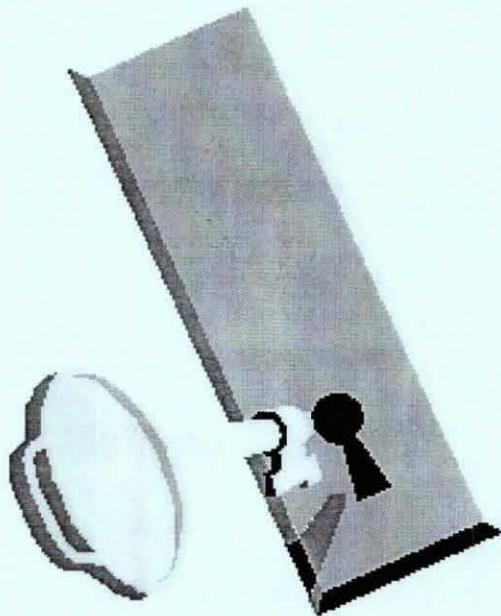


# The Key to Volunteer Retention



presented by

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# Volunteer Motivations



People volunteer their time for a variety of legitimate reasons. Usually, they do so for a combination of factors. Some jobs attract people with certain motivations more than others. Below are some common volunteer motivations:

- To get out of the house or escape boredom
- To meet new people or make new friends
- To establish a track record to get a new job
- To try out a new career
- To help solve a community problem
- To pay back
- To assuage guilt
- To get recognition
- To impress employer
- To make contacts among community leaders
- To gain prestige
- To be in charge of something
- To feel useful
- To learn something new
- To build self-esteem
- To do something different
- To rebuild an old skill
- To help another person
- To be with friends who volunteer
- To be part of a prestigious group
- To spend 'quality time' with family by volunteering together
- To make a transition to a new life
- To gain respect
- To meet potential employers
- To make business contacts
- To learn about a community problem
- To gain status
- To express a religious belief or fulfill a moral duty
- To have fun

## **Creating Connectedness**

Here are some strategies, requiring vastly different amounts of effort, to create a feeling of connectedness in your people.

1. Implement your people's suggestions for improving the way you do things. Nothing you do builds more sense of identification, pride, and importance.
2. Be specific and abundant in validating your people. Find the good and praise it.
3. Call people by name. The most important single connector is knowing the person's name.
4. Make sure people know the common purpose or mission and see how their work contributes to achieving that goal.
5. Reinforce the values of the organization. Create a sense of "That's the way we do things."
6. Give people input in decision-making.
7. Share information and plans freely. Secrets are the bricks in the walls between people.
8. Invite employees and volunteers to social activities.
9. Send them birthday and anniversary cards.
10. Prepare the group for new members. Tell each three things they can talk to the new member about and provide social time to do so.
11. Run articles by group members in the newsletter, especially essays in which they tell why they are proud to be part of the program.
12. Listen. Try your best to understand each volunteer's point of view and to communicate that understanding.
13. Be the first to say hello. It cheers you up and sets the tone that people care about each other here.
14. Make the success of one the success of all.
15. Distribute pins, badges, or other items that identify the individual as a member of the program.

## **Recognition Rules**

- 1. Give it or else.**
- 2. Give it frequently.**
- 3. Use a variety of methods.**
- 4. It must be honest.**
- 5. It should be given to the person, not the work.**
- 6. It should be appropriate to the achievement.**
- 7. It should be consistent.**
- 8. It must be timely.**
- 9. It should be individualized as much as possible.**
- 10. Pay attention to what you want more of.**

# Methods of Recognition

## Daily Means of Providing Recognition

- Saying "Thank you"
- Telling them they did a good job.
- Suggesting they join you for coffee
- Asking for their opinions
- Greeting them when they come in in the morning
- Showing interest in their personal interests
- Smiling when you see them
- Bragging about them to your boss (in their presence)
- Jotting small thank you notes to them
- Having a refreshment with them at the end of the work day
- Saying something positive about their personal qualities

## Intermediate Means of Providing Recognition

- Taking them to lunch
- Provide food at staff meetings
- Letting them put their names on the products they produce
- Writing them a letter of commendation
- Nominating them for employee of the month
- Posting graphic displays showing progress toward targets
- Mentioning major contributors by name in your status reports to upper management
- Having them present their ideas to higher-ups
- Giving permission to go to a seminar, convention, or professional meeting at the organization's expense.
- Writing articles about their performance for newsletters or newspapers
- Having them present a training session to others
- Decorating their work area on their birthday
- Having your boss write them a letter of thanks
- Having them represent you at important meetings, authorized to speak for you
- Putting their picture on the bulletin board with news of their accomplishments
- Cutting out articles and cartoons they would find interesting

## Major Means of Providing Recognition

- Having a party in their honor to celebrate a major achievement
- Make special caps, shirts, belt-buckles or pins honoring the group
- Encourage them to write an article about some work accomplishment
- Giving a plaque, certificate, or trophy to for best employee, best crew, most improved etc.
- Tuition assistance
- Buying them good equipment
- Getting their picture in the paper for outstanding accomplishment
- Giving additional responsibilities
- Giving them a new title
- Put up a banner celebrating major accomplishments
- Honoring them for years of service to the organization
- Giving them a bigger work area
- Giving them a raise.

## **Defining Responsibility**

In order to delegate effectively, managers need to define the results they want their people to achieve. Often, however, they have already thought of an activity that will help achieve the result and simply tell the worker to do that. When they do so, they take away any possibility for the worker to exercise any authority. Below is a list of activities a supervisor might tell a worker to do. For each, see if you can define the responsibility that could be delegated instead.

1. Prepare a press release for the newspaper that spotlights the good things we do.
2. Put this notice of the agenda for the next staff meeting on the bulletin board.
3. Make copies of these reports for the head office.
4. Change the anti-freeze in the fire-fighting equipment in September.
5. Send out overdue book notices.
6. Get the names and phone numbers of local legislators so I can invite them to the farewell party for the commissioner.
7. Go to an office automation fair to see what new equipment is available this year.
8. Prepare an announcement for the job vacancy we have.
9. Write a response to a person who complained about our services.
10. Call the copying machine repairman and tell him to come quick.
11. Call Rick Lynch and ask him how much he'd charge to do a seminar for our staff.
12. Proofread this document.
13. Order some more belts for the trucks.
14. Check the space heaters to see if they work.
15. Put up a sign that tells people they can't park here anymore.