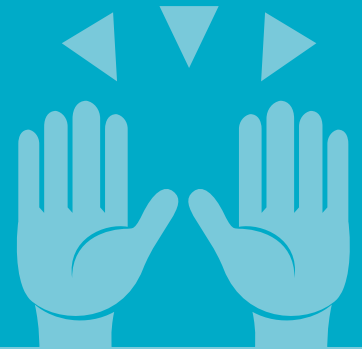


Volunteer Appreciation and Recognition Tip Sheet

FUNDED BY THE VICTORIA FOUNDATION



People volunteer for many reasons:

- To support a cause or want to give back to their community,
- To gain or improve skills,
- To meet new people,
- To support transition or meet education/work requirements

Acknowledging and recognizing the work and time given by volunteers ensures they will stay motivated and continue to be involved in and be champions for your organization.

Recognition is More than Thank You;

- Acknowledging the time and effort that volunteers commit to the organization.
- Connecting the dots between the mission, vision, goals and activities of your organization to the work of the volunteers and the volunteer program itself.
- A reflection of the unique individuality of your volunteers and organization.
- Motivation for volunteers to continue to work for your organization
- The appreciation of the unique skills that volunteers bring
- The acknowledgement that not everyone feels appreciation in the same way

For more idea please visit the 5 languages of recognition <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/126171227050075494/>

Top Tip: Ask your volunteers how they like to be appreciated

Recognition Takes Planning:

While appreciation should be sincere and timely, having a year plan for strategic recognition ensures an effective and comprehensive approach.

- Ensure there is variety of recognition efforts that appeal to different volunteers and how they receive acknowledgement.
- Build in evaluation/feedback by volunteers at appreciation sessions
- Develop a team to help you (staff/volunteer)
- Be strategic about timing and topics (tie into seasonal activities but you may want to avoid adding extra appreciation planning at your busiest time)
- Be realistic about your resources and time (don't set yourself up to fail)

Volunteer Appreciation and Recognition Tip Sheet

Recognition Ideas

Essentials

- **Train your team/staff.** Every volunteer shift should include “welcome”, leadership engagement with individual and end with a “thank you”
- **Set volunteers up for success** with training, support and realistic goals
- **Give volunteers identity** – name badge, t-shirt, etc
- **Birthday, anniversary messages**
- **Letter of reference** – prepare a template
- **Listen and ask for feedback** – involve volunteers in planning and seek regular input
- **Food** – cookies and chocolates make someone feel special

Other ways to show appreciation/recognition:

Share stories

- **Brag about volunteers to community**
- **A picture/video paints a 1000...**
- **Nominate volunteers** for awards/grants
- **Highlight their accomplishments** to board and stakeholders

Education Opportunities

- **Workshops** – focus in on your mission but also remember to grow resiliency and community
- **Crew/team gatherings** – with opportunities to learn from leadership or each other
- **Learning Exchanges** – work with other organization and trade learning experiences
- **Skill sharing** – your volunteers have many skills, ask them to share this in a workshop
- **Mission sharing** – regular newsletter or emails to volunteers’ organizational impact

Celebrate together

- **Appreciation days/events**
- **Coffee meetings**
- **Social events**
- **Gift cards or tickets to events/experiences**
- **Awards and certificates**

Value their contributions

- **Listen and ask for input**
- **Involve them in the Big Picture** where they can have impact on mission/vision and program development
- **Create an honour wall or years of service recognition program**

Volunteer Appreciation and Recognition Tip Sheet

Recognition is deliberate, intentional and ongoing activities which reinforce that volunteers are a valuable part of our organization, that they matter and that what they are doing has an impact.

More Resources:

https://www.volunteer.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Motivating_and_Thanking_Volunteers.pdf

<https://www.wildapricot.com/articles/volunteer-appreciation-guide>

https://charityvillage.com/cms/content/topic/we_need_to_thank_our_volunteers_by_really_listening_to_them/last/145#.Xh5UYOjYqzw

https://charityvillage.com/cms/content/topic/re_energizing_volunteer_recognition#.Xh9pcOjYqzw

<https://www.keela.co/blog/nonprofit-resources/volunteer-appreciation>

https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/engagingvolunteers_docs/2013%20Volunteer%20Recognition%20Study.pdf

About Volunteer Victoria

The Greater Victoria Volunteer Society, more commonly known as Volunteer Victoria, is a volunteer centre and hub to assist volunteers, volunteer managers, and volunteer-led organizations.

Volunteer Victoria's mission is to *inspire and empower volunteerism!*

Volunteer Victoria:

- Assists volunteers and volunteer-led organizations
- Builds and shares knowledge through the delivery of professional development, training, learning and networking opportunities
- Offers specialized services and resources that advance the quality of volunteer programs and builds capacity
- Treats all members, volunteers, partners, staff and stakeholders with fairness, dignity, and respect
- Provides welcoming spaces that embrace diverse ideas, knowledge, cultures, and experiences

Contact Us

Volunteer Victoria
602-620 View Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1J6

Phone: 250.386.2269

Email: volvic@volunteervictoria.bc.ca

Web: volunteervictoria.bc.ca

