Volunteer Recruitment & Selection

The best recruiter is always a good volunteer program in a decent, caring organization. Avoid the numbers game. More is not always better. Quality counts.

Main Approaches

• Each-One-Reach-One: it’s the most effective recruiting strategy if you have a good program. Also called network recruiting, its where you build in incentives for volunteers who bring in others
• Offer Maximum Choice: within mission framework, in range of job content, style, setting, and locale; "Our way is the only way" is the ultimate turnoff. "Do it your way" is more respectful and effective. Go for a "People Approach" when you can vs. “Job Approach”.
• Frame of Mind: think of yourself as a vehicle for the volunteer to meet important personal goals that are also important to the organization. For example, time management and budgeting skills.
• Recruiting Cooperatively: work with other programs. You can get more volunteers with less work.
• Media Recruiting: not as effective as people think, but is best for focusing on a specific opening.

Recruitment Messages

• The Need – The statement of need tells the volunteer why the job they will be doing is important. The need usually refers to something that exists in the community, not something that exists in the agency. The statement of need should lead the potential volunteer to the natural conclusion that something ought to be done about it.
• The Job – How can the volunteer help solve the problem stated in the need? Describe the job in context of the need. Help potential volunteers see themselves doing the job. Talk about the physical environment, people they will meet, minor details to create a full picture of the environment the volunteer will encounter. The picture should stress the positive elements of the job in order to encourage the person to volunteer, but it should also be honest and balanced.
• Set Goals - Know what you’re recruiting for and have a reasonable target in mind. Making a check-in system that allows you to visualize your target and keep track of your progress towards your goal. The central emphasis of recruiting is giving potential participants something that excites them to get further information.
• Sales Pitch- Know your pitch; you often only get a few seconds to let people know. Use attention-getting buzzwords (multicultural, units, diversity, leadership). Reflect on what made you want to get involved. How can you convey that excitement to other potential participants?

**See Department of Community Service for a sample volunteer application**