

VOLUNTEERS

How can I recruit, retain, recognise
& reward volunteers?

If you would like to attend a workshop, organise a workshop for a group, or simply purchase or download another resource from the Running Sport series, visit the following website for further information:

www.sportengland.org/runningsport

Sport England is an organisation committed to creating opportunities for people to start in sport, stay in sport and succeed in sport.

Sport England is the strategic lead for delivering the Government's sporting objectives in this country, and we distribute both Lottery and Exchequer funds to sport.

Our vision is to make England an active and successful sporting nation.

This resource forms part of the Running Sport series

Running Sport
SPORT
ENGLAND

Contents

The value of volunteers	02
Do you need volunteers?	03
Why do people volunteer?	04
Recruiting volunteers	05
Retaining volunteers	08
Rewarding volunteers	10
An action plan	11
Useful related websites	11
Useful Contacts	12

Glossary of terms

Volunteer: Someone who works on behalf of a sports club/organisation or sports club/organisation without receiving payment for carrying out such duties. Volunteers may however receive expenses

Recruitment: The process through which volunteers are enlisted to join the sports club/organisation

Retention: The task of keeping all new volunteers working within your sports club/organisation. Individual sports club/organisation may develop different methods of achieving retention, including offering mentoring and training to volunteers, rotating roles etc

Reward: Something given on behalf of the sports club/organisation to thank and commemorate the work of the volunteer. This may be gifts, plaques or even naming your new facility in their honour

MAD: MAD – make a difference. An annual event to celebrate the work of all volunteers. It can be used to raise the profile of volunteering in your club/organisation or to recruit new volunteers

Year of the Volunteer 2005: 2005 is the Year of the Volunteer, a year-long celebration of the amazing work volunteers do and a call to get more and more people volunteering. Each month, there is a specific theme linking volunteering to a number of key agencies

Sport and volunteering will be the focus for the month of August 2005. A website has been set up to support this month www.sportmonth.org

CRB: Criminal Records Bureau is the agency responsible for carrying out police checks for all volunteers who work or come into contact with children in their role. Their website is www.crb.gov.uk

Welcome

Welcome to this Running Sport resource. This forms part of Sport England's education & training programme that provides recognition, information and learning resources aimed at supporting volunteers in relation to the administration and management of their sporting organisation, club, group, team, or governing body.

I hope that you find the information of use in your sporting role and that you will continue to contribute to helping people participate in sport in England. Through you, a valued resource, one of 5.8 million – we know that we are on our way to achieving our goal of making England an active and successful sporting nation!

Thank you for all your support and good luck for your volunteering future – long may you continue!

Roger Draper
Chief Executive
Sport England

The value of volunteers

Volunteers are the life-blood of every sporting club/organisation. They dedicate hours of time and energy, working in a variety of ways. Without them, most sports clubs and associations would cease to exist.

Volunteers are extremely valuable, and deserve considerable praise and thanks:

The following quotes help to illustrate their importance:

“Volunteers make a big contribution to life in the UK, 22 million adults are involved in formal volunteering each year, 90 million hours of formal voluntary work takes place each week. This work is estimated to be worth about £40 billion a year”

Sport England Research, March 2005

“Sport plays a special part in young people’s volunteering. It is the most popular volunteering activity – 47% of young people’s volunteering takes place in sport. The sports sector accounts for 26% of all volunteering, and volunteers are vital to the success of our national sporting life – the London Marathon relies on 6,000 volunteers, the Wimbledon Tennis Championship on 5,000, Open Golf on 1,200. The Manchester Commonwealth Games involved 10,000 volunteers, and the role of volunteers will be integral to the 2012 London Olympic bid.”

Extract from The Russell Commission Report, March 2005

Administrators, officials and coaches all fulfil an important role in sport. They may come from different backgrounds, and although some are paid, many act in a voluntary capacity themselves. The key to success is the way in which they can manage the volunteer helpers for whom they are responsible.

So how do you Recruit, Train and Retain your volunteers?

Consider the following questions:

- What are your experiences as a volunteer?
- How have you contributed as a volunteer and why?
- Could your experiences as a volunteer have been improved?
- Do you know how to recruit, train and retain volunteers?
- How do you ensure your volunteers enjoy working with you?

Do you need volunteers?

Case Study

Imagine the following scenario:

You are the president of a local sports club/organisation and are faced with the following situation:

- Membership numbers are down again
- The newsletter is not going out regularly
- The junior members are having difficulty getting home from club night now that the local bus service has been withdrawn
- The nets and posts are in urgent need of replacement and costs are escalating
- The hall the club/organisation has used for the past 30 years is being pulled down and new premises need to be found with the necessary space at an affordable rate

You decide to make an urgent plea to all members to find some volunteers and receive the following response:

- Tony’s neighbour, a surveyor wants to volunteer
- Arnold, a recently retired bus driver, offers to help
- 5 others names and phone numbers are given to you (no background is given about them)

Nothing constructive happens with this information, therefore, after a short while, all the new volunteers become dispirited because they do not know what they are supposed to be doing, and can’t find anybody to give them any guidance, so they leave. You are back to square one.

Consider the following before recruiting volunteers:

Make sure you know why you want volunteers before you recruit them, and direct them to appropriate tasks, for example:

- Serving as club/organisation administrator, with clearly defined duties
- Helping with fund-raising events
- Writing a development plan for the club/organisation
- Producing the club/organisation match programme/newsletter or updating the website
- Taking care of equipment
- Maintaining the grounds
- Helping to coach teams or supervise junior night
- Helping to run events
- Washing kit
- Serving teas/coffees/oranges on match-day

Why do people volunteer?

A number of people volunteer and they come from a variety of places. Many are members, friends, parents, school students, spectators, existing volunteers and volunteers linked to projects or volunteer agencies. Look at your own club/organisation – who are the volunteers? (most will already have a link with someone at the club/organisation).

People also volunteer for many different reasons. Some of these may be:

- To learn new skills
- To help others
- To be involved with a relative who is a club/organisation member
- To share talents and abilities
- To do something different to the day job
- To make new friends
- To build self confidence
- To be part of a 'team'
- To gain a new direction in life
- To gain prestige and recognition
- To give something back to sport
- To have FUN!

If you can find out the needs and interests of your volunteers, you can then devise appropriate rewards for them. Know and recognise what motivates each individual volunteer and make sure that his or her efforts are rewarded. Many clubs/organisations nominate and reward a player or coach of the season, why not nominate and reward a 'volunteer of the year' as well.

2005 is the Year of the Volunteer, a year long celebration of the amazing work volunteers do. The main aims are to:

- Increase the number of volunteers
- Open up more volunteering opportunities
- Raise the profile of the work volunteers are doing
- Thank volunteers everywhere for their time and commitment

Each month, there is a specific theme linking volunteering to a number of key agencies. Sport and volunteering will be the focus for the month of August 2005. Go to www.sportmonth.org for further information and advice on supporting your volunteers.

Recruiting volunteers

Finding volunteers

To find your volunteers, you need to have a clear understanding of why you want them. If you identify clearly when, where and why you want help and then seek it in an organised way, people are more likely to step forward and offer their assistance.

Ideally one of your members should take charge of new volunteers; this role is commonly referred to as the 'Volunteer Co-ordinator'. Whoever takes on this task needs to demonstrate excellent inter-personal skills and ideally have some experience of managing people. The Volunteer Co-ordinator is required to spend time training, mentoring and managing each volunteer to ensure they are being deployed effectively and that they are enjoying their role.

Before you recruit volunteers you should consider delivering mentoring training to any club/organisation officials who will be asked to work with the Volunteer Co-ordinator in supporting new volunteers.

In order to help new volunteers support the club/organisation the Volunteer Co-ordinator should think of the following:

- Determine where volunteers are needed
- Decide how much time the volunteers need to be able to give
- Write brief role descriptors
- Plan the recruitment strategy
- Invite volunteers to attend club/organisation meetings to ensure they are aware of all club/organisation activities
- Supervise volunteers or find other members to supervise volunteers. Those members should be briefed on the role of the volunteer and their role as a mentor/supervisor
- Organise training for volunteers

- Keep volunteers motivated and enthusiastic, and make sure they know their contribution is valued
- Revise and update volunteer duties as the need arises

You need to answer these questions before trying to recruit new volunteers:

- How many volunteers do you need?
- To do what?
- When?
- For how long?
- What demands will be made of the volunteer?
- What levels of responsibility will the volunteer have?
- To whom is the volunteer responsible?
- What support is there for the new volunteer?
- Will trained volunteers and other personnel, already in place, willingly accept the new volunteer?
- What sort of people do you want in these roles?
- What skills do they need?
- Where can you find the right people?
- Are there partners within my local community that already have volunteers that my sports club/organisation could use?

Role descriptors

There are many positions and duties that can be filled by volunteers. Often volunteers are recruited into positions for which they do not have the necessary skill or experience. To avoid problems and misunderstandings as to what is expected of and required of them, you may need to produce brief role descriptors.

The role descriptors should include:

- Job title
- Names of organisers and immediate supervisor
- Main duties and responsibilities
- Hours, frequency and dates the volunteer is required
- Qualifications or experience needed (if any)
- Special skills or training needed (if any)

To view some examples of role descriptors visit the www.sportmonth.org website and click on the 'Need Volunteers' icon, then the 'Top Ten Toolkit'.

Remember to review the role descriptors after a while (e.g. three months) to find out how well the description fits the job. If it is necessary to rewrite the role descriptors, involve the volunteer in the process.

Always provide support for the new volunteer. If you have the people, try to find a member who is given responsibility for providing this assistance. Do not force anyone to take on this role.

NB: Some jobs for volunteers are ongoing but others, such as organising a major event, are limited to a particular time. Offer your volunteers alternatives that will suit them.

Where to find volunteers?

Volunteers are everywhere. It may be a good idea to target certain groups or areas, but any type of recruitment campaign should be widely distributed and contain clear, accurate and attractive information.

It may be worth considering:

- Raising the profile of volunteering and its benefits on your website
- Producing volunteer information sheets
- Checking past and present membership list. A list of parents' skills/jobs may give you an idea of who has key skills that you could utilise
- Introducing a volunteer scheme for present members
- Holding 'bring a friend' social events
- Organising a recruitment drive using current volunteers to promote the club/organisation and its activities e.g. a volunteer recruitment fair during the volunteers' week (MAD) each year
- Using the local newspaper – classified ads, letters to the editor, feature articles etc.
- Organising community notices on local radio or an article on your website
- Producing pamphlets and flyers which can be distributed in a place your potential volunteer may visit (e.g. the supermarket, the doctors surgery, dentist, the fish and chip shop, the local schools notice boards)
- Promoting your club/organisation and its activities within local schools, colleges and universities. Schools and colleges now offer volunteer & leadership courses e.g. Step-into-Sport (for further information email info@sportengland.org)
- Asking for volunteers from the people who spectate at matches or support the team
- Promoting your 'Volunteer of the Year' winner in the local media
- Identifying if your sponsors have any key skills to offer
- Developing a partnership with your local volunteer agency to identify volunteers (to contact them go to www.volunteering.org.uk)
- Registering your volunteering opportunities on the www.do-it.org.uk website

The recruitment process

The recruitment process allows you to search for volunteers who will best meet the club's/organisation's needs. This is a two way process. It does not need to be too formal, but it is an important way of identifying the skills and experiences of a volunteer to decide if he/she wants to support your club/organisation. The recruitment process should involve identifying and inviting the volunteer to the club/organisation for an informal discussion. Ideally, the Volunteer Co-ordinator should attend, along with another member from the club/organisation (committee).

NB: Don't make the volunteer feel like it is an interview, as you don't want to put them off attending.

The discussion will allow you to identify:

- Why the volunteer wants to be involved
- What skills the volunteer has and if they meet your club's/organisation's needs
- Their experience in working within a sports club and within a 'team' of people

- Their availability to fulfil the role
- Additional skills e.g. coaching, refereeing, that could also be utilised
- Whether the volunteer has completed a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) police check, and if so, is that check still in date
- Clothing size of the volunteer – after all every new member feels part of the team if they have a t-shirt!
- An opportunity to see the benefits of becoming a volunteer at 'your club/organisation'. It is vital not to forget that the volunteer is offering their time free of charge and will be expecting something (not necessarily financial) in return e.g. What can your sports club/organisation offer them: - make new friends; learn new skills; create a better club/organisation; go on trips and enjoy the rewards that come from helping people
- References – ensure that you take up references, even verbal ones, before your volunteer begins



Retaining volunteers

Keeping your volunteers involved

Some clubs/organisations are successful in attracting volunteers. Perhaps the activity is exciting, glamorous or challenging. Even with such benefits, however, sometimes clubs/organisations lose newly recruited volunteers and it is important to try and prevent this from happening.

An induction period is an essential part of any volunteer programme if you want to make sure you retain your volunteers. Even in a small club/organisation, an introduction to the activities and the key members will encourage volunteers to stay involved.

Volunteers want to feel:

- Needed
- Useful
- Part of the team
- Welcome

Motivation

Motivating volunteers is often different from motivating members of staff, because:

- They are not on the payroll
- They do not have a formal contract
- They may be unreliable (what you want them to do is not necessarily a top priority for them)
- They have their own motives (which may conflict with yours)
- They are not dependant on you for job security

People volunteer for jobs in sport for a variety of reasons. These include:

- Family involvement – son or daughter or other relative
- Want to meet people
- Service to their sport (particularly past performers wishing to 'put something back')
- Service to others
- Prestige (the chance to deal with the media, sponsors etc.)

Motivation is an important part of people management, whether they are volunteers or paid staff. It is not simply about being enthusiastic, (although in the right amount, this helps) or about urging people on. It is about identifying what is important to that person and trying to ensure they gain what they want from their involvement. It is about matching the needs of the individual with the needs of the job.

Motivation is providing the sort of leadership that ensures people's needs are being met and their interest sustained. Pay particular attention to the kind of tasks that you expect your volunteers to do.

NB: Job satisfaction comes from doing something worthwhile and often challenging.

Delegating tasks

Delegation is not easy. It requires courage, patience, trust and skill. It is one of the most important aspects of any organiser's job, and one in which there is considerable freedom of choice. What you choose to delegate, to whom, and when, is usually entirely at your own discretion.

Successful delegation is matching responsibility with authority. To give responsibility without authority is unreasonable. Imagine a referee without the power to make decisions. The referee would have to be very persuasive to be able to control the match!

NB: When you delegate, you must give authority as well as responsibility. If you are in charge, you are still responsible for what happens, so when you delegate, you do not stop being accountable.

In order to delegate a task, you need to:

- Identify a job that can be delegated
- Decide the key elements of the job
- Identify a volunteer with the necessary skills and attributes
- Decide upon the training and support needed to enable somebody to do the job
- Decide how you will know if the delegation is working well
- Monitor the work that has been delegated, without interfering

NB: Delegation is not passing the buck!

Training

Training is an essential part of the work programme of any company that wants its staff to perform efficiently and effectively. The same principals apply to volunteers in your club/organisation.

There are a variety of training opportunities available to volunteers and your volunteers should be encouraged and supported to attend.

If your club/organisation has specific needs, you could organise your own specific training programme. Perhaps you could also invite representatives from other local sports clubs/organisations to attend. Networking with several other sports can give you different ideas about how to run your club/organisation or some practical coaching ideas. In fact, a Running Sport attendee at a recent workshop made the following quote:

"The course brought all sporting backgrounds together in a united role. Sharing knowledge and experience is essential."

(Running Sport attendee, 2005)

Better still, perhaps you could persuade your local association, National Governing Body or County Sports Partnership (CSP) to organise a series of training events.

For NGB contact details use the following Sport England link:

<http://www.sportengland.org>

Then click on the 'Get resources' link / then 'useful links' / then 'governing bodies of sport.' You can then choose whichever sports are applicable and it will link you to the relevant website.

For CSP contact details use the following Sport England link:

www.sportengland.org/csp

Talk to your National Governing Body about finding a tutor to deliver training.

See Section 9 (Useful Contacts), which lists several clubs/organisations that provide training e.g. Running Sport, sports coach UK, Sports Leaders UK etc.

Communication

Ensure your volunteers are part of the whole club/organisation by:

- Communicating regularly with them. Update them on the objectives of the club/organisation and your progress towards meeting those objectives
- Providing scope for individuals to take greater responsibility
- Encouraging ideas and, where practical, allowing the responsibility to implement them

Rewarding volunteers

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is vital if you want to retain your volunteer. In order to achieve this:

- Find out what they want from their involvement (what motivates them)
- Clearly identify the nature of the job to be undertaken (using role descriptors to help you)
- Try to match their motivations with the inherent rewards of the job (this will require careful placement of volunteer at the outset)
- Offer appropriate guidelines or training to help them in their role
- Encourage volunteers to contribute new ideas and to implement them if appropriate
- Build in incentives and provide feedback recognition and tangible rewards
- Set targets so that they understand the part they play in meeting the overall objectives of the club/organisation

Enable your volunteers to enjoy their work with you by:

- Helping them to experience personal achievement in the role they are doing
- Making them feel they are making a worthwhile contribution to the objectives of the team and of the whole club/organisation
- Making them feel the job is challenging, demands the best from them, and gives them responsibility to match their capabilities
- Giving adequate recognition for their achievements
- Ensuring they have control over those aspects of the job that have been delegated to them
- Making them feel they are developing and improving their experiences, skills and abilities

Recognition

Recognition is a very important factor, and is vital if you are to retain your volunteers. Consider the following:

- Offering praise to volunteers while they are doing their job
- Send them a letter or a text message to say thank them for their help
- Give them a thank you certificates
- Giving kit or equipment e.g. t-shirts/pin badges
- Giving them a present. It doesn't have to be expensive! Just given with thought
- Acknowledging them in club/organisation newsletters and on the notice board
- Giving complimentary tickets to special events and functions
- Sending birthday and Christmas cards
- Awarding life memberships
- Having a party or barbeque for your volunteers
- Having a day of changing roles. Let the participants organise and run the club/organisation and the volunteers just participate
- Acknowledging their efforts during committee meetings
- Paying out-of-pocket expenses and providing meals
- Smiling and calling them by name
- Listening to their ideas
- Make them feel valued and a vital part of the club/organisation
- Having an awards day for them or entering them into a local or national volunteer recognition scheme. e.g. BBC Unsung Hero Award, Whitbread Young Sport Achiever etc.

To view the list of Volunteer Recognition Awards available visit

www.sportengland.org/running/sport and download your free copy of the 'At-A-Glance' Calendar from the 'Good practice, Recognition and Reward Resources' section

An action plan

Action plan to find and keep your volunteers

- Decide why your club/organisation needs volunteers
- Appoint a Volunteer Co-ordinator
- Make links and work in partnership with local volunteer agencies and education establishments who are delivering leadership and volunteer training
- Work out specific job requirements for volunteers and write role descriptors for each one
- Decide what skills you need your volunteers to have
- Decide how many volunteers you need
- Decide which methods you will use to recruit volunteers
- Go ahead and recruit

- Meet and choose people with appropriate skills
- Show them how to do their jobs and support them through the process
- Involve volunteers in matters that affect them
- Provide opportunities for training
- Supervise and evaluate their performance and provide feedback
- Reward and recognise volunteers appropriately
- Review the process regularly and make the necessary changes
- Say 'Thank you'

If you do not already volunteer and want to as a result of reading this resource, register your interest at either of the following websites:

www.do-it.org.uk or www.sportmonth.org

Useful related websites

Sport Month

www.sportmonth.org

To view role descriptors, register your interest as a volunteer & generally find out what volunteering in sport is like, how to get involved and what is going on in your area to support sport month

Year Of The Volunteer

www.yearofthevolunteer.org

Information about the Year Of the Volunteer 2005 – all themed months

Step-into-Sport

www.sportengland.org

To view a copy of the Step into Sport information leaflet, which provides further details about the project

Do-it.org

www.do-it.org.uk

The national database of volunteering opportunities in the UK.

Criminal Records Bureau

www.crb.gov.uk

To help clubs/organisations make safer recruitment decisions

To contact your NGB:

Visit the relevant NGB website to view their list of contacts

For NGB contact details use the following Sport England link:

www.sportengland.org

Then click on the 'Get resources' link / then 'useful links' / then 'governing bodies of sport'. You can then choose whichever sports are applicable and it will link you to the relevant website

To contact your CSP:

For CSP contact details use the following Sport England link:

www.sportengland.org/csp

Talk to your National Governing Body about finding a tutor to deliver training

Useful contacts

Central Council For Physical Recreation

Francis House
Francis Street
London
SW1P 1DE
Tel: 020 7854 8500
Fax: 020 7854 8501
Email: info@ccpr.org.uk
Website: www.ccpr.org.uk

Child Protection In Sport Unit

NSPCC National Training Centre
3 Gilmour Close
Beaumont Leys
Leicester
LE4 1EZ
Tel: 0116 234 7278/7280
Fax: 0116 234 0464
Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk
Website: www.thecpsu.org.uk

Clubs For Young People

371 Kennington Lane
London
SE11 5QY
Tel: 020 7793 0787
Fax: 020 7820 9815
Email: office@nacyp.org.uk
Website: www.clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk

English Federation Of Disability Sport

Manchester Metropolitan University
Alsager Campus
Hassall Road
Alsager
Stoke On Trent
ST7 2HL
Tel: 0161 247 5294
Fax: 0161 247 6895
Email: federation@efds.co.uk
Website: www.efds.net

Running Sport Hotline (general enquiries)

Tel: 0800 363373

Running Sport Support Team (workshop & resource enquiries)

3rd Floor, Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square
London
WC1B 4SE
Tel: 0207 404 2224
Fax: 0207 383 5740
Email: runningsport@coachwise.ltd.uk
Website: www.sportengland.org/runningsport

Sport England

3rd Floor, Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square
London
WC1B 4SE
Tel: 0845 850 8508
Fax: 0207 383 5740
Email: info@sportengland.org
Website: www.sportengland.org

Sporting Equals

Commissions for Racial Equality
3rd Floor Lancaster House
67 Newhall Street
B3 1NA
Tel: 0121 710 3014
Fax: 0121 710 3022
Email: sportequal@cre.gov.uk
Website: www.cre.gov.uk/sportingequals/about.html

sports coach UK (general enquiries)

114 Cardigan Road
Headingley
Leeds
LS6 3BJ
Tel: 0113 274 4892
Fax: 0113 275 5019
Email: coaching@sportscoachuk.org
Website: www.sportscoachuk.org

sports coach UK Business Support Centre (workshop enquiries)

Sports Development Centre, Loughborough University
Loughborough
Leicestershire
LE11 3TU
Tel: 01509 226 130
Fax: 01509 226 134
Email: bsc@sportscoachuk.org
Website: www.sportscoachuk.org

Sports Leaders UK

Clyde House, 10 Milburn Avenue
Oldbrook
Milton Keynes
MK6 2WA
Tel: 01908 689180
Fax: 01908 393744
Email: info@sportsleaders.org
Website: www.bst.org.uk

Women's Sports Foundation

3rd Floor, Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square
London
WC1B 4SE
Tel: 020 7273 1740
Fax: 020 7273 1981
Email: info@wsf.org.uk
Website: www.wsf.org.uk

Youth Sport Trust

Sir John Beckwith Centre for Sport
Loughborough University
Loughborough
Leicestershire
LE11 3TU
Tel: 01509 226600
Fax: 01509 210851
Website: www.youthsporttrust.org

Volunteering England (London)

Regents Wharf
8 All saints Street
London
N1 9RL
Fax: 020 7520 8910

Volunteering England (Birmingham)

New Oxford House, 16 Waterloo Street
Birmingham
B2 5UG
Fax: 0121 633 4043

For both offices:
Tel: 0845 305 6979
Email: information@volunteeringengland.org
Website: www.volunteering.org.uk