

Valuing your volunteers

An organisation that values its volunteers tends to attract more volunteer help, meaning there are more people helping with every activity—and getting more done. Valuing your volunteers can be done in many ways, some requiring a little more thought.

Think about ways you can reward your volunteers, recognise them and, importantly, respect them and the work that they do. Some ideas include:

Rewarding volunteers

- ▶ Make sure that you put on a function at least once a year involving volunteers. Provide a few drinks, nibbles, or a barbeque. Invite volunteers to your end-of-year party or other functions held during the year.
- ▶ Work at building team spirit—ways of doing this could include providing volunteers with team t-shirts and helping them to get to know their fellow volunteers. Hold social events a few times a year—where the volunteers can relax, rather than work.

Recognising volunteers

- ▶ List volunteers' names where appropriate—in your newsletter, annual report, and on your website, for example.
- ▶ Thank your volunteers publicly in speeches, or by name dropping.



Source: Institute of Community Directors Australia, 2019, *Valuing Volunteers*, viewed 21 July 2019, <www.communitydirectors.com.au/icds/tools/?articleId=1622>

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Respect volunteers and their work

- ▶ Give your volunteers the training they need. Find out their expectations for their contribution and help them learn new things.
- ▶ Supervise your volunteers properly and offer them resources and support.
- ▶ Don't under-value your volunteers' contribution—demand that they do a good job.
- ▶ Consult your volunteers. Ask them to suggest other volunteers and seek their opinion on things going on in the organisation. Brainstorm their ideas.
- ▶ Tell them about the complaints and grievance resolution procedures in case they have a problem.
- ▶ Challenge your volunteers. Find them tasks that produce results worth as much as they have put in. allocate their time just as if they were paid staff.
- ▶ Work your volunteers' particular skills and abilities—use them for your organisation's best benefit. It will also give them confidence because they will know what they are doing.
- ▶ Survey your volunteers to find out whether or not they are satisfied with the way your organisation uses them.



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