



Volunteer and Staff Recognition

Creating a Great Club Culture through Happy Staff and Volunteers!

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INSPIRE What will inspire a culture of appreciation?

Volunteers are often recruited by other volunteers through co-workers, friends and family through positive word of mouth.

- Appoint a volunteer coordinator for your organisation
- Make a year round volunteer/staff recognition plan
- Tips for team leaders /coaches in making volunteers/staff feel welcome and appreciated eg saying thank you at the end of each session, take an interest in the volunteer
- Make available training and mentoring opportunities
- Volunteer /staff / coaches handbook with all they need to know about being involved with the club eg training opportunities, petrol refunds to courses, clubs structure, who to go to if having problems
- Regular newsletters/updates by e-mail.
- Volunteer meetings.

IMPACT What can be done to show volunteers the impact of their work?

Studies show most volunteers believe the best form of recognition for volunteers is to know the impact of their work.

- Keep volunteers informed of the clubs vision, activities
- Create a summary of the clubs activities / performance of the year to give to volunteers to show how they have all contributed – eg numbers participating, Incentive Award numbers,
- Get members to write a note on a piece of paper at the end of the year expressing what they have got out of the programme include parents - include the comments in a thank you card and add some of the best comments in the summary to clubs.

CELEBRATE

How can we recognise the volunteers?



Everyone enjoys being thanked and when a person is working for no other reason than to help out or possibly get some work experience, then that thank you is even more important. Keeping the current volunteers you have is easier than recruiting new ones. Therefore making sure they feel valued and supported should take priority as it will definitely improve your retention and help with future recruitment.

Recognition of volunteers is closely related to an organisation's ability to retain its volunteers.

Make it part of your Club culture to always thank your volunteers, so they hear it from many parts of the organisation (e.g. staff, board/committee members, athletes, other volunteers). This holds true for every sports organisation that needs volunteers.

What might seem a small deal to a club administrator can be a very big deal for a volunteer. Never underestimate how powerful some simple recognition can be for the volunteer.

Many a time a bottle of wine and/or box of chocolates is given as a token of appreciation however there are so many other ideas out there.

Before you fall back on your standard thank you's take a few minutes to think and check – for example does the volunteer like wine/drink alcohol? Not everyone does and there's nothing worse than getting a bottle of wine that you then have to pass onto someone else.

See below for a few different ideas to get you thinking:

Informally

- Name badges
- Volunteer apparel – t-shirts, caps
- Volunteer of the month award
- Post volunteer acknowledgements/appreciation on websites and social media
- Birthday cards / cakes
- Have tea / coffee / snacks available at place of volunteering

- Holiday gifts
 - Easter Eggs
 - “Thanks for your royal efforts” gift at Queen’s Birthday weekend
 - “Thanks for your hard work” at Labour Weekend
- Homemade laminated book marks with personal note
- Arrange a fill-in to give your volunteer a night off
- Ask business to sponsor a gift or provide a discount voucher to thank your volunteers eg food, petrol vouchers,
- Know what your volunteers like eg volunteer discount voucher for coffee cart
- Acknowledge Volunteer Awareness Week

Formal

- Acknowledgement at club prize-giving’s
- Club Awards System
 - Eg volunteer of the year award, service awards
 - 5 , 10, 15, 20, 25+ Years Service Acknowledgement
 - Life memberships
- National Sporting Recognition Schemes
- Thank you events eg BBQ
- Nominations for local sports awards eg Coach of the year, Service to Sport
- Nominations for Sport-Maker Awards

Making a Plan

Once you have started to think about volunteering it is a great idea to write a plan on when and how you are going to recognise these wonderful people. If you are interested there is a template on the last page of this booklet as a template.

Shout out wall!

Research shows that paid employees need to receive thanks every seven days to feel engaged. It's no different for volunteers, so why not set up a space in your gym?



Dressing up a bottle of wine or box of chocolates:



Something for a lover of tea?



Something for a lover of coffee?



Or maybe something for those chocolate lovers?



Maybe you're hosting a Summer competition or a Spring festival?



Or maybe a winter festival or a winter competition?



Or Vouchers might be more your thing?



Petrol vouchers



Movie Tickets

or something more versatile



Or maybe a need for something sweet?





Something to grow or last forever?



The possibilities really are endless but a little effort goes a long way in helping to make your volunteers feel valued.

Example of a Volunteer Recognition Plan

Club: (Name of Club)
Overall Responsibility: (Name of person)
Number of volunteers: (Number of Volunteers)

YEAR	Action's	Who	Cost
January	Order Volunteer T-Shirts Make calendar of birthdays and purchase cards to post for each volunteer. Coaches and Volunteer handbooks updated & printed Invitation to club planning night Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		T-shirt cost \$400, printing donated by sponsor with their logo Handbook printing donated Cards \$10 for a pack of 10
February	Coaches / Volunteer Meeting 1 - Distribute Volunteer T-Shirts, Handbooks including information on courses coming up. Valentine's Day chocolate heart and message "we love what you do for us" Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		\$15 Coach and Volunteer development budget from head coach
March	Meeting with lead volunteers on making volunteers welcome and what we are doing for them and saying thanks etc. Term 1 Newsletter Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		
April	Easter Muffins handed out at club night Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		Donated by local bakery
May	Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		
June	Coaches / Volunteer Meeting 2 – with mid-winter dinner Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		Dinner items donated by members
July	Term 2 Newsletter Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		
August	Nominations for district sports awards to approve at committee Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		
September	Coaches / Volunteer Meeting 3 Schools Festival Event – on the day food for volunteers, thank you cards and nominations for Sport-maker Term 3 Newsletter Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		\$80
October	Invite appropriate people to attend sports awards with club nominees Labour weekend – food voucher "thanks for your hard work" Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		Vouchers donated by subway.
November	Term 4 Newsletter – summary of achievements for the year. Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		
December	Club prize-giving - Thank you cards and appropriate gifts and petrol vouchers for each volunteer as per club policy. Volunteer Xmas thank you BBQ – poster board with thank you notes from members Volunteer of month – Sportmaker nomination		\$500 \$200