



VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT GUIDEBOOK

Leading a team – where to start?



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CONTENT

1. WHO IS THE MANAGER?

2. TEAM BUILDING

- How to attract people?
- Get to know your team members?
- How to build your team?

3. MONITORING TEAM'S. PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

- Meetings
- Delegation of tasks
- Encourage your team

4. TIPS AND TRICKS

5. WHY PEOPLE VOLUNTEER?

1. WHO IS THE MANAGER?

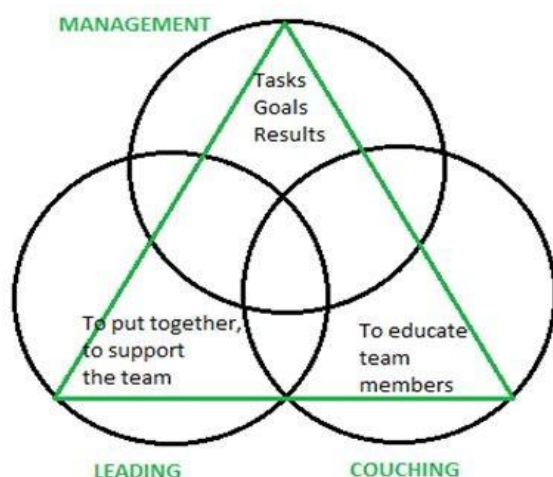
If you type "manager" into Google, you will find multiple definitions and many articles on what a manager should do. To reassure you, being a good manager doesn't require knowing all the definitions by heart, so here are the main things we should strive for as managers:

TO MANAGE the team by clarifying goals and objectives and guiding the team to ensure the achievement of required results.

BE A LEADER by bonding and supporting your team in the pits of motivation, in the tough moments, in the small and big victories, and overall, throughout the process.

EDUCATE people by raising their competences and inspiring their confidence.

Food for thought: Maximum results can be achieved by matching both the individual and collective needs of the team with the project's objectives or expected outcomes.



I WANT TO KNOW MORE!

How to proceed next?

You will learn further by reading this short guide and by trial and error – because no one is born a manager!

For a self-assessment, we suggest the following test: what are your leadership types?

Link: <https://bit.ly/37DIb6l>

Or scan a QR code:



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What if I don't know what kind of manager/leader I am?

You will not find out in a day or a month. To understand your type of leadership, you need to be a leader for a while and with different teams. It is not about finding a label, but about observing yourself and how your team reacts to you.

Leader or friend?

In an organization with a lot of contact with people, these concepts can become intertwined, and this is very normal. It is important to feel the boundaries and observe how the current situation affects the friendship/team. With the right communication – anything is possible!

2. TEAM BUILDING

How to attract people?

One of the most worrying questions, when you start assembling your team, is what if no one comes? How to avoid this risk?

Word of mouth is the best way to get the message across. Probably the topic you are interested in will also be relevant to your friends, their friends, your friends' friends... so don't be afraid to share the news that you are starting a new project with people you know. This is the most effective way.

Make **use of the university's facilities** – don't be afraid to ask for help from lecturers, administrators. Perhaps you can present your initiative at the beginning or end of a lecture?

Ask for **help from other organizations**, the university. Sharing your post on pages with lots of followers doesn't cost anything, but many new people may learn about your initiative

Don't be afraid of unconventional solutions, guerrilla marketing.

It is important to understand that the number of members is not a key indicator of success. Often after the first meetings, a large number of people drop out. This is not a bad thing, it means that your initiative has reached a lot of people who are interested in it. I have no doubt that you will see them at your events as participants.



Guerrilla marketing is an advertisement strategy in which a company uses surprise and unconventional interactions in order to promote a service or activity.



GET TO KNOW YOUR TEAM MEMBERS!

Before starting to work with volunteers, it's very important to get to know your team members. It's a key to problem solving, good communication and high work quality!

Skills of your team members

Before assigning responsibilities, it is very important to objectively assess the skills and competences of the team members, to find out what they are interested in and where they would like to develop their skills. Perhaps one of the volunteers wants to learn layout, techniques or has had practice in copywriting before. Why not take advantage of this and entrust these areas to them!

What kind of people are in your team?

Volunteers are first and foremost people with different strengths, weaknesses and different ways of dealing with challenges. To ensure the success of the team, it is important to get to know the team members as people

What is their busiest time of the day? It's normal for a team to have both early birds and night owls.

Maybe a person has a job, additional activities that require their time?

Does they need encouragement and supervision, or will they manage fine on their own?

What motivates them to act?

How does the person react in stressful situations, how does he/she express anger?

What are the person's strengths and weaknesses?

What fears do you feel before joining a team? How can I help as a manager?

What is his/her ideal of a leader – what qualities do they think a good leader should have?

How do they prioritize their work?

Do they prefer to work with a team or alone?

What are their expectations?

What rewards does he/she expect here? – Does he/she need a public thank you or will this cause additional discomfort?

How does the volunteer see the organization in a year's time?

How did you imagine your place and role here?



HOW TO BUILD YOUR TEAM?

Many organizations have different structures – coordinators, committees, boards. So, it's normal to be lost in the beginning about how your team should look like.

First, find out main directions you want your initiative would move to. It can be stronger communication, better events, better public appearance, ...

Find your team members strengths. They would be really happy and feel appreciated if they can use their skills.

Every important direction should have a responsible person. You are a leader of a team, not an expert on everything. Trust in your team members and let them coordinate and work with the main directions of your initiatives.



How you build your team?

Team building consists of socializing formal (e.g., team-building training, discussions on work topics, work meetings, etc.) and informal (spending time together, lunch, informal socialising, etc.) parts.

How you form the team will depend on what kind of team it is and how long the team will be in place. For example, in a voluntary organisation, informal communication is important, whereas in a team that will only work together for a month and very intensively, you may want to focus more on formal communication.

Few ideas:

<https://www.indeed.com/hire/c/info/team-building-activities?hl=en&co=US>

If you have good examples of team building – share them!

3. MONITORING TEAM'S PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

From the start of the meeting, the team has (or should have) a goal that it will achieve over time, by certain means. The most important aspects for this process to happen and the questions you need to ask yourself when leading the team:

A common understanding of the purpose and results of the work – what do we need to do and why? how does it contribute to the overall goal? Do we have the same understanding of responsibilities?

Delegation of work – what is the importance of work? What tasks/responsibilities can we share? By when do we have to complete the work?

Time planning – what are the estimated time costs? can we prioritise the work? what unforeseen circumstances might prevent us from completing the work on time? how can we avoid this? what help do we need/can we need?

Workload monitoring – do I need help? Are there risks we haven't thought of? how can I make the work smoother and more efficient? Do I need to ask the questions I raised earlier?

Feedback – how did I do personally? How did we do as a team? what should we avoid next time? what should/could we improve? What competences did we gain? What competencies should be improved?

Measuring results – were the objectives achievable? Did we achieve them? what can we be happy about? to what extent the result was not due to our work?

MEETINGS

Types of meetings:

- **Work Circle** – a brief gathering to reflect on what has been done/achieved;
- **Discussion;**
- **Competence development** – competences are not only developed through training. You can and SHOULD observe your team, find weaknesses and help them improve;
- **Idea generation** – brainstorming on a topic;
- **Motivation meeting** – a meeting to celebrate your achievements, to celebrate or to work on an idea that motivates your team members;
- **Problem solving** – a meeting to discuss one specific problem;
- **Team building.**
- ... other?

Several types can be combined!



Step 1: Preparing for the meeting

Let's assess the needs. It is important to know **why** and **for whom** you are holding the meeting. If it is meaningless, the participants will immediately feel it;

Purpose of the meeting. Read the minutes of the last meeting (if available) to help ensure continuity. Have the objective and communicate it to the team before the meeting. They will be able to prepare/know if they are relevant/understand the importance of the meeting;

Provisional agenda (if necessary). Be sure to draw up a provisional agenda for yourself and, if necessary, briefly describe it to the team before the meeting;

Information. Send all important information for participants before the meeting. It will save a lot of time and meeting will be much more productive, because participants will have time to prepare

Place and time. Set a time and place that works for the team (TIP: for regular meetings, we suggest a regular meeting time);

Protocol template. Prepare the minutes template in advance by filling it in with future topics.



Step 2: The meeting and its proceedings

Greetings; introductions/meetings if there are new members. Not just at the first meeting!

Icebreakers (how's it going?) – involving all team members; How many cups of coffee have you had today? The weirder the questions, the better the ice breaks ;)

Setting the rules and expectations – especially important in the first meetings, when you need to let the team know that there are rules and ask them what their expectations are, maybe they also want to raise other topics during the meeting;

Time monitoring – let the team know how long the meeting will last, monitor the time yourself, do not take longer than you promised;

Sticking to the agenda – trying to discuss about what has been planned and to achieve the desired results of the meeting;

Form of communication – don't forget to present the information visually, use whiteboards, etc;

Brainstorm – remember to involve all members, listening first, commenting later, encouraging and withdrawing an idea only after good reasoning;

Summarize the meeting and the decisions – what is the main message you want participants to take away from the meeting? Don't forget to note the decisions and the people responsible;

What next? Always end the meeting by planning the next step – time of next meeting, date of event, date of sending minutes, etc.



Step 3: After the meeting

- Send the minutes;
- Gather feedback from participants (from the HR coordinator/team member observing the meeting, from members);
- Monitor the implementation of delegated work.

Did you know that?

How does our brain evaluate the information it receives?
Interpreting another person's message by:

- Verbal information (text) 7 %
- Vocal information (timbre, tone) 38 %
- Body language 55 %

100% communication – voice and face-to-face!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why do we need meetings?

*Monitoring and supervising the work of the team;
Discussing current issues; Reviewing results;
Sharing updates; Other.*

What to do when the enough people don't turn up?

Find out what could be the reason for this – wrong timing, uninteresting topics, difficult period for the team, too much/too little work for the team? It is best to make a personal appeal to find out the immediate reasons.

Are team members constantly late for meetings?

Perhaps the timing of the meetings is really not right, or perhaps it is time to remember the rules and respect each other's time? Possible competence building in time management.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Is there an unplanned discussion?

It's important to give the team the creative and ideological freedom to express themselves, but at the same time control the situation and stop repetitive thoughts. In this case, summarising works best – "to sum up, he thinks this, he thinks that, we don't agree on this and that, we can discuss it in letters, because now it's time to move on to the next topic".

Is there misbehavior?

Do not tolerate discrimination, abusive language or oppressive speech. Although you are all members of the team, as managers you have the right to draw strict boundaries and make the rules.

Did I make a mistake/say something nonsensical?

Mistakes HAPPEN. We misunderstand, we get mixed up, we say the wrong things, we say wrong deadline. The most important thing is to accept mistakes, sometimes to laugh at it and most important – to take your responsibility.

Delegation of tasks

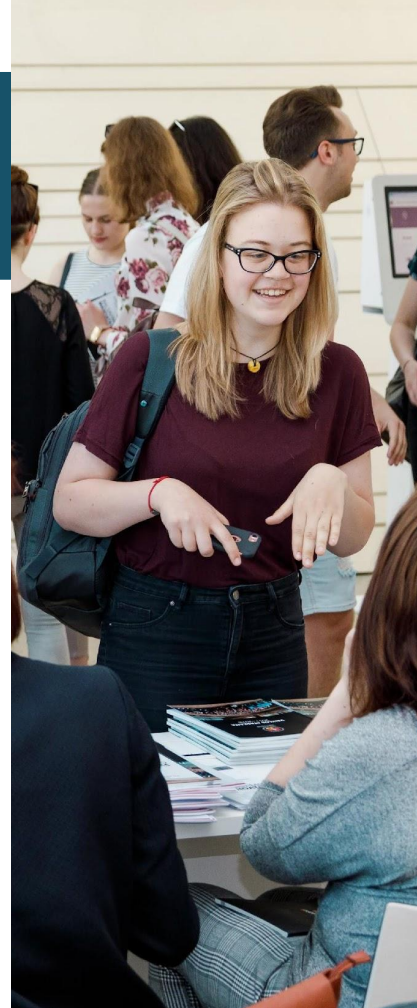
The first job for a new person must be programmed for SUCCESS! Evaluate which person in the team and what kind of work we are giving and make sure that it is adequate and done successfully. This creates motivation and ensures that the team member is willing to stay with the team for the next task.

Remember that delegation is important:

Workload of the people – not too much, not too often;

Clarity – a precise communication of the task and the desired outcome;

Skills – let's not give the job of folding papers to people who could organize a event perfectly well by themselves. Let's not forget to ask what a member can do well and see for yourself, because people are not always so bold to boast.



MONITORING

- It is important to monitor the progress of work;
- Stay in control of the situation when you're not around;
- Keep the balance and don't push too hard.

How the team member could benefit from the task?
Delegate work with the intention that the team member will learn something new or share their expertise with others.
Always ask – what will be your first step?

Give freedom and creativity!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Nobody wants to take the task?

Consider whether your team members lack skills or are too busy. Delegating work can be done through personality: "I see that you, Marina, know a lot about history.."



4. TIPS & TRICKS

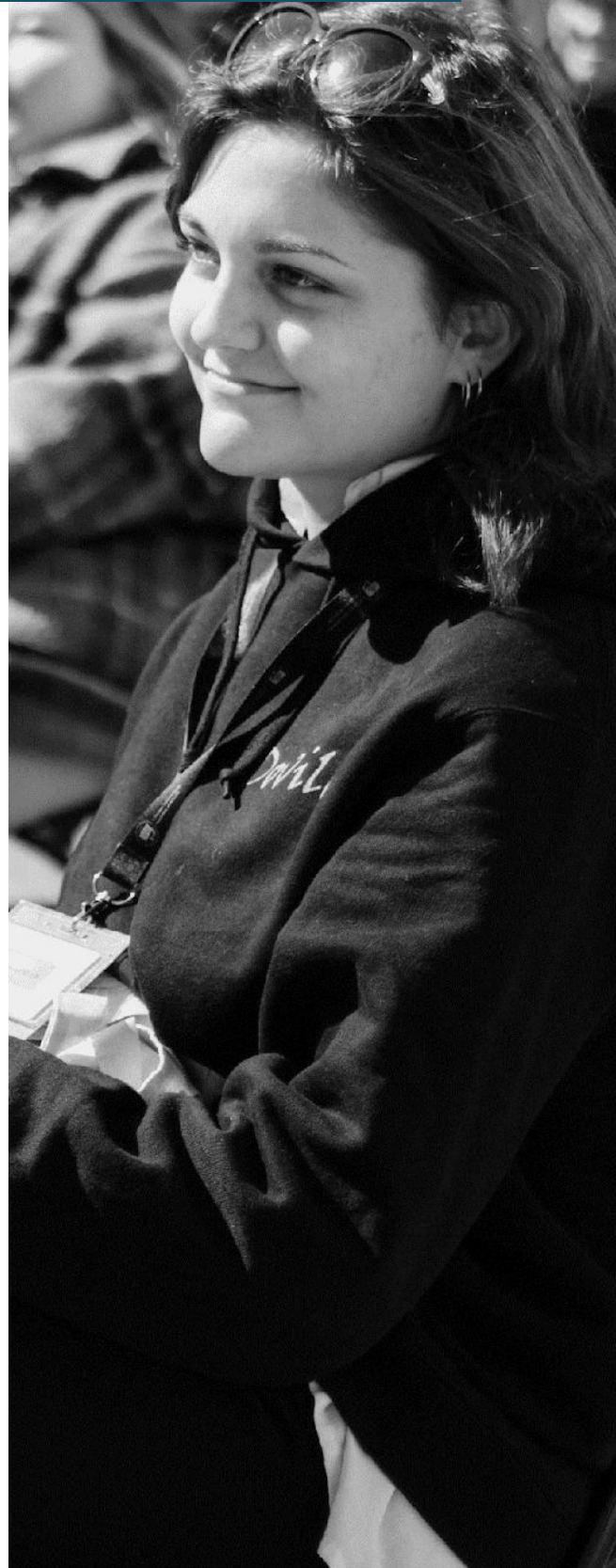
- Meetings are a great way to build a team, and lively communication helps with the sense of ownership within the team. Organize meetings even if there are no big goals, remember that they can be used for competency building, discussions, etc. (see: types of meetings);
- When delegating work, set earlier deadlines to allow time for revisions and feedback;
- To ensure that everyone is really sharing their thoughts, you can use the ball technique – whoever has the ball or pencil in their hands speaks, throws/passes it to the other person who wants to speak;
- Emphasize to the team and remind yourself of what RESPONSIBILITY is and why it matters;
- Find out what type of persons are in your team, it will help you to communicate and solve problems in your team:
<https://www.16personalities.com/>

Let's learn and teach others!

NOTA BENE: There are more than three hundred and sixty-four ways to solve the problem, and you can always get help from your team, community manager and other people working in the field. Don't be afraid to ask!

VOLUNTEERS ARE DIFFERENT

To boost people's motivation to volunteer, it's essential to know what benefits volunteering can bring for them. Everyone has different expectations for volunteering and volunteers for various reasons. It's important to understand that your volunteering goals are not necessary the same as your team members. So, why did people start volunteering?



5. WHY PEOPLE VOLUNTEER?

Competencies:

Employers look for candidates with a range of hard skills and soft skills. Volunteering gives you plenty of opportunities to add to your personal and professional skill set. By volunteering, you're faced with problem-solving tasks, work with a team of diverse personalities – all while adjusting to life outside of your comfort zone.

Finding like-minded people:

The way someone chooses to spend their spare time is a true reflection of their values and priorities. Connecting over shared passions for a cause while helping others is a great way to meet new friends. By volunteering, your "circle of friends" can get a whole lot bigger in just a short amount of time.

Good example for others:

By volunteering, you inspire others to get involved to make a positive change in the community. It also sets a good example for children. Serving food at a local soup kitchen, leading a corporate team to raise funds for a charity run, or working with at-risk adolescents in an after-school program are great examples on how to spark a passion for volunteering in others.

Why people volunteer?

Good for your health:

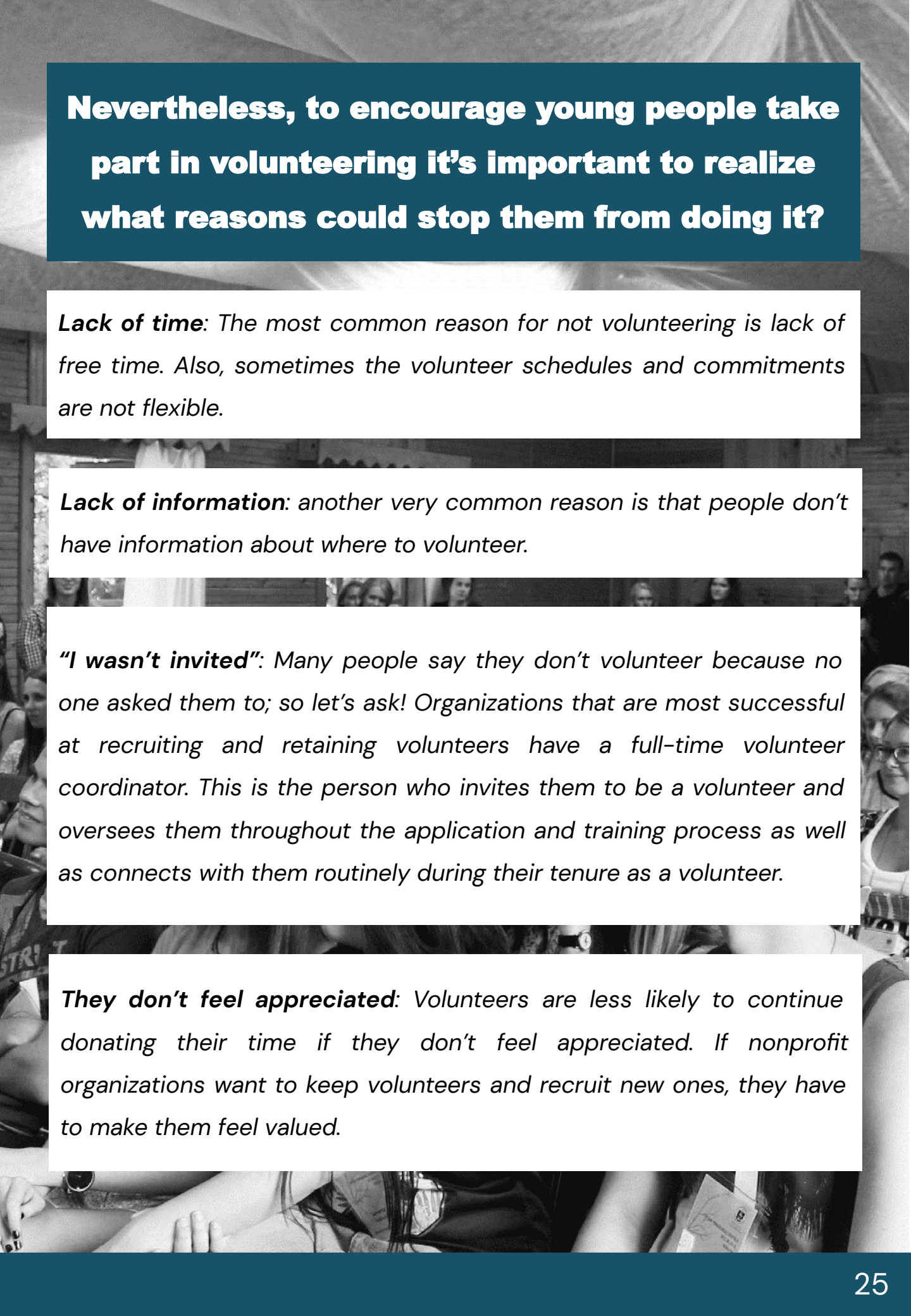
The social contact aspect of helping and working with others can have a profound effect on your overall psychological well-being. Nothing relieves stress better than a meaningful connection to another person. Working with pets and other animals has also been shown to improve mood and reduce stress and anxiety.

Explore your interests and passions:

Doing volunteer work you find meaningful and interesting can be a relaxing, energizing escape from your day-to-day routine of work, school, or family commitments. Volunteering also provides you with renewed creativity, motivation, and vision that can carry over into your personal and professional life.

Networking:

If you're considering a new career, volunteering can help you get experience in your area of interest and meet people in the field. Even if you're not planning on changing careers it's always useful to get to know more different people.

A background image showing a group of young people at a community event. Some are looking at the camera, while others are looking away. The image is slightly blurred and has a dark, moody tone.

Nevertheless, to encourage young people take part in volunteering it's important to realize what reasons could stop them from doing it?

Lack of time: *The most common reason for not volunteering is lack of free time. Also, sometimes the volunteer schedules and commitments are not flexible.*

Lack of information: *another very common reason is that people don't have information about where to volunteer.*

"I wasn't invited": *Many people say they don't volunteer because no one asked them to; so let's ask! Organizations that are most successful at recruiting and retaining volunteers have a full-time volunteer coordinator. This is the person who invites them to be a volunteer and oversees them throughout the application and training process as well as connects with them routinely during their tenure as a volunteer.*

They don't feel appreciated: *Volunteers are less likely to continue donating their time if they don't feel appreciated. If nonprofit organizations want to keep volunteers and recruit new ones, they have to make them feel valued.*

ENCOURAGE YOUR TEAM!

There are a lot of incentives and stops for people to volunteer, so how to encourage students to become a volunteer?

Show your appreciation. They give their time, energy, and sometimes funds. Show your appreciation with daily appreciation. Volunteers are diverse, and each one requires custom interaction—this will, in turn, strengthen your relationship. The possibilities are endless, but there are some tips:

- First of all, thank your volunteers.
- Host informal meetings for your volunteers to get to know each other better and to create unforgettable memories.
- Share your volunteers' success stories to demonstrate the important difference they make.
- Honor top volunteers in big and small ways. Small recognition efforts mean a lot – in print, online, and event settings.,

ENCOURAGE YOUR TEAM!

Value your volunteers' time

- People volunteer because they want to make a difference in the world. They have busy lives and competing responsibilities as we all do. Therefore, if they don't feel like they're making a difference, they won't continue to donate their time and energy.
- Signing on anyone who steps forward to "help" in vague ways, without clear objectives and coordination, simply wastes time – for both the paid staff and volunteers. Give volunteers a sense of purpose while they're working with you — set expectations, define goals, and make sure they have what they need to make the most of their time.
- Volunteers' meetings are important to support open lines of communication but don't hold unnecessary meetings or wander off your agenda.

Use their strengths

Volunteers enjoy using their expertise for a good cause. Therefore, allow them to apply their strengths to better your organization, and ensure the task is challenging and stimulating.

ENCOURAGE YOUR TEAM!

Communicate and listen to their feedback

Listen to what your volunteers say. Volunteers who feel ignored probably won't be volunteers for long. Therefore, ask their opinions, listen to their suggestions, and always follow up. When a volunteer approaches you with an idea, listen and ask questions. If it can be accommodated, let them know when it's put into effect.

Cultivate your volunteers for other, bigger roles

Your volunteers may also be leaders — coordinators, chair persons, board members. Sure, you'll have volunteers who just want to show up and assist with whatever task you provide. However, the care and feeding of all of your volunteers are critical for your organization's reputation and growth. You never know where resources will come from, so think of your volunteer force as a network of opportunity.

Give volunteers the training and resources they need

- Let volunteers know that you'll actively help them grow their impact on your mission over time by providing relevant training and opportunities for development. Training sessions help volunteers develop their skills which will enable them to more effectively advocate for your cause. The more trained a volunteer is, the more confident they are in their work and the more responsibility they can take on.
- Volunteers can also take part in development opportunities, such as networking, if they are interested in getting involved full-time with your organization! Organizers can also provide mentoring, write letters of recommendation, or edit resumes for volunteers to aid them in their professional development.

ENCOURAGE YOUR TEAM!

Encourage your volunteers to motivate each other.

Peer-to-peer recruitment is a powerful way to reach new audiences that will naturally be more receptive to your message, plus it strengthens your relationships with volunteers who recruit their friends. The main reason people start volunteering is because someone asked them. Your volunteers can serve as your most valuable asset in recruiting! Mobilize's bring-a-friend feature automatically prompts your volunteers to get their friends and families involved

Limit your requests.

No one wants to feel that he or she is constantly being asked to "give" non billable time away. Carefully consider how many times you go to the same well.

Make sure they are matching the skills and experience of their volunteers to the roles they have available.

Making copies and coffee are certainly not meaningful to most. Some organizations have a short interview process where they discuss the background of the potential volunteer to closely match it to the needs they have.

An effective way for a nonprofit leader to recognize volunteers is to feature them on the organization's website.

The nonprofit manager should interview a volunteer every month and find out a little more about them, such as what they do for a living or what motivated them to give their time. Sending contributors thank you notes is another good way to make them feel appreciated. Nonprofit managers should send handwritten notes and try to personalize every message.



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