

# A Guide to Volunteer Development



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## Introduction

Volunteers are everyday people young and old male or female from all walks of life. These people offer their help with the enthusiasm to take on the world, but why is it we do not retain or even increase our volunteers.



As a current volunteer we take on the various tasks, (**can you remember the first task you undertook as a volunteer?**) at times, without question. But what about 'New Volunteers' what do they know about what they may or may not be required to do, have we as recruiters of volunteers outlined the 'Do's and Don'ts?'

Below are areas that we should take into consideration when recruiting volunteers

- Has anybody explain to the volunteer what to do?
- Explained how often they were needed?
- Who they should go to and ask for help?
- Find out if the volunteer had a problem?
- Even thank the volunteer for their contribution?

First impressions are most important, was this shown to the new volunteer? when starting a new job. If a volunteer knows that the club/organisation they know that the organisation has a good volunteer management structure, then they are more likely to approach their task with enthusiasm and remain with the club in a volunteer capacity.

Having a sensible, workable and practical policy for a Volunteer Management program would be more effective if the Volunteer/s themselves were to be part of the development of the policy, which will vary in size and detail depending on the organisation.

Everyone in the organisation, participants, officials, administrators in fact any individual involved in some capacity as a volunteer will benefit if a valuable Volunteer Management program is in place.

Steps to a successful program will need some sensible planning in it's initial planning. Having planned, developed and implemented your Volunteer Management program you will have an organisational policy for volunteers which should:

- give a volunteer coordinator a separate position on the organisation's committee
- provide training for its volunteers appropriate to the tasks,
- give recognition for the efforts of its volunteers
- provide money in the budget for volunteer management

Remember for clubs and or organisation's to survive volunteers contribute their time, skills and experience for no monetary reward other than reimbursement if the volunteer has paid out of their own pocket. A volunteer provides because to them it is the satisfaction they get from their achievements which may result in the volunteer making new friends who share the same interest, develop new skills and most of the time and most importantly have fun.

**So how do we start the process for an effective 'Volunteer Management Program?' .....**

The following information is a guideline to the process of our 'Volunteer Management Plan' which will give clubs and organisation's the best possible environment for their it's volunteers.

It must be pointed out that other resource material such as ***Volunteer coordinator's Kit*** or ***'Club Planning - an Easy Guide for Sport and Recreation Clubs'***, available from the VIP Coordinator in your state or from your Sport Recreational Office

# Planning for Volunteer Management

For the overall development of any club or organisation, planning is vital if it's going to survive productively.



A volunteer management plan should be included as part of the clubs/organisation's plans, with this in mind the clubs/organisation's planning will help to:

- identify why volunteers are needed
- identify tasks so that the clubs/organisation's performs more effectively
- identify the skills of the people who are needed to run the organisation
- establish how to best utilize the resources available for the clubs/organisation's i.e. use of facilities, equipment, finances and people
- manage with changes in the environment, this may include venue or government regulations
- simplify the purpose for the clubs/organisation's existence
- determine where the clubs/organisation's has come from, more importantly where it is now
- plan towards the clubs/organisation's position and purpose for the future
- best plan on how to get there
- develop a cohesive team approach away from the clubs/organisation's internal structure
- keep progress checks of the clubs/organisation's plan

**Once the plan is written the important thing to remember is that time, resources and effort have been put into your plan and it becomes a "living" document. It is a guide for your clubs/organisation's that will change just like you. So don't let this valuable guide stand in some dank dark place gathering dust, because you would not stand still to gather the same dust**

The following chart indicates end results from a simple planning process.

<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
① why you are doing what you do	what it is you are wanting to achieve	what you are going to do and how you can best achieve this	What resources (people, money, material) you need	when you are going to perform the tasks	how you will know if you have achieved what you set out to achieve
②					
③					
④					
⑤					
⑥					
⑦					
⑧					

Finalising a volunteer management plan, giving it an appropriate budget your clubs/organisation's ready to put together a volunteer policy.

## What is a Volunteer Policy?

It is a set of guidelines outlining what the clubs/organisation's will provide for its volunteers. It should also outline how it will provide for it's volunteers in turn this will indicate the seriousness of the role that the clubs/organisation's has taken to look after it's volunteers

This policy should also it's strong direction for:

- retention of it's volunteers
- recruitment of new volunteers
- recognition for it's volunteers and
- provide, if required, appropriate training or assist with resource material for appropriate training

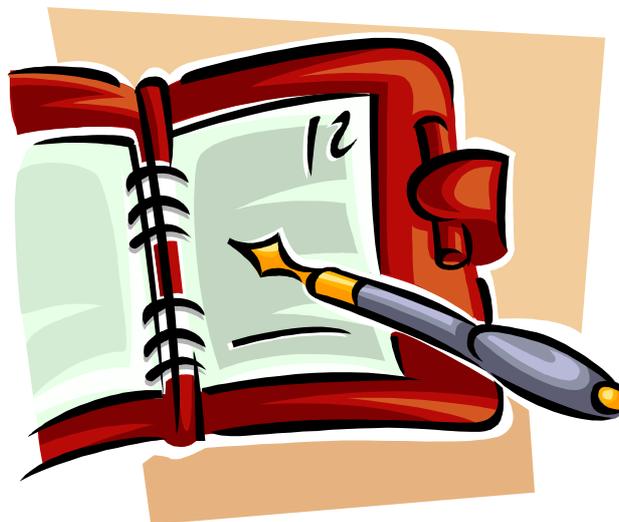
Evolution of your volunteer policy will occur from needs identified in your clubs/organisation's management plan.

Areas you may want to considered for inclusion in you 'Volunteer management Plan' could be:

- a volunteer coordinator, their roles and responsibilities
- what makes a volunteer want to volunteer
- what should the volunteer expect from the clubs/organisation's
- is their any type of protection provided
- what responsibilities do paid workers, if any, have with volunteers
- how will the volunteer management program be evaluated and reviewed
- is their adequate training or direction for volunteers

Additional policies to go with the volunteer policy, possibly will be:

- code of practices for the clubs/organisation's and it's volunteers
- a rights and responsibilities statement for volunteers
- a manual informing on such things as -reimbursement, insurance, grievance, health and safety regulations



## Steps to Develop your clubs/organisation's Volunteer Policy

The clubs/organisation's management committee to submit names from its volunteer pool to form a small group who will representative all volunteers in the clubs/organisation's this group will then determine the needs of the clubs/organisation's and the volunteers.

1. Determine the time frame for the development of the policy.
2. Distribute the policy outline to all volunteers
3. Give all volunteers an opportunity to have input into the policy.
4. Arrange a meeting of all volunteers to discuss the draft policy which has been created as a result of their earlier consultation.
5. Prepare a final draft for clubs/organisation's executive approval and implementation.
6. Distribute final document to all volunteers.

## Budget



The organisation needs to ensure that funds are set aside for volunteer involvement. Some of the costs which need to be considered include:

- reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses - not necessarily an honorarium (e.g. telephone usage, postage, printing, stationery etc)
- honorariums (i.e. where a person receives an agreed payment for services rendered, e.g. Honorary Treasurer) - honorariums may be considered as taxable income, depending upon the amount concerned
- volunteer training (e.g. coaching courses, administration courses, leadership courses)
- volunteer recognition (e.g. provision of clothing, free passes, memberships etc)
- insurance of volunteers - public liability and accident insurance
- publicity and advertising
- catering
- equipment
- supervisory costs
- facilities
- miscellaneous costs e.g. newsletters

Information on preparing a budget can be found in the **VIP Club Administration Manual** booklet available the VIP Coordinator in your state or from your Sport Recreational Office.

# The Volunteer Coordinator

As previously mentioned clubs/organisation's should have included the appointment of a Volunteer Coordinator in their volunteer management plan and policy.



The position of Volunteer Coordinator is vital to any clubs/organisation's management structure. Their role is to essentially manage volunteers and provide a link between the clubs/organisation's Executive Committee/Board of Management and the volunteers, it must also be noted that clubs/organisation's Executive Committees and Boards of Management often comprise volunteers. Therefore it would be a good idea if the Volunteer Coordinator was a member of the executive committee.

Ideally, the Volunteer Coordinator will be "all things to all people" i.e. a planner, decision maker, mediator, communicator, motivator, evaluator, supervisor, delegator, financial manager.

An excellent Volunteer Coordinator will be a member who would fall into the middle of those who are "all things to all people"

It is important the clubs/organisation has a job description for the volunteer coordinator what their particular role will be. A volunteer coordinators role will vary from clubs/organisation to clubs/organisation so make sure their job description suit the clubs/organisation needs

## Volunteer Coordinators Skills

There are a number of desirable skills and attributes, apart from those listed above, that would make the role of volunteer coordinator a more advantageous one.

**These additional skills include an understanding of:**

- the nature of volunteering, what motivates people to volunteer
- what are the goals and structure of the clubs/organisation
- what role do volunteers play in the organisation
- the ethics of managing people

# Volunteer Coordinators Job Description

A description of duties may include:

- be a member of the clubs/organisation executive
- assist in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the volunteer management program
- assist in the development of a policy on volunteering in conjunction with the management committee
- assist in the development of a budget for the volunteers in conjunction with the financial manager
- assess the human resource needs of the club for general running and special events
- assist in the development of job descriptions for volunteers (with input from the volunteers)
- recruit, select, appoint and deploy volunteers
- organise orientation and training of volunteers where appropriate
- ensure appropriate recognition of the volunteers



## Training the Volunteer Coordinator

A Volunteer Coordinator's Kit has been developed as part of the resource material available through the VIP. The kit contains step by step instructions on the various tasks of the Volunteer Coordinator and is available through the state VIP coordinator or the national office.



To provide further assistance to Volunteer coordinators, some states are providing training courses for coordinators. Details of these courses are available through state VIP offices.

## Conclusion

Once an organisation commences on the pathways to developing a Volunteer Management program by following and implementing the steps outlined above, it will find that the continued management of its volunteers will maintain a high priority in the club's development.