

4 Doing it Well Standards



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4.1 Volunteer recognition

Volunteers need to feel both valued and valuable, and to understand how their role contributes to the organisation's goals and mission. Volunteers who feel valued are more likely to be loyal to the organisation and to become long-term volunteers. Acknowledgement and recognition of volunteers is therefore a crucial part of retaining volunteers and is most effective when there is a combination of ongoing, on-the job (informal) recognition and larger (formal) recognition events.

Ideas for recognising and celebrating volunteers

- ✓ Acknowledge volunteers at the beginning of their volunteer shift; a simple hello and thanks for being here is highly valuable.
- ✓ Provide volunteers with a Volunteer Manual outlining their rights and responsibilities and other appropriate information during their orientation and induction.
- ✓ Give personal praise to volunteers while they are on the job.
- ✓ Have blank cards printed with our Club's logo on front, that you can personally handwrite for various purposes (for example, if the volunteer is unwell or undergoing medical treatment, or has been bereaved).
- ✓ Acknowledge volunteers on your Club's notice board, website or social media channels.
- ✓ Include volunteers in decisions that affect them, by inviting them to meetings/ planning days.
- ✓ Have a volunteer newsletter and invite volunteers to make contributions to the newsletter.
- ✓ Acknowledge volunteer efforts at the AGM, presentation evenings.
- ✓ Nominate outstanding volunteers for the Tasmanian Volunteering Awards.
- ✓ Encourage volunteers to include their volunteering on their resume.
- ✓ Ensure volunteer contribution is included and highlighted in your Club's annual report.
- ✓ Recognise your volunteers during National Volunteer Week in May.
- ✓ Celebrate International Volunteers Day on December 5th.
- ✓ Organise a series of events and activities throughout the year where the Club's volunteering community comes together and gets thanked, such as BBQs and afternoon teas.

4.2 Replacement and succession planning

Saying goodbye to your volunteers is sometimes sad, but it's a very natural part of the volunteer lifecycle. Their departure may be voluntary as they feel it is time to move on, or involuntary, due to conflict or performance issues.

Exiting volunteers

No matter what the reason is that volunteers move on, it is important to recognise their contribution to your club. You can do this with something as simple as sending them a thank you email, giving them an appropriate goodbye gift, or thanking them in your (volunteers) newsletter. You can make this as big or small as seems appropriate for the contribution they have made to the club.

We recommend that you record the exit of the volunteer and think of anything you need to organise before the volunteer finishes their last shift. This includes making updates to your volunteer database or software system, to ensure your record-keeping is up to date, and checking that any club equipment or keys that the volunteer may hold have been returned.

It is best practice to provide the exiting volunteer with an official letter or email to thank them for their contributions, and to give them with the opportunity to provide feedback. You could develop an exit survey that you ask all departing volunteers to complete to help you improve or review volunteer retention practices and strategies.



Template

Exit Interview Survey (Appendix 3)

Replacing volunteers

To ensure you have good succession plans in place to replace key volunteers, we recommend you prepare existing volunteers to step into vacant roles when they become available. This is particularly important for your club's committee members, as the volunteer committee plays such an important role in the club.



Hot tip – succession planning

- Prepare existing volunteers to step into vacant roles.
- Communicate with volunteers who hold similar positions in other clubs.
- Invite club members who show interest to committee meetings.

A good way to plan for exiting Club Committee volunteers is to think about the Committee over a period of three years. What can volunteers learn from each other in that period? This helps to ensure that knowledge is not lost by volunteers moving on from the organisation.

A three-year plan could look like this:

