

“Keys to Recruiting More Volunteers!”

All non-profits, such they are schools, hospitals, libraries, colleges, museums, have great missions and limited resources. When it comes to fundraising and advancement, the more resources and people you can put to the task, the more successful you will be. But with tight budgets and limited resources, how can advancement program or foundation continue to grow. Well, first of all, continue to make your case for more resources to your directors. But second of all, a dedicated volunteer can make all the difference in the world.

In my early years of working in private schools, I had superiors who did not see the value of advancement and who did not want to put the resources needed to advancement. They wanted all the benefits of a strong advancement program or foundation but did they did not want to budget for it. How was I able to make the advancement program more successful? Answer: volunteers? Dedicated volunteers. In fact, many of my volunteers were more helpful and dedicated than paid staff members.

Most non-profits have a dedicated following. Whether you are a private high school or college, a hospital, a YMCA, a library, a church, or a museum, you have a following. So, how can you grow your volunteer corps?

1. **Personally Recruit** – Look around your organization. Personally ask one or three or five or ten people to help you with a certain project. It is the personal invitation that is key! If you are putting together an alumni mailing or membership mailing, ask some people to help you with the copying, folding, envelope assembly or mailing. Whether you are planning a mailing, sponsoring an event or social, or planning a golf outing or gala, look around your community and personally invite healthy, constructive, productive friends to help you.
2. **Bring a friend** – Next time you are having a meeting or taking part in an activity or sponsoring an event, ask everyone to bring one friend. This way you can double and keep doubling in no time!
3. **Train the Volunteers** – Everyone needs to be trained, whether they are key volunteer leaders or team members. What are they doing? Where are they doing it? Who has the keys to the room? Where are the materials? Who do they contact for more materials? Where can they get the company card or check to acquire the materials they need?
4. **Support the Volunteers** – Volunteers are gold to a non-profit. Support your volunteers. Have coffee and rolls for them when they arrive. Drop by to visit and see how they are doing. Build friendships with them. A little food and consideration and kindness go a long way. In my volunteer groups, the volunteers enjoyed getting together so much they started to bring their own cookies or cinnamon rolls. Make it fun!
5. **Watch for the Cream to Rise!** – Some of your volunteers will be exceptionally dedicated, responsible and gifted. Keep your eyes open for the gifted ones. Ask them to take on key leadership positions for various activities.
6. **Appreciate Them!** – Once or twice a year have an appreciation for them. For example, at Christmas time, New Years or another holiday season, invite them in for a light lunch and provide at least token thank you gifts for them.
7. **Always be replenishing your volunteer list** – Always be seeking names of new volunteers from other volunteers, staff and organizational leaders. Seek to add 10-25% in new members each year. In this way, your advancement program or your organization will be continually revitalized.

If you have found the “Keys to Recruiting More Volunteers!” helpful, then contact us today at VisionWorks – 402.999.2970 or MarkF@VisionWorksCo.com.