



Everyone Ready®

Achieve more when *everyone's*
ready for volunteers

FROM ENERGIZE

Slide Views for Notes

New Approaches to Volunteer Recruitment

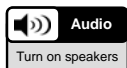
Trainer: Susan J. Ellis



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New Approaches to Volunteer Recruitment

Online Seminar – Part 1 of 3

With Susan J. Ellis



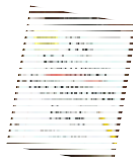
New Approaches to Volunteer Recruitment



Trainer

Susan J. Ellis

- President, Energize, Inc.
- Co-Dean, *Everyone Ready®*
- Author:
*The Volunteer
Recruitment –
and Membership
Development –
Book*



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A Universal Topic

Recruitment is universal

- Every organization
- Every era

Techniques may change

Principles remain constant



What We'll Cover

Part 1: Fundamentals

- ☐ Framework for recruitment
- ☐ Why people do/don't volunteer
- ☐ How trends and issues affect recruiting

Part 2: Strategies

- ☐ Designing work that attracts volunteers
- ☐ Where to look for volunteers

Part 3: Tactics

- ☐ Traditional recruiting techniques and methods
- ☐ Using new and emerging technologies

Avoid this Common Mistake

Before you print those brochures:

- Know who you want to reach
- Know where to find them
- Then decide on what tools you will need





Fundamental Principles

1. Don't recruit before you are ready to put volunteers to work

- Fear of not finding volunteers makes recruiters rush to spread the word
- But this results in lots of applicants without the qualifications you need
- Might be better to stop recruiting until you've strategized a better way



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Fundamental Principles

2. Your recruiting success is directly connected to what you are asking volunteers to do

- Everything begins with volunteer work design
- Offer challenging and important opportunities and you'll attract people who want to be challenged and useful



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Key Questions

What's your recruitment goal?

- Generating a lot of random interest is costly
 - Time lost in screening
 - Potential volunteers turned away or turned off
- Focus on targeted outreach
 - Self-screening based on interest or suitability to a particular assignment



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Key Questions

Do potential volunteers know something (positive) about your organization?

- Are you new to the community?
- Do you need to update old information?
- Do you need to address a negative image?

Public relations is intertwined with volunteer recruitment

Not the Same Thing

Publicity

Informs people:

- What the organization does
- Why it needs volunteers

Recruitment

Invites individuals to:

- Learn more
- Join in

Key Question

Are you suffering from Volunteer Revolving Door Syndrome?

- Ongoing recruiting just to replace the volunteers who are dropping away

Fix what's wrong first!





Seven Steps to Successful Recruitment

1. Identify why people DO and DO NOT volunteer with you
2. Consider larger TRENDS as well as LOCAL issues
3. Design ASSIGNMENTS that are likely to attract the people you want
4. For each volunteer role, brainstorm SOURCES of the most likely candidates
5. Match recruiting TECHNIQUES and MATERIALS to each source. ADAPT your approach to each audience.
6. DO it!
7. Be READY for applicants

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Step 1. Why People Do/Do Not Volunteer

- If there are 80+ different motivators for volunteering....
- Why would you limit yourself to one recruiting approach?
- Keys to recruiting success:
 - Get to know which buttons to push for your target group(s)
 - Then adapt your recruiting approach for each prospective volunteer



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Why People Volunteer

Motivator: Having fun

- Your competition consists of leisure activities, not paying work
- Your work design should include some FUN
- Your recruiting approach should answer:
 - Will I enjoy this?
 - Will I like the other volunteers?
 - Will I look forward to spending time with this organization?



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Follow Along

- Seven Steps to Successful Recruiting Worksheet
- Pick a real recruitment challenge that you have and apply this seminar to that

Seven Steps to Recruitment Worksheet

Volunteer Assignment:
(Use a real volunteer assignment you want to fill)

1. Identify why people do or do not volunteer with you

What might prevent someone from volunteering?	What can you do to overcome the barrier?

2. Consider benefits as large as well as small rewards

What might someone expect to gain from volunteering?	What can you do to change the perception of what is in it for them?

Why People Don't Volunteer

What stops people from volunteering with you?

- Not interested in your mission
- Lack qualifications for the work
- Timing, location, or other logistical issues
- Preconceived notions about volunteering (in general) or your organization (in particular)
- Or other issues...



Valid Concern...or Stereotype?

Are there valid concerns on the list?

- Face the truth
- Deal with the issues:
 - If you can, adjust the program
 - If you can't change the program, at least address the issues openly...and early!





Which Obstacles Do You Face?

- ☐ Transportation issues
- ☐ Unrewarding tasks
- ☐ Inflexible requirements
- ☐ Financial costs
- ☐ Overwhelming mission
- ☐ Recent poor publicity
- ☐ Personality issues
- ☐ Not fitting the pattern of previous volunteers
- ☐ Fear of seeing something distasteful
- ☐ Fear of failure
- ☐ Safety or liability concerns



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Facing the Obstacles

Prospective volunteers are rational:

- If potential negatives outweigh potential benefits, they will look for a different opportunity
- By identifying and facing the obstacles, you have a chance to change the equation



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The Number 1 Obstacle Is.....

"I don't have time!"

- Individual is overcommitted...
 - Make a note, try again in a year
- Volunteer position is too demanding...
 - Adapt the position
- Individual isn't interested...
 - "Tell me honestly, does this appeal to you?"



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Eliminate Vocabulary Obstacles

Does the word “volunteer” repel
or attract?

It depends on the audience:

- Professionals
- Business people
- Students
- Faith communities
- Women versus men



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And Finally, Don't Forget to Ask!

Surveys consistently tell us:

Why don't people
volunteer?

I wasn't asked

Why do people
volunteer?

I was asked

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Step 2. Consider Larger Trends and Local Issues

1. Identify why people DO and DO NOT volunteer with you
2. Consider larger TRENDS as well as LOCAL issues
3. Design ASSIGNMENTS that are likely to attract the people you want
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Context: The Changing Family

Trend: Changing family patterns mean:

- Parents have less time
- Daytime availability is limited
- Parents could be custodial or non-custodial



Examine – and update – your assumptions!

- Are your volunteer positions designed to appeal to today's family members?

Trends That Impact YOUR World

- Aging population
- Mandated service programs
- Terrorism and security issues
- Energy, environmental and climate change
- Election results
- Corporate volunteering
- Economic crisis



Ask Yourself...

Which trends are making it more difficult to recruit?

Are your assumptions out-of-date regarding:

- Who volunteers?
- What volunteers want?
- Which activities are most appealing?
- How your recruiting message fits with *today's* reality?





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staff development plan

FROM ENERGIZE®

What We'll Cover

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Part 2: Strategies

- ☐ Designing work that attracts volunteers
- ☐ Where to look for volunteers

Part 3: Tactics

- ☐ Traditional recruiting techniques and methods
- ☐ Using new and emerging technologies

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End of Part 1

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Step 3. Design Assignments that Attract

Recruiting focus:

Prospective volunteers want to know that their work will help meet your mission



For general information on this topic:
Everyone Ready® Seminar:
Designing Work for Today's Volunteers
Trainer: Steve McCurley

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Be Ready to Tell Each Recruit

For each volunteer position:

- Why the assignment matters
- What the work is
- How much time is required
- What background checks are required
- How the application process works



Be ready to offer choices

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Titles Matter

"Volunteer" is a pay category, not a title



...to do what?

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Titles Matter

- Clerical Volunteer
- Clerical Aide
- Secretarial Assistant
- Office Coordinator
- Recordkeeping Team Leader
- Records and Reports Czar
- Computer Control Central Coordinator

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Titles Matter

- Mentor
- Friendly Visitor
- Outreach Team Member
- Support Visitor
- Counselor
- Personal Coach
- At-home Support Team Member
- Aftercare Partner
- Goals Guide

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What Do You Think?

- I searched a long time.
- I finally found the perfect prospect.
- But if she sees what this position really involves... I could lose her.



**How would you advise
this volunteer recruiter?**

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Dealing with "Overwhelming" Positions



Be honest with the prospective volunteer!

- Self-screening at the start is better than losing someone mid-assignment
- Just in case, have some less demanding options available
- Consider offering a "trial run"
 - Short-term commitment
 - Less intensive
 - Scaled down goals that can be reached quickly

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Step 4. Determine Where to Find Volunteers



For *each* volunteer position:

- Brainstorm sources of the right candidates
- Who is your target audience?
- Where might you find them?



**This is classic
market segmentation!**



Don't Make this Common Mistake!

Who do we know who might
want to do this?

**Whom don't we know that we
should get to know who might
want to volunteer?**

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Practical Advice

Rule #1 for where to recruit?

- There are no rules!!

By thinking creatively about sources:

- You side-step competition
- You reach out to a different audience
- Your message is fresher...and more successful



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Practical Advice

Plan first, then act

- It's still not time to start printing those brochures!

Enlist a "Recruitment Think Tank"

- Meet twice a year
- Group = synergy = innovative ideas



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Practical Advice

Focus on **one** position at a time

Ask this:

Where can we find the
people who have what
this volunteer role
requires?

Not this:

Where can we find
people, in general?

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Example: Calligrapher

Where can we find someone skilled at calligraphy?

- Art classes studying pen and ink
- Businesses specializing in producing invitations
- Graphics departments of major corporations
- Local freelance artist association
- Online discussion forum for calligraphers
- Japanese art society
- Large catering firms that also do invitations
- Companies with computers that do calligraphy
- Sign-making companies
- Art supply stores selling calligraphy pens and inks

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Brainstorming Successfully

Don't include general sources

- Odds of finding the right
mix of skills is poor

Don't self-edit

- Focus on "where"
- Don't jump ahead to the
"how"



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You Try It!

Where in our community can we find people
who drive cars?



Show Me

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Susan's List

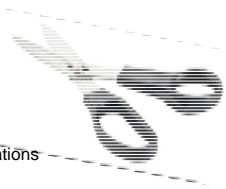
- car washes
- Traffic Court
- the Motor Vehicle Bureau
- drivers' education classes
- drive-in windows
- gas stations
- car showrooms
- taxi and bus depots
- truck stops
- drive-in movies
- car repair shops
- car accessory stores
- parking lots
- tire and auto parts stores
- car rallies
- car shows

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Editing Your List

- Delete ideas that seem unfeasible
- Rank sources, from most-to-least likely
- Localize the list
 - Local companies, stores, organizations that fit this description
- Rank the localized list based on criteria such as:
 - Located nearby
 - Linked to your organization in some way
 - Inside contact available
 - Appealing to you for some reason



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Seeking Diversity?

Re-examine your list using a demographic filter:

- Which offices are in a Spanish-speaking neighborhood?
- Which organizations have a predominantly male membership?
- Which stores hold special sales for senior citizens?



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Fine-Tune the List

Revisit the list and fine-tune it

Bottom line:

- If you are not communicating with the right target audience, you are wasting your time



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Characteristics as Well as Skills

Where to find people who can volunteer during the Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. timeframe?



Show Me

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Brainstorm Possible Sources

Shift
Workers

Evening
Workers

Weekend
Workers

Odd or
free-to-choose
schedules

Self-employed

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What about Rural Communities?

Downside:

- Fewer resources to tap

Upside:

- Need fewer candidates



Brainstorming process works just as well:

- Although list may be shorter

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Surprising Rural Resources

Who could help homebound elderly?

Studied membership associations (= volunteer groups)

- 319 groups!
- Meant that networks of
volunteers already existed



Map source: <http://www.fay-west.com/fayette/map/>

Small communities have a surprising number of sources!

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One More Idea

Proximity Chart

- What resources are closest to your agency?
 - Walk or drive around and write down *whatever* you see
- You are only aware of the things you see on your usual route
- You no longer see those
- You may not know what you are looking at



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Keep Going!

**Continue to inventory
in expanding circles**

**In a high rise? Ride the
elevator!**

**Every new neighbor
you discover means
potential new
resources**



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Using Your Proximity Chart

Analyze the list of what you found nearby

- How can each neighbor help?
 - Certain times when volunteers might be available?
 - Special skills available?
 - Donations of goods, facilities, equipment?
- Do any neighbors share something in common with you in terms of mission, projects, or clients?

Make contact!

- Do special outreach to those closest to you – your “neighbors”

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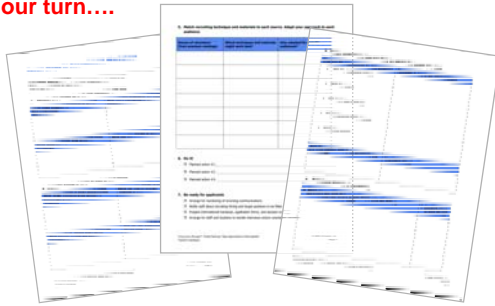
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Back to Your Worksheet

Your turn....



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Why Brainstorming Comes First

You will have to choose a recruitment technique
that fits the sources you have identified



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Ask Aunt Susan...

Dear Aunt Susan:
I want to put the call out for more
volunteers. How can I get the local
news media to pay attention?

- Recruitless

Dear Recruitless:

- Make news that editors want to cover
- Consider paid advertising so you control your message
- Limit your use of mass media to searching for unique skills

- Aunt Susan*



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Traditional Mass Media

Television and radio

- Commercial
- Public/educational
- Cable public access

Newspapers

- Major dailies
- Local/community papers

Billboards

*Diminishing
Importance!*

- Press releases
- Feature articles you write
- Feature articles written by reporters
- Classified ads

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Special Circulation Publications

- Local weeklies or neighborhood newspapers
- House organs
- Newsletters of all sorts
- Company employee notices
- Organizational messages to members of any group or institution



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Make Your Own News

"News" can come from many sources online

- Social media is built on many people sharing their thoughts

Blogging is the fastest growing news source

- It's free and easy to do
- But you want to add news, not noise!



Ask Aunt Susan...

Dear Aunt Susan:
You keep warning me not to print brochures until I am ready. When do I go to press?

- Paper Ready

Dear Paper:

- ▶ Now! Recruit a volunteer with publishing software/graphics skills
- ▶ Concentrate on flyers that you can change and edit for each source
- ▶ Only print out what you need so you can revise as you go along

- Aunt Susan*



Printed Materials

- Brochures
- Flyers
- Posters of various sizes for different places
- Inserts in mailings or handouts already distributed by others
- Special items such as bookmarks or placemats, to make best use of a specific source





Ask Aunt Susan...

Dear Aunt Susan:

I keep giving presentations to groups
and sitting at exhibit booths, but only
get a trickle of responses. Help!

- Shorton Tlme

Dear Shorton:

- Weigh the costs – and time is a cost! –
against the potential benefits
- Once again, make your decision based on
whether this opportunity will put you in
front of the people you most want to
recruit

- Aunt Susan*



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Public Speaking

To organized groups

- Members already identify with
each other

To random groups

- Audience not affiliated except
for the shared interest of this
class or event



Distribute printed material

- Sow seeds for the future

Keep in contact

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Audio-Visual Materials

- Slide/tape shows or
PowerPoint® presentations
- Videos
- Microsoft® Flash®
presentations
 - To accompany speakers
during a presentation
 - As a stand-alone display at
an exhibit
 - Self-running whether viewed
or not
 - Viewer self-selects to see it



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Booths and Exhibits

- At events sponsored by your organization
- At events already occurring in your community
- Volunteer Recruitment Fairs
- Bulletin boards of all kinds, especially in your own facility



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One-to-One Invitations

Recruiting this way is effective

- But it usually doesn't produce diversity



Tips:

- Empower current volunteers with outreach tools
- Train them:
 - What to say
 - What NOT to say
- Consider "open houses" where volunteers invite friends or colleagues

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Social Networking Sites

Facebook and similar sites let friends of friends learn about you

- Ask volunteers to post about their work with you
- The "like" function then sends the post on to more people
- You cannot control the message



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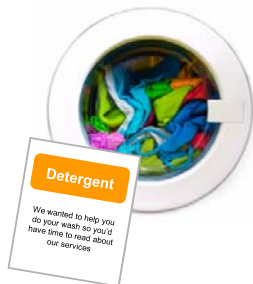


And More...

**See Handout Packet
for more ideas**

Gain attention:

- Creativity
- Humor
- Element of surprise



Ask Aunt Susan...

Dear Aunt Susan:
The Internet is so overwhelming and
global! Is it worth my time and effort
to try to recruit volunteers online?
- Web Wary

Dear Web:

- ▶ If you're not online, you don't exist
 - ▶ You should try some of the options even if you feel like a novice
 - ▶ Recruit volunteer "Cyber Deputies"!
- Aunt Susan ✨



Start with *Your* Web Site!

Your Web site is a critical recruiting tool

- Are volunteers visible and findable?
- Are volunteer opportunities explained?
- Are current vacancies shown – and updated?
- Is there an e-mail contact address?
- Can someone apply online?

**"Recognizing" volunteers on your site has
a recruiting purpose, too!**



Register at Every Free Site!

- Most sites are free for organizations and volunteers
- List of sites:
www.energizeinc.com/prof/volop.html
- Make your posts appealing and **specific!**
 - Not “volunteer needed to help”
 - Describe individual positions in separate postings
 - Include your Web site address



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Update Often

Keep postings current

- Delete what is no longer available
- Change the date

Check out the “competition”

- Would a prospective volunteer find your description more attractive than other ones?



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Non-Web Registries

Also look for non-cyberspace registries of volunteer opportunities

- Local volunteer center
- Campus student placement office
- Municipal or county government center

Your organization already listed?

- Make sure listing includes a “Recruiting Contact” and your URL

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Like-Minded Communities

Power of the Web:

- Ability to do targeted outreach

Tips:

- Search for each type of expertise
- Follow up on each search result
- Work with the site's moderators or hosts to help you get your message across



"Working" Social Networking Sites

Ask volunteers to tell their followers that you need more volunteers

- Give a "badge" or other graphic to post

Start your own profile

- Be creative

Share your ideas on our Discussion Board!



www.TechSoup.org

Podcasts and Videos

Easier to do than you might think

- Podcasts are like short radio shows
- Let them do double duty
- YouTube has LOTS of volunteer-related videos
- Showcase what volunteers are doing and accomplishing
- Incorporate an invitation to learn more at end of each post





No End in Sight

Avatar-based sites

- SecondLife

“Convergence”

- Smart phones bypass computers
- Apps of all sorts



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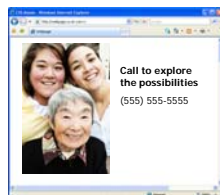
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Do's and Don'ts

- Target your prospects
- Use images to say, “You will fit in here”
- Provide examples
- Adapt your message to audience and source
- Don't imply that everyone is accepted



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5. Match recruiting TECHNIQUES and MATERIALS to each source. ADAPT your approach to each audience.
6. DO it!
7. Be READY for applicants

Putting Plans into Action



- Smile
- Listen
- Explain expectations
- Be flexible – up to a point

Offer the opportunity to
get involved in something
really worthwhile



Seven Steps to Successful Recruiting



1. Identify why people Do and DO NOT volunteer with you
2. Consider larger TRENDS as well as LOCAL issues
3. Design ASSIGNMENTS that are likely to attract the people you want
4. For each volunteer role, brainstorm SOURCES of the most likely candidates
5. Match recruiting TECHNIQUES and MATERIALS to each source. ADAPT your approach to each audience.
6. DO it!
7. Be READY for applicants



Recruiting Readiness

- Monitor incoming communications
- Return messages promptly
- Tell the staff to be on the lookout
- Have detailed information and application forms on hand
- Schedule interviews or orientation sessions



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Remember...

Prospective volunteers
should feel welcomed!



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What We Covered

Part 1: Fundamentals

- ☒ Framework for recruitment
- ☒ Why people do/don't volunteer
- ☒ How trends and issues affect recruiting

Part 2: Strategies

- ☒ Designing work that attracts volunteers
- ☒ Where to look for volunteers

Part 3: Tactics

- ☒ Traditional recruiting techniques and methods
- ☒ Using new and emerging technologies

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Everyone Ready®

An online volunteer management
staff development plan

FROM ENERGIZE®

Use Your Worksheet



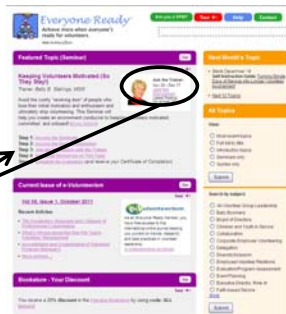
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Meet Me on the Discussion Board

Join the Discussion!

Susan will be on the
board March 19th
through April 14th

Discussion Board



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End of Part 3

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