



Office of Volunteer Relations

Ways to recognize volunteers based on their motivation.

Affiliation Motivated Volunteer Recognition Ideas

- Cards, gifts, etc. on their birthdays, or special holidays.
- Letters to supervisors telling of their work to benefit people.
- Unexpected thank you notes.
- Awards that are personalized with a thank you from client served.
- Opportunities to give input about specific clientele needs.
- Banquets, luncheons, picnics, social outings or attending community events as a group.
- Include volunteers in slide shows or photos showing their work.

Achievement Motivated Volunteer Recognition Ideas

- Tangible awards, plaques, or pins that can be displayed.
- Letters of commendation for specific accomplishments from board members and to area newspapers.
- Opportunity to use their own ideas to attain goals.
- Include in staff meetings when appropriate.
- Nomination for area, state or national awards.
- Careful not to waste their time.
- Color name tags, badges to honor time spent with the agency.

Influence Motivated Volunteer Recognition Ideas

- Impressive job title.
- Ongoing program or site name for them.
- Recognition that is broad-based that will be seen by people in authority and power.
- Letter of commendation noting their impact and importance sent to newspapers, colleges, and magazines.
- Send them to seminars for volunteers and ask them to teach others. Introduce them to people of influence and media contacts.



Office of Volunteer Relations

No/Low cost ways to say thank you to volunteers

1. Write a news article for your newsletters, website or social media. If it's a great story, consider submitting it to the local newspaper.
2. Send a handwritten thank-you note.
3. Smile.
4. Send a holiday greeting card.
5. Ask a volunteer for their input about a program or evaluation.
6. Share the results of program evaluations with volunteers so they can see their impact on clients and programs.
7. Utilize volunteer's unique special talents.
8. Have a "volunteer of the month" award.
9. Establish a Volunteer Honor Roll.
10. Ask effective volunteers to each recruit another volunteer who is "just like them."
11. Debrief with volunteers following a conference, program, or activity which they participated in or assisted with.
12. Greet each volunteer with enthusiasm and appreciation.
13. Ask an effective volunteer to mentor a new recruit.
14. Provide useful and effective orientation for each volunteer position. It sets the right tone from the beginning.
15. Ask a volunteer for their input or opinion.
16. Recognize and share innovative volunteer suggestions or programs.
17. Recognize the number of hours contributed to the agency, organization, or program.
18. Ask a volunteer to speak on behalf of the program to an outside agency.
19. Nominate volunteers for awards – inside and outside of your organization.
20. Make sure that each volunteer is a "good fit" with their volunteer role.
21. Encourage program participants to send a thank-you note to your volunteer.
22. Involve volunteers in problem solving efforts.
23. Always greet your volunteers by name.
24. Be honest at all times.
25. Don't treat volunteers as second-class citizens.
26. Make volunteers feel good about themselves.
27. Create a climate in which volunteers can feel motivated and keep challenging them.
28. Make sure the work is meaningful to the volunteer and the community.
29. Work with local businesses to provide discounts or coupons to volunteers.
30. Take time to talk with volunteers about their interests.