



## **Handy Hits for Recruitment of Volunteers**

### **Before you recruit**

It is important that you are well prepared before you recruit. You need to know why you want volunteers, what the process is, what they will do and how you will support them. Further information on developing good practice in volunteer involvement can be found at [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

### **Recruitment ideas**

So, all the thinking and consultation has been done, everyone knows why volunteers are being involved and the kind of work they will do. How do you go about actually getting new recruits?

#### **1. Word of mouth**

Most volunteers are recruited by existing staff, clients, supporters or volunteers. Make sure everyone you know knows that you are trying to recruit, and what the opportunities are.

#### **2. Print**

Posters can spread your message to a wider audience. Leaflets or postcards are a handy and attractive way of providing information to potential recruits.

When designing printed information remember the principles of your recruitment message. Keep it simple, and reflect the nature of the volunteering opportunities in your design. You should also consider who your target audience is and the formats they may require information in. You might consider placing printed information in:

- schools and colleges
- libraries
- town halls and other public buildings
- GP and dental surgeries
- sports and leisure centres
- religious centres
- shop windows/shopping centres
- bars
- Job Centres
- Community Centres

#### **3. Brokerage services**

- Volunteer Centres - put people in touch with organisations who need volunteers. Organisations need to register with their local centre, which might also be able to provide advice and support on working with volunteers. Your local Volunteer Centres include Bolton, St Helens, West

Lancs, they can put your opportunities onto the 'Do-it' website. **Volunteering Wigan run a scheme like this locally contact Jenny or Tracey on 01942 615886**

- *Business in the community* – have a project called Manchester Cares. They recruit teams or individual local business employees to undertake one-off event or projects e.g renovation, design web-site, staff events etc – [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk)
- *Millennium volunteers* – Millennium Volunteers is a national scheme for anybody aged 16-24 who wants to get involved with a voluntary activity. The award is achieved by logging hours, the amount and time is totally up to the young person. we also cover expenses - Local groups can get involved in two ways either as a host organisation that is looking for volunteers or by us recruiting young people who are looking for voluntary experience or to try something new.

#### 4. Talks

Once you have identified a possible source of new recruits you need to take your message to them. Setting up a talk or presentation might take some time – you will need to persuade the host (be it a school, a college, an employer or whatever) that your information will be of real interest. But it can produce good results.



Try to be as well-briefed as possible about the people you will be talking to and what is likely to appeal to them about volunteering.

Visual images such as photographs or a video can aid a presentation, but real live volunteers or clients are the most effective inspiration. Make sure you bring printed information to support your talk, giving people the chance to go away and think before committing themselves. Be clear about how people can get involved or find out more if they are interested.

#### 5. Events

An event such as Volunteers Week (1<sup>st</sup>-- 7<sup>th</sup> June) is a great chance to recruit new volunteers. You might have an exhibition stand in a shopping centre or stage a PR stunt to attract publicity.

There are many places and events at which stalls can be set up, including:

- the local high street (you will probably need to get local council permission to do this)
- the local library
- fetes and carnivals
- career and recruitment fairs.
- train stations

#### 6. Press and radio



Events such as Volunteers Week also provide an opportunity to get coverage in the local media.

Coverage in the local media might range from feature articles to brief news stories. Try to build a good relationship with local newspapers and radio stations, stressing the 'human interest' of local people getting involved to help the community or as a form of recognition for your existing volunteers. Find out local media contacts at <http://www.wiganmbc.gov.uk/pub/presslst.htm>

Nationally, [The Guardian](http://www.guardian.co.uk) newspaper runs a volunteers page every other Wednesday in its supplement. They currently charge a minimum of £30 for a short recruitment advert. And tend to attract students/graduates - [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

There is also a wide range of specialist media in which you might consider advertising or seeking coverage. These include:

- company newsletters
- professional and trade journals (particularly useful if you are seeking someone with specialised skills)
- the black press, such as *The Voice*
- the gay press, such as *The Pink Paper*
- Cable TV message boards & Community Channel



If you are considering placing an advert you should:

- ensure your advert reflects the diversity of the local community
- consult with other organisations who have placed adverts
- check the newspapers circulation areas and numbers
- ask if there is a special rate for volunteer vacancies.

## 7. Local companies

When assessing your local area for possible sources of recruits you might well come across local companies whose employees are keen to get involved. You might be able to recruit individual employees or groups to perform one-off 'challenges'.

It will help if you can get the support of someone senior in the company – for example, to allow you to address a staff meeting. Once employees are volunteering, the company might also be willing to offer other kinds of support.

## 8. Other ideas!

- Community and neighbourhood newsletters e.g local authority, SureStart etc
- Paid adverts in magazines e.g Big Issue, Cinema magazine
- School newsletters / mailout to parents
- Professional association and club bulletins
- Employee newsletters

- Church bulletins
- Celebrity spokespersons
- Yellow Pages ads
- College campuses
- Get "on line": (get into companies' email systems, local community newsgroups)
- "Bring a Friend" teas for current volunteers
- Open house/agency tours
- "Just ask"
- Public recognition of your volunteers
- Volunteer fairs
- Go in with other agencies for publicity during Volunteer Week
- Booth at community events/fairs
- Articles in your agency newsletter
- Special announcements at agency fund raising events
- School Citizenship lessons
- A website of your own
- Bus/Billboard Adverts
- Your existing contacts/links/networks

### **Contacts**

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