# 52 volunteer management tips that can be shared weekly via email by programs with their RSVP stations

1. Keep an open mind about who can volunteer.
2. Treat volunteers as you’d like to be treated.
3. Provide a space where volunteers can put their personal belongings. This gives them a sense of ownership and belonging.
4. Keep it simple: assign a single point of contact for volunteers.
5. Be flexible… involving volunteers is a two-way street.
6. Make sure volunteers understand basic safety procedures and have acknowledged they received training. This is good risk management.
7. Create volunteer position descriptions to outline tasks, duties, and recruitment purposes.
8. Volunteer management means completing all steps of the wheel: plan, recruit and place, orient and train, supervise and recognize, and evaluate.
9. Let staff and other volunteers know when a new volunteer is starting and include what general tasks they will be performing. This will assist the new volunteer in not feeling ‘out of place’ or intimidated by other staff or veteran volunteers.
10. Offer new opportunities to existing volunteers.
11. Recruitment message should convey a powerful message of community impact.
12. Connect your volunteers together to build peer support and team work.
13. Discuss the background, mission, and goals of the organization; explain the daily activities and how the work will play an integral part in the “big picture”.
14. Make sure volunteers understand the risks they may encounter in a service assignment.
15. Ask for input, but only if you are going to use the information collected.
16. Don’t let your volunteers over commit to the organization.
17. When you ask for volunteers, be ready to act.
18. Involving volunteers is not a static process – keep looking for ways to improve the volunteer experience.
19. Value the gift of time.
20. Show appreciation by hosting events, saying ‘thank you’, give gifts, and acknowledge publically.
21. Discipline if needed: make volunteers aware of the organization’s policies and rules.
22. Avoid micro-managing: volunteers need to have clear expectations in their job descriptions to allow them to perform their roles efficiently and effectively.
23. Think about what you can offer your volunteer.
24. Due diligence is necessary to protect your organization. Job descriptions, safety briefings, and supervision are components of volunteer management.
25. Support and training doesn’t stop after orientation.
26. Orient and train volunteers well to increase volunteers’ confidence, enthusiasm, knowledge of role and organization, feeling of belonging, and sense of purpose.
27. Volunteers are not necessarily free. There needs to be an allocation of appropriate resources for support.
28. Say ‘thank you’ and in lots of different ways.
29. Create new challenges and responsibilities for volunteers; this will keep their motivation and interest levels high.
30. Make it easy for people to volunteer by being creative and flexible when designing volunteer opportunities.
31. Develop an effective recruitment message: if you wouldn’t respond, rewrite it!
32. Showcase the importance, the impact, or the fun one can have by participating in your organization.
33. Clearly state the time commitment, physical requirements, and necessary training or materials a volunteer needs to bring.
34. Take advantage of technology.
35. If a challenge or need is identified – take action.
36. Give volunteers the instruction, direction, feedback, corrections, information, and freedom needed to perform tasks and roles.
37. Utilize online tools and resources such as Constant Contact or Facebook to help streamline recruitment.
38. Create community awareness about your program by staying in the public’s eye.
39. Engage volunteers by exchanging information. Learn about them and what their interest are while letting them know about the organization.
40. Excellent supervision of volunteers is key to volunteer retention.
41. Support rather than control volunteers.
42. When evaluating volunteers review the past, analyze the present, and plan the future.
43. Volunteers have different interests and needs, so different approaches are necessary.
44. Always encourage questions.
45. If it becomes obvious that a volunteer’s time and talents are mismatched in an opportunity, offer an alternative.
46. Deepen the relationship with volunteers by ensuring manager and volunteer meet frequently.
47. Effective orientation and training develops skills a volunteer will need and gives the opportunity to go over what is expected.
48. Match an experienced volunteer with a new volunteer for hands on, one-on-one training or mentoring
49. Provide a guided tour of the organization so the volunteer feels more comfortable in the surroundings.
50. Recruit good volunteers onsite, by word of mouth, online, through the media.
51. When evaluating volunteers be cautious not to review personality traits, shortcomings, etc., but stick to the volunteer job responsibilities.
52. Screen your volunteers: 54% of volunteer organizations conduct background checks.