



Power Booster

DuPage Association of Volunteer Administration

Ways to generate referrals

Ideas and excerpts from Joe Garcia of www.givetogetmarketing.com

The same principles that work effectively in marketing a business can also work well in recruiting volunteers. Word of mouth referrals are one of the most powerful referrals in volunteer management.

1. MAKE YOUR VOLUNTEERS 'RAVE' ABOUT YOUR PROGRAM

"The happier you make your clients, the more automatic referrals you will get." If your volunteers feel recognized and are happy with your volunteer program they will tell their friends about it.

2. UNDERPROMISE AND OVERDELIVER

"Too many businesses overpromise and under deliver. That turns customers off and eliminates any chance of referrals." Be realistic and accurate about what your volunteer program can do or provide for your volunteers. Then, look for ways to give them more (more recognition, more educational opportunities, coupons, extra treats, etc). "Surprise your clients with something unexpected. Go above and beyond the expected."

3. REMIND YOUR CLIENTS OF YOUR BUSINESS AND YOUR SERVICES OFTEN

"Out of sight, out of mind is very true in business. You must remind your clients of your business and your services often if you expect them to pass your name." The same holds true for volunteers.

"How? There are a number of ways.

- Send your clients a free monthly newsletter filled with helpful tips
- Ask your clients if any of their associates may like to be put on your free newsletter list
- Send your clients an article that they may find interesting and useful along with your business card and a short personal note
- If you find a useful resource that your clients may find interesting, you might want to call to let them know
- Send your clients holiday greeting cards"

4. GIVE SOMETHING WITHOUT EXPECTING ANYTHING IN RETURN

Apply the Give to Get philosophy." Here are a few suggestions related to volunteers:

- call them just to say thank you! A personal thank you without any strings attached will make an impact
- email them with news of special community events that they might be interested in
- email them when you learn about an employment opportunity. Of course you don't want to lose them but maybe their spouse or sister-in-law is looking for a job. They'll be grateful for the tip

"Be generous with your knowledge. Provide your clients with helpful resources, even advice without expecting anything in return."

5. MAKE IT EASY FOR PEOPLE TO REFER YOU

If it's difficult for people to refer you, then they won't. You have to make it as easy as possible for them." Try some of these suggestions for your volunteer program.

- give your volunteers your business card or a bookmark or a flyer to pass along
- suggest they forward your e-newsletter or email to a friend
- add a clickable link to your web page or e-newsletter to your recruitment page

6. OFFER FREE WORKSHOPS - INVITE YOUR CLIENT AND A GUEST

- have an open house or coffee hour or free tour behind the scenes to which they can bring a friend
- if appropriate have a job shadow day so a friend can come along and see your organization first-hand
- ask them to invite a friend to a lecture or workshop at your organization

