

FRIENDS OF CANADIAN LIBRARIES

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS TEN TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE RECRUITING

1. The first person to really talk to is yourself!
Disregard old stereotypes, don't lie, don't diminish the job, don't apologize, don't beg.
2. Ask one-to-one, face-to-face. It's the best method.
If possible, ask face-to-face: 80% of people volunteer because someone they know asked them.
3. Be Enthusiastic!
The best recruiter is someone who likes what they are doing, and values the work of the organization - share your enthusiasm.
4. Know the job to be done. Have a one-page job description prepared.
Outline the purpose of the job, its responsibilities and how to get help.
Provide a contact name and selected print resources. Don't overwhelm.
5. Explain why you asked them.
Do your homework. Know skills, attitudes, knowledge required to do the job. Go where these skills are found in abundance. The trend today is on focused recruitment. Match the right person with the right job. Don't be satisfied with "any warm body".
6. Be explicit about "what's in it for them".
Try to put yourself in their shoes. What needs does this job satisfy for this particular volunteer?
7. Ask !!!
85% of people who don't volunteer say its because no one asked them. Remember, don't apologize. Try the following positive approaches...
"I have an opportunity for you..."
"I've heard so much about your skills..."
"Join us. We can really use your talents..."
8. Answer questions honestly.
Answering their questions demonstrates your interest in their concerns. Remember to use the "no surprises" method of volunteer management. Even if the individual says no to you, you've told the story of your organization. This will establish the groundwork for future involvement, or for a referral to others. Think of recruitment as "friend raising". Then, even a NO becomes a success story.

9. Link recruits with a specific project and a personal contact.
Agreeing to help takes courage. You want to get someone involved while their interest and enthusiasm are high. Many people offer to volunteer and then are not contacted. This really hurts the reputation and credibility of your organization.

A specific project is the “hook” to get people involved. They are contributing “on-the-job”, learning the language and culture of your organization. Don’t have them observing for the first year. These folks will drift away.

A personal call from the committee chair (or someone with whom they will be working) makes the newcomer feel welcome. Consider a buddy or mentor to watch over a new recruit (especially a youth volunteer), and to ease them into the organization.

10. Don’t promise what you can’t deliver.
It may be tempting to offer the world in order to entice a hesitant recruit. Resist the temptation. Promising what you can’t deliver makes people resentful and sets up a series of expectations which may not be realized.