

"Oh, help me!" Getting the help you need

Think volunteers are few and far between? Find out how others have gotten much needed help with a variety of nature-oriented projects. Come ready to share and learn at this important need-based workshop. We will discuss everything from the anatomy of good volunteers to strategies for retention and transition. Bring your questions, concerns and successes!

1. Anatomy of a GOOD volunteer

The classic stereotype of a volunteer is someone who has lots of time to spare and is looking for something to do. Although this perception may have been true in the past when many women stayed out of the workplace and gave their energies to charity, the stereotype no longer fits. **Women still volunteer more than men, and people between the ages of 35 and 44 are the likeliest to volunteer.** Those members of the "likeliest group" also are likely to be balancing careers with raising families, not to mention taking care of aging parents, going to the gym, and keeping up with e-mail.

*Adapted From: **Nonprofit Kit For Dummies, 2nd Edition***

- Enthusiasm
- Common Sense -- Flexible, adaptable, polite, respectful, on time and ready to work as a team player
- Personal Interest -- Love, FUN
- Problem solving

2. The WHY Factor (Why do people volunteer?)

(Self-serving - Rational - Belief according to volunteer mgmt. expert Thomas McKee)

B. a) Because it "runs in the family"

S. a) To get experience (if young)

discover new skills and capabilities - I can do things I didn't know I could do!

R. b) To share their expertise with others (if older),

in other words, to give back to society, balance the scales (see butterfly lady)

B. c) To get something - satisfaction, fulfillment, intrinsic paybacks (improve self-esteem), recognition, feedback, positive change, **friendship, feeling of belonging, ***results (do something the love)

**"I liked the people. They all wanted to do a good job. It had an energy about it. You had the sense that someone was relying on you."

***"I feel as if I've done something that warrants being alive..."

\$\$Volunteer experience is becoming more important when you apply for college. Volunteering shows that you are a well-rounded person who cares about making a difference in your community. **Did you know that there are scholarships available for outstanding volunteers?**

3. Recruitment (How do we get them?)

Statistics from the 1992 Study from the Voluntary Action Directorate of Multiculturalism and Citizenship in Ottawa, Canada

- About 40% become involved because someone asks them
- Over 25% learn about the work from a relative or friend involved in it
- Less than 20% seek out the activity on their own.

****Every satisfied volunteer can be seen as a potential recruiter.**

- Approx. 109 million American adults volunteer annually — that's 56% of all adults.
- Volunteers contribute an average of 3.5 hours per week — totaling 20 billion hours with an estimated dollar value of \$225 billion.
- 59% of teenagers volunteer an average of 3.5 hours per week — that's 13.3 million volunteers totaling 2.4 billion hours at a total value of \$7.7 billion.

4. Retention (How do we keep them?)

- Poor planning or improper use of a volunteer's time leads to dissatisfaction.

- Disorganized management
- Staff indifference
- Lack of contact and support
- Perks that are withdrawn
- Lack of board support
- Limited training and orientation
- Wrong assignment
- Insufficient funding