

VOLUNTEER TOOLKIT



INSPIRING A HEALTHIER SPORTING NATION

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Volunteers are the lifeblood of community sporting clubs; the time and dedication of passionate members helps to make our local clubs function on and off the playing field.

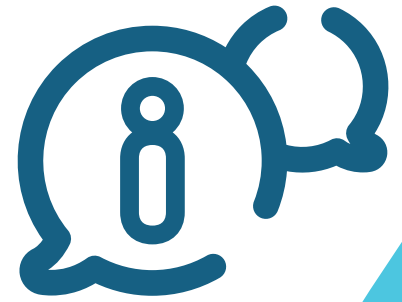
At Good Sports, we know that recruiting and maintaining active membership is a big issue for many local sporting clubs. In fact, it might be one of the most challenging aspects of keeping a local club running.

As a volunteer yourself, you understand that committing the time and energy is worth it – but how do you find others? This toolkit will help you to do just that. We'll talk you through the challenges and opportunities when engaging new volunteers. We'll also equip you with some handy resources to make the recruitment process easier and help to spread the load.

.....

WHAT'S INSIDE?

- 1 Understanding volunteering
- 2 Getting volunteers on board
- 3 Reaching the right people
- 4 Training volunteers
- 5 Celebrating volunteers
- 6 Volunteer recruitment poster



UNDERSTANDING VOLUNTEERING

Understanding what motivates people to donate their time and energy is critical - once we understand what volunteers get out of their work, as well as what prevents people from being volunteers, we can tailor our recruitment message to highlight why volunteering with a sports club is fulfilling – and start thinking about how to reduce the barriers to joining one.

Why do people volunteer at local sporting clubs?

Think about the reasons you volunteer - what motivates you to give your free time to the club? People commonly volunteer to meet new people, learn new skills, and to make a difference in their community. The feeling of being part of a team with a common goal is something that's attractive to many.



Fact: more people are volunteering

Giving Australia 2016 found that both the number of people volunteering, and the hours that they commit to volunteering, are increasing.

The most likely to volunteer are women and people over 35, with those 65+ contributing the highest number of hours overall.

What prevents people from volunteering?

Understanding what's holding people back from getting or staying involved will also help your recruitment efforts – and keep your current members happy and engaged. Some common reasons for not volunteering include lack of time/interest, the possibility of out of pocket expenses, or the belief that they're not skilled enough to help.

It is important to show potential volunteers that the pros of volunteering greatly outweigh the cons - Volunteering Australia has found that people who volunteer report being happier and healthier both mentally and physically.



Fact: people are volunteering at local sporting clubs

Sport in Australia is delivered in large part through the efforts of volunteers. In 2010, the sport and physical recreation sector attracted the largest number of volunteers (2.3 million people). The Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2014 General Social Survey revealed the most common types of organisations for which people volunteer are those relating to sport and physical recreation at 31 per cent. Sporting and recreational organisations also have the highest hours of volunteer involvement at 157.5 million hours, compared with religious organisations 147.6 million hours and welfare/community 141.1 million hours.

GETTING VOLUNTEERS ON BOARD

Getting volunteers on board isn't always easy. Most local sporting clubs will need a solid game-plan in place to recruit new volunteers. Not sure where to start? Let's talk strategy.

Creating a recruitment game-plan

In order to recruit new volunteers, your strategy should focus on the benefits of volunteering for both the club and the individual. You'll also need to think carefully about the best way to promote these benefits to the club community.



STEP 1: Start the conversation

Put your recruitment strategy on the agenda of your next committee meeting and ask the club's current volunteers for their input on why they choose to help. You might ask questions like 'What do you like best about being a volunteer at the club?', 'What pushed you to get involved as a volunteer?', or 'Why do you think other members don't volunteer?'



STEP 2: Consider the benefits for members

There will probably be some common themes that emerge from your current volunteers about what they enjoy. You might like to write down your favourites and play around with how to express those volunteering benefits to potential new members in a clear, concise and engaging way.



STEP 3: Consider the benefits for the club and community

Now look at what your members are most proud of. Maybe it's a specific project or club event, or the impact they have had as a volunteer coach or in the club canteen - make sure you communicate to prospective volunteers how their help can be of benefit to the community.



STEP 4: Create your recruitment message

Get creative and use the experiences of current volunteers to craft a short quote or description which highlights what the club, community and individual can gain from being part of the volunteer team. You'll want to keep it fairly short and punchy so you get your point across quickly and keep the attention of your prospective volunteer.

TIP: It might be tempting to base your messaging around the shortage of club volunteers and amount of work needed to be done, but we recommend a more positive approach which highlights the many benefits of volunteering. Think something like, "making our club and community healthier and happier."

REACHING THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Whether an existing or past-player, family-member or coach, most prospective volunteers will already be a part of your club community.

Identifying broadly who you're looking to recruit will help you decide what channels will be most successful for reaching that target group.

Consider current or ex club members, community members (parents, young people and retirees), local government representatives or councillors, and university students as potential volunteers for the club.

TIP: Identify two or three groups (by age, their role at the club, or location) to focus on.

Also consider the barriers to those groups volunteering and if there's any way to reduce them.

Picking your channels

You'll want to use the right channel to reach your target audience. Depending on your specific strategy, your recruitment campaign might include an A4 poster to put on display in the clubrooms/ local community (check out the recruitment poster on page 11), social media posts, or match-day announcements.

Being professional and adaptive

It's easy enough to pique interest in volunteering, but often the hardest part is placing prospective volunteers in to the appropriate roles. The way you handle this final part of the recruitment process can be make or break.

Be professional: As best you can, provide Position Descriptions and plenty of information for prospective volunteers. If there are strong systems in place, members may feel more inclined to get on board.

Be adaptive: The ways that people live, work and volunteer are always changing. Listen to your volunteers and where possible provide them with roles that suit their schedule, needs and interests. Spread the load and ask members to help by completing just one of these tasks.

Print out the poster on the following page and pin it up on your noticeboard to encourage people to sign up to volunteer.



VOLUNTEER FOR A BETTER CLUB AND A BETTER YOU.

Providing a positive, healthy and family-friendly sporting experience for all.

- ✓ Learn new skills
- ✓ Meet new friends
- ✓ Be part of your community
- ✓ Become more confident
- ✓ Make a difference

Register your interest today



INSPIRING A HEALTHIER SPORTING NATION

goodsports.com.au

TRAINING VOLUNTEERS

Recruiting volunteers is one thing, maintaining them is another.

Training volunteers around their roles and responsibilities will help to maximise their positive impact on the club. It will also help to keep them engaged and volunteering for longer.

.....

Key training steps include:



Creating a Volunteer Guide or Induction Kit:

This guide should talk about the club history, benefits of volunteering and key contact details. It should also include any club policies or procedures, a volunteer Code of Conduct and a welcome/thank you letter.



Holding an Induction event:

An information evening at the start of the season is a good chance to share key information and encourage volunteers to meet.



Screening volunteers:

This is especially important for junior clubs who will need to ensure all volunteers working with kids have a valid Working with Children's Check. Clubs might also consider requiring a Police Check. Check in with your local police services for information about the requirements in your state.

CELEBRATING VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are awesome! They give up their time and energy to make a local sports club better, and that's something to celebrate!

Celebrating the achievements and dedication of volunteers is not only a great way to build team morale, it's also a good promotion tool and will help to acquire new volunteers for your club.

Use these ideas to get started:

A star profile

Include a profile of a volunteer in each edition of your club newsletter. This could be as simple as a Q&A or short testimonial from a fellow-volunteer or your volunteer coordinator.

Social media shout outs

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are a great way to share on-the-spot updates. Spot a volunteer doing something awesome on match day? Share a photo with your online club community. Just make sure to get permission from the volunteer before sharing the picture.

Volunteer awards

Hold a Volunteer Awards night, or include some awards for volunteers at your next Club Presentation Night. Present special awards to recognise volunteers who have been with the club for 3, 5 or 10 years.

Certificates

Create personalised certificates for your volunteers and present these certificates at your next club event.

Volunteer thank you BBQ

Hold an exclusive BBQ just for club volunteers. Ask local businesses to donate supplies.

Volunteer pins or badges

Present volunteers with pins or badges to wear at club events.

Volunteer discounts

Approach local businesses to offer discounts for your club volunteers. Many businesses will be happy to provide discounts for dedicated community volunteers.

A volunteer round

Schedule a round in your fixture which celebrates volunteers – think match-day announcements, prizes and heaps of opportunities for members to say thanks.

Professional development opportunities

A great way to reward volunteers is to offer opportunities for them to upskill. Upskilling your volunteers benefits everyone! Think Responsible Service of Alcohol, First Aid courses and work experience opportunities.

