

# How Do You Attract The Right People And Keep Them Involved?

It's not a secret: "volunteers don't grow on trees". So, when someone comes walking through the door, our first instinct is to grab them and never let go. This may be a great short-term solution, but does it really work in the long run? Not often!

Finding the right people should be top priority for all volunteer groups. Finding people who are willing to take a leadership role is even better. How can you make the best of your recruitment strategies?

## RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

The following reflection exercise presents you with the steps to take to plan for recruitment. It is important to plan your recruitment approach—the following checklist can assist your group.

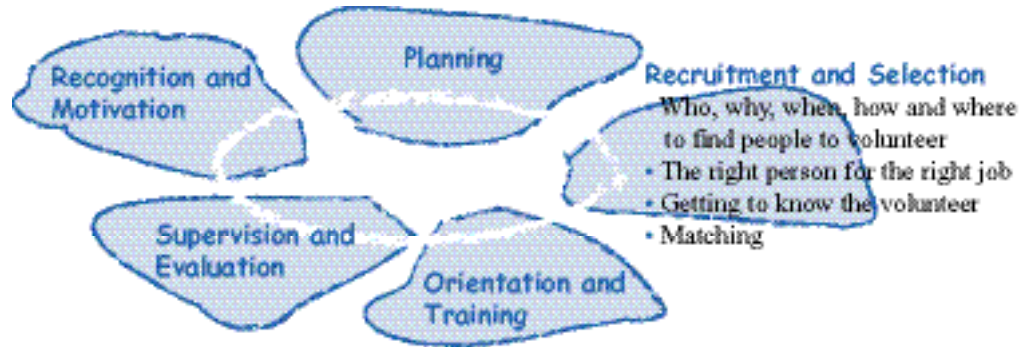
### Before We Recruit New Volunteers:

- We ask the question: "Who's not here?"** Make sure your group truly represents the community you serve. You may need a cross-section of members (age, geography, interest) in order to offer services that are effective and relevant to your community.
- We look for skills, not names.** Try and match the kind of positions you require with skill sets. For example, you may want to recruit someone with media knowledge to chair your publicity committee.
- We appeal to the individual's interests.** A great way to recruit new volunteers is to showcase how the volunteer position relates to the group's overall mission and goals, as well as how it relates to the individual's interests. List the reasons why someone would want to volunteer with your group and find out why potential volunteers want to get involved before approaching anyone.
- We use the stepping-stone approach.** One of the most successful techniques for developing highly involved volunteers and leaders for your group is to first offer them specific tasks that allow them to become involved in a limited way. Later, offer them opportunities to "grow" into a role with more responsibilities. Recruiting someone to assist with fundraising for a specific event could lead to a position as fundraising coordinator for the group.
- We define the task.** Recruiting new volunteers to help on a community project is most effective when the task is very clearly defined. "As equipment manager, you would be responsible for making sure all equipment is in good working order, safely stored, and transported to and from activity areas when required."
- We invite active volunteers to recruit new volunteers.** Current volunteers are the ones who will be best able to explain the requirements — and benefits — of taking on specific roles. This is a great recruitment approach when it is used in conjunction with other approaches. Resorting only to current volunteers as recruitment agents can limit the circle of individuals invited and involved. To promote diversity and involve volunteers with different points of view and opinions, rely on more than one recruitment approach and market.
- We use time efficiently.** Well-run meetings mean a lot to busy volunteers. There's nothing worse than losing leadership potential by making your new recruits feel like they are wasting their time!
- We market our group effectively.** Making sure that the community is aware of your group's contribution is a good technique for attracting potential leaders. Your group has to have credibility and be appealing to the potential leader.

There is an approach to finding, involving and keeping dedicated volunteers. It's called **Volunteer Development** and it is made up of five stages. This **Fact Sheet** (no. 6 of 14) addresses the importance of **volunteer recruitment and selection**.

For more information on the Volunteer Development Cycle or Volunteer Involvement, contact your local Volunteer Centre ([www.volunteer.ca/volunteercentres](http://www.volunteer.ca/volunteercentres)).

## Volunteer Development Cycle



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