

Volunteering Relationship: Pressure Points

The volunteering relationship is key to effective volunteer management. It is important to acknowledge that there are different stages of transition experienced by the volunteer. During each stage, the volunteer has particular expectations relating to their volunteering experience, and each stage can act as a 'pressure point' in the relationship. *(Adapted from Katharine Gaskin: A Choice Blend)*

Work through each of the transition stages, adding in the effective actions you can take to ensure that the pressure points are acknowledged and adhered to.

Transition	Volunteer's needs	Pressure points	Effective actions
Pre-volunteer: (not volunteered before, no knowledge of volunteering)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive image of volunteering • Awareness of variety of volunteering • Attraction to the role or organisation • Clear, positive messages and invitations to volunteer • Easily obtained information • Easy access to volunteering 	Image and appeal Recruitment methods	
New volunteer: (first volunteer role, returner to volunteering, change of organisation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive experience of initial access • Responsive and interested staff • Personalised approach • Procedures efficient but informal • As few delays as possible • Being given choices • Understanding how things work • Feeling equipped and confident to carry out the role • Having the necessary skills for the role 	Recruitment and application process Induction and training	

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Established volunteer: (committed & on board, engaged in volunteering)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant training for the role • Opportunities for progression and further skills development • Good organisation and communication • Degree of commitment respected • Personal constraints accommodated • Feeling comfortable and welcome • Feeling of making a useful contribution • Sense of being part of the team 	Training Overall management Ethos and culture Support and supervision	
Experienced volunteer: (volunteering over longer time period, part of the organisation, possibly developed into new roles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility and trust • Autonomy & empowerment within role where appropriate • Ability to transfer to other volunteering opportunities • Respecting life cycle changes 	Overall management Support and supervision	