

Recruiting VOLUNTEERS



NSW Sports Federation
The Voice of Sport

Volunteers are a vital part of sport. We all know that and you may well be a volunteer yourself. As you will be aware, there are countless theoretical examples of what we should and should not do to get volunteers in our sporting clubs.

Here at the NSW Sports Federation, we've widely researched from the best in Australia to the best around the world to come up with 50 ideas that you can use to recruit volunteers. We've collated all the ideas and have used bullet points so it's easy to read.

But to make it more 'realistic', we asked the army of real live volunteers out there in NSW who are doing the hard work on the ground out there. The response was great and is a representation from a range of sports, clubs and ages of volunteers. You should be able to pick up some great innovative ideas to help with your club...

In all cases, if you are recruiting Volunteers and they will work with Juniors, you **must** check volunteer's references and do Working with Children Checks. More information about all of this can be found on NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

A big thanks to everyone who gave me their thoughts...



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FIRSTLY, SOME IDEAS ON PLANNING:

1. Succession Planning – forward plan to recruit new people to help at your club.
2. Make ‘Volunteers’ an agenda item at your committee meetings and implement a targeted recruitment plan.
3. Appoint a Volunteer Coordinator. Get someone in your Club to round up the troops as and when necessary.

JEFF BEARD
Dungog Memorial Bowls, Sport & Recreation Club

We have a group of volunteers who turn up every second week, or otherwise as required, to undertake grounds maintenance, etc. These people answer to one well respected member who rallies them when required. Therefore we don't recruit as such, they just continue helping when asked. We may, from time to time, call for volunteers by way of a notice on the board, for a particular project.

4. Prepare projections for what you'll need – that way you'll know exactly when you will need people.
5. Turn a problem into a recruiting opportunity.

LINDA MARKS
Wodonga Diamonds Football Club

This year we challenged every team to conduct their own fundraiser to relieve the burden on the committee and small band of volunteers that do the bulk of the work. We have 13 teams ranging from U11 to Seniors as well as several small-sided teams U6-U10. This was coordinated through our Team Managers and we have had a fantastic response so far with teams coming up with some original ideas and running fundraising activities with the help of parents and players in their team. Some teams have run 2 or 3 fundraisers and others are ongoing throughout the season. This has been excellent for team building, engaging parents, recruiting volunteers, and for fundraising. We found that teams really got behind and supported other team's efforts to fundraise. This is something we will definitely run with next year and look at setting some challenges as well as rewards for team effort.



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6. Form collaborations with other organisations or teams.
7. Decide when and where to recruit.
8. Pay attention to timing – don't recruit people until you really need them as their enthusiasm may wane.
9. Consider motivations and benefits of volunteering so that you can be ready to explain these. Know what you are 'selling'.
10. Think about what could motivate these people to volunteer for your club:
 - a. Older people
 - b. Young people
 - c. Students
 - d. Parents
11. Identify the barriers that may deter people from volunteering. See if any of these can be changed.
12. Emphasise the rewards of being a volunteer.
13. Offer small honorariums – waive their fees in return for coaching etc.
14. Think about the demographics of who might be right for the role you want to fill. Think broadly at this point and try not to restrict your options or discriminate.
15. Prepare a simple one page job description. Your State Organisation will have templates for you to use.
16. Outline specific roles and responsibilities.
17. Split jobs up so they are in smaller chunks. That way, people don't think they are taking on too much.

RYAN FONTI
Concord Baseball Club

It's a good idea to split jobs evenly. If you only have three executive positions it eliminates the major roles and the thought that you have to put hours and hours in with titles.

18. Decide on the characteristics you want your volunteers to have.
19. Develop a checklist of the most important requirements.



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NOW THINK ABOUT ADVERTISING OR MARKETING OR PROMOTING:

20. Lots of people unconnected with clubs will have skills to offer.
21. Consider using the words 'get involved' or 'helping out'. They can be perceived as being less onerous!
22. Think about advertising in your wider community.
23. Develop a recruitment message that "sells your program".
24. Create recruitment materials that will catch people's attention.

KERRY SOUTER

Administrator, Riding for the Disabled Assoc NSW Tall Timbers Centre

- Have a Volunteer recruitment stand at the local shopping centre.
- Register with Volunteering NSW.
- Write stories for the local press.
- Have Display boards about your sport whenever you do local events eg Bunnings, Raffles etc.
- Have a good website - volunteers need notice.
- Facebook - advertise for helpers especially for special events.
- Newsletter - send one 3 times per year.
- Email - keep details of contacts and send updates every month with upcoming events.
- Have a Banner to use at events - volunteers needed.



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25. Develop a slide show that can be played at registration day.
26. Plan presentations that put a personal “face” on your programme.
27. Use your local volunteer centre, newspapers, supermarkets, local groups etc. to advertise opportunities.
28. Create the following so that people can find out about you easily.
 - a. An advertisement
 - b. A letter
 - c. A brochure
 - d. A website
 - e. An email
 - f. A poster.

BRONWYN HATZIS
Revesby Workers Swim Club

We advertise the AGM in the newsletter and positions available about 2 months prior. This year we got 5 new members. We have given a free shirt to all committee members which helps them to be identified. The 4 of the 5 executive have been in place for 2 or more years.

29. In every case, make sure that there is a name and phone number to ring if you'd like to get involved.



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MAKE IT EASY FOR PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER:

30. Is your Club a fun, happy place to be? If so, you'll have more luck in getting people to help!
31. Start with what's in front of you – just ask.
32. Face to face recruitment is the most effective method – ask people who come to your club regularly ie .parents etc. It sounds obvious but people forget.

ANGELA VAN DYKE
Castle Hill RSL Dolphins Swim Club

For our club, we do not advertise to recruit volunteers. In fact, like many clubs, we recruit from within! So as new families join (usually when their kids are young), we encourage them to do simple things like time keep on a club night. Over time, people become more familiar with how things run, kids get a bit older (requiring less direct supervision) and we do call outs via our newsletters encouraging people to do the various courses for various roles. We are fortunate to have experienced long serving members (and technical officials) who can run training for us. This makes the experience less daunting for parents. We are also very fortunate to have existing volunteers who have been around forever (no disrespect intended). They joined as mentioned above, kids grew up and moved on but they remained involved in the sport. It's fantastic for people retiring, as it keeps them busy and engaged, and we (those with much less tenure of service) really appreciate and learn from their experience! So, it's not a formal confronting thing. We keep it simple, casual, and engage with people that are interested in what we do.

33. Present a friendly welcoming face – some people can be intimidated or overwhelmed. Have some nice and friendly people to talk to parents so that they feel happy to get involved.

MANDY BROWN
Tamworth Softball Association.

From my own experience I believe that very willing volunteers could be, or are very intimidated by those already involved. In my first years at Tamworth Softball I felt limited to being a cheque book for my daughter. I believe if softball in Tamworth was much larger I would not have been encouraged to be a part of the Association. I personally would never have asked to be more than a mom on the side lines (my own personality limited me). Because I was encouraged to assist I now live and breathe everything softball. I give up many hours of my week and encourage friends and family to do the same to help.

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34. Develop a volunteer form so that people can fill in their contact details for later.

LOUISE BERGFELD
Publicity officer, Ryde Little Athletics

Little A's relies on getting a whole lot of parents out on the field and this is always a challenge. Last season we added a new form to rego that required the parents to nominate what event they would be helping at and/or if they had no experience, which session of a "train the parent" would they be attending. They were required to hand these forms across to one of our committee (me!) so we could "eyeball" everyone individually and give them the talk about the expectation is that every child competing has a parent out on the field helping. We then had around 40 plus new parents turn up for the training sessions and quite a few of these become new and dependable volunteers during the season. The training session was to remove the mystique/excuse that judging, timing or measuring is "too hard" and "I don't know how to do it". We never get every parent to help - some are world class standard starers at the ground when the call goes out for help! But every bit helps. We'll try it again this season.

35. Recruit more people than you actually need.

36. Have board members at registration days.

37. Have a Volunteer table at registration day.

38. Consider alternate times and locations for registration for volunteers.

39. Have committee / board members wear a name badge with the languages they speak.

40. Have an express line for return volunteers.

41. Use a welcome committee to greet parents at each registration day.

JILL HEPBURN
Lismore Richmond Rovers Football Club.

We ask through Newsletters for volunteers to participate in Canteen Duties, Junior team coaching, setting up fields for the day. At the beginning of the season we sometimes have difficulty in getting helpers for the canteen, or for junior coaches - usually parents of children in teams take on these positions, with parents only having to help for say one hour in canteen on the day their child is at home. Coaches of teams are not asked to assist other than coach their team.

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42. Post a list of needed volunteers.
43. Encourage any questions.
44. Make sure members know what opportunities there are with the club – have a clear advert about Volunteering clearly visible in your club.

PETER MOORE
Wagga Swans Junior AFC

We regularly text parents and advise vacant committee positions at the beginning/end of year. Our Committee meetings are open to all. We try to create a transition where the President has a 2 year reign and keep an experienced committee in support around them.

ALEXANDRA PEARCE
Cherrybrook Senior and Little Athletics Club Inc.

For the Little A's section – we talk to and encourage the parents to help. Part of registration for Little A's – parents must be present for the competition night so we strongly encourage them to also help. For the senior section – we are recruited via Athletics NSW. Volunteers are required from each club, and these add to our 'brownie' points which adds to the clubs certification requirements.

IVAN STEPIC
St Michaels Knights Soccer Club

We encourage teenage players to join referee ranks; We openly identify our weaknesses/needs for skill sets required and ask that members work to their strengths. We broadcast as much information as possible so our members understand what is going on. We pay young people to carry out canteen duties. We divide work load.



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45. Look at what skills your current volunteers already have or would like to develop and identify any training needs.
46. Invite members to 'bring a friend' to a volunteer taster event. Hold an 'Each one, Reach one' evening.
47. Don't overlook young players as potential coaches or umpires.
48. Contact your TAFE / College where students are studying courses to do with sport. The best contact would be the Student Engagement contact or student work placement contact.
49. Contact your local High School and speak to the Head of Department for PDHPE or Principal. Schools do great things like the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme which need young people to volunteer as part of their Award.
50. Your local school may also be involved with the NSW Premier's Student Volunteering Award Scheme for pupils in Year 9 and 10. These students can get an award for volunteering in their local sport.

So there you go. 50 ideas to get you started. Now you've got to **keep** these wonderful people and it would be a good idea to **reward** them too. See our other resources and workshops at www.sportnsw.com.au.

Julie Stafford
Education Manager



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HERE ARE OUR SOURCES:

Australian Sports Commission Volunteer Management: A Guide to Good Practice.

http://www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/115556/2._Managing_Volunteers.pdf

Volunteer Centre Network – SportScotland:

CLUB TIP: RESOURCE 1 VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT – WIDENING THE NET.

<http://www.helpforclubs.org.uk/ChannelNavigation/Resource+Library/Publications/Club+Tips+for+Volunteers.htm>

Australian Sports Commission – Volunteer Management Program – Recruiting Volunteers.

http://www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/150031/Recruiting_Volunteers.pdf

Hockey Australia – Club Development Manual.

http://www.hockey.org.au/fileadmin/user_upload/Game_Development/Resources/The_3_Rs.pdf

Running Sports – Sport England.

http://www.clubmark.org.uk/files/Retaining_Volunteersv2_0.pdf

Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Guide – City of Whitehorse, Victoria.

http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/IgnitionSuite/uploads/docs/Volunteer%20Guide%20for%20Sporting%20Clubs_web%5B1%5D.pdf

Australian Football League (AFL) – Club Management Program: Volunteer Management.

http://aflcommunityclub.com.au/fileadmin/user_upload/Manage_Your_Club/3._Club_Management_Program/Volunteer_management.pdf

Running Sport – Hillary Commission – New Zealand.

http://www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/334957/Recruiting_and_Retaining_Volunteer.pdf

American Youth Soccer Organisation (AYSO) – 30 Great Tips for Recruiting Volunteers.

www.ayso.org/region.../tips/tips_for_recruiting_volunteers.aspx

World Volunteer Web – 16 tips in recruiting adult volunteers.

<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/browse/volunteering-issues/senior-volunteers/doc/16-tips-in-recruiting.html>

