

Fill your charity with volunteers

How to recruit and keep volunteers

By Nigel Tailyour

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I want to thank the following people, without whom none of this would be possible:

About the Series

Congratulations for using this book to “*peopleraise*” in your charity. In other words, you want to find people for your charity and you do not have a lot of money with which to do it.

Most charities are short of both money and people. This book will help you find people without spending more than a tiny amount of money. Other books in the series will help you find the money and also to keep the volunteers that you have. They are easy to follow, do not have unexplained jargon and are written by people like us who actually do the job. Don't worry if you are not in a charity, the word *charity* is used to simply used to encompass any voluntary nonprofit organisation or group.

There are two other books in the series:

Fundraising

“How to Fill your Charity with Money”

You need more than people. You also need money and so you’ll find this book very useful. **“How to Fill your Charity with Money”** is your next step after you have started to find some people to help you. This book is about fundraising and will give you many easy ways to find funds. Do you know where to look to find a local Charitable Trust to give you a lump sum to help you along? *“How to Fill your Charity with Money”* will tell you exactly what you do.

Keeping your Volunteers

“Keeping your Volunteers”

Now that you are successful in finding and recruiting people to help you, you will find *“Keeping your Volunteers”* invaluable. There are several great ideas in how to keep your volunteers happy, motivated and of course – staying. The longer the volunteers you have remain with you then the less need to recruit. You do not have to do so much *“peopleraising”*. The book covers why people join. What they are looking for. Why they don’t stay. It covers *“how to motivate and keep volunteers”*. In addition, the book covers important areas such as Risk Assessment, Health and Safety, Grievance Procedures and much more. Volunteers still have rights even though they are not paid.

Website

Please visit our website to stay in touch with other readers and, of course, download the templates that will save you from typing them yourself. It will save you so much time and give you a professional finish. Just log on and download.

www.charity-volunteer.com

Consultation

We come to you



Are you stuck? Do you have an opportunity for growth but perhaps you do not have the resources to keep you going for a few months? The largest charities can have short-term problems. Even when they win a “Charity of the Year” from a supermarket, they have to expand rapidly to meet the donor’s timescales. The author is a well-respected consultant and is able to put you in touch with a network of other consultants who will help. A quick chat is free to see if it is appropriate for you. Maybe at that time you can also find out how much it will cost to get expert help. Sometimes any cost can be offset by increased fundraising or recruitment success so the charity ends up better off with no cost. Simply ask for an exploratory telephone call using our website: www.charity-volunteer.com or

Skype *charity-volunteer*

Talks



The author gives motivational talks to charity groups and has spoken at national conferences. The talks are lively and even include conjuring tricks, to emphasise a point, of course, but also to amuse your delegates. If you have either a big or small event then please email to book your guest speaker now. speakers@charity-volunteer.com



Training

How about in-house training for your team? This is a very useful way for you to see instant results from the lessons in this book. You can see both the message and the benefits of these ideas and you'll want your team to see them too. When you book us for a training session with your team you will soon get great results.

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Introduction

Do not spend money on advertising

Why spend money?

Why do charities spend so much hard-earned cash on publicity to find new volunteers? What is the point of putting your need for volunteers on the back of a bus? Yet research shows that this type of advertising may raise awareness but certainly does not lead to any action at all. Several charities actually think that advertising on buses will bring them a volunteer. Why do charities spend thousands on advertising in newspapers and magazines trying to find new people? It just does not make sense. This book will save your charity hundreds or even thousands of pounds because I am going to show you how to get volunteers without buying advertising space.

In fact I am going to tell you that spending ANY money on advertising for volunteers is probably a waste of your hard-won cash.

How did you get your charity funds in the first place? I expect some of it came from shaking a bucket on a street and that is enormously hard work to organise. So getting that money was tough. The same goes with selling raffle tickets or arranging a social event. It is really difficult to get people involved and taking part.

The point I am making is that you should never forget how difficult it is for any charity to get money so wasting it by spending it where you do not have to be almost sinful. Please do not spend it on publicity to find new volunteers. Getting money into the charity is hard. I am going to tell you ways that are free ways to get volunteers and I know they work.

Once you have used all the free ways – then, by all means, you can spend money on advertising but it should be the very cheapest advertising that you can find and monitor it's success or failure. Good news for your treasurer! There are some really easy and simple things to do that will bring rapid results. If you have done them all and you want to boost your volunteer recruitment then by all means buy some of the low price advertising that is mentioned in this book. Apart from that, just keep your money in the bank.

Prospecting

Working with people you don't know.

This section deals with some great ways to invite people that you have never met before to consider being a volunteer with your charity. Some work better than others. They are all free or very cheap and so I suggest that you try them all. If each method brings in two volunteers a year and you are trying six at any one time (but a different six throughout the year) then you will have twelve new people and you won't get stale. We never know which of these methods will work and so it is best to try them all. Different methods vary in success with different groups so **try them all.**

The piggy back

Let's start with the piggy back. It is free and easy to do. Your treasurer will buy things every week and send out cheques. These destinations are your targets for the piggyback.

Simply put, you use the fact that THESE suppliers know you as a reason for THEM to send out your "Volunteer" leaflets.

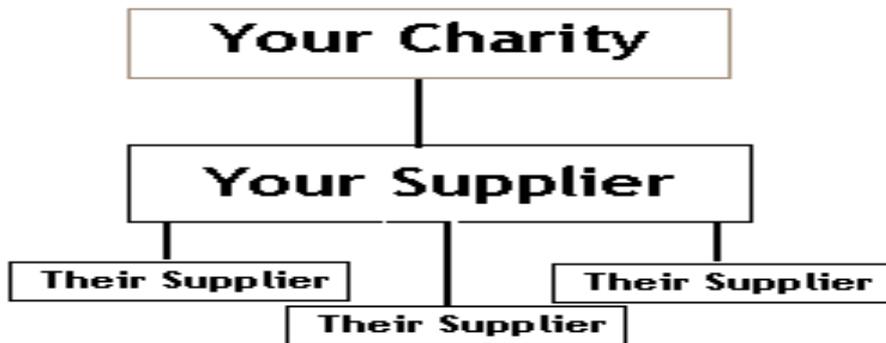
To get this going, you need to have a letter prepared and 2,000 volunteering leaflets.

You put 200 leaflets in 10 envelopes and send them with the next 10 payments to suppliers or beneficiaries of your charity. So each supplier has 200 of your leaflets.

The letter from you to your supplier says:

*“We value you as a supplier. To keep us going we need Volunteers. Please add these leaflets with your Invoices, Payments and Statements to any of **your** local customers and suppliers.*

When you run out, please ask us for more. Many thanks - Your Charity”



This simple and free method is used by many leading charities and is used by companies up and down the country. It works and is free. Remember that suppliers have their suppliers who have their suppliers so ask your suppliers to suggest that they too piggyback to their suppliers too.

But it seems cheeky and it will upset my supplier?

If you worry about your supplier then you could telephone to ask permission but it is very unlikely that they will object. If you want to stay on good relations with your supplier, because they are your landlord for instance, then of course it is a good idea to ask for permission first. But will it work? Yes it will because the recipient will be a customer of your supplier. Your information will be in an envelope that will not be binned as it contains a Statement or a Payment or an Invoice. It will be read. Remember that if you don't ask you don't get and a polite request is always worthwhile.

Talks

Go and give a talk - it never fails



Here is a really easy way to find Volunteers. Simply invite yourself along to your local Rotary Club, Business Club, Lions Club, Business Network International, Inner Wheel, University of the Third Age, Mothers Union, Women’s Institute and many more.

Anywhere that there are groups that want to have a speaker. And there are lots of them.

Send the “free Talks” leaflet plus the standard letter to all of these clubs and do it twice a year. Both of these are on our website: www.charity-volunteer.com so that you can download one now and get started.

This is easy to do when you use simple management software (like Maximizer www.maximizer.com) and you buy a list of social clubs and sports clubs. Expect to pay about 200 pounds for the list which will be emailed to you that you can mail merge it into a letter.



so

Then sit back and wait. I promise you that if you make sure that everyone at the talk has a “Volunteer” leaflet you will always get one applicant from the talk at your Info Event who attended your talk.

Please don't forget to tell them when and where the next one is during your talk.

Exhibitions

Charity Events

Many charities band together with local Voluntary Action Groups.

Have a look at:

<http://www.ivr.org.uk/voluntaryaction.htm>

<http://www.togetherwecan.info/events/>

You could run a volunteering fair over a weekend. Together with other local charities grouping up together you can lessen the load and ensure that every stand does not have to be staffed all of the time during the event. This book includes several regional charity groups that already have fairs and you can find them under **Voluntary Action Groups** in the Government Websites section.

Chamber of Commerce

Breakfasts, Lunches and Networking Events

Join your local Chamber of Commerce. It makes so much sense to be out in your local business community. They have endless opportunities for their members to sell their wares to each other and you will be overwhelmed by chances to tell people about the work you do.

To find out about your local Chamber of Commerce go to:

Chamber of Commerce <http://www.chamberonline.co.uk>

The cost to join is about £150 - £200 (\$400), which is roughly the price of two new volunteers.

Breakfasts

These are great places to meet local companies who will offer you three things:

- Their staff to volunteer at your charity.
- Money to help your work.
- Their assistance in ventures such as the **piggy-back**

Let's look at what you do to prepare for your first breakfast meeting:

You will be sitting at a table with around ten other people and they will all be in business. They either work for large local companies or they are in business for themselves. Some may be self-employed. You buy goods and services too so you too are in business. You have every reason to be their equal. Your charity status does not infer inequality. You are selling to these other ten people. You can list the benefits that they will reap when they volunteer with you. These benefits will apply equally to their staff.

Benefits of volunteering with your charity:

- Learn new skills.
- Feel better about working for the company (if it is a company scheme).
- Staff will have more fun when they volunteer.
- Greater retention of staff.
- Less cost in recruiting.
- The company is part of the community in which staff like to work.
- Staff development may be increased helping you face a new challenge.

List these on one side of a card and your charity details on the other. You can

download a template from <http://www.charity-volunteer.com/templates>

Make sure that you distribute these to everyone you meet.

When you meet them ask them this simple question,

"Would you be prepared to do the piggy back with me?"

I think that you'll get a laugh, but of course you simply want them to send out your volunteer information with their cheques, invoices and statements.

Lunches

These will often include a speaker. The speaker will address all of the people at the lunch, often 100-200 people.

You will not appear as a speaker until you have attended several lunches but of course this will be your aim. You can still network with everyone at your table, giving out your cards with the volunteering benefits and asking if they will piggy back with you.

Networking Events

These are often evening events simply aimed at new members of the chamber meeting as many other members as possible. The format is usually standing only and with waiters handing out drinks and food. There will be a welcome from your host and then the intention is to “work the room” by meeting as many people as you can. Use your piggy back question and your benefit cards to tell as many people as you can that their staff will benefit from volunteering and so will their company.

Sponsor a Day

When you are enjoying your membership of your local chamber you can add a sponsor a day opportunity to your conversation.

This simply involves the company that you are talking to, owning one day in a year.

They choose the date. They pay to cover your costs for that day and they agree to provide you with a chance to talk to their staff on that day. The venue is often the staff canteen at lunchtime where they give you a table and you talk to staff during their lunch break when they wander over to your table.

Here is what you should do:

- Work out the cost per day to run your charity
- Make up a letter in colour that lists where the money goes to on that day
- List the benefits to the company of sponsoring that day
- Have it ready to hand out at your next chamber of commerce event

You can download a template from:

<http://www.charity-volunteer.com/templates>

Recruiting

Working with people you do know

There are lots of people that you know well who will help you to find new volunteers. Let's start with the existing volunteers. It is very important to get them involved in the process, as they will know someone else, just like them, who may make a great volunteer. Your suppliers too are a source of free volunteering work, local newspapers, radio, sports clubs and many more places. This section will help you use the people who you know, or who know you, to find more volunteers.

Local Places of Worship

Write a story for the local parish magazines at the Church, the Temple, the Synagogue and the Mosque. The readers of the magazine are sympathetic to the idea of serving the community and giving something back. They will already be warmed to your need and the story that you tell. In other words, you have a warm audience. You might like to attract volunteers that do not come from a religious background and there is no reason why you should not do that as well. Just do not miss the well of talent available in the faith community. Remember that even if they don't volunteer themselves they may know someone who will.

Local Students

Write the same story for your local Students Union magazine. Local students are the second most likely source of volunteers. Volunteers run the students' magazine and they will readily appreciate the help that you give them by sending a really good story. You can send the same story every year if you wish. Just a few changes, and perhaps a new title, and it will be relevant to them every year.

Make sure that you send your story to: <http://www.studentvol.org.uk/>

The **Students Union** in your local college or university will be very keen to put your posters on their notice boards and in their intranet.

Vinspired

<http://www.vinspired.com/> is a UK government initiative for people between 16 and 25 aimed at attracting them to volunteer for your charity. If these people can make a contribution to your work then make sure that your charity has opportunities logged on to this website.

To have your charity's volunteering opportunities displayed on Vinspired you need to go to <http://www.do-it.org/> and log it (or them) on to the site. Vinspired get their opportunities from do-it.org.

Do-it.org

Here is a great link to get you started:

<http://www.do-it.org/needvolunteers/localorganisations> Post your opportunity to volunteer on your local do-it.org site and it should arrive on Vinspired automatically.

Press

Four small cheques

Have you heard of "*Distressed Space*"?

Well it's the space in a newspaper that is not bought by advertisers.

When this space is not bought then do you see a blank page? No of course not. Instead you will see advertisements that rely solely on “distressed space”. You have seen these adverts throughout your life. They include all those stair lift and walk-in bath adverts, “101 Things to do with Vinegar”, “Trouble with your English?”, “Losing your Memory?”, “How to win Prize Draws” and many more.

So here is what you do.

- Ask your Treasurer to make out 4 cheques to the local paper or magazine.
- Make these cheques out and get them signed BUT NOT DATED.
- Put the amount as about 1/3rd of the cost of a ¼ page advertisement so the cheques are for about £35 for a £150 (\$300) advertisement as an example.
- Devise your ¼ page advertisement and get it printed out clearly on hi-gloss paper. It should look like the artwork does in a printers shop.
- Make sure it does not have a place or a date or a time. It should be something that can be run at any time of the year.

It simply says something like:

VOLUNTEER with US[your charity]

Call now to do something that might change the world and certainly change your life.

Telephone:

Email: volunteering@xxxxxxxxxxxx

There are many people (animals) who need our charity. A small amount of time from you will make a huge difference to them and you too. It's rewarding and fun.

Now you write a letter that says this:

“We can’t afford more than £35 for our advertising with you. You have always been very supportive of our work in the local community and we know that your readership also support us. . (This is the amount of each of your cheques – say £35 when the normal price (also known as the Rate Card is £150). Here are 4 cheques for you to cash whenever you have space for our advertisement. Please invoice us whenever you have distressed space for our advertisement.

I have included the artwork, which you have my authority to use whenever you wish.

Signed, xxxxxxxxx”

Now you’re thinking that they won’t fall for a bit of sharp practice like this. It’s not sharp practice. It is the way that distressed space works but often on a much larger scale. You should know that sometimes they only have one hour before the publication deadline and they still have some space to sell. It will be very easy for them to pull your prearranged advertisement off the shelf and insert it. You are doing them a favour by providing them with artwork and money and therefore you expect a discount in return. Remember that there are businesses running very nicely by only using distressed space and that includes several well known charities that you might hear on radio stations. It is very unlikely that the radio stations are charging the charity the full price.

Write a story

There are some very easy ways to get a story about your charity needing volunteers in your local papers. These are free or very cheap.

Meet the Editor

Firstly, following the print run of the paper, go and meet the editor. They are busy people but the best day is the one after which the paper is printed. If your paper is printed on a Thursday then Friday or Monday are times when they may take your calls. When you call your local editor you need to have some questions ready so that you do not waste any time and you get the information that you need.

You could ask the following questions.

- When you send in a story what format should it be in, such as Word or RTF?
- Do they accept pictures with stories?
- What format should the picture be in? B/W or colour? Tiff, Gif, Jpeg or Bmp?
- When is the deadline for submissions?
- What is the name of the Features Editor?
- Do they have a feature coming up that your charity might link into?

Features

Often your charity can get extra clout if you deal with an issue that the feature editor will be running over the next 12 months. They will have a calendar of features and themes. The Feature Editor will tell you what they are for the next 12 months. You just need to ask what the calendar is and suggest that you become part of the feature. I can guarantee that “Global Warming and our community” will be a feature in your local paper every year. Just make sure that you can add to the discussion by having a prepared 100 words.

Your 100 words could be along these lines," *xxxx charity said that they were very concerned about the issue as it affected their work. Volunteers are busy resolving this issue and to find out how rewarding this can be just call xxxx charity for more information.*"

That's only 38 words but you can add a quotation from your CEO about the issue.

The local paper to the author had the following features in 2006:

- Exam Stress
- Traffic Jams
- No local parking
- House prices up
- Easter Weddings
- House prices down
- Summer drought
- Local hooligans
- Christmas shopping

Pre-prepared contributions

If you have pre-prepared contributions then you will be in the press with your volunteering angle.

You will be asked to buy advertising. Just say no. After all you are doing them a favour by adding local expertise to their story. You do not have to buy any advertising no matter how persuasive the advertising sales teams are. Explain that if you buy advertising it will interfere with the integrity of your charity and readers

might think that the advertising and the feature are linked. You have to guard your integrity jealously.

Have someone available

Can you have a publicity spokesperson available on the phone? Could you give that telephone number to the press? If you can have someone to make a comment at a moment's notice then you will always be a friend of your local press. You only need to have one member of your team who is prepared to answer the phone whenever the press calls. They should always say that they are in need of volunteers at the moment and it is important that people should call to find out more about the rewards of volunteering.

Cheap Advertising

Student Magazines and website

Student magazines in your university of college are very cheap and the readership is young people who often like to volunteer.

<http://www.educationuk.org/clubuk/10/index.html>

The Big Issue

If your town is where there is a big issue paper then you will do worse than spend some money in their back pages of classified section. It is not expensive when compared to commercial magazines and the readership might be more willing to volunteer that you would expect. I know of some good results with The Big Issue advertising. You can check the regional issues here:

<http://www.bigissue.com/ukdist.html>

And the international editions here:

<http://www.bigissue.com/intl.html>

The home page for The Big Issue is here:

<http://www.bigissue.com/>

Other social magazines and publications may give you some response through very cheap advertising. I like this one as a source of students of recent graduates in social issues.

<http://www.socialworker.com/home/index.php>

Finding someone for a specific job

Local Students.

You can probably find a local journalist to help you with your relationship with the local press (including Magazines, TV and radio.)

You should try you local college and university **Media Studies Department**. They will have students who are looking for work experience and they want to add something tangible to their CV. It will look good if they can say that during their student years they acted as Press Officer for your charity. Address your letter to, Head of Department, **Media Studies** in your local college. Sometimes they are called **Communication, Cultural and Media Studies** or **English and Media Studies** or **Media and Film**.

Finding Professionals

Journalists for Press and PR

The **Journalist Network** is a national network of volunteer media professionals who give their time to help charities with press and PR. These volunteers include journalists, producers, marketing and communications professionals who can help you find volunteers. If you need help in this area you can email journonetwork@csv.org.uk or call them on: 020 7643 1373 in the UK. They can help you tell the press that you need volunteers without you and your volunteers having to do so. And these are experts so they will be very good at it.

Broadcast Journalism Training Council

Go and visit the website <http://www.bjtc.org.uk/> where you can send in your opportunity to young journalists in training. Remind them that it will increase their chances of landing a great job if they can show that they have volunteered their expertise as your Media Officer before qualifying.

Journobank

If you visit this website: <http://www.journobank.org/> you will find professional journalists who will be able to help you put together a really professional press release. You should ask them to volunteer for your charity as the Publicity Officer or External Relations Officer.

Lawyer to keep you legal

There are lawyers who will give some of their time to your charity and when they do this they use the phrase, "pro bono" which means *for the good*.

Here is a great point to start at Oxford Brookes University in Oxford.

<http://www.brookeslawsociety.co.uk/6.html>

You can approach almost any solicitor's office in your town and ask for volunteering of a lawyer for a project. You stand a much better chance of free help if you have the following information written out and ready to give to the law firm for their consideration.

How long do you need (in hours) If you do not know how long it will take then put a maximum time on it such as, "Up to 4 hours work" or "one hour per week for four weeks" If it is occasional work then perhaps you would word it, "Up to 3 hours per annum"

Now put down what they will do.

- "Scrutinising four supplier tenders per annum"
- "Attending one AGM per annum"

- “Sitting on Committee to build new office. 5 meetings in 5 months
(weekday evenings)

They may not know what your charity does so write down who you will be helping or what is the cause that you are going to alleviate. Phrasing is important. For instance a bad reason to ask them to volunteer their time would be, “To look out for our suppliers not adhering to the contracts” A better reason would be, “To help us alleviate suffering by ensuring that our contract conditions are met.”

Finding an accountant

A good place to find help is from the student body of trainee accountants who would like to have on their CV the fact that they act as your Treasurer. Another place to find help is from retired accountants who may have a little more time to help you. You know where to post these opportunities. Use the do-it website and the other websites in this book for volunteering. Just be specific about the time needed and the skills set.

Your advertisement might be something like,

Trainee accountant needed for 4 hours a month to help charity relieve the suffering of the poor.”

Or

“Year End accounts need finalising by local charity. Please give 4 hours to prepare the accounts for auditing in April”

Have a look at this website and put your opportunity on the site.

<http://www.goodwillgallery.co.uk/freecharityservices.htm>

These people too will have a volunteer for you if you put your opportunity on their site:

<http://www.volresource.org.uk>

The Institutes

There are Institutes for Lawyers and Accountants in England Scotland Wales and Ireland. These are good places to find the person that you need as they have bulletin boards where you can post your need. If you are not a member then you might ask a member with access to post your vacancy on the intranet notice board for you.

You are looking for websites similar to this:

<http://www.icas.org.uk>

<http://www.icaew.co.uk/>

<http://www.ifa.org.uk/>

www.cimaglobal.com/

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/home.law/>

And here is a site for trainee solicitors

<http://www.tsg.org/> This is where you can offer your charity as a great place to volunteer before they become qualified.

Public Libraries

There is a wealth of information in your public library and librarians are usually only too willing to help. Many of the information resources that I have listed in this book are on the web. You may not find what you need by using this method and so your library is a place to keep looking. Also you can have access to the Internet from libraries now. Lastly it is a great place to find volunteers! Take a volunteering leaflet into the library and put it on the notice board there. Take some leaflets and talent cards too and make sure that you hand them out to the readers in the library.

Local Radio and TV

You have so many opportunities with your local TV and Radio to help fill your charity with volunteers. Do not be afraid to simply telephone in or walk in the front door and say who you are, which charity you are from and ask to go on air to plead for volunteers. They might say no but often they will say yes.

The timing of your visit or call is best in the evening after the rush hour. They are very busy during office hours and first thing in the morning but they can use your story late every day.

Write down the questions that you want them to ask

Journalists and presenters want to make you feel at ease. They are not trying to catch you out. You know your charity better than they do so it may be unfair to expect them to very knowledgeable on the issues that you face. For this reason they will appreciate some help in asking relevant questions to help you feel at ease. So you should write down the questions that you want them to ask. Go onto our book website www.charity-volunteer.com to download a sheet of typical questions. But here are the top three to be going on with:

"Why do you need more volunteers?"

"How can people contact you?"

"How can people get more information?"

Take this with you to the studio and hand one copy to the presenter and keep one copy for yourself.

"Presenter:

YOUR CHARITY is doing great work here in YOUR TOWN and they have been doing this since they started in 19xx and recently they celebrated this xxxxxxxxxx wonderful success. But they can't continue without volunteers and so the call today is going out to you, our wonderful audience to just give a little time to the charity and make a huge difference."

Today we welcome MARY from YOUR CHARITY into the studio. Welcome Mary, now you said that you said that you need volunteers. Exactly what will these volunteers be doing?

MARY, how does that change people's lives?

You said that you celebrated xxxxxxxx success. How did that come about?

How does our audience get in touch if they want to volunteer?

Office of the Day

Become the "Office of the Day" on your local commercial radio station. This involves the radio station interviewing a workplace with workers and the boss choosing records and explaining what they do at work.

Write in to your local radio station if they have their "Lunch-Break" section or "Office of the Day" by letter or by email.

You will need to have 2 or 3 people available for an interview and usually the big boss because they like to interview "The Boss". It is free and fun and you get to choose your favourite tracks too.

When they interview you, make sure that you say to the presenter "... we need new Volunteers and the number to call is 01*** *****"

Action Desk

<http://www.csv.org.uk/>

Your local BBC will have an action desk and this will be linked to a local charity organisation such as CSV (Community Service Volunteers) Make sure that you have your charity and the need for volunteers on the action desk site every month. Here is how to do it:

- Go to the BBC Radio website and click on "Where I live" then put in your postcode to get your local radio station's website.
- On the left hand side is either "Community" or "Action Desk" Just click through these links until you find a page that is similar to this:
 - Message Board
 - Events and What's On

Use the local radio presenters

So imagine a radio presenter looking for something to say. They look at the "What's On" part of the BBC site and then they read out on the air: "Next Thursday the local Samaritans are having an exciting and dynamic evening devoted to listening to others and improving our communication skills. This event will be great for any communicators and anyone who wants to find out what other people are feeling when they speak"

How did the presenter know that it was going to be exciting and dynamic?

Because it was you that wrote those words of course.

Remember that all your events are fun, exciting, packed, dynamic, unusual, and popular when you are describing them to other people, especially when you are describing them to the press.

If you want to find out more about this fantastic free method then work your way through the BBC website via:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/whereilive/>

Click on your county on the map.

On the left hand side click on "*Events Guide*"

Click on "*Submit your event*"

Under "*Event Title*" make it interesting. Don't put "Charity Information Evening".

You are trying to get the Radio presenter's attention. Can you think of some phrase that catches the ear? "Planet in Danger" or "Traffic Chaos" or a phrase that is interesting.

Go to "*Pick of the Week*" on the BBC website to see what you are competing against and you will see that you need to make it lively. In the box "*Details about the event*" be really positive again and make it easy for the presenter to read out. Say something like:

*"Here is a fascinating evening put on by Your Charity which brilliantly explores why using your ears is more important than using your mouth. It's a popular event run all over the country and this month it is held in *****. It is always popular so please call now to find out more"*

I am sure you can come up with something better. But please don't say something dull like:

"There will be an Information Evening at Your Charity and learn how to be a Volunteer and give something back"

It is a bit dull and it is not going to fill the room.

Put the date for about 6 weeks ahead as it takes this long to get people to read it and 4 weeks to decide to turn up.

Do it for the next 12 months

Ask your Information Evening team to give you the dates for the next year to you in good time.

Then you cut and paste the same text into the BBC website but with different dates each time. I would also change the "*Event Title*" too. But you can keep the text the same. This way you can get 12 months of info events on the BBC website in one go.

Commercial Radio

Check that the commercial stations also have an "**Action Desk**" or similar and get your events on there too.

Special Programmes

There is nothing stopping you inviting the local radio or TV to broadcast a programme from your charity. It will make a very interesting item for the listeners (or viewers) and will give you plenty of reasons to build a Press Release around this event. It will bring in volunteers.

Simply write a letter to the "Head of Programming" in your local stations. Give them a great reason for saying yes. Maybe it is a birthday for your charity, do you have a "Christmas Message" or can you tie it in with a national day such as "World Peace Day" or "Thinking Day" or a country's National Holiday.

Get creative and explain to the station that it will be a great opportunity for them to bring a new experience to their listeners of viewers.

Free newspapers

Free newspapers are often a good way of distributing your “we need you” leaflets. You simply deliver them to the distribution point and pay a small cheque to the newspaper. This method can be good as it takes a burden off your volunteers who may agree to post the leaflets once in their streets or around your charity but they are not so keen the second time.

Post Office

Your local post office sorting office will distribute your leaflet for a small fee. This is usually done twice a month by your postman. They will be dropping off several leaflets as well as yours but it is not expensive and it has been proven to work. It has the benefit of being easy for you to monitor the success. When you know that the post office will be delivering 1,000 leaflets in a housing estate near you, you can monitor the calls to see if you see an increase in calls from that estate.

Txt to volunteer

Many people are quite relaxed in texting on their mobile phone for things that they want. For this reason you can add a volunteering facility to your charity by using mobile phones. There are several agencies that will set you up for a fee so that anyone who texts VOL to 123456 will automatically receive a text back from you with a message such as: " *Thanks for texting [your charity] we will call to get your address and send info pack. Also see www.yourcharity.org*"

You can visit these sites to see if the service that they offer will suit you:

<http://www.iflow-tech.com/>

<http://www.ipipi.com/>

Email to volunteer

Make sure that you have an email box called volunteer@yourcharity.org as well as the other spellings so that they all get through to your email address.

Vollunteer, Vollunnteer, Vollunteerr Vullonteer

Your email system will have the ability to handle a hundred email addresses so make sure that it is easy for people to get through.

Diverting emails

There are some email addresses that you view every day and some that you never look at. Some charities ignore their volunteering email box and then wonder why they do not find volunteers. It is really easy to set it up so that all emails to these addresses are forwarded by the computer to an email address that you look at every day. Do not rely on your memory to check for emails from volunteers or rely on another volunteer. Get the computer to do this automatically. Hotmail, Yahoo, Gmail and Googlemail accounts all do this automatically for you.

Freshers Week

Your local University and College will have a Freshers Week at the start of each academic year. This will be in September of each year and is usually organised by The Students Association or the Students Union.

The young new students will be looking for clubs to join and things to do. Freshers week normally takes place a week after universities resume. Different clubs and societies group up at a stall and display what their club has to offer.

Volunteering with your charity could be one thing that they will sign up for. It is good to attend for several years in a row as that way you will catch the second year and third year students who were too busy in their first year. Remember that "repetition builds reputation" If you turn up each year you will build on success.

Student Magazines and websites

Make sure that the Student magazines have your news. You can easily reach several dozen magazines in one go or just reach your local student magazine by connecting to:

<http://news.ukstudentnews.co.uk/>

Go to: <http://www.nusonline.co.uk/> to find the National Union of Students where you will be able to find the local SU in your local centre of learning.

If you are going to spend a small amount of money on advertising for volunteers then these magazines are GOOD places to try. Between September and February will yield the best results if you want people to answer your advertisement. Make sure that you also have a listing on the website for the student magazine.

Student Radio

Several colleges have student radio. This is run by students for students. It is a cheap and easy place to get on air and to tell the students that you need volunteers and to tell them about your charity.

To find your nearest student radio go to the Student Radio Association site and tell them what you do and what you want to achieve.

<http://www.studentradio.org.uk/>

Working with other charities

Your own Charity Fair

Hold your own recruiting fair with other local charities. There are many occasions when you can meet other charities together at a charity event. These charities are not your competitors. You might think that you are all competing for the same volunteers and if you help another charity then you are going to lose out. They will get your volunteer instead of you. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, if you help other charities in a mutually beneficial way, then both of you will have new volunteers. Here are two ways that this will work:

Speed Volunteering

This is just like speed dating. You and maybe a dozen other local charities arrange to hire a room for an evening and together you organise some publicity for the event.

You will be able to find more volunteers and get more publicity than you could ever do on your own. October each year is a great time to arrange this and your local university or college is a fantastic venue.

If you can see 100 prospective volunteers in one evening and 20 meet you and your charity then you have a very high chance of finding 3 or 4 new volunteers in just one evening.

Because it sounds like a fun evening and the volunteers might meet some other people like them socially you are likely to get quite a good turn out. Just because someone comes to your event because they want an interesting evening out meeting new people does not mean they will not make excellent volunteers.

Speed volunteering checklist.

- Team up with other charities.
- Choose an evening
- Choose a young people venue such as college
- Choose the autumn when new people arrive at college

Joint mailings

This is a not list swap, which is mentioned next but different. This is where you send out two or even three other charities information when someone asks you for information. Here is how it works: A person asks your charity for information about volunteering in your charity. You then send out your standard pack of information but you include other charities information too. You also add a paragraph to your letter that says something such as:

"If you do not want to find out more about our charity we have included some of the other charities near you that carry out different work. We hope that you will call us but if not, then you might like to call them instead."

You do not put a charity in your information that is similar to yourselves.

Let us assume that you are a conservation charity looking for outdoor types who can clear scrubland or build a wall.

The type of charity you include will be a first aid charity, a charity for kids and a charity for old people. None of these need outdoor types.

You then get the other 3 charities to do the same. That is that they send your information out to people who enquire about their charities too. There is no conflict and it certainly will help you to fill your charity with volunteers.

Visit a Charity Fair

Book a stand at one of the Volunteering England charity fairs near you.

<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/>

There are many recruiting shows and exhibitions up and down the country and certainly there will be one that you can book a stand with.

If you are in the UK then you may want to learn about Forum3, which is an annual exhibition in October for charities by charities.

<http://www.forum3.co.uk/>

To find out more I suggest that you watch the bigger websites on volunteering to keep up to date on what is going on. Here are a few to add to your bookmarks in your browser:

Links to Government sites

CSV (Community Service Volunteers)

<http://www.csv.org.uk> this is a government supported website that will give you a great base to find more local contacts to help you. They work with the BBC and the local paper as well as your local Voluntary Action Group. Make sure that your charity is registered with them as well as your vacancies for volunteering.

Do-it.org

To search for your local volunteering centre visit: <http://www.do-it.org.uk/needvolunteers> and register at your local volunteering centre or *Voluntary Action Centre*. There will be one in or near your town. Just to add to your confusion, these groups are also known as do-it.org.uk. They tie in with Vinspired and other organisations such as cdse.org.uk to help you find volunteers. When you post a vacancy for a volunteer on the do-it.org site, they will distribute it to the other sites for you.

Help the site find you

Vinspired only looks for people between 16 and 25 years old and so it will not pick up your vacancy unless you make sure that this is made clear in your application. Insert a phrase such as “suitable for anyone between 16 and 25 years old” if you want to be on the Vinspired website.

Vinspired

<http://www.vinspired.com/>

This is a website and government led initiative to encourage volunteering in 16 -25 year olds.

This is what they say about themselves:

“We are v, the charity behind vinspired.org that champions youth volunteering in England. Our aim is to inspire a million more 16-25 year olds to volunteer. If you're aged between 16 and 25, and are interested in exciting opportunities to gain new experiences, learn new skills, meet new people and have fun, then you've come to the right place.” Young people can register at <http://www.vupforit.com/> to find out more.

everyactioncounts.org.uk

<http://www.everyactioncounts.org.uk/>they try to help local groups and clubs involved with activities around climate change and the environment.

This is a site run by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and it boasts some easy actions and activities.

Togetherwecan

<http://www.togetherwecan.info/> is a government website that tries to help you get people involved. Here is what it says about itself:

"Together We Can sets out the government's plan to enable people to engage with public bodies and influence the decisions that affect their communities. Together We Can is led by the Department for Communities and Local Government

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/> and 12 other government departments are contributing with policies that empower citizens to get involved."

www.neighbourhood-knowhow.org.uk

<http://www.neighbourhood-knowhow.org.uk> Neighbourhood Know-How is for anyone who is interested in getting involved in his or her neighbourhood

TimeBank

<http://www.timebank.org.uk/>

TimeBank is a national charity that hopes to inspire people to share and give time. TimeBank appeals to people who know that their time and skills are in demand - but just don't know what to do about it or where to start. Make sure that your charity is on their website.

Communitiestakingcontrol.org

<http://www.communitiestakingcontrol.org/>

This site is aimed at tenants of housing associations. The site contains examples of groups in control of problems that affect their lives so if you want to run a playgroup or similar activity to help tenants this might help.

Pledgebank

<http://www.pledgebank.com/> You can make a pledge on this site and agree to do something, such as become a volunteer, only if someone else does something too. So you could make this pledge:

“I will run a training session to help a new volunteer make a difference in the community – but only if I get a volunteer.”

Or

“I will volunteer at *Your Charity* – but only if someone else volunteers to give me moral support” For this to work you do need one volunteer but of course you may double your intake through Pledgebank.

Cdse (if you live in the south east of England)

Try out <http://www.cdse.org.uk/> or a similar one in your region.

If you live outside of the south east of England there is a page of related sites that you can visit to find the full list of UK government organisations and sites:

[CDSE - Related Sites](#)

Volunteering England

Try this site <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/> for plenty of links to other sites.

Remember that your volunteering position can be distributed by these sites to the others without you doing anything. So it is important that your charity is updating the opportunities on these sites every week. Volunteering England has a section for helping you manage your volunteers. Go to the link

<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/managingvolunteers/> to find publications and more.

They run and promote a course called Excellence in Volunteer Management

<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/managingvolunteers/>, and you can use this course to train and receive a qualification in volunteer management. It might give you a better job but of course it is there to help your charity keep and recruit volunteers.

Links to Non Government Sites

Gumtree.com

If you are a charity that needs help then <http://www.gumtree.com/> will register your need for some volunteers in London and 45 UK cities plus sites in Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, and Poland.

The Scarman Trust "Can Do Exchange"

<http://www.thescarmantrust.org/> The Scarman Trust is a national charity committed to helping citizens change their community, in the way that they want. The Trust funds and gives practical assistance to hundreds of remarkable people with a 'can do' attitude. The best bit for you is their, "**Can Do Exchange**" simply put it means that you can barter or swap something that you have (maybe a nice meeting room) for something or someone that you do not have. Very rarely does any money actually change hands but the Scarman Trust will help you find people or things that help you find people. You just have to give something else back.

The School Governors' One-Stop Shop

<http://www.sgooss.org.uk/>

The School Governors' One-Stop Shop is a small limited company with charitable status which aims to recruit volunteers with transferable skills to become governors and add value in schools across England. So if you are a school then you should try these people.

Business in the Community

<http://www.bitc.org.uk/>

Business in the Community is a group of the UK's top companies who will encourage their staff to volunteer. They have a project called CARES. This is Business in the Community's national campaign to engage employees in their communities through volunteering. More than 400 companies support city-based and regional Cares partnerships in 32 locations across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. You can contact the local CARES partnership on +44 20 7566 8732 in the UK.

Looking in North America?

The **volunteermatch**, **volunteersolutions** and **idealist** sites are admirable examples of how your charity can match its need with volunteers.

Volunteermatch

<http://www.volunteermatch.org/>

A similar site that provides several ways to help your organization in North America is

Volunteersolutions

<http://www.volunteersolutions.org/>

Idealist

This site is bi-lingual and includes an office in Argentina as well as North America

<http://www.idealist.org/>

Do Something

The **Do Something** site will give you an opportunity to post your need for volunteers. <http://www.dosomething.org/>

They will help you organize your own Do Something club or help you network with an existing one locally to your charity.

Servenet

<http://www.servenet.org/> has some tips and hints to help you find volunteers in North America.

Wikihow

<http://www.wikihow.com/Fundraise-for-Charity> is full of content written by others. It is rather like the Wikipedia (<http://www.wikipedia.org/>) but this site contains How To Do advice rather than facts.

Using computer lists

You should buy a database of every address in your area on a disk so that you can carry out easy mail shots:

- Secondary Schools
- Universities and Colleges
- Village Halls
- Doctors
- Vets
- Hospitals
- Pub/Clubs
- Places of Worship
- Social Clubs
- Sports Clubs
- Youth Clubs
- Local Press, Radio, TV
- Local Government and Town Councils
- Rotarians/Lions/Round Table/Inner Wheel
- Top 50 local companies in your town or region.

You can find the names of the large employers in your town from many free sources very easily. They are available from your **local town council or county council**.

They will give you a free list of big companies in your area because they keep these to send out to other companies who may want to come to your town.

On the web you can type this into your favourite search engine:

Noticeboards

These places on the list all have notice boards either in their reception area, in their canteen and rest areas. You can have free publicity of volunteering for your charity just by sending your poster about an interesting event. They will usually place your poster in a prominent spot if it has an “expiry time” clearly printed on the back or front. This expiry time can be the date of your event. It could be a social event or it could be an information event to find out more about your work.

Give a talk to work group in a company

You can also talk straight to them. These companies will tell all of the staff that you are going to give a talk about your charity at lunchtime for about 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for questions. They will set aside a room for you and give you a flip chart and a digital projector. You may have to bring your own laptop though.

Keep the talk down to 30 minutes. There are several advantages in keeping it short:

- Keep them wanting to know more. Never tell the whole story. Stop when they are into the “interest” stage.

- You will be invited back if staff are not late for work after lunch.
Their managers will notice if they are late.
- If they can go and eat their lunch as well as hearing you they will be pleased.

Buying your database

Buy a database of every address in your area. You can buy them easily but a good source would be Experian: <http://www.uk.experian.com/> (they used to be Yell Data (Yellow Pages)) and £150 buys you 1,000 plus addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses.

You should try Marketscan on <http://www.marketscan.co.uk/> and also <http://www.businesslistsuk.com/>

There is a list of suppliers who belong to the DMA (Direct Marketing Association) on <http://www.data.dma.org.uk/>

The term for companies who hold and sell lists is a "**List Broker**" You will find a list broker in your local town.

Using Contact Management Software

Buy a cheap Customer Relationship Manager program

Try:

Microsoft "Business Contact Manager for OUTLOOK"

You do need to have a PC running Outlook and Office. If you have these products then you can download a completely FREE set of add-ons from Microsoft themselves. Look for, "Business Contact Manager for Outlook" and download your free copy.

Go to the Microsoft site <http://www.microsoft.com/>

Find, "*Products*"

Find, "*Office Online Home*"

In the panel marked, "*Welcome to Office Online*" type in, "*Business Contact Manager*" and click the "*Search*" button.

You will be guided to the page that tells you more. If you have the software installed such as Outlook and Office, then you should get Business Contact Manager for free.

Maximizer

This is a wonderful program that is streaks ahead of the others but it will cost you a small amount of money. I am biased as I use it to keep track of all my appointments, emails, letters, invitations to give talks, consultancy requests and it even has a world clock so that I know the time in California where my daughter is.

You can download a trial copy to see if you like it. Go to

<http://www.maximizer.com/> to find out more.

Goldmine

A very good way to keep in touch with your community is by using a programme such as Goldmine. <http://www.goldmine.com/>

ACT!

This is compatible with the other programmes I have suggested. They will all swap information and they all have a chance for you to try before you buy.

<http://www.preact.co.uk/>

All of the simple versions of these systems are about £70 in the UK. (\$100) and they will transform the way that your charity deals with volunteers.

Here are some good reasons for buying a CRM program for about £50:

- You can hand it over to your successor
- You can send a press release to all the Press in one go and you can see what you sent them when you do another one next year.
- You can contact every group and invite yourself to give short talk.
- You can send information about volunteering to every contact really easily.

Remember that you can try Ebay for second user software. Many companies will issue you with a free license as long as you apply on headed notepaper with your charity number printed on it. These donating companies include Microsoft.

Keeping - Working with your existing volunteers

Here are several great ways of using your existing volunteers to bring in new volunteers. The first one is to use the Talent Cards.

Talent Cards

The talent card idea is not new and because it has been successfully used for years and years by really switched on groups you can have confidence that it works.

People like *TGI Fridays* use this method of recruiting new bar-staff by rewarding the existing staff when they recruit a friend. For this to happen easily they are all given Talent Cards to give out to their friends.

And your Volunteers can do the same.

- There is a design that you can play with on the website. You can easily download a design from there. www.charity-volunteer.com
- You simply give 5 of these cards to every Volunteer in your charity. They can use them as "ice breakers"
- It works because it is difficult to say to someone, "I think you might make a good Volunteer" so your Volunteers can use the Talent Card instead.

- Make sure that they get rid of them by a certain date because if you don't give a date then they won't bother.
- Always set a timescale with Talent Cards
- Tell your Volunteers that you are doing a survey and that you need to collate the answers over the Christmas break.
- This means that all the Talent cards must be given away by the end of October. When it is explained like this you know that the cards will have gone and not kept in people's wallets and pockets and never used. If you do this then you can expect about 50% of the cards will be used. So you should be giving out 500 in the spring if you have about 100 Volunteers in your Charity.

Social Event Free Ticket

Have a fun social event such as bowling, quiz night, darts match, barbecue where everyone in your Charity can bring family and friends. Charge everyone some small amount at the door to keep the Treasurer happy.

Now here is the twist.

Make entry free to every Volunteer who brings a friend and the best way to do this is to have the money on the door and you hand one to every volunteer who arrives with a friend.

Why? Because you are going to stand up during the event and explain to those who are not volunteers that the Charity can't run without volunteers and the friends here would be very welcome to apply.

Point to the pile of application forms or just tell them to speak to their hosts in confidence that they would like to know more.

Two reasons why people do not apply.

One of the biggest reasons people don't apply to volunteer is *that they think that they do not have the right experience*. They think that you want experts in your charity. *The second reason is fear of being rejected*. They think that if they are rejected that you "don't even want them-even if they are free".

Imagine telling your friends that you can't even give your skills and experience away.

So it is a good reason to reassure people that they do not have to be experts or special people to be volunteers.

Your regular events

You need to have a focus for people to meet you and your volunteers in an informal setting. Without a focus it is too difficult to measure how well you are doing. You need to see how close you are to finding the target number of volunteers that you need and regular events are the best way to do this. You will find that if you have 20 people in the room you will always find 3 new people. If this is the case then you know exactly how many people you need to attract into the room to reach your target of new volunteers.

Your AGM

What a great way to thank the volunteers in your charity who have helped to bring in new people. You can download a certificate from our website and hand the certificate to them at your AGM. A bottle of wine or some flowers will make the award very special. But do not forget to arrange to take photos of the presentation too. This photograph can be framed and given to the volunteer a few weeks later. Just as important is putting the photos on your notice board so that other volunteers see your "heroes" getting their awards. Remember that the more support that you get from your volunteers then the less work there is for you to do so reward them publicly and take a photo of the award.

Theme event

Some charities will have two themes for their events each year, where they offer an interesting evening every 6 months about their work to complete strangers who might like to volunteer with their charity.

You may want to offer an introduction to the work that you do. Call it a "Taster Session" if you want to.

Put on a demonstration.

I know of an animal charity that has good contacts with a dog-training club. This is because they help to house stray dogs and they offer care advice free of charge to the dog-training club. In return the dog training club members put on a dog agility show whenever the charity are out looking for money or volunteers. This means that the charity can make their event interesting by advertising a dog agility show to draw people in to their event. Can you find one of your volunteers who have a talent and are willing to share it with others?

I have been to a charity that has a wine buff in their group. This person sets up "Wine Tasting Evenings" that attract nearly 100 people at each event. Do you have someone like this in your charity?

Name Badges

Everyone who comes to your event must have a name badge. It is important to use name badges to recruit new volunteers for several reasons. Firstly it makes everyone in the room at the same social level. For the potential volunteer this is really important. Can you remember what it is like to join a new school? Perhaps more recently you joined a club where the others were already members. You feel awkward and as you do not know anyone yet it may be difficult to start a conversation. The others are old friends and they are chatting to each other anyway so how are you going to interrupt? For this reason and others you must make sure that everyone has their names clearly written on a badge. You need to make the badges easy to read by using a large felt tip pen and CAPITAL letters. This makes it easy for people to read at a distance and without glasses. Both are important if people are sitting a few feet from each other or are in a situation where they are holding something such as a glass of wine. If they are holding things such as your brochure then it is difficult to get their glasses out of their pocket. So make it easy for others to read each others names.

Some of your volunteers may not like name badges. They may say, " I think that name badges are awful." It is a good time to remind them that the event is about finding new volunteers and research show that using name badges quickly builds confidence in new people joining any group. In other words it is about the strangers who are not in the group and not about the group who are already friends.

Mark the badges so that it is easy to see who one of your volunteers is and who is a stranger. It is very important that all of your volunteers can see who the guests are and then to engage them in conversation. Different coloured pens or a large dot in a corner or even a different coloured badge are all ways that are popular. Use simple self-adhesive address labels as your badges. Write the badges out as people arrive rather than have them pre-printed. The simple act of asking for their name and making sure that it is spelt correctly will be a great icebreaker between the newcomer and your charity.

Badges checklist

- Self-adhesive address labels
- Large felt tip pen
- Handwrite the names
- Use CAPITALS
- Identify the newcomers on the label with a colour

Business Card

Does your Chief Officer or Director have a business card? Free ones are available from: www.vistaprint.co.uk <http://www.vistaprint.co.uk>.

Or <http://www.freeprintablebusinesscards.net/>

It is really important that he or she can hand the card to the prospective volunteer and say, "I really hope that you will volunteer with us. If you have any questions or worries then please call me personally on my home number or work. Here is my card for you to keep."

Why go to all of this trouble just for an event?

If your chief person makes the ASK, it is better than the host, who may be their friend, trying to stay in touch as the new person may want to say No but not feel able to.

They can speak to the chief person and not have to upset their friendship with the host. If you protect their friend, who may be your volunteer, by doing this then you will find that your volunteers will not mind doing it again.

The bottom line is that you want your volunteers to bring more guests next time. They will do this if they bring a guest and other people do the rest of the process. Giving the guest someone else to talk with, giving them a talent card, the chief giving them a business card are all things that will make an impression on the guest but also on your volunteer.

If they are not embarrassed but actually they feel proud of the effort that your team do to make the friend feel at home, can see what people's names are, not bothered with jargon, wanted as a volunteer and they have an easy way to say yes or no, then your volunteer will take part in your next event and bring another friend.

If you do not do these things then you will find that the next event is less successful and you will blame "lack of interest". It is rarely true that there is lack of interest. It is usually that the first event was less than perfect and that they do not feel that it was worthwhile or that they had to do much of the work with out being thanked.

Thank you

You need to have 3 pre-prepared letters sitting ready to be sent to both your volunteers who came to support you and the guests who were brought to the event.

- Supporter's Letter this is sent to the people who came to support and help but did not bring guests.
- Host's Letter this letter is for the hosts who brought guests.
- Guest's Letter this goes to the guests.

All 3 letters are at our website on www.charity-volunteer.com for you to download instead of typing them in. Here is the main paragraph to give you an idea of how each letter is written:

Supporter letter

..... Your support is really appreciated. Thank you for taking the time to talk to our guests and making them feel welcome. I hope that we will be able to find some new volunteers for our charity because of your help with this event. We will be having another event soon and I hope that I can count on your wonderful support at that time, to make it a success. Please bring any friend that you have as your guest as **[host]** did with **[guest]**. We will make them very welcome and who knows – they may feel like helping us in our work too

Host letter

..... Your support is really appreciated. Thank you for bringing **[guest name]** with you. It really is appreciated that you took the trouble as we find that people who see our work are sometimes able to take some time to volunteer. Your contribution in bringing a guest cannot be over estimated. It is the lifeblood of our charity.

We will be having another event soon and I hope that I can count on your support then to make it a success. Please bring any friend that you have as your guest. We will make them very welcome and who knows – they may feel like helping us in our work too

Guest letter

..... Thank you for coming with **[host name]** and taking the time to meet out volunteers and seeing how important our work is. It is vital that we continue this work for so many people in our community. We cannot do this without people like you. I would like you to fill out the application form for volunteering and send it back to us. Please call me personally if I can answer any questions that you have, as it can seem daunting at first. Don't worry. Everyone feels like that. We would love you to join our training course which is starting on **[date]**

Best wishes,

Chief person

Jargon

A good way to drive away a guest at your event is to use jargon. Every charity has some and it makes no sense to anyone outside of your charity. It can be used as a way of connecting with a fellow volunteer and it is fine when there are just two people in the conversation but not when a new person is with you at an event.

Avoid jargon when new people are about.

A great idea from a Liverpool charity

This Liverpool charity gets plenty of volunteers and they do not spend much money. This is what they do:

They have a good quality white postcard.

They use simple font and only black ink and one colour. This keeps the cost down to two-colour printing.

They then make sure that everyone sees this card and that every volunteer has the cards with them rather like the Talent Cards. They also get the local free papers to pop the cards through the letterboxes of people near them for either a very small amount of money or free of charge.

What is on the card?

Here is the text. It is not earth shattering but I guarantee that it will work for you if your volunteers give these out at every opportunity.

Thermometer

It's a great idea to tell your existing volunteers what is going on in your charity. It will give them the feeling of being involved. They will understand that other people value their work so much that they too would like to get involved. They can see that "the Committee" or the bosses are actually pursuing new people to lighten the load. They can see that they are part of a growing charity while sometimes they may feel that they are doing all the work on their own (even though they are not)

Here is a simple thermometer that you can use to show your existing volunteers how the charity is doing and how much more you need to achieve.

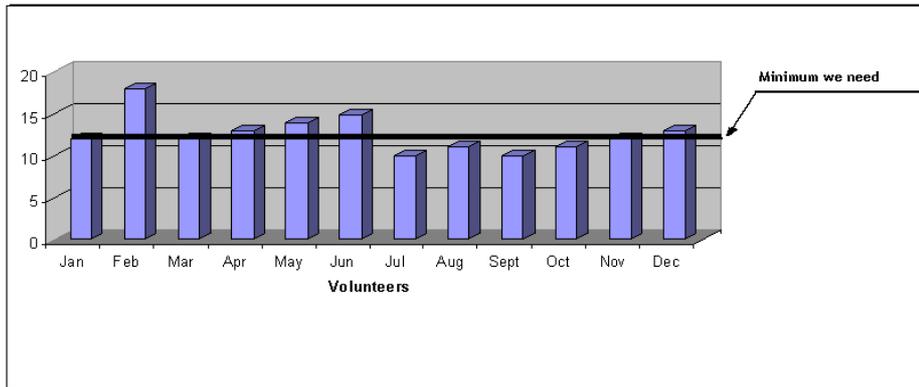
You can download your own thermometer from our website: www.charity-volunteer.com so you do not even have to make your own.



Charts

Here is a chart that works well when you have to have people on duty to man the office or the phone or be in a particular place.

It allows the volunteers to see when there are plenty of people around and when you need more help. It will tend to smooth out the shortages of helpers during busy times.



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BIG and put them on a wall where everyone can see them.

There are some easy ways to make posters for your office made out of several sheets.

A very good way is to use a free program called Page Plus. You can download this completely free at: <http://www.freecerifsoftware.com/>

It is made by Serif Software. Download the program for Desktop Publishing and it will let you make some very large banners really easily.

Newsletters

Do you write a newsletter “by the volunteers for the volunteers”? These internal newsletters are great for transmitting information to your volunteers. It prevents a “them and us” attitude if people are kept informed of what is going on in your charity, even if it is just a small group of friends. Include some fun items as well as some regular “columns”. The regulars are usually:

- *Note from our Treasurer* to tell volunteers of how the money is going. If they have just helped in a tin-rattle in your local town then what a good time to tell them how much was raised.

- *Message from the CEO* This will tell them the current state of the charity and is a good place for the CEO to thank and congratulate your volunteers.
- *Diary Dates* this tells volunteers of what is happening soon.
- *What we have been doing* This is filled with photos of recent activities and a few words about the fun that everyone had and the huge amount of money that was raised.
- *In the News* Usually filled with recent press cuttings or perhaps an interview on the local radio or in the local newspaper.

Free Newsletter Templates are available from the Internet. These allow you to email your newsletter to every volunteer in your charity and also to print it out in colour to have a paper version too.

Although this is not free from **Constantcontact** it will cost about £10 (\$20) per month, they do offer a really great service.

Other places to find your free or nearly free newsletter software are:

From Microsoft at www.office.microsoft.com

www.graphicmail.co.uk

Your newsletter will make a big difference to the recruits that you find. Make sure that they see what fun they will have when they join you and how much trouble you go to, to keep them informed.

Where do they work?

Posters

Can you give them a poster to put up on the notice board at work? It is often very easy to do this. Very rarely is there any protocol about notices in the canteen area and that is where your volunteer can put up a poster about your charity.

Intranet

Instead of posters it is often possible to put the information on the company intranet. How is this done? It is very easy for any volunteer in your charity to be sent an email by you about your volunteering opportunity and they will put it on the company intranet. To help them do this you can send it to them in the format that intranets like. This format is called HTML. You really can create and write an HTML piece about your charity very easily on a word processor or several free HTML editors such as Seamonkey. <http://www.mozilla.org/projects/seamonkey/> You can download a free copy of Seamonkey from this site.

Writing HTML for an intranet or someone else's website.

All you need to do this trickery is any word processor software such as Microsoft's **WORD** or **Open Office** or the Apple Mac equivalents.

Simply write your piece as normal and save it safely. Got it saved? Good. Now go to *VIEW*, choose *WEB LAYOUT* and now you can see your document as if it was a web page. Now choose *FILE*, and then *SAVE AS*. Next you will see a window known as a dialog and you have seen it before. Normally you choose to save as a document but this time you will scroll down the "*SAVE AS TYPE*" until you find *WEB PAGE*. Now you click *SAVE* and choose a name with web on the end such as *myposter_web.htm*. This is now a file that you can use as a web-page and so can other people use it on their intranet in their office to publicise your volunteer opportunities in their workplace.

Piggy Back

Ask your volunteers to take a letter into work asking the accounts department to use the piggyback on their invoices and statements. Please do not ask the volunteer to do the asking. All that you will get back is, "Well I asked and they said no" You can't argue with the volunteer or question if they tried hard or not. After all they work there and they may not want to rock the boat with the department that pays their wages.

You must do the asking. Here is how you do it.

Write a convincing letter and ask your volunteer to hand it to the Finance Director.

In other words the highest, most senior person they know of. A second choice would be to hand it, un-opened to the PA for that Director. You can download a letter from our website or you can write a letter along these lines:

“ I am writing from Your Charity to ask if you would help us.....(do great work in the local area) This will not cost you or your company anything. All that I am asking is that you help with a simple method that has proved time and time again to bring results to the (people, animals, and issues) that we care about in our community. You care too. Please call me to discuss this and I will reveal all about *“the piggyback”* It will not cost your company anything and it will impress your customers and suppliers that your company is a pleasure to do business with.”

You have not explained what it is that you want done. All you have done is say that it will not cost them anything (twice) and that you will explain more.

This letter assumes that you want them to call you to find out more. If you want to explain about the piggyback and run the risk of a big “no” then this is what you do in order to minimise the chances of rejection.

You must send 100 of the letters to suppliers and customers with your volunteer together with the following letter to the big boss.

“I am writing from *Your Charity* to ask if you would help us to (*do great work in the local area*) This will not cost you or your company anything. All that I am asking is that you help with a simple method that has proved time and time again to bring results to the *people, animals, and issues* that we care about in our community. You care too. Please include one of these letters when you send out your invoices, purchase orders, cheques and statements. It will strengthen your links with your suppliers and customers.

It will not cost your company anything and it will impress your customers and suppliers that your company is a pleasure to do business with.”

You have not given them a chance to say no. All that is likely to happen is that they will either do it or throw them away. But actually it is likely that they will do it for you. So make sure that your volunteer takes in the letter to the Finance Director and 100 of the piggy back letters all sealed up and unopened.

Mystery Shopper

Apply to your own charity

One of the first things that you can do, there is no reason why you cannot do it now, it to apply to your own charity to be a volunteer. You need a false name and a real address of a friend or neighbour to see what level of service a new applicant is getting.

Ask a friend to apply

If you are the person who is responsible for processing the applications then (and this needs courage) you should ask a friend to apply to your charity without telling you. (Using a different name, obviously)

Apply to two other charities

Now I want you to apply to two other charities too and this time you can use your own name and address. The reason for this is that most people apply for two or three charities because they either are not sure which one is for them, or they think that they will not measure up and you might not want them. It is unlikely that they only apply to your charity.

How did your charity compare? I expect that it was not bad compared to local rivals.

Wait and Wait and Wait

Now you should wait and see if any of the charities telephone you to make sure that you have the information and you are happy with everything. They should be trying to overcome the fear of rejection by telephoning you and encouraging you to apply. If your own charity calls your friend they should try to find out some simple information and so I have drawn up a simple checklist:

Your information should make a thump

There are certain qualities that will make your reply stand out and quite a few that really do not matter.

Here are the things that matter:

- It must arrive the very next day.
- It must have a first class stamp and the correct postage.
- The envelope should be handwritten or a window envelope.
- There should be an application form in the pack.
- There must be a reply-paid envelope back to you in the pack.
- There must be an invitation to find out more at an event or meeting.
- There should be a fundraising opportunity such as a Christmas card catalogue or a recycling envelope for old mobile phones.
- There must be a talent card or similar invitation to tell a friend and bring a friend.
- Another application form for the friend.
- A map of where you are.

You could also add some volunteering information from some other charity that does not compete with you. See the section about **“Working with other charities”**

Here are things that do not matter:

- An expensive or glossy brochure.
- Your annual report.
- A letter from your CEO or Director.

Here is what your information pack absolutely must have:

- A follow-up telephone call. This makes sure that the pack arrived and lets them chat about themselves so that they can tell you what they want to achieve.
- It must arrive before any other information pack from any other charity so the next day is the latest.
- Two application forms.
- Pre paid and addresses envelope back to you.
- Date and the time of a further meeting to find out more.

Response Checklist

- Did they get your pack?
- Are they interested in finding out more?
- Which other charities have they applied for?
- Ask them to talk about themselves.
- Tell them that their skills and experience are exactly what you are looking for.
- Are their contact details correct? (You want to know that you can keep in touch)
- Ask them to come to an information session, event, interview, and tour, anything to show them more of what you do.

Can you make it land with a thump or rattle?

Try to fill the envelope with standard material that will not only cost you very little but is easy for you to obtain. Perhaps you could include a pen or gift. It will make a big difference. In the world of Direct Marketing where clever people design offers that land on your doormat, they will try to find a way to make the envelope rattle or bulge.

Other items that people use to make the envelope rattle or bulge include:

- Wrapped sweets, chocolates or rock.
- Sachets of tea or coffee or sugar
- Beer mat
- Sticky paper pad

- Pen
- Pencil

Any very cheap and easy-to-find item will do together with a link to your cause in your letter.

Your letter should refer to the item to make the item important to your message. You could say:

Pen

“We are really keen for you to apply and so we have even included a pen for you.”

Chocolates

“The children we help don’t often get chocolates”

Tea bag

“You only need water to make a cup of tea but many of the villages we support overseas have no clean water”

How good are you at training?

Voluntary organisations provide training

You may improve your chances of finding volunteers when you provide training and a certificate of participation. This is important when recruiting young people. If you cannot provide accredited training in your charity then could you sponsor the volunteer to go to a college or training school? This way you know that you have a volunteer until the training ends and you may also have other volunteers arriving who are also on the course already.

If this option is too expensive then make sure that you have a certificate that you present to them instead. It simply has your charity logo and details and is signed by your CEO, Chair Director or a senior Trustee. It must say that the volunteer has been providing a valuable service to your charity and that they have successfully trained in your charity.

A certificate template can be downloaded from the website so that you do not have to make your own. Simply follow the links to www.charity-volunteer.com

These are the training areas that your competitor charities are providing. You should try to provide it too.

Inter-personal skills.

Communication skills.

Organisational and managerial skills.

Fundraising skills.

Technical skills.

Enhanced knowledge of health, welfare, women's issues, political questions, criminal justice, and the environment.

Source

*Taken from the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, August 2001.

Here is what volunteers said put them off the charity

Meetings, meetings and more meetings.

Volunteers like the chance to exchange experiences with other volunteers but most will admit that they avoid meetings to do with volunteering.

Why should they spend time away from their family or friends or volunteer work or put in extra time into their packed life. "I did not come here to go to meetings" will be something that most volunteers feel.

Things that turn volunteers off:

Although most volunteers are happy in their volunteer roles there are some common things that people have said will put them off volunteering for a charity.

Disorganised management

Volunteers like to think that they are contributing to a vision that is clear and fixed. Your organisation will change of course but if change is clearly explained then volunteers will take it on as part of the process. If you appear to be disorganised then at least explain as much as you can to the volunteers.

Lack of board support

The Trustees should make it known that they are grateful and that they support the work that the individual does.

Staff indifference

There is a attitude that volunteers are less than the paid staff or *vice versa*.

Limited training and orientation

You have not invested in top quality training to be followed by mentoring.

Lack of contact and support

When the volunteer finishes a shift or their contribution, no one has said well done or thankyou. The chief is viewed as remote.

Doing the wrong job

They are not happy with their role.

Perks that are withdrawn

Tiny changes in benefits such as a small present compared to the previous year or a reduction in some benefit, even a small thing such as a parking permit no longer given freely will cause a grievance.

Insufficient funding

If your volunteer is fighting against lack of resources as well as your Cause then may feel that they are carrying too much of a load on their own.

Source: A report to the Voluntary Action Directorate Multiculturalism and Citizenship

Canada Ottawa 1992

The benefits of volunteering

Here is a sample of some volunteering text from the *Association of Charity Shops* in the UK. You will notice that it does list the features of volunteering in a charity shop and the benefits.

A feature in your advertising could be the phrase that they use which is:

- *Over 110,000 people volunteer in charity shops in the UK every week.*

If you were a volunteer you might ask, "So what?" When you put your advertisement together you should make sure that you ask yourself the, "So what?" question.

You might say to yourself when you read someone else's advertisement, "So What?" and you will be able to improve your own,

To tease out the benefit from:

- *Over 110,000 people volunteer in charity shops in the UK every week.*

You can use a very simple trick. Just add these three words:

... .. which means that

When you add, "*Which means that*" you have a really easy hook to add the benefit after the first part of the sentence which may be something about your charity.

Let's try it with • *Over 110,000 people volunteer in charity shops in the UK every week.*

It might become:

- *Over 110,000 people volunteer in charity shops in the UK every week **WHICH MEANS THAT** we have lots of experience finding a role that you will really enjoy.*

Or

- *Over 110,000 people volunteer in charity shops in the UK every week **WHICH MEANS THAT** you can ask lots of people for help if you need it.*

Some Key Information:

- Over 110,000 people volunteer in charity shops in the UK every week.
- Some charity shops are run almost entirely by volunteers.
- They raise almost £100 million a year for the charities they support.
- More volunteers, especially younger people, are always needed.
- Your new ideas, energy and enthusiasm can raise money for a good cause – making a real difference.
- Why not become a volunteer and help the charity shop of your choice? - There are hundreds to choose from.
- Your charity shop needs you!

What will I get out of it?

- Meeting lots of different people.
- Making new friends.

- Having fun!
- Being a valued member of a team.
- Learning new skills.
- Development of talents that employers & colleges really value – such as communication skills, numeracy, teamwork & taking responsibility.
- Some charities offer formal qualifications such as NVQs in retailing.
- You can make a difference & help the charity of your choice, whilst having fun at the same time.

What would I be expected to do?

There's a lot to do in a charity shop with something to suit most tastes.

- If you have a passion for fashion then sorting clothes might be for you.
- If retailing is your thing, then helping the customers, pricing stock, or working on the till could be right for you.

Reproduced with kind permission of: Association of Charity Shops

Ideas on how to show recognition for your volunteers

There are many ways in which you can recognise the volunteers who work within your organisation. Not all of these require you to spend money.

Here are just a few ideas, which you may like to put into action:

Visits and open days

Recognising the importance of a volunteer is also about making them feel that they belong in your organisation. Arrange a date and time when volunteers can bring some relatives or friends to visit your organisation. This will give both yourselves and your volunteers a sense of pride and achievement.

Social outing

Organise a social outing for all of your volunteers and staff, so that you can all get to know one another better.

Presents

Buy a small present for each volunteer on the anniversary of his or her first year's service. This will remind them that their contribution is valued.

National Awards

Nominate your volunteers for a national Award.

The Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service 2008 will be open for nominations on 2nd June 2007. If you have an exceptional group of people who you think are unsung heroes, log onto <http://www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk/> and request a nomination form.

Thank you

Meet them on a regular basis, just to say 'thank you' over a cup of tea or coffee.

Take up ideas

You can recognise the contribution that your volunteers have to offer by putting into practice an idea that they suggested.

Your own Award Ceremony

If your organisation involves a large amount of volunteers, organise an annual awards scheme to reward them and give them an incentive to keep volunteering with you.

Thanks from users

If your volunteers work with children or the elderly, ask the beneficiaries of your volunteers' services to make thank you cards at regular intervals.

Photos

Take some photos of your volunteers and put them up in a communal area at work. This will ensure that all staff know who they are and what role they play. You can also send them into us and we will publish them on our website.

The Art of Selling

Think of the Opera

Yes it is the opera but we are talking about AIDA.

This is a way of remembering how people get interested in Volunteering.

Here is what it means:

- **Awareness**
- **Interest**
- **Desire**
- **Action**

Awareness.

All the advertising that goes on around the world about your charity increases awareness. Most awareness advertising is done by large charities from their head office. If you are a local charity you do not have the power to use general awareness advertising. You need to advertise in order to get some action. So you will have to make awareness of your local volunteering event or need for volunteers the only awareness advertising that you do. But it is true of every buying process in the world. It all starts with awareness.

Many people will be aware of your charity. This will be because you are active in your community and you have made friends and contacts over the years. If you are brand new then don't worry, we will cover that too.

When you give talks and have bucket shakes in the street or at supermarkets you are increasing awareness by being out and about. This is an essential part of your recruitment process. Without this activity you will not get people to join your charity. Hang on! You say. "What about someone joining because a friend told them or their partner mentioned them?" Well that is awareness too. The fact remains that you will never recruit a single volunteer without "awareness".

Interest

Interest is when you explain a bit more about your charity, “Oh. I know where you are” or when you say that you help people in a new or clever way, “Oh, I didn’t know you did that as well”

That shows interest in your charity and that is stage two.

Desire

Desire is raised during your information event or when they read your “Information Pack”. It is the moment when they want to say yes. They have connected with your message and they understand what you do and who is going to benefit. They also begin to feel that they have the skills and talent to help you. They may not be confident just yet. You need to reassure people who ask, “How do I apply” that most people feel apprehensive when they apply in case they do not measure up and they end up being rejected. It is a good idea to add some notes on your application form that reassure any applicant.

I suggest that you copy this paragraph on to your form now. It is available on the website if you do not want to type it.

“Most people feel apprehensive when they apply to be a volunteer. Don’t worry; it is normal to feel this way. We will give you the best training that we can and you will have another volunteer assigned to you to hold your hand when you start. Our volunteers find it is fun and rewarding so please fill in the form and send it off today (or hand it in before you leave) “

Action

Action is when they fill in any form that you put in front of them. You just can't get people to go directly from awareness to action. They need to go through Interest and Desire before Action. It is not possible to short cut this process. So you are trying all the time to get people to the next level and it is easy to do with little effort. Please don't write to them and say, "Would you like to be a Volunteer?" unless they have been passed the Interest and Desire stage. It is just too big a question. They don't know if they want to be a Volunteer until they know more. This learning process for them is how you get great volunteers. There is no substitute for "Info Events" and talking with volunteers in a social setting. Invite lots of people to your social events and you will have volunteers flooding in.

There are only 3 reasons why anyone buys anything

- **Save Money**
- **Save Time**
- **Pleasure of ownership**

These three reasons are the only ones that anyone buys anything. That includes you. You have not bought something that did not save you time or money or did not give you pleasure of owning it? There are not many things that fall outside these three reasons to buy them. And that is the reason that so many advertising agencies and marketing gurus spend so much time making the item that they sell, more appealing to either saving money, time or making them a must-have item such as a fashion label.

Men have gadgets and women have shoes. We do not need them. They do not save time or money except the TV Remote control does save time and as for the pleasure of owning it, well, ask any man give up the TV Remote instead of fasting and see what happens. So you have to ask yourself why someone would buy your volunteering opportunity.

- It WILL cost the volunteer something.
- It WILL cost you something to recruit them. At a general estimate it probably costs your charity as much as £100 (\$200) for each volunteer.

It is never free.

So be professional. You are offering a product or service. The volunteer is buying something that you are offering and they will buy because they either save money, save time or they get a kick out of doing it.

What are the reasons for them to join you?

Your USP or Unique Selling Point?

Start to think as if you are a shop or a manufacturer. There are many excellent books about finding your USP but here are some easy ways to get you going.

Reasons	You	Charity 2	Charity3
Flexible hours	5	4	8
Local location			
Reason 3			
Reason4			

Write down the reasons that people might volunteer with you. One might be that you offer flexible hours.

Next work out if two similar charities to yours also offer flexible hours or not. Then you rate these charities too.

Think of some more reasons to volunteer with you and write these down too.

Now make up a table like this to compare each of the three charities. I have put down 4 simple reasons for someone to volunteer with you but you can use completely different ones of course.

This exercise will enable you to see where your benefits are greatest when compared to a similar charity near you.

Now that you can see where you score highest you need to write down your USP so that you can use it again and again in your volunteering literature and when you talk to potential volunteers. Start with something like: **“We are the charity that specialises in ”**and you should be well on your way to have a clear idea of what makes your charity special to a volunteer.

We are the charity that specialises in

What are you selling?

Good time	Lots of parties and new friends
Self-improvement	People skills or nursing skills
New useable skill	Building skill, DIY or IT skills
Great career asset	Being a Magistrate or Trustee.
Nice warm feeling	Any volunteering
Find a partner	Meet a person just like you.
New social group	Share your life

Are they going to stay with you for several years if all they do is give give give and “help make a difference” or “put something back”? The answer is **No**

You must make sure that they are still buying what you are selling.

You are not selling “*help make a difference*” or “*put something back*”. That is their reason outwardly for spending time and money with you but it is not what you are selling. They constantly spend with you if they are happy volunteers. They are your customers. When you know what keeps them you will have no trouble finding new ones.

Offer them “Nice Warm Feeling” and a feeling of belonging.

Consider a murder mystery story with the detective trying to find the murderer. They always focus on the motive. What motive would suspect “X” have for being the murderer? Once the detective solves the motive question then the rest falls into place. What motivates your volunteers to help you?

Imagine that you run a stable yard with ponies for people to ride. You have a young volunteer and you want to find more volunteers just like her and so ask her why she volunteers so that you can find some more. This volunteer may reply that they enjoy working here, "Because they like horses". You may accept that answer and so you try to find other people who also like horses. But you are probably going to fail. The reason is that many people like horses. I like horses too but you will not find me at 6 am shoveling horse manure and grooming the horses at the crack of dawn in time for the first client. I will not be there in a field leading a pony around a track with mud sticking to my boots. Your volunteer will put up with a lot of inconvenience and maybe cost of traveling and training in order to be your helper (remember that a volunteer should never be out of pocket for any travel expenses. You must pay expenses to recruit and keep them). But I doubt that her fondness for horses is the reason that she arrives on time at 6:30 in the morning. Something much stronger is motivating her. It may be a desire to be a veterinarian surgeon and this volunteering will look good on her CV or resume. It may be that she has a self-image that is enhanced when she tells her friends or parents that she works in your stables. That is more about self worth and being in control of her life than liking horses.

Sometimes the human factor is what brings volunteers. Things like making friends, meeting friends, having social events and the feeling of belonging gives them the incentive to volunteer and later to stay with you.

So your advertisement to find more volunteers might focus on the real reasons that people volunteer rather than just the outward reason. You might therefore scrap the advertisement that started with, "Do you like horses? Then join our stables" to "*Make friends, have fun and ride for free at our stables*"

You can think of a much better idea I am sure. The point to bear in mind is that you sell the benefits of volunteering in your charity and they are not what people may say to you.

A really successful advertisement from a national charity (Samaritans) has the following headline, "*Want to make a difference to someone's life.....your own?*"

There is a photograph of people with their hands up indicating that they want to volunteer. This advertisement is several years old and it is still going strong.

I would change it to, "*Want to make a difference to your life..... and someone else's too?*"

I would put the reader's benefit first and then remind them at the end that they will help others too.

Here is a way of attracting volunteers with your tongue in cheek.
You could run an advertisement with the following text:

W

e Series

**No wages
No car
No free laptop
No expense account
No pension
No secretary
No paid holidays
No free meals
No share options
No annual bonuses
No commission scheme
And sometimes we don't even get any thanks
To find out why we volunteer at xxxxxxxxxx charity call...**

There are only three reasons for volunteering

People volunteer to learn

They want to improve their chances of a better job or they have an interest in the cause that your charity helps with. Getting involved is a way of getting hands-on experience that potential employers recognise as assets to their company. An example would be someone who wants to be a nurse or doctor or vet and they volunteer in a medical or animal welfare charity. Learning may include finding out how a charity runs for professional reasons or to see if being in your charity is good for them as they may like to convert their volunteering into a paid job at head office.

They may also be trying to see how the school functions to improve their knowledge to help their children.

People volunteer to feel

They have a feeling or a common belief in your work as a charity. Unlike learning, where they want to improve their prospects, these people have a connection with your charity.

These people will split into two types:

1. People who have less understanding of their motives. They are unsure of the reasons they feel this way. They may be a little confused when you ask them, “Why are you here?” They may look at several charities whilst looking for one that will light up their *feelings*. You may need to make them passionate about your charity before they want to volunteer.
2. People who know exactly why they need to volunteer with you. They may have had a relation or a close friend of theirs that received exceptional care in a hospital or home and they want to volunteer with you to repay your charity. They have a real link and they are looking for the feeling of repaying a perceived debt of gratitude.

People volunteer to connect

Whether as part of their community, or meeting new friends, finding business contacts or finding a mate these are all valid reasons that people volunteer. Just volunteering to have fun is not uncommon. It is a comfortable way to interact with new people as you both instantly have a common experience. Give them a sense of belonging.

Identifying the reasons why people volunteer gives you a head start. Your charity is ultimately not only about what you want to do or achieve. Indeed your charity must provide for the needs of your potential volunteers too. Begin thinking of your charity as the means to meet the needs and desires of volunteers in order to get the results that you want.

Feel Felt Found

This is a simple tool that is used in the sales business to help you overcome the moment when someone says something to you that they think will stop them from being a volunteer.

For instance they may say that they do not have the time.

Feel Felt Found works so that you can think on your feet while you think of a reply that can give you the chance to continue the conversation.

So here is your reply to, "I don't think I have the time."

"Yes, I know how you **feel**, and I **felt** that way too but I **found** that I could easily fit a couple of rewarding hours in each month."

Feel

This acknowledges two things to them:

1. Firstly, that you are listening.
2. That you understand their concern and you agree that it is a legitimate concern.

Felt

You reinforce their legitimate concern by saying that you felt that way too. You could use, “many others felt like that too” if you could not possibly have felt that way.

Found

Now you gently dismiss this objection quietly and get back to the asking process without ever dismissing their objection or diminishing their right to hold that view.

We can try out Feel Felt Found now on other objections.

For instance they might say, “I don’t like animals”

You might say, “I know how you **feel**. Many of our volunteers **felt** the same and also like to stay away from animals. But they **found** that they could help with the fundraising events and parties. You could help with the fun evenings couldn’t you?”

Let’s try one more. They might say, “I volunteered once before and it does not suit me.”

You might reply, “I know how you **feel**. I **felt** the same some years ago. But I **found** that we change through life and it is worth giving it another go. I think you will like being with us.”

This little aid is not designed to trick the other person into volunteering with you when they do not want to. It is just a way to give you confidence not to back down at the first thing the other person says that is, at first sight, a valid reason to refuse your ask. It is just a prop to help you think on your feet when you thought they would say YES and they said maybe. Try Feel Felt Found and you will be amazed at how much your self confidence grows.

Prospect, Cultivate, and Ask

Here is a simple model to find volunteers.

This works best when you have social events to make your existing volunteers have more fun. It is where you can meet prospective volunteers in a fun environment. So you arrange to have an evening event for your volunteers. Naturally you charge a small entrance fee to cover room hire and entertainment or refreshments and entice them with the promise of a wonderful event when they arrive.

In addition you should also add that, "Admission is free when you bring a friend.

Your admission price will be handed back to you on the door.

When you hold your event you make sure that you have money there to hand to the host as soon as they arrive. If they bring two friends then they make a profit.

A "Welcome Pack" should be given to the guest at the front door and inside there must be your normal information that you send to anyone enquiring about an opportunity in your charity.

Most events will have name badges that are easy to read. All of the guests should have a different colour name badge to existing volunteers.

During the evening these guests with different colours should be cultivated gently and treated as part of the family.

At the end of the evening they should be asked to volunteer. The key to getting the person to say yes is for your most senior person to ask. That is your Director, Chair, C.E.O. or whoever is there. It must never be the host. It must always be the senior person there.

Here is the checklist:

- Arrange an event.
- Invite all of your volunteers.
- Charge a small admission fee.
- Make admission free if you bring a friend.
- Hand the money back on the door to the host.
- Give a welcome pack to the guest.
- Use a label to identify the guests.
- Make friends.
- Get the “senior person” to Ask.

Prospect, Cultivate, and Ask at talks

A really easy place to use this technique is at a talk that someone in your charity gives. The *prospect* part is happening as soon as they agree to ask you to speak. You do not have to do this at all as it is happening anyway while you speak.

The *cultivation* is something that you must weave into your speech. Make sure that people understand that your volunteers are just ordinary people doing an extraordinary job. Try to weave in a “Day in the Life of a Volunteer” section.

Lastly, before you close explain that you need volunteers urgently to carry on the work that you have talked about. This is not the last thing that you say but it is just before your closing and applause.

You could add something like this into your speech,” Before I finish ladies and gentlemen I just want to say to you how much we need people just like you to do the wonderful work of the charity. You may think that you won’t measure up or that you are not the right person for us and that is perfectly understandable. Well we have thought about that and so we are holding an information evening where we can meet you and you can meet us and see our work at first hand. Please come on Saturday 11th XXX at XXXpm to XXXHouse on XXXRd. Where refreshments will be served and we will have an open house. And so in conclusion.....”

After your talk you will probably have questions and you should have briefed your host in advance that you will need a question about volunteering. Write down your question and give it to your host before you start. This is just in case a question about volunteering does not come from the floor.

You could write out something like this,” I have one question for you. How long is the training to be a volunteer and do you just throw new people in at the deep end when they arrive?”

The *ask* will be done by the senior person in your charity who is at the event. Do not let the host or even the speaker ask any individual to become a volunteer. It should be your Director or a very senior person when they are speaking one-to-one with a guest.

Speaking Trick1

There is a trick that professional speakers use after their speech to encourage questions, as there is nothing more embarrassing than a deathly hush that descends when you ask if anyone has a question. This is it. You or your host use the following phrase, " *We are running out of time (or we are trying to keep ahead of time) so we only have time for a few questions. Who has the first question?*" Make sure that the host does have a question written out in front of them that you arrived with and you can answer easily. You will be amazed at the forest of hands that spring up when you use this simple phrase and have a planted question with your host.

Speaking Trick2

What would you do if you are asked a question that really is almost impossible to answer? Maybe your charity has been in the papers about some issue or you are campaigning on an issue. What would you say if someone asks, "Do you think God exists?"

The trick that trainers, teachers and professional speakers use is to "open it up to the audience"

You reply by saying, " that is a very good question. It is profound and I wonder if others in the room have an opinion about it. Let's open it up to the audience. Does anyone here have a view that they would like to express?"

A survey in Canada unveiled these interesting facts about volunteering

Reasons for volunteering

- Most people volunteer because they were personally invited. It was not because they saw an advertisement, heard it on the radio or saw the charity advertised on the back of a bus.
- The number one reason people volunteer is to contribute to a cause in which they believe.
- Eight out of ten people want to put their skills and experience to use.
- Younger volunteers are more likely than any other age group to volunteer to improve their job opportunities or explore their own strengths.

Reasons for not volunteering

- People say they don't have enough time to volunteer.
- People are unable to make a year-round commitment.
- On average, each volunteer contributes 162 hours over a year or about three hours per week.
- A small group of volunteers contributes most of the volunteer hours accounted for in Canada: 7% of all Canadians contributed 73% of all volunteer hours.
- If your charity is asking more hours than this and your stalwarts are taking most of the load then perhaps your charity is facing volunteer burnout.

SOURCE: Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2000 National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating. Canadian Centre for Philanthropy. Volunteer Canada. Canadian Heritage. Health Canada. Human Resource Development Canada. Statistics Canada. 2000. (<http://www.nsgvp.org/>)

Where do you find your volunteers?

- Women are more likely than men to volunteer. But men contribute more total volunteer hours per year.
- Married people have the highest rate of volunteering (28%) and widowed Canadians have the lowest rate (17%). However, widowed, separated or divorced volunteers gave more hours than those who were married.
- Educated volunteers generally participate more.
- Wealthier people are more likely to volunteer.
- Young people's participation is high (those aged 15-24 (29%)) and for those aged 35-54 (30%)
- Older, retired people gave the longest hours. The amount of time spent volunteering increases with age, from a low of 130 hours per year in those aged 15-24 volunteered to a high of 269 hours per year in those aged 65 and older.
- In 2000, the average annual number of hours contributed per volunteer increased to 162 hours from 149 hours in 1997.
- Stalwarts. Almost three-quarters of all volunteer hours come from one-quarter of volunteers. These volunteers contribute 188 hours or more.
- In year 2000, volunteers contributed approximately 1 billion hours.

- These volunteer hours translate into the equivalent of 549,000 full-time year-round jobs (assuming 40 hours of work per week for 48 weeks).

*Source*Taken from the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, August 2001. Canadian Survey.*

Here is what volunteers will want to ask you before they join.

1. What are your mission, vision and values?
2. What will I be doing?
3. What are the opportunities for advancement and variety?
4. May I see a written role description?
5. How much time will it take?
6. How will my role help you fulfill your mission?
7. What skills will I be able to use or develop?
8. Do I have a trial period?
9. Who is my supervisor?
10. What kind of environment (i.e. formal, hectic or even-paced) will I be working in at your organisation?
11. Will my out-of-pocket expenses be reimbursed?
12. How are you funded and are you solvent?

13. How many other volunteers are involved?

14. What are the background checks on me?

15. When can I start?

Adapted from the Volunteer Centre of Ottawa-Carleton and the Volunteer Centre of Hamilton and District.

Use the Volunteering Week

If you can focus on some interesting activities for one week then you should try to use the volunteering week every year. Volunteering week is always the first week in June in the UK.

Here are some great ideas that will not cost you much to arrange in June every year.

- If you want “young mums” as volunteers then hold a kids tea-party in the afternoon.
- If you want students as volunteers then hold a quiz night in a pub close to the campus.(or actually on campus in the student union)
- If you just want the general public then hold an open day of your charity and publicise it as a great way to look around and find out more. Arrange a speaker in the evening or afternoon and arrange for the mayor to come and cut a ribbon or present a prize.

For even more ideas go to the website in the UK of

<http://www.volunteersweek.org.uk/> where you will find lots of ideas and similar charities to yours all eager to join up and pool resources.

Breaking new boundaries

There are charities on-line in the virtual world and you can easily find volunteers by becoming a presence in the virtual world.

Second Life

Second Life is a virtual world that came into the news 2006. It will send you a program that will let you go into a virtual world. Once your charity is registered for free you can buy your land and your office and set up as a charity in Second Life. You will be required to spend about £100 a year for your rent and upkeep. You, as a person can explore the land and meet other charities and join in with group activities. If you can do it in the real world then you can do it in the virtual world. Your charity can sell items and services to raise funds and to generate awareness of your work in the real world.

Entropia

<http://www.entropiauniverse.com/>

Entropia Universe is an online virtual universe designed by Swedish software company MindArk. It uses an economy with real money. The currency in the Entropia Universe is the PED (Project Entropia Dollar) these can be redeemed back into real world funds to benefit your charity.

There are about 550 000 registered participants from over 220 countries with a growing number of charities building their offices and networking in Entropia.

In 2004 a planet was sold (in the real world) for 100,000 USD on Entropia and the new owner can charge you rent to buy land and build your charity on his land.

Conclusion

However you find helpers for your charity, I hope that this book has been useful. It is intended as an inspiration that you really can find people without having lots of money to spend as well as a “how to do it” guide. So I hope it had been practical and encouraging too. There is heaps more help on the website <http://www.charity-volunteer.com/> to keep you motivated so sign up for the “nearly a newsletter” and keep in touch.

Finding volunteers is not a science. There are many great ideas that people like us stumble upon. I would be genuinely pleased to hear from you when you find one that works so that I can use your idea to help others. I promise to give you all the credit for your help. Do email me at <mailto:nigel@charity-volunteer.com>

I hope that you keep having fun being a volunteer so that others will notice your enjoyment and want to join you. It really is the most satisfying thing to do in your life, so enjoy it smile and have a ball.

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