



# Power Booster

DuPage Association of Volunteer Administration

## Turn Your Volunteers Into Magnets To Recruit More Volunteers

Most volunteers talk with friends about their volunteer work. However, with a little help from you, in providing expectations, information and tools, they can become powerful magnets to attract new volunteers.

First, set up the expectation that all volunteers will help spread the word about your recruitment needs. From your initial contact with them and beyond, explain your need for volunteers, the impact volunteers have and how volunteers assist in recruiting others. Then reinforce that expectation in all your documentation, emails, newsletters, etc. Periodically advise them how many new volunteers have been referred. I personally thank those who refer others.

Provide your volunteers with information. While their passion will be evident to others, they still need concrete facts. Provide it in multiple formats – heart-warming stories, trivia facts, statistics, behind-the-scenes facts, etc. Provide suggestions as to who to talk to beyond the usual circle of family and friends.

Now that your volunteers have the expectation and the information, provide them with the tools. Over the years I have found these tools to be effective.

- **Flyers** designed for specific target groups. Encourage a teen with graphic skills to design flyers targeted to teens, a retiree to design a flyer for other retirees.
- **Photos** are worth a thousand words. Recruit a volunteer to take photos and use current photos in your recruitment messages. People in the community will recognize photos of their friends and be encouraged to volunteer.
- **Promotional items** for volunteers to pass along to friends can often be created in-house. Try giving out blank business cards, magnets, colorful bookmarks, postcards, discount admissions or free admission passes. Think beyond the usual target groups. If one of your volunteers meets regularly with a group for coffee, give them coffee cups or coasters with your logo. Out of ideas? Have a volunteer research promotional items for you and then create your own.
- **Newsletters** - Print extra copies so volunteers can pass them along to friends and co-workers.
- **Emails** that are fun and informative will be shared if you also provide useful community information.
- **Send them photos** of themselves at their volunteer jobs or being recognized. They will likely share with friends and family.
- **Gift items** – Choose gift items that identify and represent your organization so that volunteers will be proud to use them in the community such as a water bottle, car sticker or a license plate holder.

The more you can help your volunteers be magnets for your organizations the more exposure you'll achieve for your recruitment message.

*Excerpt by Diane Ernst from "Turn Your Organization Into a Volunteer Magnet" 2nd edition. This book is a knowledge-sharing initiative within the international community of volunteer program managers for the purpose of peer-to-peer professional development. Forty authors from five countries worked on this book that is available as a free download at <http://www.lulu.com/content/1197018>*

