



Top 10 Tips for Advertising a Volunteer Role

Writing an appealing Volunteer advertisement is not as simple as it may seem at first. Follow these top tips to help you find the best volunteer for your role.

1. Know what you want

Having a written Role Description before writing an advertisement will help you clarify the required tasks beyond just needing “help”. Undefined roles are difficult to become enthusiastic about, and enthusiasm is the emotion you want to elicit in potential volunteers who read your advertisement.

2. Check your language

Speak directly to the reader in your advertisement. The use of “you” and “we” will appear more engaging and friendly, rather than “The volunteer”. This helps people visualise themselves in the role.

3. Choose the position title carefully

The position title should reflect what the volunteer will actually be doing; it gives a sense of identity. Generic terms don’t mean anything, and the use of “Volunteer” in the title should be avoided.

4. Provide all the necessary details

Missing information leads to less applicants. What tasks will the volunteer be responsible for? Where will the work be carried out? Is there flexibility around this? If your advertisement is missing key details, potential volunteers will more likely pass over the role and look elsewhere.

5. Anticipate possible questions

Put yourself into the head of a person considering volunteering with you. What might they want to know? Try to offer that information as part of your advertisement. For example they might be interested but not sure if they can do the work, so be sure to include “no previous experience needed”, or “beginners welcome”.

6. Specify the expected commitment

Volunteers want to know upfront what you expect from them. Be clear on how long the job will take, how often it needs to be done, and what hours / days it should be carried out. Specify if it is a regular commitment or a one-off project.

7. Tell them what’s in it for them

When you invite someone to volunteer you are asking them to give up some of their discretionary time. Therefore you want the role to be appealing, and rewarding. Tell them what they’ll get out of volunteering for you e.g. gaining a new skill, developing a professional network, having fun, etc.

8. Promote the impact they’ll have

People are more likely to be motivated if they can see the difference they will make through volunteering. Tell them not just the tasks they’ll be performing but the outcome of these tasks, e.g. reducing loneliness for older people, or improving someone’s quality of life.

9. Keep it short and simple

Keep sentences and paragraphs bite-sized and aim to keep the word count down. Use language that your reader is likely to use, and avoid complicated or technical words unless absolutely necessary. Efficient writing enables efficient reading.

10. “Would I volunteer for this role?”

This is the crucial last step before publishing your advertisement! If the role doesn’t sound appealing to you then it is unlikely to appeal to others. Consider running your advertisement by other volunteers in your organisation to get their feedback.