

The Four Keys to Volunteerism

Key # 1: Assess

Assess your chapter needs and institute a volunteerism plan

- What events or services does your chapter want to provide in the coming year?
- What do you need to do to make the plan work?
- How many people do you need to make it happen?
- What does each person need to do?

Key # 2: Recruit

Plan your recruitment strategy

At the beginning of the year:

- Write job descriptions that emphasize opportunities for professional development, leadership training and networking, and a chance to "control" volunteer commitment, as well as benefits, time lines and time demands. Be clear about what is required and what is expected of the volunteer.
- Survey members to assess skills available. Start the volunteer recruitment process at the beginning of the board year by mailing members a letter outlining the benefits of volunteerism and a summary of volunteer job descriptions. Include a response card and ask the board member overseeing that person's area of interest to contact them as soon as possible.
- Make sure that there are volunteer opportunities at a variety of levels, so members can take on a volunteer job that meets their current interests, schedule and need for involvement.
- Hold an annual volunteer "job fair" to introduce members to a variety of volunteer opportunities.

Then:

- Include volunteer job notices in new member packets so new members can get involved immediately.

- Ask people to volunteer every chance you get. Talk to people at meetings and set up a table to advertise open positions.
- Offer potential volunteers a job that gives them the opportunity to develop new skills. Instead of asking a newsletter editor to edit the chapter newsletter, ask him or her to work on the website or help plan your professional development program.
- Advertise open positions in your chapter newsletter or on your website.

Why do people volunteer?

Understanding people's motivation can not only help you recruit them, it will enable you to find the most satisfying assignment for them.

- Because they were asked!
- Self improvement
- Professional development
- Power motivated
- Want to influence the organization
- Recognition
- Networking
- Fun
- Gain new skills in a non-threatening environment
- Personal interest
- Career planning
- Want to achieve something/growth
- Need to be challenged
- Sense of duty
- Thinks no one else will volunteer to do the job

Why people don't volunteer

- NEVER WAS ASKED TO VOLUNTEER (60 - 70 percent of potential volunteers are never asked)
- Lack of time
- Unclear expectations
- Little or no recognition
- Mismatched skills
- Burnout
- Didn't seem important enough

Key # 3: Manage

- Provide volunteers with the tools they need to succeed. Give them training when possible or develop notebooks with tasks, time frames, checklists and notes from past position holders.
- Survey volunteers to determine whether the program successfully provides professional development, leadership training and networking, and a chance for volunteers to control their commitment.
- Keep in touch by talking to chapter leaders to see if they're getting the volunteer help they need.
- Motivate volunteers by giving them accountability, communicating clearly and allowing for creativity.
- Allow volunteers to share tasks and responsibilities.
- Everyone should have a specific assignment with a deadline
- Ask volunteers to report on their progress at each meeting.
- Make succession planning part of each job description.

- Hold an annual retreat to evaluate roles and direction.

Consider using chapter monies to support members who volunteer at the district and international levels and are not supported by their own companies.

Three motivation types

1. Affiliation motivated (need to affiliate)

- Needs constant feedback, assurance
- Craves personal interaction
- Works to make friends
- Likes group projects
- Needs to be liked
- Seeks socialization opportunities

2. Achievement motivated

- Needs specific goals
- Works well alone
- Sticks to a task until completion
- Seeks responsibility
- Likes problem-solving
- Loves challenge
- Respects authority
- Needs parameters/fences -- needs to know what needs to be done so s/he knows if the task has been (is being) accomplished
- Needs tangible rewards

3. Power motivated

- Sees the "whole" picture
- Prefers strategic vs. tactical assignments
- Wants to make an impact
- Needs to impact/influence others
- Enjoys teaching others
- Will seek/accept position of authority
- Responds to titles
- Enjoys being persuasive

Key # 4: Recognize

Plan a variety of ways to collectively and individually recognize volunteers during the year.

Collectively:

- Hold a special function to recognize volunteers such as a banquet
- Recognize their efforts at each meeting
- Publish their names in the newsletter
- Offer special discounts on events
- Make a donation on their behalf

Individually:

Recognition should match a person's motivation type

1. Affiliation motivated (need to affiliate)

- Banquets
- Name/photo in newsletter
- Note of thanks
- Social gathering/party

- Personalized gift
- Smile at them

2. Achievement motivated

- Tangible items (plaque or other memento)
- Letter of praise from you to their employer/in newsletter
- Nomination for an international award
- Smile at them

3. Power motivated

- Give them an impressive title
- Award named after them
- Donation in their name to the Research Foundation or other organization
- Give them a job with increased authority
- Introduce them to "key" people
- Smile at them

Adapted from materials created by Mike Heron, IABC Past Chairman