

fact sheet 08

introduction to volunteer management ... basic principles

valuing volunteering

Always have to hand!

The Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Volunteering jargon buster*

Decide why you want to involve volunteers in the first place

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Why organisations involve volunteers*

Involve not use

Do not use the terms 'use' or 'utilise' volunteers. Instead try: *involve, empower, count on, rely on, ask, commission, enable, delegate to, entrust, allow, authorise, mobilise, assign, enlist, request, encourage ...* Lee & Catagnus, 1999, *What we learned (the hard way)* about supervising volunteers

Understand why people might wish to do voluntary work

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Why people volunteer*

Understand the reasons why people do not volunteer

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Barriers to volunteering*

Recognise that you must meet the needs of both the organisation and the volunteer

See the Volunteering Ireland *Charter for effective volunteering*

Familiarise yourself with the volunteer management cycle

Plan and develop policies/procedures ⇒ recruit and select ⇒ induct and train ⇒ support and supervise ⇒ motivate and recognise ⇒ monitor and evaluate ⇒ plan etc

Please note!

In organisations with a highly structured and supported approach to the management of their volunteers, the volunteer experience is very positive.

Ralaheen Research and Design, 2001 (research for the National Committee on Volunteering)

Write a volunteer policy

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Volunteer policies*

Design clear roles for volunteers, develop a clear recruitment message, then advertise

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Volunteer recruitment*

Ensure appropriate, fair and transparent selection procedures

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Volunteer screening and selection*

Provide appropriate training for all volunteers

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Volunteer training*

Make sure all volunteers receive adequate supervision

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Supervising volunteers*

Create a climate in which risk is managed and volunteers can feel motivated

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheets: *Insurance for volunteers, Volunteer expenses, Volunteering and social welfare payments, Volunteer recognition*

The golden rule of volunteer management

"Their niceness will let you recruit a volunteer, but only your competence will let you keep them"

McCurley & Lynch, 1996, *Volunteer management*

Have clear roles for all the actors involved in the volunteer management process

This will depend on the size, age and structure of your organisation and may involve any of the following: volunteers, paid staff, trainees/interns, volunteer coordinators, management committee / board members, etc. See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheets: *All-volunteer groups*

Volunteers and paid staff

Network with other volunteer managers

If coordinating the work is the main part of your job (whether this is paid or unpaid work) join Volunteering Ireland and link in with VOLT (Volunteer Organisers Linking Together): the Irish network of volunteer coordinators

Evaluate your volunteer involvement on an ongoing basis and be ready to take on new challenges

See the Volunteering Ireland fact sheets:

- Celebrating diversity
- Employer-supported volunteering
- Virtual volunteering
- Thinking of setting up a volunteer centre?

Particular challenges for the manager of volunteers in Ireland

Research undertaken on behalf of the National Committee on Volunteering in 2001 shows that volunteers in Ireland have the following support needs (in order):

- *more volunteers*
- *more guidance in handling difficult situations*
- *greater recognition of the volunteering effort*
- *more skills training.*

Also see the Volunteering Ireland fact sheet *Volunteering facts*

Further reading

Visit the Volunteering Ireland library.

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