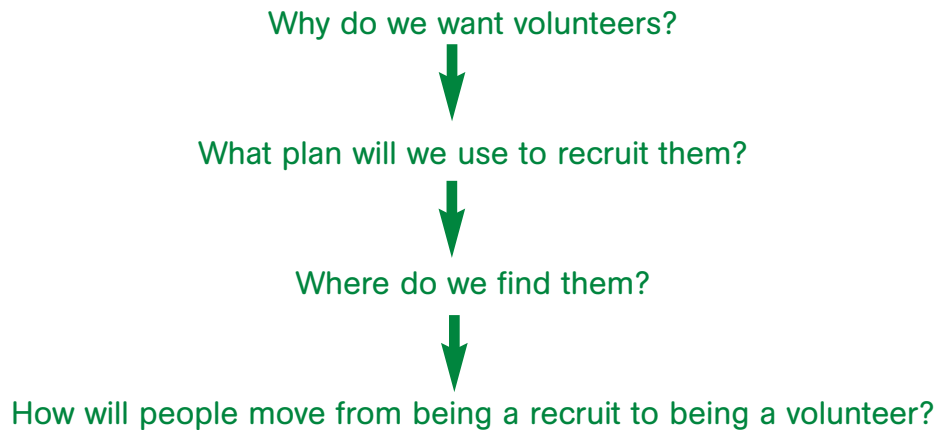


# finding new volunteers – recruitment top tips

The regular cry from sports clubs is ‘we haven’t got enough volunteers’ and ‘it’s always the same few’. These Top Tips will give you a few ideas of how to address the difficult task of recruiting volunteers.

Throughout the text, reference is made to sports ‘clubs’. This term is used to include all sports organisations, such as leagues, county and area associations, and other community groups that provide sporting opportunities, whether in an organised setting or a more informal environment.

The basic steps in recruitment are:



## why do we want volunteers?

People always say they want more volunteers. However, before recruiting volunteers, it is important to plan for their arrival. Questions that you may need to answer are:

- What tasks do we want volunteers to complete?
- Have we got role outlines for these?
- How many do we really need? (Have you calculated this properly or just guessed?)
- How long do we need them for?
- When do we need them?
- What training will they need to complete the tasks we have identified for them?
- What support will they require (from when they arrive)?
- Will our current volunteers accept new volunteers?

It is important that new volunteers feel they are making a contribution and that you don't leave them with nothing to do when they arrive – this happens more than we like to admit!

You also need to ensure that you have sufficient resources to support them while you train them. This may be anything from the time of another volunteer supporting/mentoring them in the role, through to funds to support their attendance at externally arranged training courses and events.

## **what plan will we use to recruit them?**

Ensure your administration is in order before you go any further:

- ❖ Either write, rewrite or design your role outlines. These outlines could be simple, for one specific role, or could be produced to incorporate an array of tasks with a view to having a broader appeal. The emphasis could be on having fun/being social and could offer a chance for individuals to re-use old skills, or learn new ones.
- ❖ Produce your volunteer code of practice.
- ❖ Update your volunteer welcome pack.
- ❖ Ensure you are ready to do a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check (if necessary).
- ❖ Make sure your committee(s) agree with the recruitment plans and approve any resources that may be needed for the event(s) or campaign.
- ❖ Make sure information is sent out to all enquirers and that anyone answering the phone is aware that the club is looking for volunteers and what to do next.
- ❖ Prepare your club to be volunteer-friendly and ready to welcome new volunteers (eg do you have a volunteer coordinator or someone to greet new volunteers?).
- ❖ Prepare your recruitment event(s) or campaign.
- ❖ Timetable some time to interview and meet potential new volunteers.
- ❖ Recruit any current club members who will be helping with the event(s) or campaign.

## **where do we find volunteers?**

You will be more successful in recruiting volunteers if you target your event(s) or campaign. For example:

- ❖ if you want someone to help you rewrite your constitution you may wish to look at organisations like ProHelp or Reach (both provide professional support)
- ❖ if you want a new coach, you may be better looking through community sport networks and/or your governing body.

However, there are many places to look and some of the agencies that may help you in your search are listed at the end of this text, such as TimeBank, Community Service Volunteers (CSV), do-it.org and volunteer centres.

**Top Tip:** For general recruiting, it's important to avoid simply saying 'volunteers needed'. Instead, focus on roles and what they have to offer. For example:

- ❖ Get fit and pass your cricket skills on to young people.
- ❖ Budding PR whizzes needed – hockey club needs volunteers to help promote themselves in the community.

Don't forget to look at young volunteers. They have lots of skills and are often looking for good placement opportunities! For more advice on working with this particular group, please view the 'Young People as Volunteers' Top Tips at [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

## how will people move from being a recruit to being a volunteer?

Once you have found some potential new volunteers, you will need to complete the relevant checks.

**Top Tip:** Even if you think you are in desperate need of some instant help, make sure adequate checks are made on the people who have offered to help. Remember, it is important to get the **right** person in the **right** role, so that they can enjoy doing the **right** things efficiently and effectively.

You can filter volunteer recruits in a number of ways:

- ❖ One-to-one interviews
- ❖ A 'find out about volunteering' evening (bringing a group together and talking to them as a group)
- ❖ CRB checks
- ❖ Asking for and taking up references.

If you do use the interview or group discussion method, ensure it is a two-way process and allow the volunteer to decide whether it is something they want to do. It is also an opportunity to check whether you have the right volunteer for the right role.

Maybe introduce a trial period after initial filtering, to allow the volunteer the chance to try the role for a while (maybe two weeks or a month), and allow you chance to get to know them.

When you are happy that you have the right volunteer(s), send out a welcome letter and welcome pack (if you have one). This letter should give the new volunteer the name and contact details of the person who will be supporting them (at least on their first time as a volunteer), and a time for them to make their first visit to the club.

Once you have your new volunteer, you will need to look after them (details of this process will follow in another Top Tip and in some of the publications/resources listed on the next page).

## further information and useful contacts

Volunteering England (London)  
Regents Wharf  
8 All Saints Street  
London N1 9RL

Volunteering England (Birmingham)  
New Oxford House  
16 Waterloo Street  
Birmingham B2 5UG

Tel: 0845-305 6979

Email: [information@volunteeringengland.org](mailto:information@volunteeringengland.org)

Website: [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

Community Service Volunteers (CSV)  
237 Pentonville Road  
London N1 9NJ  
Tel: 0207-278 6601

Email: [information@csv.org.uk](mailto:information@csv.org.uk)

Website: [www.csv.org.uk/Services/Need a Volunteer/](http://www.csv.org.uk/Services/Need a Volunteer/)

*CSV work in close collaboration with thousands of organisations throughout the UK, including social care charities, social services and social work departments, housing associations, NHS trusts and youth offending teams; providing them with volunteers and supporting them whenever volunteer management issues arise.*

Criminal Records Bureau  
CRB Customer Services  
PO Box 110  
Liverpool L69 3EF  
Tel: 0870-90 90 811 (general enquiries)  
Website: [www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk)

Do-it.org.uk  
3rd Floor  
2-3 Upper Street  
Islington  
London N1 0PQ  
Tel: 0207-226 8008  
Fax: 0207-226 8118  
Website: [www.do-it.org.uk/needvolunteers](http://www.do-it.org.uk/needvolunteers)

**ProHelp**

Business in the Community  
137 Shepherdess Walk  
London N1 7RQ  
Tel: 0870-600 2482  
Email: [information@bitc.org.uk](mailto:information@bitc.org.uk)  
Website: [www.prohelp.org.uk](http://www.prohelp.org.uk)

**Reach**

89 Albert Embankment  
London SE1 7TP  
Tel: 0207-582 6543  
Fax: 0207-582 2423  
Email: [mail@reach-online.org.uk](mailto:mail@reach-online.org.uk)  
Website: [www.reach-online.org.uk](http://www.reach-online.org.uk)

**TimeBank**

2nd Floor  
Downstream Building  
1 London Bridge  
SE1 9BG  
Tel: 0845-456 1668  
Fax: 0845-456 1669  
Website: [www.timebank.org.uk](http://www.timebank.org.uk)

**publications/resources:**

Dyer, F. and Jost, U. (2002) (First edition) Recruiting Volunteers – Attracting the People You Need. London: Directory of Social Change. ISBN: 1-903991-20-X.

Ellis, S.J. (1994) The Volunteer Recruitment Book. Energize Inc. ISBN: 0-940576-15-5.

*Both of the above resources are available to purchase from:  
[www.volunteering.org.uk/managing-volunteers/publications/](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/managing-volunteers/publications/)*

runningsports Quick Guide ‘Volunteers – How can I recruit, retain, recognise and reward volunteers?’

*View, download or purchase a copy from [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)*

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