

### **How to make the most of Involvement's volunteer recruitment service**

Volunteers are in short supply – there are always more opportunities than there are volunteers to take them, so how do you make sure that volunteers choose to come to you?

One very important way to increase volunteer interest in your organisation is to make sure that the description and details of your volunteering opportunities are appealing, informative and well written.

Involvement asks you for this information via our Opportunity Registration forms. These are not just filed away and forgotten about. We use the information you give us, in your words, to advertise your opportunities in newspapers, on the radio, in our shop window, and at publicity stands as well as when describing your opportunity to potential volunteers.

Interesting and clearly expressed descriptions are far more likely to attract potential volunteers than a couple of sentences thrown together in a rush. They also give a good impression of your organisation, and are more likely to be chosen for newspaper and radio publicity. Time invested in writing and editing opportunity descriptions is time well spent!

#### **Sell, sell, sell**

With over 100 different opportunities available at any one time, your opportunity has to compete to attract a potential volunteer's attention.

The title is the first thing people will look at – does it capture what the role involves? Make it eye-catching but clear, and less than 5 words long.

Next is the opportunity description - make it clear and concise. Use an objective style but don't be too formal. Avoid jargon and always check grammar and spelling.

Some things to consider including:

- What are the benefits to the volunteer?
- What will be required of them?
- What skills will they develop?
- Who will they be working with?
- What benefit will their volunteering bring to the organisation?
- What will they actually be doing?
- What is the time commitment?

Remember that you are trying to sell your opportunity, but at the same time it is important to describe it accurately.

### A second opinion

If possible, get someone else to read through what you have written. Ask them if it makes sense, if there are any mistakes and if they have any suggestions for improvements. Try asking someone who knows nothing about your organisation as this is the position most potential volunteers will be in. Try asking existing volunteers to see if they think you have described the role accurately.

### Examples

1. Lunchtime Assistant

"Volunteers are needed to help lay the table, serve lunch and wash up."

This might be better expressed as:

Lunch-club helper

"Make friends over lunch. Our friendly stroke club needs volunteers to help with lunch-time duties and to socialise with members."

2. Conservation Volunteer

"Volunteers needed to carry out conservation tasks such as clearing brambles, clearing ditches, picking up litter and maintaining footpaths"

This might be better expressed as:

Conservation Volunteer

"If you enjoy fresh air, exercise and meeting new people while helping the interests of wildlife and the environment, give voluntary conservation work a try. It's rewarding, varied, fun and something different to do on a Sunday! Volunteers will work in teams to carry out practical conservation tasks. Tea and biscuits are provided!"

### Further information

If you would like any help or advice with writing your opportunity descriptions, contact Maymay, the Volunteer Bureau Coordinator. She will be happy to provide any assistance that she can.

For information on writing in plain English, visit [www.plainenglish.co.uk](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk)