

Ideas to Recruit, Retain and Manage Volunteers based on GIVERS

At the NNZ Council Volunteer Workshops on Sunday 23 February, representatives from Centres, Zones and NNZ came together to learn about the GIVERS model.

GIVERS is an evidence-based approach to understanding what drives volunteers to commit to a role and what influences their behaviour to enjoy their journey. By knowing what volunteers want and need from their experience we can better value and support them which will ultimately increase the number of volunteers, increase retention and provide a positive experience for all.

These are the ideas that came out of the workshop discussions in relation to GIVERS. A number of ideas covered multiple letters of the acronym.

Check out the full GIVERS model: [Recruit, Retain and Manage Volunteers using GIVERS](#).

Growth

Examples provided in Council Presentation:

- Connect with local RST's or Volunteer Centres for workshops they are running that you could invite your volunteers to attend
- Provide challenging tasks that require problem solving and a sense of achievement
- Mix it up, allow volunteers to apply their current skills to a new environment/setting

Discussion Ideas:

- Personal development
 - Catered to each individual volunteer
 - All roles have the opportunity to diversify knowledge base and put this into action
 - Support volunteers onto and through award pathways e.g. coach and umpire framework
 - Allow volunteers to use their existing skills to make an impact
- Roles
 - Give different people opportunities to do a role rather than the same ones that already have multiple roles
 - Organisations need to know what skills are needed for each role to be effectively carried out
 - Provide job descriptions so that each volunteer knows what is expected of them and what skills they may need or will gain from their experience
 - Have roles that have a varying level of challenge to suit the type of involvement a volunteer wants
 - Break down roles into smaller parts with clear time expectations or have a roster to minimise time barrier

- Know what skills exist in your membership to call on when needed
- Attract youth through age appropriate roles
- Support
 - Invite coaches to an experienced coach's open training session to observe and ask questions
 - Provide a reference for volunteers to add to their CV
 - Mentoring/buddy system for all volunteers
 - An apprentice system e.g. president to vice president
 - Respect the skills that volunteers have from their previous life and work experience

Impact

Examples provided in Council Presentation:

- Allow volunteers to be part of the consultation, decision-making, reporting and review processes
- Tell volunteers about the success stories, informal chat or formal by sharing the annual report
- Let administration volunteers see what their behind the scenes work helps to achieve e.g. go to rep games, holiday programmes or coaching courses

Discussion Ideas:

- Recognition
 - Thanking to be age appropriate
 - Sharing on digital media about who volunteers are and what they do for you
 - Volunteer uniform (gear) worn for special occasions at beginning and end of season – younger ones are inspired to get involved
 - Rewards – ANZP games, season tickets, free coffee, shop vouchers
- Voice
 - Survey/feedback from volunteers which helps the management committee shape the season/future
 - Feedback – to find out what the impact has been on the individual
 - Create the opportunity to capture impact stories
 - How do you measure impact – survey to understand their experience, debrief or phone call
- Growth
 - Involvement – training, mentoring
 - Involvement from experienced members in an advisory role

Voice

Examples provided in Council Presentation:

- Use your volunteers to approach their friends/networks to share how enjoyable and rewarding their role is
- Trigger emotions with wording, e.g. "without you many young people won't be able to play" vs "you will be helping young people to play"
- Create opportunities for feedback and suggestions, e.g. surveys, debriefs, or events to chat to Centre staff/committees

Discussion Ideas:

- Opportunity to be heard
 - Volunteer surveys at the end of the season (what works, what needs to be done better etc)
 - Volunteer survey at the beginning of the season/meeting the volunteers to chat
 - Personal approach for feedback (review/reflection/debrief). One on one – makes them feel special, thoughts are important to us, could be over coffee. Does not have to be at the end of the season
 - Monthly meetings in season for Clubs/Executive/Committees etc – allows for an evolving Centre that makes changes as required
 - Volunteers are in the know as they are at the coal face so are seeing what's happening first-hand
 - Give youth a voice – attach youth to a volunteer to understand how it all works/provide new ideas
- Experience
 - Encourage a give back culture
 - Family core values
 - Don't give up on volunteer initiatives if numbers are low
- Recognition
 - Profile volunteers via media coverage
 - Netball Leaders recognition award
 - Writing a message down to say thanks, adds meaning to a thanks and something the volunteer can refer to later, can be more sincere
 - Nominate for local volunteer awards, Zone newsletters, NNZ Service Award
 - Public recognition – social media, prize giving, newsletters, PA announcements
- Recruitment
 - Shoulder tapping, making feel good
- Social
 - Forums, drinks and nibbles, informal catch ups, ideas night
- Growth
 - Mentoring system with youth
 - Involve youth as a journalist or similar role

Experience

Examples provided in Council Presentation:

- Have a dedicated person to support volunteers and deal with any difficulties that may arise
- Provide an induction pack with easy to understand guidelines and instructions
- Allow maximum flexibility in terms of time and location for the volunteering e.g. from home or via online technology

Discussion Ideas:

- **Ease/Flexibility**
 - Provide the relevant resources so volunteers are set to go from the start
 - Provide simple resources, don't overload with information, contracts etc
 - Online video call meetings for time poor people
 - Webinars for coaching workshops
- **Growth**
 - Buddy systems to engage and support new volunteers
 - Link with similar Centres – 'Sister Centres'
 - The dedicated support role could be filled by a life member
 - Identify gaps in roles that aren't currently being covered by paid staff
 - Share ideas on what works for other Centres in the volunteer space
- **Voice**
 - One on one post season debriefs e.g. coffee with volunteer coordinator vs survey
 - Have a VIP come in to speak to volunteers or include them when VIP's come in
 - What experience do they bring with them e.g. past jobs and qualifications
- **Recognition**
 - Start a volunteer of the week programme
 - Celebration of volunteers on Saturday competition e.g. over speaker
 - Little touches in volunteer areas e.g. flowers to make it feel like home
- **Social**
 - Have an event, lunch or morning tea, during National Volunteer Week to meet everyone
 - Fun days e.g. silly sock day to add enjoyment and build culture
 - Networking function during volunteer week
 - Informal get together for past and present volunteers and life members – share stories

Recognition

Examples provided in Council Presentation:

- Thank volunteers publicly e.g. award ceremonies and social media
- Let your community know who your volunteers are through sharing their stories and photos in a well frequented part of your Centre
- Need to highlight all the other reasons to be involved, especially in relation to health and well-being, it will become normal to not expect something tangible and instead understand the other ways they are being recognised by just being involved

Discussion Ideas:

- Gratitude
 - Encourage everyone to thank at least 3 volunteers a day
 - Meaningful interactions, be sincere when saying thank-you/giving chocolate
 - Share the love
 - Age appropriate
 - Making the effort to go around and say thanks to people while they are doing their role
- Awards
 - Share Volunteer of the Month on website/social channels
 - Awards such as 'volunteer of the year' and 'coach/umpire etc of the year' at end of year prize giving
 - Players nominate a volunteer to thank/recognise
 - Nominate volunteers for awards hosted by Zones, NNZ and other community organisations
 - NNZ Service awards
- Perks
 - Provide car parking for volunteers
 - Special treats e.g. petrol vouchers, dinner out, food, wine
 - Corporate rates i.e. gym membership, discounts
- Growth
 - Mentoring/PD
 - Recognise people's strengths and weaknesses so they are allocated to roles appropriately
 - Support volunteers to achieve at a higher level e.g. NNZ pathways
 - Know what skills you have in the community
- Impact
 - Articles in paper and on website
 - Social media post – telling stories
 - List volunteers in annual report to show who they are
 - Volunteer register/display in Centre
 - Volunteer profile in newsletter

- Social
 - Celebrations to get people together e.g. wine and cheese evening
 - Volunteers recognition night – cross code, invite funders, Mayor
 - Special event e.g. take to an ANZP game

Social

Examples provided in Council Presentation:

- Set aside time at the beginning, during and the end of their experience to meet and connect with other volunteers
- Use a social media tool to form a group chat for regular interactions, sharing and updates
- Make them feel part of the Team with a uniform

Discussion Ideas:

- Gatherings
 - Hold volunteer meetings at a café/pub or go to café/pub after meetings
 - Social meetings – gossip (positive), create connections, develop stronger relationships
 - Survey, ask them what they would enjoy doing socially
 - Volunteers Day – an appreciation day with food, drinks, seating while watching a game
 - Cross code collaboration social events
 - Umpire room as a hub to share ideas, rules chat, feel empowered to make decisions
- On Game Days
 - Morning teas for volunteers, 3 times a season, could be offsite as well
 - At events have a social aspect – engaging with public, creating community connect
 - Provide an environment to socialise e.g. light lunch
- Growth
 - Buddy system to help welcome new volunteers as well as support and develop
 - Awareness of where you can go for support
- Experience
 - T-shirts, name tags, ID cards, badges for volunteers to be recognised and recognisable at key days/tournaments
 - Ensure protocols around Social Media/group chat are in place
 - Create fun environment that people want to be part of
 - Get to really know people though social situations, then can work to their strengths
 - Recruit senior citizens and form relationships with retirement homes