

Examples:

- Find the volunteer's motivation – ask them what they like to do inside and out of AFS
- Informal place to meet
- Meetings need to be accessible to the volunteers. In big cities have meetings at a different places every time to make the volunteers feel you care i.e. show them that you are willing to make an effort and compromises to meet with them⁶⁸
- Apart from AFS work, offering fun activities
- Create an open environment so that all problems can be shared at any time and be easily discussed
- The Environment has to be recognisable. If there are new persons who arrive in the chapter, present them...
- Be careful with an overload of AFS abbreviations
- Create a relaxing environment; voluntary work is about leisure time, working and also having FUN
- Stimulate affection between volunteers, e.g. by forming work groups
- New volunteers should take advantage of older more experienced volunteers e.g. new and old should work together.

4.3.3 Challenges to volunteers

Meaning:

- Push volunteers to discover their hidden competences and make them work to develop new ones
- Give the opportunity for local volunteers and new volunteers to increase their different skills in the AFS framework
- Every volunteer should be given tasks that are in accordance with his/her own values, ideas and personality
- Get the chapter better developed by pushing the local volunteers.
Make the volunteers open to new ideas and not get into a static situation
- Analyse how things are going and take action according to that
- Help volunteers see that facing new challenges not only aids to the organisation but to themselves as well

Steps that should be taken:

- Office should give the challenges to the volunteers according to their participation in different training seminars, newspapers, advertisement actions etc.
- Volunteers should have access to the office information
- Office should give people possibilities to use their potential skills
- Learn from mistakes made by others
- Stress the skills and training of volunteers – how can these skills be used for self-assessment
- Show respect for these skills
- Stress to volunteers the skills they have developed which will be useful in other fields – counsellor may be a great trainer for other volunteers
- Try to make the issue of taking responsibilities into a positive challenge, so that they are not afraid of it
- Every volunteer gets the task that is in accordance with his/her own values, ideas and personality
- Make sure that volunteers know that whatever they do is fine and try to help them in the future

4.4 Factors that make volunteers stay committed

What is the purpose of the utopia? It is to make sure we keep on walking

E. Galeano

It is very hard to work for a purpose that does not seem reachable.
You have to look at it on a smaller scale. Everything you learn and teach contributes to a better world.
Volunteers have to keep on working towards it and believing in what we are doing.

⁶⁸ Increasing the conditions for participation at local level, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, 2004.

Here are some of the many possible motivations resulting from the AFS seminars and from other volunteers⁶⁹:

- Activities
- Keep skills alive and donate them
- Appreciation
- Give something back (returnees)
- Learn how NGOs function
- Explore a career, a professional development opportunity
- Value of general work experience, self-management, discipline and other career related personal skills acquired thanks to volunteering
- Experience in international education
- Perception that volunteers' work is fundamental and that the scope of your activities depends on them
- Get to know a community / the world
- Demonstrate commitment to a cause/belief
- Global education
- Ideals & idealism
- Hosting
- Intercultural education
- Joy
- Knowledge
- Learning languages
- Learning and teaching
- Processes and contents
- Like doing something useful
- Act out a fantasy
- Gain practical skills
- Gain leadership skills
- Communication
- Counselling
- Cultural experiences
- Do your civic duty
- Keep busy
- Satisfaction from accomplishment
- Have an impact
- Learn something new
- Help a friend or relative
- Escape
- Become an 'insider'
- Sense of belonging
- Be challenged
- Memories
- Organising camps
- Opportunities of personal growth
- Possibility to use skills
- Public relations
- Recognition
- Co-operation
- Responsibility
- Result
- Satisfaction
- Social network
- Spirit
- Success
- Tolerance
- Emotions
- Empathy
- Enjoy doing work
- Feedback
- Feel proud
- Meet new people, make new friends
- Help someone
- As therapy
- Do something different from your job
- For fun!
- An excuse to do what you love
- Assure progress
- Be part of a team, to feel involved
- Feel good
- Test yourself
- Feel needed, important, appreciated
- Keep the whole thing going
- Travels
- Well-being of participants
- Work itself work with other young people
- Build your resume
- Because of personal experience with cause
- Be an agent of change

⁶⁹ Adapted from Danijela Dolenc, Educational Adviser, SIC – International Educational Centre, 2001 ANNUAL REPORT Project: Student Resource Centre Zagreb.

5.1 Activities and Motivation

Activity /job	Motivation	Activity /job	Motivation
Finding host families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Success - Share opportunities - Get the possibility to talk about your year - Meet people 	Speaking at schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieve self-confidence - Learn how to speak in front of a group of people - Share experiences - See how you can influence people - Keep your own experience alive
Hosting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maternal instincts - Getting to know other cultures - Take the world home - Make students' experience better - Responsibility to educate - In touch with students 	Co-ordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Power - Responsibility - Organising/planning for volunteers - Give back what you have received
Counsellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help others, make someone happy - Share experiences, both negative and positive - See how students change - Learn about different countries - Intercultural experience - Being accepted as a reliable person - Satisfy protective instinct - Psychoanalysis 	P.R.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build up contacts - Meeting important people - Writing skills - Learn about media - Creativity - Ego - Fight for something - Spread the word of AFS - Opens new doors - Influence others - Make AFS known
Camp person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fun, gossip, games - Meet new people - Learn about countries - Learn (e.g. teaching and organising skills) - Breaking routine - Fulfil your commanding needs/attitudes - Like tempo/stress - Being with AFSers - Help to make their year better 	Helpers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Want to do something for AFS but not very much time or experience - Feel the AFS atmosphere
		Organiser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be the boss/authority - Have responsibility - See the result - Influence
		Sending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transferring travel needs (psychology) - Know/learn about own culture - Share your experience - Fresh motivation - Responsibility to educate
		Fundraiser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creates opportunities - Develop programme

5.2 De-motivation

5.2.1 Reasons of Frustration

Do you recognise the feelings?

That is what emerged from a role play during the EFIL seminar “Youth Participation: AFS as an active element of the local community” (Strasbourg, 2003).

- Exhaustion
- Work overload g delegation
- Too much responsibility
- Roles /aims are unclear
- Communication problems
- Someone in the organisation pushes you into a passive role
- Different priorities / approach to volunteering / motivation / interests
- Being left alone, no support
- Differences
- Doing all the work alone
- Wrong or no communication
- Difficult students
- Volunteers are not trusted
- Age-contrasts
- Too few volunteers
- Some people just want to party
- A lot of works falls on 1-2 persons
- No time
- No responsibility
- Monotony of the tasks
- Being taken for granted
- People do not know what AFS stands for
- Don't know who to ask for help
- People say yes but then they don't accomplish what they have been asked to
- No proper orientation
- Participants (families) do not understand everything
- Host families / exchange students blame you
- You give them an inch and they'll take a mile (the more you do, the more you are asked to do)
- Families do not trust volunteers
- Lack of attention from advisers

It is essential to devote time to volunteers, to keep track of what they are doing, what are their questions and concerns regarding one or another task, what would they do different, to keep your word, to demonstrate your care.

Anyway, your volunteers will go away one day. You have to be prepared to substitute them, to grow new volunteers while the 'old' ones are still in office to instruct them.

BAD OR DESTRUCTIVE LEADERSHIP

- if the leader takes over, as soon as something does not work
- if the leader takes the best parts of the job
- if the leader doesn't see volunteers' efforts and commitment or do not show it
- if the leader is not interested in what volunteers are doing
- if the leader doesn't give feedback (positive or negative)
- if the leader doesn't give to the volunteers their space to develop and learn

CONFLICTS

“My local chapter works quite well, but there could be better results if the group were more harmonious and really worked as a team”⁷⁰.

Elements leading to conflict:

- frequent contrasts between volunteers
- competition, especially among Key-volunteers
- disagreement with decisions taken at regional/national level (by paid staff)

Conflict management

Aims:

- form a more harmonious group; everyone should get along with the others
- work as a team
- more participation to decision-making
- increase the number of volunteers, impossible at the moment because of the bad environment
- prepare future allocation of roles and tasks

⁷⁰ Personal Action Plan presented by Davide, AFS Italy, during EFIL seminar Empowering Grass-Root Volunteer Structures, Budapest, February 2001.

Obstacles:

- potential volunteers not willing to join the group because of the conflict / uncomfortable environment
- there is also a lot of work to do which takes time away from team-building activities
- urgent deadlines to respect, volunteers under pressure g communication worsen

Resources:

- well-trained volunteers
- training for young volunteers
- age-mix
- choose the best person for the specific task
- meetings at regional/national level

5.2.2 Why do you still volunteer then?

- People
- Friends
- Fun
- Things in common, values...
- Connection with your experiences
- See new horizons
- Results
- Power
- Variety of actions
- Learning
- Self development
- Solved problems
- Being a part of a 'big plan'
- Feeling a family
- Seeing that the numbers of volunteers increases
- Seeing old volunteers coming back to the organisation with new motivation
- Bonds between people
- Networks
- Exchange students
- International connections
- Skills
- Helping others
- Intercultural learning
- Challenges
- Seeing participants and volunteers evolving, blooming
- Enthusiastic feedback
- Meeting new people
- Orientations
- Nice activities
- Seeing your exchange students coming back
- Making a difference in peoples' life
- The mission
- AFS is part of myself
- The importance of the job that you do
- Being a role model
- Personal growth
- Reaching a goal
- A way to say thank you for the AFS experience that I also made
- Never ending AFS experiences
- New perspectives
- Learning about people and about oneself
- Doing thing that you never expected
- Contributing to peace, changing the world

During another EFIL volunteer seminar "Volunteerism: Motivating Young People", a workshop was focused on de-motivation. Below there are some elements that emerged during the discussion.

1. How can we prevent de-motivation? (preventive solution)
2. What can you do if you are already de-motivated (reactive solution)?
Usually people are not motivated because:
 - They do not see benefits anymore
 - The benefits are not attractive for them anymore
 - Their "contract" is not valid anymore (contents has changed)
 - They have changed/lost their interests in a project

Problem	Solution(s)	Example(s)
Priority/time	- Delegation - Time management	Handing in a term paper – the closer the deadline comes the higher the priority
"Killer phrases"	- Ask questions - Try to involve - Visualise/marketing	You have a great idea and pre-sent it to somebody, who answers: "This doesn't work, you will never find the people or the money."

“You have to find common ground with the people who are in charge of putting your idea into reality. Some people can't stand it if others have good ideas”

No common goal/vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teambuilding (prevention) - Conflict management (if you are already off target) 	A team can't work efficiently if they don't agree on a goal
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“There is a difference in quality between a group and a team. To become a team it takes a lot of time (long process). A team is based on mutual trust, not everything has to be explained.”

Inadequate job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renegotiate the job (job enlargement / job enrichment) - “Psychological contract” 	AFS USA composed job descriptions for each volunteer job in their organisation
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“Before you get a job, try to find out what the job is like. Let the people explain what they expect from you (commitment, time, etc.). Ask why they think you should do it?”

Health (personal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen to your body/mind - Tell the people what they need to know 	A 19 years old volunteer can't be the only responsible person for an orientation camp
Private life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan enough time - Respect yourself 	You can't plan 100% of your time
Ingratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think again! - Ask them for feedback 	You have to ask yourself if you really need gratitude, or if it is just your ego-status?
No progress (maybe not visible)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take “baby steps” 	If you have goals that are far away, look for goals that lead you along the way
Failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing evaluation - Milestones 	
Conflict (in a team)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team-building - Conflict management (internal/external) 	Internal: find a solution within the team External: find an outsider (coach)
Changes (in life)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expect and respect changes 	Within AFS there are different levels of volunteerism

“If the job you want doesn't exist, create it yourself!”

TRAINING

6.

// Training Needs

Training should meet volunteers and organisation's needs.

It normally focus on programmes and procedures, whereas it should be used also to develop the organisation's culture and to create training teams.

If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the women and men to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery, The Wisdom of the Sands

6.1 Training Scope

- To train new volunteers
- To 'recycle' old volunteers
- To accomplish with the idea of 'AFS as a Learning Environment'
- To keep volunteers motivated
- To give volunteers the possibility of expanding their horizons inside and outside AFS

6.1.1 A model for Trainings

There is not a perfect model for training. Training should be an endless cycle. Although it can not solve all the problems of the organisation or of the volunteers, it has to be an occasion of growth and empowerment on both sides.

- Non formal education
- Everybody's participation
- Diversity of methods
- Development of competencies
- Intercultural learning process
- Experimental learning
- Safe learning environment
- Life-long learning

// AFS BRA Trainings

A National Training Pool Team has been created:

The group is composed of two experienced volunteers and two experienced staff.

The purpose of this group is to:

- Develop a training model to AFS BRA;
- Identify AFS BRA training needs;
- Develop Trainings and Seminars;
- Make sure the training model is implemented and follow-up;
- Establish evaluation criteria and propose innovation.

Calendar of Trainings:

Training for Trainers	national	February
Sending Support	regional	May
Intercultural Learning	regional	June
Workshop for Regional Sending Advisors	national	July
Workshop for Regional School Co-ordinators	national	August

6.2 What volunteers need to gain from the training

In the specific case of AFS, volunteers need to:

- be aware of the international context in which they work
- be aware and accept the core values and mission of AFS. AFS should be sold to new volunteers as an ideological organisation - since it is one, not just as a student exchange organisation!
- be aware of principles, rules and working norms that guide all the work done within the organisation
- acquire skills and knowledge for accomplishing their demanding tasks. e.g. for Counselling activities, they need:
 - Psychological knowledge
 - Active listening capacities
 - Negotiation and conflict management skills
 - Orienting and leadership skills
 - Knowledge about intercultural learning, culture shock
 - PR-skills, knowledge of intercultural experiences, on AFS

7.

// The Trainer

During the “Training Methodologies in Intercultural Learning” EFIL seminar, participants discussed about their personalities as trainers.

The participants were asked to identify the qualities an ideal trainer should have.

They came up with the following:

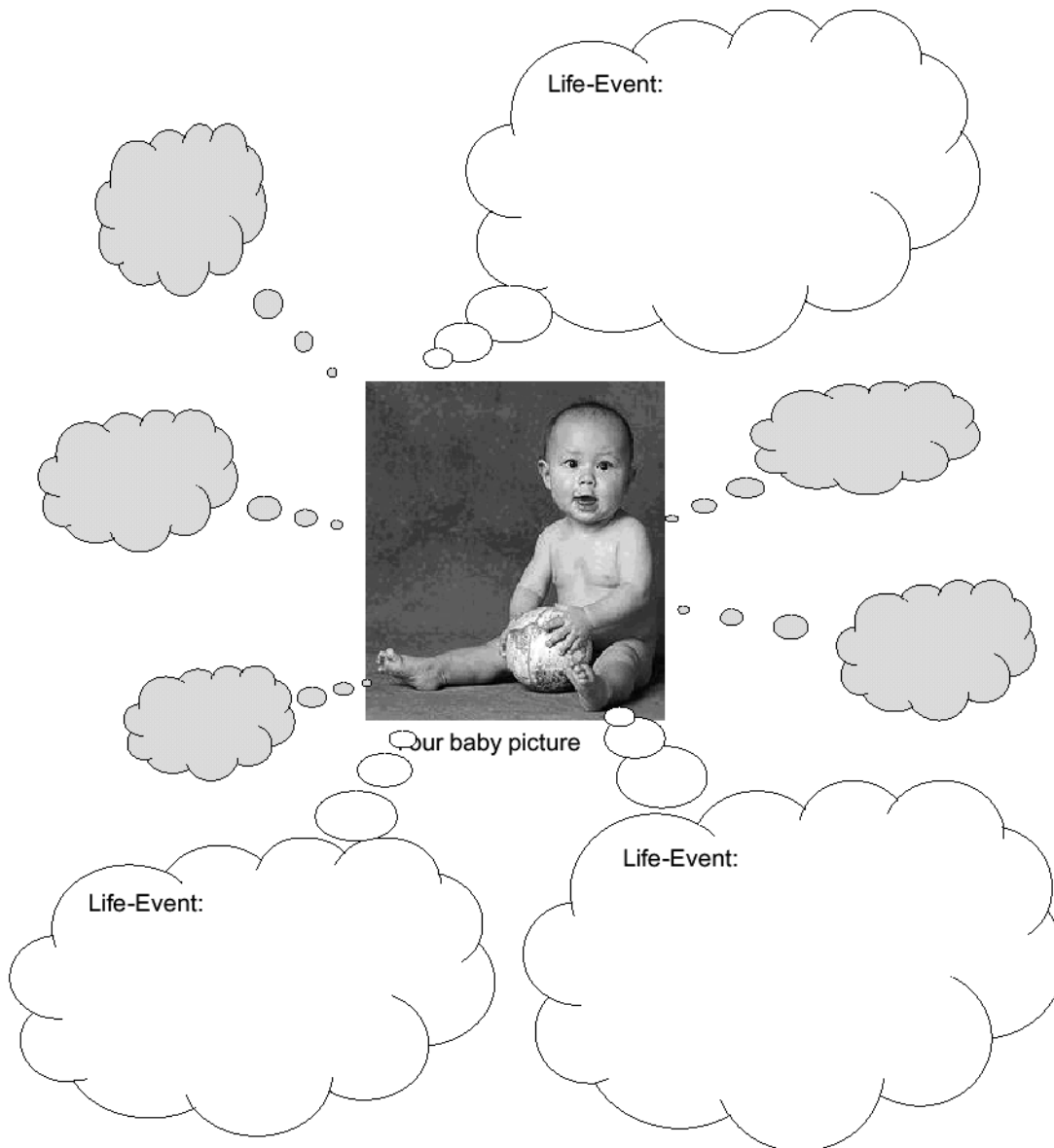


Qualities were broke down into: Emotions/Feelings, Skills and Knowledge.

Participants were asked to choose one quality that they feel is important from each of the previous categories.

Afterwards the participants were to discuss the qualities they chose, with another participant who had chosen totally different qualities. They were to confront their choices and explain what they felt was the reason for such choices.

The last step of the workshop was an individual moment of reflection. The participants were asked to think about three events in their lives that they consider as very important in their development as persons.



After finding out these core events, the participants were to find out in what way they influenced their values, their lives and their decisions.

When preparing a training activity, it is essential to analyse the several elements that influence the session:

8.1 How to choose the right methodology?

We have to clarify four terms that are very often used in the area of training, that are often confused. In our “jargon”, we will use those terms as follows:

Aim:	What do you want to achieve?	Example: To make the participants discuss about their values, what they consider “good” or “bad”
Method/ Methodology:	How do you want to achieve it?	The methodology we use is “discussion”
Activity:	What do you want to do?	e.g. group play
Tool:	With what do you want to do the activity?	e.g. story...

When you have taken your audience into consideration, be careful about the environment, it is time to select the right way to address the training needs.

To choose the right training methodology, one can use the so-called “SWOT” analysis.

This methodology allows you to analyse the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of your activity or project...

This will enable you to determine, in advance, the positive outcomes (the ones you expect, hopefully) and be prepared to counterbalance the limitations (the weaknesses and the threats).

Strengths	Weaknesses
of method itself	
Opportunities	Threats
in the use of method	

8.2 Different Methodologies

	Target group	Skills activated	Role of Facilitator
<p>Role Play</p> <p>through acting helps people practice life situations and analyse/discuss topics from different points of view. Wearing somebody's shoes!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - students with common language - families (on a voluntary basis) - volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - empathy - acting skills - motivation - identification - perception of conflict/ conflict management - confrontation with own and other prejudices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - motivate - help the participants - get into the role - ask questions - leave space to participants - allow participants to share their experiences
<p>Discussion Games</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - leaving students (hopees) - host families - volunteers - trainers - teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - argumentation - discussion skills - question of own values - judgement - awareness for other values/ acceptance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - guidance without interfering - should have a clear aim to guide discussions - prepare debriefing - should include everybody
<p>Simulation Games</p> <p>Participants take part in a fictive situation, trying to achieve a common task; they usually play a character other than their own</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - motivated target group - exchange students - volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - awareness of other cultures - cooperation - patience - energy - tolerance - understanding of differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - patient - careful - enthusiastic to start off - not playing - should show no emotions - knowledge on how to help participants to get out of their roles
<p>Visual Method</p> <p>Participants are shown images: pictures, photos, postcards, cartoons. This method could trigger the thinking process and discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - any group - maybe also host families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formulate opinions - observing - imagination/ creativity - teamwork - critical sense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - good moderator to guide discussion - able to move discussion to a different level - guiding without steering
<p>Experiential Learning</p> <p>Learning from experience. Game about real life: participants don't play a role, are themselves; involved in the process, learn by doing, about oneself, other people, feelings and emotions. Like an experiment, doing something new and learn by trying (perhaps by mistake). It can be verbal and non-verbal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - should not mix host families and students - volunteers are maybe too excited and affect debriefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - empathy - trust - reliability - alternative communication - observing - creativity - encouraging - learn from others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - aware of profit for the group - feeling of responsibility - should know the subject very well - good observer - perspective - debriefing important

	Target group	Skills activated	Role of Facilitator
<p>Case Study</p> <p>Group is give a specific case / problematic situation: objective, factual and detailed description of the situation without suggesting any solution</p> <p>Participants study the case, identify problems and find solutions;</p> <p>at the end they evaluate the whole activity with specific regards to how it relates into real life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff - returnees - volunteers – who work on projects similar to the one studied - participants (15-18 y.) - families - teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - not judging - empathy - analysing - planning - see situation from another side - co-operation - communication - making decisions - team building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - quick - structure arguments, relevant situation, target group - has experience - balance/ take side

	Risks	Debriefing questions	Swot analysis
<p>Role Play</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - misunderstand roles - unclear instructions - time needed - challenge for the participants to get into a role too far from their own realities - participants taking things as a game - level of language needed to express oneself - cultural background 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feelings playing this role - is this a realistic situation? - agreement or disagreement with one's own character - previous experience of such situation - reactions in real life - consequences in family/community if this situation would happen 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it can require too much time - language problems - a great deal of motivation is needed to get involved <p>Threat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it may not get to any solutions
<p>Discussion Games</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - story may invade privacy/ personal space of participants - no discussion /passive group - dominant participants 		
<p>Simulation Games</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasize stereotypes - gets out of hand - motivation of participants - de-roling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - de-roling feeling - observation - linking it to real life situation - task accomplishment in game 	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - group dynamics <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participants take an active role - FUN <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - requires specific skills from participants and facilitator - debriefing is very important - depends on the creativity of the participants <p>Threat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - energizer character can take over and block the subject - can emphasise stereotypes

	Risks	Debriefing questions	Swot analysis
Visual Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - choosing wrong visual input - participants know ideas of game - things get out of hand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first impression -do people feel fooled? - relation with real life - how visual input affects thinking/value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hard to select materials - preparation takes time - might strengthen stereotypes/prejudices - beware of misinterpretations
Experiential Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - physical touch - passivity of the participants 	<p>Explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feelings - observation - expectations vs. outcomes - how it can relate to inter-cultural learning conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - needs de-briefing - needs an experienced facilitator - has many hidden threats and dangers - many activities but for some target groups only a few - many activities are tactile – not easy for all target groups - can create feeling of exclusion – being left out - can create a closed group - can be too emotional
Case Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - motivation - good text (enough details/ clear) - one person knows the case - language - domination of a group size - quick judgement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - real life situation? - co-operation - planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - complexity of real life case - takes a lot of time - adaptation to a specific target group - dominant group/ people - one conclusion/ no discussion - seriousness: too much / too little

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