

VTI Level III : Volunteer Recruitment module

Introduction

What's the expression? Many hands make light work. How often do you feel that, when it comes to your volunteering with the Huntington Society, there are enough hands?

The question is: how do you get more hands?

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to getting more volunteers, but there are a number of realities and trends that exist that need to be kept in mind when it comes to coming up with an approach for recruiting and keeping volunteers.

Please go through the information we've provided below and think about it prior to attending the Summit. We need you to come prepared to discuss the issues of getting (and keeping) more volunteers. Your feedback might only be in the form of questions: how DO you attract volunteers? What works, what doesn't? These questions are important because they tell us what we need to make sure to include in the final version of the Recruitment module.

Here are the realities and trends

(Statistics below taken from the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP) as prepared by the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy)

- There are 78,000 registered charities in Canada (the Huntington Society of Canada is one of these), and there are another 100,000 unregistered nonprofit organizations in Canada as well. Of the 178,000 organizations, the majority of these are looking for volunteers.
- According to the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP), 6.5 million Canadian volunteered through a charitable or nonprofit organization. They averaged 162 hours of volunteered time during the course of the year.
- Over one-third (34%) of all volunteer hours were contributed by the 5% of volunteers who gave 596 hours or more of their time. Another 39% of volunteers who gave between 188 and 595 hours during the year. These two groups represent only 25% of Canada's volunteer force (and less than 7% of the total Canadian population) but they accounted for 73% of all volunteer hours given in the country.

- Volunteers undertake a wide range of activities. The percentage of volunteer events by type of volunteer activity are as follows:

Organizing or supervising events	57%
Member of a board or committee	41%
Canvassing, campaigning or fundraising	40%
Office work	30%
Providing information	29%
Teaching or coaching	27%
Care, support or counselling	26%
Collect, serve or deliver food	25%
Driving	20%

- Although volunteers contribute to many types of organizations, most volunteering happens in the following types of organizations:
 - Arts, culture and recreation organizations (26% of volunteer hours)
 - Social services organizations (20%)
 - Religious organizations (16%)
 - Education and research organizations (11%)
 - Health organizations (9%)
- Volunteers get involved in the following ways:
 - 30% get involved because they were asked by an organization
 - 16% get involved because they actually approached the organization themselves
 - 15% get involved because they are already a member of the organization
 - 12% get involved because they already have a child or spouse involved
 - 9% get involved because they were asked by a friend or relative to get involved

Who are these volunteers?

Gender

- The majority of all volunteers are women (54%) and they contribute 51% of all volunteer hours contributed annually.

Age

- One out of four volunteers is 35 to 44 years old. These Canadians provided 24% of all volunteers hours in the country.
- Only 23% of seniors volunteer, but they have the highest average of volunteered hours on an annual basis of any age group (202 hours).

Education

- 51% of all volunteers have a post-secondary certificate/diploma or a university degree. This group contributes 52% of all volunteer hours contributed annually to the sector.

Labour Force Status

- 48% of volunteers are employed full-time.

What do we know about Huntington Society volunteers?

- The majority of people who volunteer with the Society have some kind of personal connection with the disease, most often because it is in their family.
- Very few volunteers at the local level volunteer with the Society without some kind of connection to the disease (e.g. knows someone with the disease).
- HSC volunteers contribute time in the following ways:
 - Fundraising (Indy, Amaryllis, garage sales, golf tournaments, hikes/walks, bingos, etc.)
 - Public Awareness (providing information, media follow-up, mall displays, media interviews, etc.)
 - Organizing or supervising events
 - Member of a Chapter executive or related committee
- Most Society volunteers are involved in more than one category of activity (most often they fall into all categories)
- The level of commitment of HSC volunteers to the work of the Society is incredibly high, but personal circumstance often forces volunteers to step away from their volunteering with the Society.

All of this information is fine, but what do you want me to do with it?

Please think about what you've read in here, and think about the community that you live in, the experiences you've had trying to attract volunteers, and the experiences that you've had once you had a new volunteer come along. How does your experience fit, relative to the statistics? Given the statistics, do some things that you've seen make more sense?

If you've never tried to get new volunteers before, what does this information suggest to you about strategies for getting volunteers?

In general, we need to be able to have a discussion – staff and volunteer participants – about what we think the best strategies are for identifying, recruiting, and keeping new volunteers. We then need to think about how best to train other volunteers in the organization about these strategies.