

# 6 Ways To Keep Your Volunteers Engaged



Like many nonprofits, volunteers are your most valuable asset. For any organization that relies on volunteers to accomplish their mission, recruitment of volunteers is only the first step. The big question is how to keep the volunteers you've recruited active, engaged and totally committed to the cause.

## **1. Make Your Volunteers Feel Needed And Appreciated.**

No matter how idealistic your volunteers are and how dedicated to the cause, everyone needs a healthy dose of external appreciation to keep them going. It sounds like a no-brainer, but never forget to tell your volunteers – as often and in as many ways as possible – that your organization could never accomplish all it does without their help.

## **2. Ask Volunteers To Help In Specific, Actionable Ways.**

If you really want people to help you, avoid the general “join our cause” and “help us change the world” kind of calls to action. Be specific in giving practical ways that people can volunteer for you and make it easy for them to follow up.

## **3. Inspire Your Volunteers With The Cause, Not The Organization.**

Don't ask your volunteers to help your organization, but the cause. Inspire them with stories of real people they will be helping and real challenges that their work will be addressing.

## **4. Stay Connected, And Make Sure Your Communication Channels Go Both Ways.**

Keep in touch with your volunteers on a regular basis. With the proliferation of social media, email, texting and the like, communication is easier than ever. You can offer training and tips to help their volunteer work and relevant and timely information including updates on what's new at your organization.

Be readily accessible to listen to what your volunteers have to say, too. As the people on the front lines, they often have a lot of valuable information to share and important questions and concerns that you need to address.

## **5. Develop A Community Of Volunteers.**

Build a sense of community among your volunteers. They should feel connected to each other and not just to the organization. Online forums can be helpful in this regard, but there's no substitute for good, old fashioned interaction – in person. Hold a conference, or even better, throw a party to celebrate the dedication of your volunteers.

## **6. Show Your Volunteers How They Made A Difference.**

Highlight your volunteers' successes to show them how their hard work helped the cause. Whether it's the smile on a hungry child's face when they receive the food package a volunteer packed, or the first book a learning disabled child reads after months of tutoring, let your volunteers see the results of their efforts. There's no motivation as powerful as knowing that you made a difference in the world.