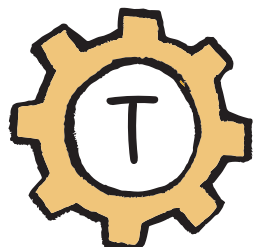


Volunteer management



Using the 'motivation tool' to identify methods of recruitment and supporting volunteers

The motivation tool provides a framework that will assist you to gain insight into a potential volunteer. It will also provide input in developing a one-page profile with the volunteer using motivation as a starting point.

The motivation tool will enable you to clarify the reasons why people want to volunteer, explore what this tells you about their potential strengths and what matters to them.

Working through this exercise will also enable you to gather information on how a volunteer would like to be supported in their role – which will be essential when you are looking to retain them.

The tool is separated into four different sections:

Section 1: The motivation to volunteer

During the interview process ask the person why they want to volunteer for your organisation.

Ask them what they hope to gain from the experience and what they feel they might be able to contribute.

Getting a sense of why a person wants to volunteer will also provide insight into their motivation behind volunteering in general. You can use this information to explore their potential strengths.

Capture the top 3 reasons why they want to volunteer, use this as a starting point for further conversation.

Section 2: The positive reputation and strengths of a volunteer

Understanding a person's reasons for volunteering may also provide an insight into their strengths and positive attributes. You may need to ask specific questions that will provide the potential volunteer with the opportunity to reflect on what they feel their strengths are.

You can then move beyond this initial conversation and ask the person what they are good at and what they feel they have to offer as a volunteer.

It is important to develop a culture of appreciation as this will support embedding person-centred approaches throughout your organisation. It will ensure that volunteers, as well as other staff, feel valued for their contributions.

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Section 3: What is 'important to' the person wanting to volunteer?

The positive reputation and strengths that someone possesses will often provide an understanding of what is 'important to' them as a potential volunteer. Using open-ended questions that encourage conversation will support the person to be able to tell you this information.

You can then use this information to determine where and how they will be best utilised within the organisation. You will also retain them and keep them interested in volunteering with your organisation.

e.g.

One of Thao's strengths is that she is a great cook. There are some obvious assumptions about what might be 'important to' her based on this information.

When the volunteer manager, Jess, started to ask Thao more questions about cooking and what it meant to her, essential detail emerged.

Jess initially thought that Thao wanted to volunteer to prepare meals at one of the services.

When they started to explore this further it emerged that Thao enjoyed sharing knowledge with others and seeing them develop and grow.

Based on this conversation, Jess not only developed a better understanding of the things that were 'important to' Thao, but was also able to find the right role for her that matched her strengths and drive. Rather than just cooking, which was originally assumed, Thao was supported to set up and run cooking classes with individuals wanting to learn to cook.

Section 4: How to best support volunteers

It is essential within a person-centred approach to have an understanding of how to support volunteers [as with all staff] to operate at their best, to stay motivated and to feel appreciated within their role.

Everyone has different or preferred ways of receiving feedback. Understanding particulars about each volunteer is a way of getting communication and support right from the start.

When you are working with volunteers who are not being paid for

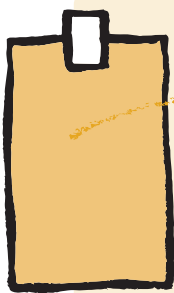
Volunteer management

their work, this level of understanding and type of support can make all the difference in whether the person decides to stay working with you and your organisation.

It is important that you ask volunteers what support they want and need, in the same way as you would with your customers.

Example questions may include:

- * How can I support you so that you are able to utilise all of your qualities, strengths and skills?
- * What do you need to ensure what's 'important to' you is fulfilled?
- * How would you like your contributions to be recognised?
- * What is your preferred way of communicating?
- * Is there anything we need to know or do to ensure you are at your best?



Tips

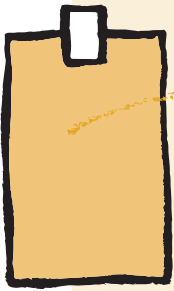
According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 57% of people volunteer in order to give back to their community and a further 36% want to do something worthwhile. However, there are subtle differences in motivation from person to person or what their interpretation of this statement is.

Many people will feel a social pressure to tell you they 'want to give back to their community'. You will need to encourage discussion to draw out what giving back to the community actually means to them or why they see that as being important. This will enable you to understand their motivations.

Take a look at 'The Functional Approach' [from Volunteers' motivations: A functional strategy for the recruitment, placement, and retention of volunteers. E. Gil Clary, Mark Snyder, Robert Ridge] to understand about different types of volunteer motivation:

- * Values motivation: the person is volunteering in order to express or act on important values, such as humanitarianism and helping the less fortunate.
- * Understanding motivation: the volunteer is seeking to learn more about the world and/or exercise skills that are often unused.
- * Career motivation: the volunteer has the goal of gaining career-related experience through volunteering.

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Tips

- * Social motivation: volunteering allows the person to strengthen their social relationships.
- * Enhancement motivation: the individual is seeking to grow and develop psychologically through involvement in volunteering.
- * Protective function: the individual uses volunteering to reduce negative feelings, such as guilt, or to address personal problems.

Using the motivation tool with volunteers will give you the basic information to develop a one-page profile.

Volunteers may not be familiar with the type of questions used in the motivation tool and their answers may initially appear as superficial thoughts. Asking the person to tell you more about their answer or asking them what it means to them as an individual, will prompt further detail and conversation.

If you are supporting large numbers of volunteers, this can be done together as a discussion in a group setting. If you are using this approach make sure that you have sufficient 'coaches' in the room on the day to support people and be aware of dynamics between those within the room.

Pay attention to everything the volunteer says that may give clues to their motivation. For example a volunteer talking in great lengths about family and friends already working and participating in the organisation might imply a social motivation.

Most people have more than one motivation. You can explore more than one if you have the time or alternatively tap into the motivation that the person seems most enthusiastic about. Many people's motivation changes once they start volunteering; it is important for retention purposes to work with their changing circumstances. For example, a volunteer host parent may originally be motivated by guilt to start volunteering and then may change to social motivation as they find that they enjoy the company of their host child.

Discussing what supports a volunteer may need encourages them to take responsibility for managing or at least identifying how they want to be supported. This enables you to then respond to the needs of each volunteer in a person-centred way. Not only will this assist your relationship with your volunteers, it can have a positive impact on the retention of your volunteers.

Volunteer management



Additional resources

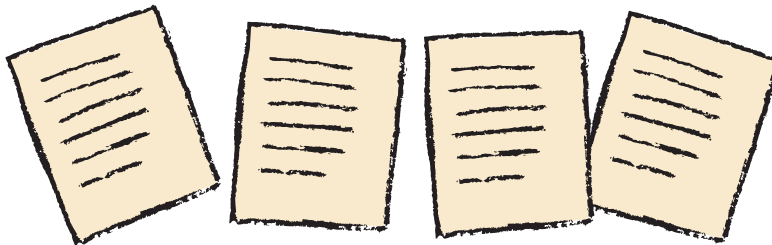
- * The Workforce Capability Framework.
- * The disability career planner and capability framework implementation guide.
- * Volunteers' motivations: A functional strategy for the recruitment, placement, and retention of volunteers - E. Gil Clary, Mark Snyder, Robert Ridge.
- * Technique, tips and template – using one-page profiles in recruitment [employers].
- * Technique, tips and template – using one-page profiles in recruitment [employees].
- * Technique, tips and template – using 'important to and for' in job design and recruitment.

Definitions

The term **individual(s)** refers to an individual with a disability and their family and/or circle of support.

The term **staff/employees(s)** refer to paid members of the organisations workforce. Employment relationships with the organisation may be permanent, casual, full-time, part-time, etc.

The term **volunteer(s)** refers to an unpaid individual willingly giving their time to provide a service or support.



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Using the 'motivation tool' to identify methods of recruitment and supporting volunteers