

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



How to Succeed With Volunteers-In-Parks

60-Minute Module Series

RECRUITMENT Training Guide

**National Park Service
Volunteers-In-Parks Program**



HOW TO SUCCEED WITH VOLUNTEERS-IN-PARKS

60-Minute Module Series

Program Preparation
Program Planning
Motivation
Needs Assessment
Designing Jobs
Recruitment
Interviewing
Orientation
Training
Safety Management
Supervision
Delegation
Performance Reviews
Recognition

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INTRODUCTION

When we are pressed to fill vacant volunteer positions, we sometimes overlook the importance of finding the right volunteer for each open position. Everyone can relate to the impact on the volunteer and the organization when the wrong person is recruited (i.e., the volunteer feels incompetent and/or unfulfilled; performance and retention problems may surface; the NPS does not get the job done well; and resistance to hiring more volunteers may occur).

Successful recruitment involves marketing your park's volunteer needs to the segment of people who can best fill your needs while simultaneously filling their own (e.g., finding a graduate student who needs an internship in cultural resources when you are looking for a person to focus on restoration of a historic structure). Recruitment is not merely following prescribed techniques to attract potential volunteers (displaying posters, writing public service announcements, etc.), but rather designing a strategy that targets the right volunteer(s) and then uses an appropriate outreach technique to invite them to consider becoming part of the park team.

It is difficult to isolate the topic of recruitment, because its ultimate success is intertwined with the development of good jobs and with having an organization prepared to utilize volunteers' time and talents effectively when they arrive. It is important, however, to examine how potential volunteers are invited to consider the NPS, particularly if this function is not centralized. Even if most volunteers go through a central recruitment process, all staff and volunteers within the NPS are a significant part of its informal volunteer recruitment team. Thus, the principles of recruitment should be useful for staff whether they carry out this function themselves or are ambassadors for the Volunteers-In-Parks program.

PURPOSE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The **Purpose** of this module is to explore targeted volunteer recruitment, a strategy of invitation to reach the best people to fill park volunteer positions.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Describe successful recruitment, including outcomes.
2. Design an effective recruitment strategy.
3. Develop a recruitment message that works.
4. Describe the characteristics of effective recruiters.

GENERAL NOTES TO TRAINER

1. This workshop is in a suggested format. Feel free, however, to personalize it with your own stories. Also, phrase questions and activities in a manner most attuned to your participants.
2. Recruitment is a primary need in all NPS VIP programs, so it is helpful to understand the key concepts of recruitment. In many ways, staff or other volunteers are involved in the recruitment every time a volunteer returns. Volunteers must continually have their needs met, and may need assistance in working through their barriers to volunteering even after they become involved.
3. This module would be most helpful if presented after the modules on Program Planning, Needs Assessment, Motivation, and Designing Jobs.
4. This module stresses that recruitment is the invitation to **consider** volunteering. It would, therefore, be helpful to follow it up with a session on interviewing, because it is at that time that the actual selection and placement occur.
5. Many resource materials on volunteer management cover the topic of volunteer recruitment. Perhaps the most comprehensive coverage can be found in *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*, by Susan Ellis. (See “Resources” in this module for additional materials.)
6. When recruiting off- site, use the 8-minute video “Come Join Us” to show your audience the wide variety of parks, volunteers and volunteer jobs that are part of the National Park System.

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Transparency Handout	Section	Method of Presentation	Time
T-1 T-2 T-3	H-1 Introduction Activity Learning Objectives Key Concepts	Activity/Presentation	5 minutes
T-3 T-4 T-5 T-6	H-1 H-2 Concept 1 Matching needs of volunteer/agency	Interactive Presentation	10 minutes
T-3 T-7 H-1 H-3 H-4 H-5 H-6 H-7 H-8 H-9	Concept 2 Appropriate targeting is key	Brainstorming Group Activity	20 minutes
T-3 T-8 T-9 H-1 H-10 H-11 H-12	Concept 3 Recruitment message has three elements	Interactive Presentation	15 minutes
T-3 T-10 H-1	Concept 4 Use best people possible to recruit volunteers	Interactive Presentation	5 minutes
T-3 H-1	Summary/Wrap-Up/ Evaluation	Summary Remarks	5 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 60 minutes

TRAINER'S NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Time: 5 minutes

T-1: Definition: Volunteer Recruitment

Opening Exercise

Have participants jot down their thoughts on a definition of Volunteer Recruitment. Ask a few people to share their ideas.

Debrief of Exercise:

If any of their definitions imply that all respondents were automatically invited to become volunteers, share with them the working definition of recruitment: a process to attract and invite people to **consider** involvement (see T -1).

During the interview and screening process, both the individual and the organization mutually decide if a match has been made. The exception to this is when the organization needs a large number of people for short-term assignments, and no skills or previous experience are necessary.

T-2: Learning Objectives

T-3: Key Concepts

H-1: Key Concepts

Continue by sharing a few introductory comments regarding the significance of thoughtful recruitment. You might also start by de-mystifying the process by sharing the most revealing statistic about recruitment strategies: the recent Gallup Poll study on volunteering and giving discovered that people were more than four times as likely to volunteer when they were personally asked.

This discussion leads naturally into the purposes and learning objectives of this seminar. Indicate that this workshop is built on **four Key Concepts**. Share T -3 briefly and indicate that each concept will be covered in the seminar.

CONCEPT 1

Time: 10 minutes

For volunteer recruitment to be successful, the needs of the organization and the needs of the volunteer must both be met.

T-3: Key Concepts

H-1: Key Concepts

T-4: Jigsaw Puzzle

T-5: Recruitment Techniques to Avoid

T-6: Why Do People Volunteer?

H-2: Why Do People Volunteer?

Presentation:

Too often we are tempted to fill positions without considering whether the needs of the park and the needs of the volunteer will be met. In our desperation to fill slots, we take the first person who is willing to do the job. It is much like the person who is in a rush to complete a jigsaw puzzle and tries to push the wrong piece into the puzzle. You may wish to use this analogy with the puzzle transparency, T-4, to illustrate what happens to the puzzle (organization) and the puzzle piece (volunteer) when this hasty method is used.

Sometimes we recruit people without taking into account whether the volunteer's needs will be met. Choose a few examples from the transparency T-5 which highlight recruitment techniques to avoid.

- Bait and switch (You will lose volunteer trust)
- “There’s nothing to it.” (message: Any dummy can do it!)
- “We’re desperate, anyone will do...” (How special does that feel?)
- Cast your nets and see who swims in... (Whoops! wrong fish!)
- “You’re a Landscape Architect. We could use one of you!” (making assumptions)
- “We have lots of needs ... HELP!” (people respond to specifics)
- “I’m tired of doing it. Anyone else want to do it?” (wrong recruiter)

Ask participants why people volunteer

Brainstorm answers on a flip chart. Refer to H-2 for a more complete list.

The best strategy for finding the right volunteer is to use marketing principles which involve an exchange in values; i.e., our volunteer job also fits the person's interests and skills.

CONCEPT 2

Time: 20 minutes

Appropriate targeting is key to the success of your volunteer recruitment program.

T-3: Key Concepts

H-1: Key Concepts

T-7: Targeted Recruitment

H-3: Who Volunteers?

H-4: Methods of Recruitment

H-5: Recruitment Techniques

H-6: Recruiting Volunteers from Special Populations

H-7: Recruitment Strategy Worksheet

H-8: VIP Opportunities Listing

H-9: The J-1 Visa Program for International Volunteers (IVIP)

Presentation:

Targeting is simply the process of identifying the best source of potential volunteers for a specific volunteer job.

Ask participants to name a particular volunteer job they currently would like to fill in their park. Brainstorm what potential recruitment sources they might use to find people with the skills they need to do that job. Encourage creativity in thinking of sources beyond the traditional ones, such as contacting trade publications, retired military organizations, high school counselors, asking staff about friends and family, etc. Potential sources are endless.

Exercise:

Use the Recruitment Strategy Worksheet to show participants how to target their recruitment efforts. Have them begin by working alone and coming up with three new sources of potential volunteers for an actual VIP job that needs to be filled in their park. Then ask participants to form groups of four, choose one of the four jobs, and identify:

- (1) the types of people likely to have the skills needed for the job;
- (2) the best sources for finding applicants;
- (3) the best way to reach them.

Ask two or three of the groups to report their findings. In conclusion, note how group knowledge and creativity, combined with a targeted approach, can identify excellent sources of qualified potential volunteers to fill important VIP positions.

CONCEPT 3

Time: 15 minutes

The recruitment message must describe, minimally, what the need is, how volunteers can help, and how volunteers will benefit.

T-3: Key Concepts

H-1: Key Concepts

T-8: Essential Elements to Include in Recruitment Message

H-10: Preparing a Recruitment Message

T-9: Recruitment Message Statement of Need

H-11: Examples of Recruitment Messages

H-12: Preparing a Public Service Message

Presentation:

Effective recruitment begins with the message given to potential volunteers. Summarize the three key elements of the recruitment message.

1. The statement of need

Important to note that the need is not the agency's need but rather the need of the resource or park visitors. (Show illustrations of this in T-9, H-10)

2. How the volunteer can help

It is important to note that you have more impact by saying "You can help by..." not "Volunteers are needed..." (third person is not as appealing).

3. Benefits of the job

Answer how volunteers will be helping themselves by doing the job. (Either general benefits of working at the organization or specific benefits of doing a particular job.)

Show examples of how other organizations have used this formula to design their recruitment message. (If possible, design and share a message developed for your organization.)

Exercise:

Have participants write a recruitment message for the job(s) that they are working on throughout the workshop. Note that recruitment messages can take the form of a newspaper ad, a public service announcement, a poster, etc. Ask several to share what they have written.

CONCEPT 4:

Time: 5 minutes

It is important to use the most effective people possible to help recruit new volunteers.

T-3: Key Concepts

H-1: Key Concepts

T-10: Best Volunteer Recruiters

Presentation:

Point out that often the best recruiters of new volunteers are those already volunteering. Ask participants what qualities to look for before asking someone to officially serve in that role.

Suggest that the keys to success include all of their suggestions, but four characteristics are especially beneficial:

Volunteers who are:

1. **Satisfied** with their volunteer work with the park.
2. **Enthusiastic** (You may wish to note that the word enthusiasm ends with IASM - I Am Sold Myself!)
3. **Articulate** (You need people who can express their pleasure so that others catch the fire!)
4. **Connected** with the person or group being recruited. (People say yes to people they know and respect.)

SUMMARY/WRAP-UP/EVALUATION

Time: 5 minutes

T-3: Key Concepts

Review the key concepts of volunteer recruitment.

H-1: Key Concepts

END 60-MINUTE TRAINING

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXPANDED ACTIVITIES

1. If participants in this training are responsible for recruiting their own volunteers, additional in-depth training can be provided, using this module as a framework.
2. Looking at barriers people might have to volunteering in your organization can be done in small groups. Each group identifies five key barriers people might face. After each group generates its list, they pass it to another group; the new assignment is to discuss how and if the organization can do anything to help alleviate these barriers. Full group sharing would follow. This exercise sensitizes groups to the reasons why they might not be attracting volunteers and gives them an opportunity to discuss a number of issues: new volunteer job development, P.R. efforts regarding the agency and its clients, more flexibility in jobs, concentration on issues of staff resistance and climate, etc. This focus will lead to the design of new ways to make the organization more attractive to volunteers. Strategies for outreach could follow.
3. Have participants design some targeted recruitment messages using the information described in Concept 3 (the design of a recruitment message). If the organization has recruitment materials developed, share with the participants and critique them with reference to the three key elements.
4. Qualities of good recruiters may be best discussed by having participants think of a time when they said yes to a volunteer position. Remember what qualities the recruiter had or the techniques utilized that influenced them to say, "Yes!" Some participants may share experiences when they said yes because they were misled or had their arms twisted. Most often they will not express positive feelings about the experience. Others said yes to a recruiter who was not only enthusiastic and persuasive, but who also gave an accurate picture of the position and was interested in the benefits to the organization as well as to the volunteer. Using participants' own experiences is fertile material for many lessons in recruitment. It does take time to process these, but the insights gained are beneficial.

RESOURCES

1. Ellis, Susan. *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*. Available from www.pointsoflight.org/catalog
2. MacDuff, Nancy. *Episodic Volunteering: Building the Short-Term Volunteer Program*, Walla Walla: MacDuff/Bunt Associates, 1991. Available from www.pointsoflight.org/catalog
3. McCurley, Steve and Rick Lynch. *Volunteer Management: Mobilizing All the Resources of the Community*, 1996. Available from www.pointsoflight.org/catalog
4. McCurley, Steve. *Recruiting Volunteers for Difficult or Long-Term Assignments*. Available from www.pointsoflight.org/catalog
5. McCurley, Steve and Sue Vineyard. *101 Tips for Volunteer Recruitment*, Heritage Arts Publishing, 1988. Available from www.pointsoflight.org/catalog

TRANSPARENCIES

Guide to Transparencies

- T-1:** Definition: Volunteer Recruitment
- T-2:** Learning Objectives
- T-3:** Key Concepts
- T-4:** Jigsaw Puzzle
- T-5:** Recruitment Techniques to Avoid
- T-6:** Why Do People Volunteer?
- T-7:** Targeted Recruitment
- T-8:** Essential Elements to Include in a Recruitment Message
- T-9:** Recruitment Messages: Statement of Need
- T-10:** Best Volunteer Recruiters

Definition: Volunteer Recruitment

A process to attract and invite people to consider volunteer involvement within your park.

Learning Objectives

- Describe successful recruitment, including outcomes
- Design an effective recruitment strategy
- Design an effective recruitment message
- Describe characteristics of effective recruiters

Key Concepts

Concept 1

For recruitment to be successful, the needs of both the organization and the volunteer must be met.

Concept 2

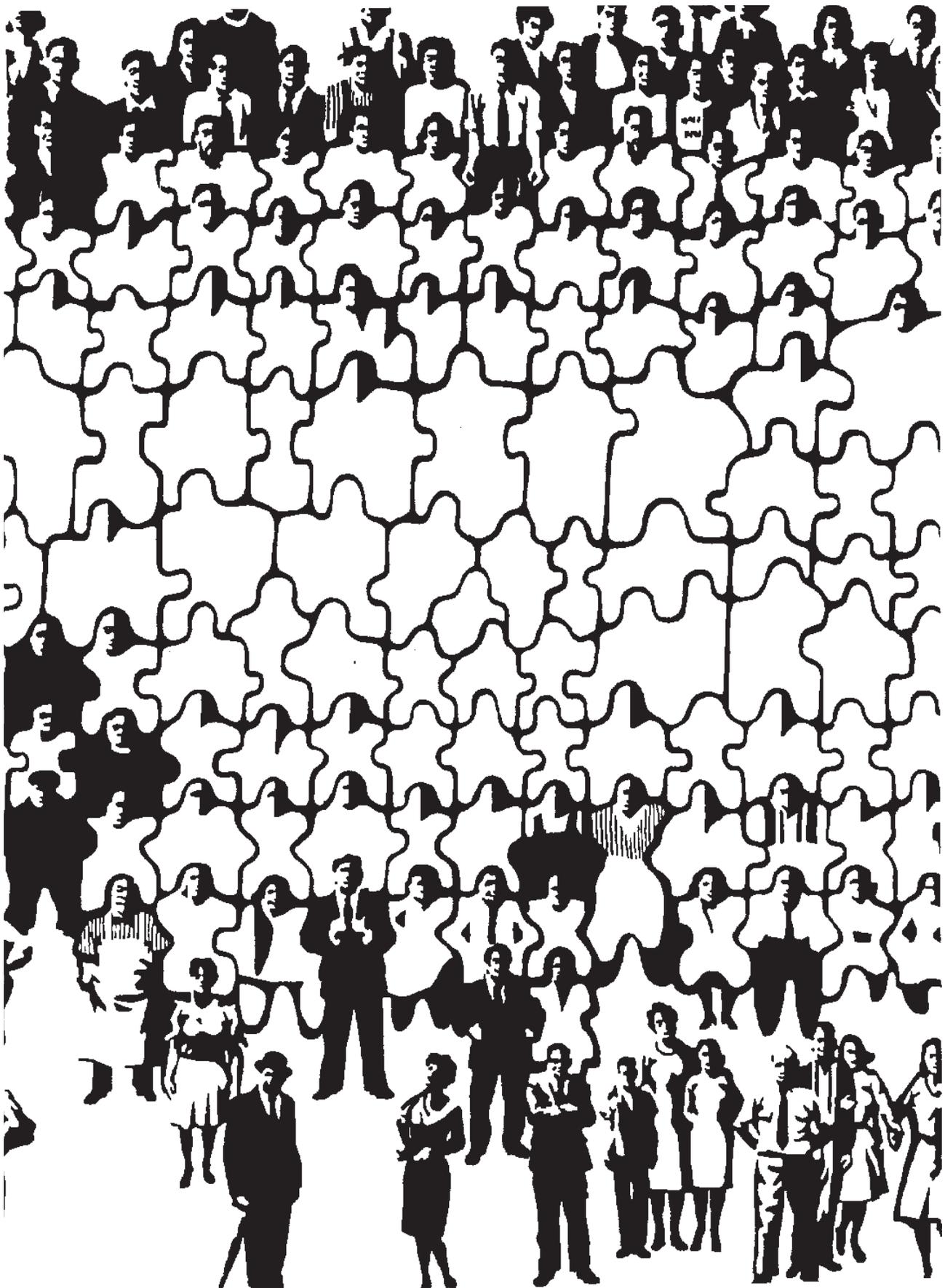
Appropriate targeting is key.

Concept 3

The recruitment message must, minimally, describe the need, how volunteers can help, and the benefits.

Concept 4

Use the most effective people possible to recruit volunteers.



Recruitment Techniques to Avoid

- Bait and switch
- “There’s nothing to it...”
- “We’re desperate, anyone will do.”
- Cast your nets and see who swims in
- “You’re a landscape architect?
We could use one of you!”
- “We have lots of needs . . . Help! ”
- “I’m tired of doing it . . . Anyone else want to do it?”

Why Do People Volunteer?

Targeted Recruitment

Finding just the
right volunteer
to do the job

Essential Elements to Include in a Recruitment Message

- The statement of need
(need of the resource, not the
park or agency!)
- How the volunteer can help
- Benefits to the volunteer

Recruitment Message: Statement of Need

In terms of the park:

- *The Maintenance Division needs people to cut up logs and brush ...*

In terms of the resource:

- *The recent winter storms have seriously impacted trails in our backcountry wilderness area...*

Best Volunteer Recruiters

Volunteers who are:

- Satisfied
- Enthusiastic
- Articulate
- Connected with the person or group being recruited

HANDOUTS

Guide to Handouts

- H-1:** Key Concepts of Recruiting Volunteers
- H-2:** Why Do People Volunteer?
- H-3:** Who Volunteers?
- H-4:** Methods of Recruitment
- H-5:** Recruitment Techniques
- H-6:** Recruiting Volunteers from Special Populations
- H-7:** Recruitment Strategy Worksheet
- H-8:** Volunteers-In-Parks Opportunity Listing
- H-9:** The J-1 Visa Program for International Volunteers (IVIP)
- H-10:** Preparing a Recruitment Message
- H-11:** Examples of Recruitment Messages
- H-12:** Preparing a Public Service Message

Key Concepts of Volunteer Recruitment

The purpose of recruitment is to find qualified prospective volunteers to apply for available park volunteer positions.

Concept 1

For volunteer recruitment to be successful, the needs of the organization and the needs of the volunteer must both be met.

A written volunteer job description is a summary statement of an identified need in your park. Prospective volunteers can read it, consider it, and work with you to decide if there is a potential match between your need and the volunteer's skills and interests.

Concept 2

Appropriate targeting is key to the success of your volunteer recruitment program.

For jobs that require large numbers of people and/or do not require any specific skills, a general appeal (such as through TV, radio, or a mass mailing) is most appropriate.

For highly specialized jobs, however, careful planning must be done to target the most likely source(s), in the right way and at the right time, to attract volunteers with the skills you need.

Concept 3

The recruitment message must include information on what the need is, how the volunteer can help, and what benefits the volunteer will receive.

Describe your need as clearly and specifically as possible. Tell prospective volunteers what they can do to help and don't forget to mention the benefits the volunteer will receive.

Concept 4

It is important to choose the right people to help recruit new volunteers.

The most effective form of recruitment is word-of-mouth and satisfied volunteers can be among the best recruiters you will ever find.

Why Do People Volunteer?

Understanding a person's motivation for volunteering is key to placing him/her in the right volunteer position. Listed below is a sampling of some of the needs that people can meet through volunteer activity:

- Be challenged
- Gain experience for a career change
- Develop new skills and interests
- Meet new people
- Earn credit for school
- Network and PR for business
- Improve community, impact a cause one cares about
- Get acquainted with your community
- Gain leadership skills
- Receive recognition
- Make a difference
- Have FUN
- Escape from life's stresses
- Continue to use skills after retiring
- Donate professional skills
- Add variety and spice to life
- Gain self-esteem and self-confidence
- Socialize
- Improve other people's lives
- Protect natural and cultural resources

Who Volunteers?

When approaching recruitment it is important to be aware of the wide range of people who volunteer:

- Elementary, junior high and senior high school students
- College students of all ages
- Employed men and women
- At-home mother or father
- Singles
- Retired and pre-retired folks
- People new to an area
- People at all levels of income
- Families
- Frequent park visitors
- People in transition from one career or life phase to another
- Parents in their children's activities
- People with particular hobbies or interests
- Former clients
- People working off fines
- Groups (service, Scouts, 4-H, Lions, church)
- Unemployed
- Disabled
- People of diverse ethnic/cultural backgrounds
- People who live near parks

Methods of Recruitment

There are two basic methods of planning your recruitment program: non-targeted and targeted.

Non-targeted recruitment

This form of recruitment is best used when the volunteer positions you are attempting to fill require a large number of volunteers and/or do not require any specific skills or lengthy commitment (i.e., picking up trash along a trail).

Recruiting in these situations calls for as wide a distribution of information as possible. Dissemination of information is usually done through:

- Posters
- Speakers' bureaus
- Notices in newsletters (corporate, church, club, etc.)
- Radio talk shows or Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
- TV appearances or PSAs
- Distribution of flyers or brochures widely distributed
- Group recruitment
- Booths at volunteer fairs and other events

Flyers can be distributed widely in such places as:

- Libraries
- Bulletin boards in churches, stores, businesses, etc.
- Senior centers
- Medical/dental waiting rooms
- Laundromats
- Chambers of commerce
- Bill stuffers
- Volunteer fairs and community events
- Residential areas (door-to-door)
- Schools and universities
- Vocational and adult education bulletin boards
- Volunteer centers
- Coffee houses
- Professional organizations
- Cable TV programs
- Grocery bag stuffers
- Community centers
- Housing projects/neighborhoods
- Health clubs
- Recreation centers
- Bus/train stations
- Shopping malls

Targeted recruitment

When you are trying to fill a volunteer position that requires particular skills, experience, aptitude, attitude, interests, etc., you will want to target your recruitment efforts to reach people who will most likely have these characteristics. To identify the best possible sources of volunteers for such positions, ask yourself these questions:

What types of people are apt to have these characteristics?

Any particular age, gender, educational background?

Where might they work or be involved in recreational activities?

What benefits would they receive by performing this volunteer job?

What will motivate them (i.e., networking, meeting new friends, etc.)?

How will we reach this volunteer with our need?

Where do they live, work, shop, play?

What do they read, watch, listen to, attend?

are they likely to access information on-line?

What are effective techniques to reach these good prospects?

Person-to-person, through a service club, on-line website recruitment, church?

Who, from our park, would most likely elicit positive responses from them?

A peer, an authority figure, a friend?

Answering the above questions will help you develop a targeted recruitment plan to find the best-suited candidate for the job. Investing your time in this planning phase would save you countless hours of handling situations which often arise when you have the wrong person in the job.

Recruitment Techniques

There are numerous techniques to reach potential volunteers. Your choice of techniques depends on who you are trying to reach. Examples include:

Slide show (12 minutes or less) showing what volunteers do in your park

Pre-retirement talks at local corporations

Reunion of former volunteers (“We’d love to have you back if you can find the time.”)

Satisfied volunteers sharing their experiences (at youth groups, service clubs, churches...)

Sending regular listings of your needs to community groups, internet bulletin boards, newsletters, corporations who support volunteering, etc.

Businesses buying ads in newspaper recruiting for your volunteers

Asking college instructors to announce your needs in their classrooms when their curriculum matches your needs (e.g., photography, counseling, video recording, accounting)

Recruiting a whole group or organization to be involved in a project (i.e., adopt-a-trail)

Stuffers in bills, grocery bags, etc.

Flyers posted in key locations around town

Having a volunteer “**Each One Bring One Day**” in your park (each volunteer brings a friend who might be interested in volunteering)

Speaking at a Newcomers Club once a year and having a flyer in Welcome Wagon handouts

Article or want ad in the newspaper

TV or radio PSA, or cable TV program

Being available as a **fill-in speaker** for service club lunches

Speaker’s Bureau (trained volunteer leaders)

Recruitment Techniques (cont.)

Specific recruitment brochure

Send information on jobs to: Volunteer Centers, American Association of Retired People (AARP), National Retired Teacher's Association (NRTA), Junior League, Chamber of Commerce, American Association of University Women (AAUW), Parent/Teacher Associations (PTAs), fraternities and sororities, appropriate websites or links

Volunteer Fairs or booths at community events

Telethons

A newspaper story about your volunteers

Contact appropriate **professional societies** (such as doctors, CPAs, lawyers, and ethnic organizations such as Black Social Workers)

Contact **high schools** having a service requirement for graduation

Contact centers or programs for **people with disabilities**

Contact organizations serving the **unemployed**

Contact **career classes** at schools

Notify **labor unions** of your volunteer needs

Notify **court referral programs** of your volunteer needs

Don't forget to update your park's website volunteer recruitment information or volunteer.gov/gov

Recruiting Volunteers from Special Populations

People with limited income/education

Tips from Sue Vineyard (*101 Tips for Volunteer Recruitment*)

1. Design materials for ease of readability (visual, not verbal).
2. Structure work around 'job development' opportunities.
3. Emphasize self- help.
4. Provide reimbursement or minimize out-of-pocket expenses.
5. Match recruiter's background with that of possible volunteers.
6. Minimize jargon and paperwork.
7. Stress one-to-one personal recruitment techniques.
8. Work through churches and community centers.
9. Minimize time delays between their interests and the job match.
10. Provide success examples.

People with disabilities

(Summarized from the National Red Cross Volunteer Manual)

Now that more human service organizations are barrier-free, increasing numbers of persons with disabilities are choosing to become volunteers. The criteria for their involvement should be as for all others, competence and suitability of the individual. It is helpful to indicate on any publicity that disabilities do not exclude individuals, but it is also advisable to take the time to offer personal invitations to appropriate candidates. From a probable history of exclusion, some may need some extra encouragement and assurance that, in fact, they are welcome. For help in identifying people that might be interested in volunteer service, one should contact community agencies, rehabilitation offices within the Social Security Administration, clubs and other services for people with disabilities, and local community agencies such as independent living centers.

Consider virtual volunteering opportunities. Could a volunteer work from their home and still accomplish work/goals for the park?

Unemployed people

To encourage unemployed people to volunteer, Sue Vineyard, in *101 Ideas for Volunteer Programs*, recommends that you

1. Distribute brochures at job re-training programs, resume writing firms, counselors' offices.
2. Place notices at unemployment offices.
3. Advertise in help-wanted ads.
4. Write job descriptions with specific tasks and skills that could translate to paid employment.
5. Emphasize re-training, career sampling and making contacts in recruitment pitch.

6. Document hours and skills of each volunteer.
7. Help volunteers develop a portfolio of skills and training.
8. Inform volunteers of other training courses available in the community.
9. Prepare letters of recommendation focusing on skills and accomplishments.
10. Provide volunteers with any job leads known to you or your agency.

College students

College campuses offer a centralized resource and point of contact for seeking potential volunteers. College students usually volunteer through departmental internship programs which are typically short-term assignments. Because there may be limitations associated with time (i.e., semester or quarter internships), the recruiter should be aware of:

1. The investment of volunteer training time balanced with the expected length of service.
2. The importance of recruiting at the close of the semester or quarter preceding the period of service.

You may wish to use student volunteers in positions that do not require a long-term commitment or extensive training. Maximize the use of time available for their commitment by recruiting and training prior to the internship period.

College students are increasingly motivated to volunteer in community service agencies. Volunteering is deemed valuable experience by colleges reviewing entrance qualifications, by graduate schools reviewing applications, and by companies interviewing job seekers. Students themselves find volunteer experience a means of gaining work-related references and an opportunity to explore their area of interest.

Agencies interested in contacting college students for volunteer service positions can approach the college student by:

Offering placement slots for internship programs established in selected departments of the college, and

Placing informational posters/bulletins in areas where students congregate, such as the library, student union, or job assistance bulletin boards.

An agency may also seek volunteers by directing inquiries to particular department heads or individual professors.

Recruitment Strategy Worksheet

Volunteer job description (summary):

Skills and qualities needed to perform this job:

What types of people are most apt to have these qualities?

(age, educational level, experiences - what types of people have made the best volunteers in this position previously?)

What are the best sources for finding people like that?

(service clubs, corporations, colleges, youth clubs, etc.)

What techniques or methods would be most appropriate to gain access to them?

(friend or colleague to personally ask, speak to Rotary, talk to classes at the local college, PSA on teen radio station, list on park website or through Volunteer.gov, etc.)

What benefits will these volunteers receive by doing this job?

(i.e., what exchange are we offering them: work experience, networking opportunities, housing, making a difference, etc.)

Who is the best person to do the recruitment and why?

Listing NPS Volunteer Opportunities on Volunteer.gov/gov

Login ID and passwords can be set up for NPS employees by contacting a regional Volunteer Coordinator.

Go to: <http://www.volunteer.gov/gov>

Select: “**Partner Access**” in the lower left corner of screen; Enter your login info

Check out the “**Tool Box.**” It has manuals and other guides to help you utilize the site.

Remember that you do not have to use this site to advertise all NPS volunteer opportunities- but if you want to recruit from more than just local sources, this provides a good tool to do so. The good news is that you may get lots of applicants. Reminder: Replying to volunteer applicants via electronic means should be treated no differently than when you get a letter in the mail...respond in a timely manner.

Note This site has a short “timed out” function. If the site is inactive for a short time, it will “time you out” and you will have to log back in. You may loose whatever you were working on. You need to complete a function, such as entering a volunteer opportunity, all at the same time.

After login, select “**Add New Volunteer Opportunity**” or “**Modify Existing Opportunity**”

Suggestion: Type up information on the volunteer opportunity in Word prior to entering the system. Information can be copied and pasted into the blocks.

Opportunity Name:

Note: The name will determine alphabetically where the opportunity will show up.

Example: “Volunteer Campground Host” will end up under “V.” “Organ Pipe Cactus Visitor Assistant” will end up under “O”

Street Address 1 & 2

City

Country

State [pull down menu]

Zip Code

Agency/Organization: [pull down menu] Select your park.

Volunteer Position Description: See Hints for what might go into a volunteer job description narrative.

Activities: [check boxes] Select activities that apply to your opportunity

By selecting these activities it will help with the search functions. It has some limitations-if you select that a job is both “office/clerical” and “visitor information,” a search for a single activities will not refer to this listing because you listed 2.

Volunteer Coordinator Information: [pull down menu] Select your name or the name of the park’s volunteer coordinator

Contact Information: Follow the instructions. Use this entry if the contact is different from the volunteer coordinator.

Available Dates

Note: These are the dates that you want to consider volunteer applications. After the “End Date” has passed the opportunity will not be visible to the public. It will be shown as “E” (expired) to administrators in the system. You can also disable the opportunity listing at any time.

Opportunity/Location Photo: [Browse button]

This allows you to upload a picture from your computer. Make sure your picture has been sized for the web (meaning that the actual file size and resolution is not large - i.e., file size should be about 50MB or less and resolution under 150 dpi)

Opportunity/Location Web Site: List your park’s web site.

Example: <http://www.nps.gov/goga>

Opportunity/Application External Site: Use if you have the opportunity listed on your park’s web site.

Click on “Enable this opportunity”

Hints on developing the narrative for the job description narratives.

Title: The proper name of the position being described.

Purpose of Position: A statement of the organization’s need for the position, the reason for the existence of the position and the results or outcome desired.

Responsibilities: The duties a volunteer is expected to perform. Be as specific as possible. The list of duties will serve as a guide for ongoing actions plans and progress reviews.

Qualifications: The skills, experience, and aptitudes required for the position. Qualifications should be very clear so potential volunteers will know whether they are qualified for the position.

Eligibility: Include age restrictions (e.g., “volunteers must be age 18 or older”), physical demands, as well as other restrictions, if applicable, such as citizenship, visa requirements, police clearances or background checks, etc.

Length of Service: The length of time a volunteer is expected to serve in the position.

Time Required: The minimum or appropriate number of hours the volunteer is expected to serve weekly or monthly.

Training Required/Provided: The specific orientations or training required, including any training that the prospective volunteer will be provided or that is a precondition to being selected for the position.

In addition to the above categories, the following information should be included to provide full understanding of the nature of the position:

Working Conditions: Describe the work setting. If the position involves hazardous conditions, strenuous work, extreme temperatures, altitude, outside or inside, etc. it is important to note and discuss them with volunteers. If your unit has volunteers with disabilities, listing special equipment and other accommodations could be invaluable in creating satisfactory placements.

Conditions of Enrollment: Is reliable transportation necessary? Is a uniform required, and if so, is it provided? Are any tools necessary? Are meals provided or paid for? Are there any other considerations that the volunteer should know about? Are there any agency specific regulations? Advise prospective volunteers about any security or police clearances, drug testing, or other requirements that may be needed as a condition of enrollment. Some agencies pay for medical testing and conduct criminal and security background checks, dependent upon the health or security risks involved.

The J-1 Visa Program for International Volunteers (IVIP)

What You Should Know

The National Park Service (NPS) Office of International Affairs (OIA) has been designated to coordinate the National Park Service J-1 Visa Program run through the State Department. The following information should be used as a guide through the process. The Office of International Affairs is your source for further questions on the program. Please contact OIA if you have questions.

National Park Service
Office of International Affairs
1201 Eye Street, NW
5th Floor
Washington, DC 20002
Phone: (202) 354-1806 or 354-1807
Fax: (202) 371-1446

What Is The J-1 Visa?

The J-1 Visa is a special entry visa issued by the United States Department of State International Exchange Visitor Program. The J-1 Visa permits foreign visitors to volunteer here in the United States. The National Park Service has been authorized to sponsor international volunteers in the category of training. According to Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS)(formerly Immigration and Naturalization -INS) regulations, we cannot have foreign volunteers receiving even minimal compensation such as government quarters (if the park normally charges paid employees for the housing) or a daily reimbursement unless they have a special work visa.

We accept qualified people from around the world that are interested in helping the NPS with its mission and who want to live and work as volunteers in one of America's national parks. J-1 programs administered by government agencies are normally from a minimum of one week up to 18 months in length. (OIA urges that programs be at least 3 weeks in length, for the benefit of the park). Currently the NPS has been approved by the State Department to sponsor J-1 volunteers for programs up to 12 months in length. International volunteers are expected to pay their own travel costs and have medical insurance.

Why Should We Use Foreign Volunteers?

It is no secret that the National Park Service is recognized throughout the world as being at the forefront of protected area management. As such, many foreigners want to see and experience life in one of our parks. Reaching out to these people so that they can see how America's natural and cultural treasures are managed will help create a better awareness of protecting the global environment. Placing International Volunteers into our parks will help them gain new cultural insights while at the same time we can learn new ideas from them.

Are There Any Special Requirements?

As can be expected, a program involving visas means there is some added paperwork but the process itself is actually very easy. Fourteen questions need to be answered and the **park needs to provide OIA with a training plan**. The volunteer needs to provide proof of medical insurance.

Under our agreement with the State Department, the NPS is designated as a training agency. As a sponsor of an IVIP, you will need to ensure that OIA receives documentation in writing that the volunteer is receiving training. By providing a training plan for the volunteer, the park will benefit, along with the volunteer. Setting training goals and objectives insures that the most important aspects of training are covered and that the volunteer will practice the skills which will meet the park's priority needs; thus insuring a successful volunteer program. The more experience these volunteers gain, the greater their possibility of obtaining park positions in their country.

Health Insurance: The insurance requirement is also very important because many foreign countries have socialized medicine and volunteers will have no coverage unless they purchase additional coverage. During work hours Workman's Compensation will apply, but after hours if there is an injury that requires medical attention the volunteer will be on his/her own. Considering the cost of medical care here in the U.S., without some kind of medical backup the IVIP would be in an extremely bad situation. The insurance requirements are included in this package.

Reporting: To participate in the program, all IVIPs must agree to submit a final report detailing their volunteer experience. Compliance with this requirement is essential to the State Department's continued support of our program. Viewed as a whole, these IVIP's reports document the scope of international volunteer contributions to national parks and the value of cultural exchange to the NPS. The accounts are posted on International Affairs section on *Inside NPS* and can be found on the International Volunteer- In -Parks Program page under "News."

Security and Tracking: Due to the events of September 11 and the past inability of government agencies to track student and exchange visitor visa holders while they were in the U.S., the State Department has introduced new guidelines for the J-1 program. Additional information is now needed to process the visa application (See Information needed to complete the DS-2019 on the following page). OIA must enter all J-1 volunteers into the new SEVIS (Student Exchange Visitor Information System) tracking system. This system allows the government to track visa holders from start to finish.

All parks sponsoring international volunteers must notify OIA when the volunteers arrive to begin their programs and when they finish. OIA must also be notified if international volunteers leave their park for more than 48 hours. These instances could include extended field trips to parks or other areas, training outside the park, or other similar events. Failure to notify OIA may cause the visa to be terminated.

Information Needed By OIA to Complete the DS-2019

Note: An electronic version of an application form is available through the NPS OIA office which includes the following:

1. Full name of applicant as it appears on passport
2. Current mailing address (no PO Boxes);
Phone number(s) and e-mail address, if available.
2. Male or Female.
3. Date of birth (month, day, year)
4. City and country of birth.
5. Country of Citizenship/Legal permanent resident of what country.
6. Previous J-1 visa? If so, list date and program sponsor.
7. If applicant is employed full-time; List current work position and type of employer in home country. Be as specific as possible, i.e., government-local or central, private business, non-profit organization, etc. If applicant is a student: List major subject area and level of education (i.e., graduate or undergraduate).
8. Current mailing address Print neatly and carefully. Write address as it should appear on an envelope. No PO Boxes.
9. A copy of the health insurance policy showing that it meets program requirements should be attached. However, if the policy is not written in English, it should be accompanied a statement from the insurance company (English only, please) verifying that all medical insurance requirements of the exchange visitor program have been met. The least satisfactory, but acceptable in an emergency, would be a signed letter from the applicant verifying that the enclosed policy meets all medical insurance requirements. Volunteer must send proof of insurance coverage in the U.S. to the National Park Service, Office of International Affairs (email or fax 202-371-1446).

**This information to be submitted ONLY by the NPS unit receiving volunteer.*

- *10. Park mailing address (including park street address of IVIP's duty site. No Post Office Boxes-use delivery address with street name and number.
- *11. Address where volunteer will be living (include dorm/building name, & other details). This is a new requirement as of July, 2004. The Consulate will not process the visa without this.

- *12. Name of supervisor during exchange period, their title and phone.
- *13. An individual training plan, designed specifically for each volunteer, summarizing the purpose, goals, and weekly training activities to be given.
- *14. Dates of proposed volunteer service.
- *15. Describe the specific field of research, study, training, or professional activity to be engaged in while IVIP is in the U.S. Include a training plan and work summary.
- *16. Estimate the dollar value of any support (housing, reimbursements, etc.) the visitor will receive from NPS during the exchange period.
- *17. If another federal or non-governmental organization will provide financial support for exchange, estimate dollar value.
- *18. Federal Express account number for the park/unit of the IVIP. Mail in many other countries is not dependable and FedEx delivery will insure documents arrive in time to obtain the visa.

Medical Insurance Requirements for the J-1 Visa

A. Minimum Coverage Shall Provide: (U.S. Dollars)

- Medical Benefits of at least \$50,000/accident or illness.
- Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$7,500.
- Expenses associated with medical evacuation to \$10,000.
- A deductible not to exceed \$500/accident or illness.

B. An accompanying spouse or dependent of an IVIP should have equal coverage.

C. An IVIP that fails to maintain the insurance coverage set forth above while a participant in the IVIP program or who makes material misrepresentation to the sponsor concerning such coverage shall be deemed to be in violation of these regulations and shall be subject to termination as participant.

D. A sponsor shall terminate an IVIP program if the volunteer, spouse, or dependent fails to remain in compliance with the insurance regulations.

E. The Office of International Affairs must have proof (in English) of appropriate coverage. This may consist of a letter from the Insurance company, or a photocopy of the insurance plan translated and signed by the IVIP.

Preparing a Recruitment Message

I. The statement of need

This part of the message should state why the job is important to the resource, or to park visitors, not to the National Park Service.

Example of need stated in terms of a park:

“We need people to help register campers in the dark.”

Example of need stated in terms of the visitors:

“After a long day on the road, families arriving at our campground could sure use a friendly smile, a warm greeting, and a few helpful directions to get their vacation off to a perfect start.”

Often the most effective way to share the need in a presentation or PSA is with a question (i.e., “Isn’t it time you shared a national park you love with someone who has only seen the parking lot?”) After hearing this, prospective volunteers should feel a desire to do something helpful.

2. How the volunteer can help solve the problem

The second piece of a recruitment message should state the activities the volunteer will perform within the context of the stated need.

“You can be a Campground Host and help grateful visitors relax, find their campsite, and settle in for the experience of a lifetime.”

3. Benefits of the job

This section should indicate the exchange a person will receive for volunteering at your park (i.e., the general benefits of working in the park as well as the specific benefits of the particular job).

“In addition to a free campsite in a setting of spectacular beauty, you will be given all of the training and support needed to make sure this is a job you will look forward to every day.”

Examples of Recruitment Messages (From non-NPS organizations)

- 1 out of 5 Americans can't read this message. By volunteering to teach an adult to read and write, you can open a world of opportunity for someone who might otherwise be limited- stuck! We'll provide the training, you set the time and place of the lessons. Call Project Read at (432) 877-5329.
- Every 15 seconds a women is beaten in this country. Every 15 seconds her partner shares in her loss of self- esteem. Their children are learning how to behave in relationships. You can help stop the cycle of violence and learn valuable communication skills by volunteering with Battered Women's Alternatives. In the next 15 seconds, you can make a difference!
- Infant car accident injury and death can be reduced by 75% with the use of infant car seats. You make infant car seats available to new parents by volunteering to demonstrate these seats each Wednesday at North Country Hospital. You will receive gratification from knowing you are helping to save the lives of our most valuable resource- our children.

Preparing a Public Service Announcement (PSA) Message

1. Media lists should be updated periodically in order to submit copy to the correct news editor or other appropriate person.
2. Know deadlines and submit copy as far in advance as possible.
3. Preparing copy- Place the organization's name, address, telephone number, name of person submitting copy and the dates the copy is to run at the top of each page submitted. (This may vary for your paper. Be sure to get their requested format.) Type using double-spacing on one side only of a standard sheet of paper. Use wide margins. Follow news format: who, what, when, where, why, how, and if applicable, cost. List a contact person who is easy to reach. Be brief and to the point. Proof read copy carefully.

Guide for standard PSA:

10 seconds	25 words
20 seconds	50 words
30 seconds	75 words
60 seconds	150 words

How to contact clubs and services groups

1. Use attractive mail - outs followed by phone calls.
2. Develop a "contact" within clubs and let that person work for you.
3. Develop interesting presentations. Most clubs are constantly looking for programs.
4. Send an invitational letter or email to groups asking them to visit your office and view your programs.
5. When making presentations, take a volunteer along who can personally talk about the benefits of volunteering with your organization.