

Volunteer Management Tip Sheet #1



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The first step in the process is developing position descriptions that list **volunteer benefits**.

Follow [this link](#) for a Volunteer Position Description Worksheet from HandsOn Network / Points of Light Institute.

See reverse side for more tips and an example of a finished message.

Creating a Targeted Recruitment Message

Retaining volunteers, like retaining staff, is an essential part of a nonprofit's human resources strategy. Getting the right volunteers in the first place — those who are a good fit for the role and your agency's mission and culture — is the key to success. These 7 steps will show you how.

1. Brainstorm a list of possible populations that would be likely to have the time and ability to do the position. (See reverse side for sample populations.)
2. Resist the urge to make the message all inclusive. To increase accuracy, aim for only one target audience per message. One position description may yield multiple recruitment messages!
3. Match the volunteer benefits listed on your position description to the likely characteristics of the population you are targeting. (See reverse side for sample benefits.)
4. List the descriptive characteristics (e.g. where, when, how often) that would be essential for a person to know before they decide to contact you for more information.
5. Include “who to contact / how to contact” information: contact person's name, title, and phone number or email address.
6. Lead with a very succinct statement of the client, consumer, or community need that your organization is addressing, and how the volunteer can help. (Note: This is not your organization's need. See below for examples.)

Instead of: “Provide phone coverage for our hotline while our clinical staff attends weekly case review.” (organizational need)

Say, “Help people experiencing crisis get back on their feet. Be the confidential, welcoming voice on our Tuesday morning hotline.” (client need)

7. Sum it up in a simple, attractive message: that includes:
 - Client/community need and how the volunteer role will help
 - Benefits that will appeal to your target audience
 - Descriptive characteristics that prospective volunteers must know before deciding to follow up
 - Who to contact / how to contact for more info
 - Sometimes graphics or photos can be used to increase appeal.
 - Match language to target audience.

Source: This tip sheet is based on *Training Busy Staff to Succeed with Volunteers: The 55-minute Training Series*, a curriculum created by Betty Stallings. Copyright 2007 Betty Stallings. Published by Energize, Inc.

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Match the target population for your message with the benefits (of those offered by this position) that will most likely appeal to that population.

Highlight those benefits in your message!

A SAMPLE OF TARGET POPULATIONS:

- * College students
- * Retired teachers
- * High school youth
- * Baby boomers
- * People with disabilities
- * Faith-based groups
- * People with specialized skills
- * Corporate employees
- * Health care professionals
- * Neighborhood residents
- * Computer enthusiasts
- * Exercise enthusiasts
- * Animal lovers
- * Service clients / beneficiaries
- * Parents of young children

A SAMPLE OF VOLUNTEER BENEFITS:

- * Try something new
- * Use skills or experience
- * Be part of a team
- * Make impact on a cause
- * Meals / snacks provided
- * Training opportunities
- * Stay involved (e.g. with youth)
- * Get outdoors
- * Be creative
- * Try something new
- * Use your technology skills
- * Learn technology skills
- * Volunteer as a family
- * Gain work skills /experience
- * Meet new people

Sample Targeted Message #1 (*Baby Boomer*)

**Are you a current or former mental health professional?
Are you free on Tuesday mornings?**

Help people experiencing crisis get back on their feet. Be the confidential, welcoming voice on our Tuesday morning hotline.

You can make a difference in as little as two hours a month (or as much as two hours a week) at Ourtown Community Mental Health Clinic.

We offer a great chance to share your compassion with others. We'll train you to answer our calls, and provide opportunities to use your talents within a warm, multigenerational group of caring professionals.

Call Angela: 617-123-4567 for more information.



Sample Targeted Message #2 (*Young Adult*)

**Are you a current or aspiring mental health professional?
Are you free on Tuesday mornings?**

Help people experiencing crisis get back on their feet. Be the confidential, welcoming voice on our Tuesday morning hotline.

You can make a difference in as little as two hours a month (or as much as two hours a week) at Ourtown Community Mental Health Clinic.

Join a supportive, compassionate community of helping professionals. We provide skills training, ongoing development, and a great team atmosphere.

**Call Angela: 617-123-4567 for more information,
or email volunteer@ourtowncommunityhotline.org.**

