

3 Human resources

3.1 The volunteer

The volunteer is:

"A representative from the community who freely chooses to give their time, skills and experience to support an organisation's activities."

Lifesaving volunteers fulfill a multitude of roles including:

- **Patrolling**
- **Training**
- **Beach coach**
- **IRB driver**
- **Bar manager**
- **Junior water safety officer**
- **Age group leaders**
- **Carnival workforce**
- **Patrolling**
- **Training**

Many lifesaving clubs throughout Victoria are experiencing difficulty keeping volunteers due to an increased workload and reliance on too few individuals to contribute. Those clubs that are able to provide a rewarding atmosphere for its volunteers have the best chance of keeping volunteers involved.

This section outlines how lifesaving clubs can improve their recruitment, induction and retention procedures to keep volunteers involved in their club and ensure they are happy in their role.

Before getting into the serious business of recruiting members (volunteers) one of the first tasks the club must do is plan. Firstly think about the volunteers themselves. By knowing who they are and by having an idea of what motivates them to volunteer, a program can be designed to best suit their needs.



Before exploring some tips on recruitment let's discuss some known facts about:

- What people think about life saving;
- Are there any barriers to joining?
- Why did our members actually join a lifesaving club? and
- Why do they leave life saving?

What do people think about life saving?

The beach

Swimming and water activities generally are seen to satisfy a number of needs such as health, competition, fun, physical sensation, sociability and even aesthetics. Water activities at the beach can tap into a number of differing needs and the emphasis varies by person. Many boys may focus on competition (if they feel competitive enough) or the fun of water activities, while many girls may want to be a part of it for general fitness reasons or, for instance, the physical sensation of freedom and relaxation. In terms of activities offered by lifesaving these different dimensions should be catered for to some degree.

In practical terms the extent to which people frequent the beach varies depending on the perceived time available, transport and the presence of motivational factors like health, sport or family. The beach competes with other organised events and sporting activities as well as family obligations that limit the time available. Whilst most teenagers go to the beach with either friends or family they are not yet interested in "hanging out" on their own.

Awareness of a lifesaver's role

Teenagers are generally aware of lifesavers through their presence on the beach and many know it as a club through hearing about it at school. There is a view that membership within the 13-14 year age group is not widespread although nippers have a higher membership profile. In the nipper age group there is a view that parents have a strong influence in encouraging children to join so membership of nippers is often seen to be as much a result of parents' as the child's interest.

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- Membership is perceived by both boys and girls to skew largely towards boys.
 - Activities are seen to focus on competition, lifesaving and patrolling beaches.
 - As the name suggests, teenagers believe that the role of the lifesaver is to "save lives".

This entails deep and serious associations of responsibility and integrity, and while the aim is seen as admirable, it may also inspire negative feelings about taking on such a burden.

Interestingly while girls do not themselves relate well to the image of the lifesaver, they are more likely to see the activity of lifesaving as something to aspire to than are boys, who may see it as boring.

The lifesaver's image

The cap with the red and yellow colours is clearly a recognisable icon and something that immediately taps into the values of lifesaving.

Barriers to joining

It is believed that while the imagery is highly relevant for older people with more old fashioned values, for young people today the lifesaver image is somewhat boring and lacking in excitement. This is because lifesaving is not seen to be a sport but rather a community objective and other activities are therefore secondary.

LSV sporting activities have a fairly high profile and are thought to focus on boat races, rowing, rescue, marathons and interclub competitions.

The barriers are:

Commitment:

- Its serious 'lifesaving' image and corresponding connotations of responsibility and commitment.

Activities:

- Lack of knowledge about activities and assumption that they can be boring.

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- Assumptions of solo participation and aversions to this sort of competitiveness. Girls are also more likely to doubt their abilities in swimming.
 - Perception of a lack of control over which activities are participated in. Teenagers feel signing up means to be bound to the activities the club decides to run.

Experience:

- A perception, particularly amongst girls, that non-membership of nippers means that they are behind others in experience and training. In their minds this makes them "too old" to join.

Popularity:

- Lack of popularity which weakens the appeal of SLSA's image as well as teenager's willingness to join because their friends are not there.

Standing out:

- Solo participation and the perception that it is a "show sport" leads girls in particular to be self conscious about their body.

Why do people join?

Children

When asked what children liked most about lifesaving they stated "making friends, catching waves and swimming" as their preferred responses. It can be concluded that children join lifesaving because they:

- Live close by
- Have friends involved
- Have family involved
- Like making friends
- Like catching waves and swimming
- Like learning new things
- Have been enrolled by their parents



Patrolling lifesavers

Patrolling lifesavers provide the core service activity for LSV's lifesaving clubs. The persons who undertake this form of activity are predominately life saving bronze (bronze medallion) qualified, aged 15-25 and are physically fit. They join:

- To have fun and meet people
- For physical fitness
- To provide a community service
- To gain knowledge of the surf

Competitive lifesaver

Competitive lifesavers are athletes, officials, coaches and even competition minded administrators (management committee members). Their ages range from 5 years to 60+ years and join:

- For the camaraderie
- They live close by
- To help a good cause
- For the challenge of competition and associated fitness benefits

Why people leave lifesaving?

There have been very few investigations into why people leave lifesaving. While membership levels have steadily increased over the last ten years exact figures for all categories are not known.

An exception to this is found in the children's area where it was found that 23% of junior membership drops out each year. They drop out because there is too much competition, they don't like the activities and games and they are bored with doing the same thing each week.

Recent investigations amongst coaches, officials and instructors have suggested that they are happy with their roles. They would like to be able to commit more time to the role but other lifestyle and work pressures prevent this.

Club management people on the other hand have suggested that they are struggling with lifesaving. This is due to the many processes which make demands on an individual's time and hamper their enthusiasm in getting things done. They may not leave the club but these people are certainly disenchanted with the organisation.

3.2 People and positions

The ability of clubs to get the most out of their members and volunteers ultimately is a measure of how successful the club will be. Often clubs are short on resources and therefore are unable to spend adequate time managing people. Those clubs that have established systems and processes to ensure their members and volunteers know what to do and how to do it are likely to be more successful.

How members and volunteers contribute to the objectives of lifesaving clubs

The success of lifesaving clubs is dependent on the people (members and volunteers) that contribute to it. In defining how members and volunteers contribute to the objectives of the club, it is important to identify and understand exactly what those objectives are.

The primary objectives for most lifesaving clubs should be as follows:

To bring new members through the door; improve the recruiting processes of the club to ensure new members join the club.

To retain existing members; ensure the existing members are happy and are getting value out of their membership with the club.

To expose the club to new people; to raise awareness for the club through various means (marketing, advertising, publicity, word-of-mouth). Increased exposure could result in new members joining the club, sponsorship opportunities, and a potential increase in funding from government or other sources.

To develop the skills and abilities of the members; to assist the members to develop their lifesaving skills through instruction, training, practice and competition.

To remain financially viable; to ensure the club continues to make revenue so that it can remain afloat.



Other objectives may include:

- To achieve significant results; to win patrol competitions, lifesaving titles etc.
- To gain sponsorship; to increase revenue through gaining sponsorship.

The primary responsibilities of members and volunteers

The primary responsibilities of members and volunteers are wide and diverse. However, it is important that clubs identify the key areas that contribute to the success of the club.

Within a lifesaving club the key areas may include:

Marketing; recruiting, promoting and raising awareness for the club. This could include visiting schools, meeting with media representatives and writing promotional pieces to raise publicity for the club.

Administration; handling the administrative tasks associated with running a club. This could be collecting and chasing up membership payments, writing club newsletters, and creating administrative forms.

Instruction / training; developing the lifesaving and competition skills of the participants. This includes organisation and conducting of training sessions and providing advice and guidance to participants on competition days. Instructors may include the club instructor, senior instructor, skills instructor and/or assistant instructors. At an elite level the roles of the various instructors tend to become more specific and will include such things as fitness instructors, mental or psychological instructors and skills instructors.

President and committee; provide advice and guidance on the future direction of the club. These positions involve a commitment to providing strategic advice and then implementation of that advice to ensure the growth, sustainability and ongoing success of the club. All club committee members, including the president are generally required to commit substantial time to assisting the club.

Event organisation; organising and running of events and competitions. Event organisation requires strong planning, organisation and communication skills. As there are many unpredictable factors that influence the success of an event / competition, the event organiser needs to have things well planned with contingencies in place.



Tips for getting the most out of your members and volunteers

The following tips highlight how lifesaving clubs can organise themselves to assist their members and volunteers to operate most effectively.

Create systems

Clubs that rely too heavily on the skills and expertise of its members and volunteers may find difficulty in having ongoing success due to lack of succession planning. Clubs need to generate and document systematised ways of completing member / volunteer functions / tasks. By having documented systems in place, clubs will be able to make a far better transition in the case that a key club member leaves.

Develop clear expectations

When a new member or volunteer joins a club or an existing member takes on a new role, a position or job description should be in place to clearly outline the expectations of the club for that particular position. Job descriptions help to provide clarity for the individual to ensure they understand their role within the club (**refer to appendix for a full list of job descriptions or www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au – Club Members section for a job description template**)

Monitor the success of the member / volunteer based on known expectations

Communicate prior to the person taking the job what is expected of him/her and how and why they will be monitored. Consistency is vital!

Provide instruction / training

In some cases the inability of the member or volunteer to perform a role successfully will be due to lack of knowledge, skill and/or expertise. In these cases it is vital that the individual receives appropriate training and/or instruction as to how to perform the role effectively.



Develop a support system

Clubs need to have a system in place to ensure their members and volunteers are given adequate support to assist them in performing their role effectively. A support system could be implemented in a variety of ways, including:

- Establishing a mentoring system, whereby less experienced members and/or volunteers are mentored by a more experienced club member.
- Regular monitoring of performance and satisfaction levels of members and/or volunteers in their positions. This could be done by written questionnaire, face-to-face and/or telephone interview.

Finally, managing any organisation can be a difficult and onerous task. Volunteering your services and skills to manage a lifesaving club that provides such wide and varied services to its members and local community presents a diverse and demanding challenge.

3.3 Member protection

LSV is committed to the health, safety and well-being of all its members and volunteers. The member protection guidelines are to assist clubs and members and are to be implemented in conjunction with relevant SLSA, RLSSA and LSV policies in the area of membership protection.

Please refer to www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au – members section for a full list of the membership protection guidelines.

3.4 Recruitment

Recruiting volunteers has become an increasingly difficult task for lifesaving clubs. Clubs need to develop strategies to entice new volunteer members to their club and to ensure that once they are there, a rewarding experience is provided.

Benefits of volunteer recruitment

Developing effective volunteer recruitment systems and procedures will increase the likelihood of success for lifesaving clubs in their recruitment efforts. By developing effective recruitment systems and processes lifesaving clubs not only benefit themselves but also benefit the new and the existing volunteers. The following outlines the benefits of attracting volunteer members:

- Increases the likelihood of success in recruiting new volunteers to the club
- Minimises the workload on existing volunteers as there are more volunteers to complete the required workload
- Improves the atmosphere / morale in the club as new volunteers create added energy and enthusiasm
- Clubs are able to assign better structured roles for the volunteers as there is less of a dependency to have volunteers doing “a bit of everything”
- Volunteers can provide more specialised services to the club as the role that they are being asked to perform better aligns with their skill set and expertise
- The club has greater flexibility to respond to new ideas and initiatives raised by volunteers as they have the resources to be able to respond to requests
- The club will be able to deliver a better experience for its members and therefore are likely to increase membership numbers

Once clubs understand the benefits of developing effective recruitment systems and processes they need to go about setting up those recruiting systems and procedures to ensure those benefits are achieved.



Volunteer recruitment principles

Know what you want in a volunteer; clubs must first outline what they are looking for. This includes identifying the skills, attributes and the outputs and results that are sought.

Look for potential volunteers from a variety of sources; clubs should seek out potential volunteers from a variety of sources, including contacts from existing members.

Let people know that you are interested; clubs should promote their interest in recruiting volunteers continually and through a variety of sources.

Let potential volunteers know what you expect of them; clubs should be up front with potential volunteers letting them know what a volunteer's role will be and the expectations of that role. This includes the time commitment required as well as the support that they will get in this role.

Establish a structure; people are more likely to have an interest in volunteering if they know that the club will not be totally reliant on them. People want to feel as though they will not be 'handcuffed' to the role with an obligation to stay there. Many clubs have volunteers that continue to fill their position simply because there is no one to take their place.

Present a professional image; volunteers are far more likely to be involved with a club that they see as being professional. Clubs can show professionalism through:

- Having information at hand
- Providing information kits
- Following through phone calls and meetings
- Having position descriptions established

Highlight the benefits; clubs need to remember that they are still trying to 'sell' the position and therefore a strong emphasis should be placed on outlining the benefits for the potential volunteer.

Recruit the right people; there is no point in recruiting a person to fill a position in your club, if they are not suitable. Generally, this results in greater problems for the club and for the person. Clubs are far better off targeting the potential candidates who can add value to the club.

Tips for recruiting the right people

Outline the requirements of the volunteer position (position description)

Identify what you want in a volunteer (the skills and attributes)

Conduct an interview with the potential candidate prior to them taking the position. Ask them:

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- What they want to get from their role with the club?
 - What was it about your club that attracted them?
 - What skills and attributes could they bring to the position?
 - What experience they have that would assist them in working in the position?
 - What they would require from the club to perform their role and satisfy them?
 - Whether they could foresee how long they would be involved with the club?

Refer to www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au – Club Members section for a sample list of interview questions

Establish some type of criteria or list of things that you are looking for in a volunteer.

Identify whether the potential candidate meets your needs, specifically in the areas of attitude, skill, motivation, experience and suitability.

Resourcing the recruitment process

Make up information/induction kits for volunteers. These should contain a brief summary of the organisation's objectives, history and long-term plans. Also include material on club membership; how many there are, what they do, why they enjoy volunteering and, most importantly, specific job descriptions for positions to be filled. This gives the volunteer an idea of where they fit into the club and of its needs.

Consider introducing a mentoring system. Perhaps for members who receive the most support from the organisation; top performers, sports teams, etc. Develop an agreement where members who have been assisted are required, in turn, to assist.

Organise a meeting and invite people to attend. Ask trained lifesavers to talk about why they enjoy lifesaving and the satisfaction they get from it.

The best publicity comes from the members. If your members are happy with the club, encourage them to spread the word among friends and work colleagues.

Consider different ways the newspaper can be used to get a story across. What about letters to the editor, media releases, feature stories or advertising in the classifieds? Ask around the club as there may be someone who has a contact with the local newspaper. Do not just rely on daily



newspapers, also consider local suburban newspapers, student and school magazines

Produce posters, pamphlets, flyers or anything that can be left in prominent places around the community. Consider banks, supermarkets, take away shops, doctors/dentists rooms, notice-boards

Make a cd or video that promotes the club and has volunteers talking about their experiences. This provides an extremely useful resource for potential volunteers.

Contact high schools and colleges and other education institutions and offer to take sessions on lifesaving as part of their recreation classes or the Advance program (**see section 11.6 for more information on the Advance program**).

 **Remember, the member is giving up precious time for the club so something must be offered in return. Always stress the positive aspects of volunteering for lifesaving:**

- **New skills to be learned**
- **New friends**
- **Exciting opportunities**

Have an overall strategy worked out for the recruitment method chosen. Who will speak to those who respond to the club's plea? Who will arrange the information sessions?

Make sure all those concerned know exactly how the step is to be achieved.



3.5 Induction

The next phase in the volunteer recruitment cycle is to go through an induction process to introduce and welcome your new volunteer to your club. A volunteer induction program should build upon the recruitment process that your club has undertaken and focus on making the volunteer comfortable with their position in the club. This section outlines the key things for clubs to consider when inducting volunteers and provides some tips to assist clubs setting up and implementing an effective volunteer induction program.

Key considerations for clubs in inducting volunteers

When introducing new volunteers to clubs you need to consider the following:

Who is responsible for inducting new volunteers? Some clubs do not allocate anyone to undertake the role of inducting new members and therefore the task is either not done or is unprofessional in its approach.

Does the person inducting new volunteers to the club have access to the required information? Clubs need to set up systems and procedures for inducting new volunteers to the club. This includes developing volunteer resources, such as information kits, background material on the club and a job description.

Does the club have a job description? A key component of the induction process should be educating the volunteer about their role as a volunteer and how it will contribute to the club's objectives.

Clarify any queries or concerns: Make sure the volunteer has understood what you have covered in the induction process and answer any questions or queries that they may have. It is also important to make sure that you follow up your induction process as the volunteer may have some concerns that they didn't consider initially.

These provide the basic considerations that the club needs to have in place when inducting a new member. The following provides a more detailed list of tips for inducting new members.



Tips for inducting a new volunteer

Introduce people around the club; introduce the new volunteer to key people around the club including a selection of members to make them feel comfortable in the surroundings.

Tour the facilities; take the volunteer on a tour of the facilities at the club. Highlight the location of key things that the volunteer will need in their role (e.g. equipment, manuals).

Explain the role; talk the volunteer through their role (preferably with a job description). Highlight the key aspects of the position and how it contributes to the objectives of the club.

Explain the expectations; let the volunteer know what will be expected of them in their role, including duties and time commitment required.

Provide necessary information; provide the volunteer with information that will help them to undertake their role successfully. This will include contact details of club representatives, event schedules, training times, equipment list and locations, hours of operation etc.

Explain emergency procedures; explain the club's emergency procedures including what their role would be in the case of an emergency; familiarise them with the club's OH&S policy.

Explain the club's day to day operations; familiarise the volunteer with what would occur in a typical week at the club.

-  **The key to implementing a successful induction program is to develop a systemised process for delivering these key requirements. Once the system has been established it can be replicated by other members of the club, which is vital in the case that your club's induction representative leaves the club. By establishing the volunteer induction system "up front" clubs will be better prepared and will be far more likely to leave a good impression of the club with the volunteer.**



By the end of the induction session, the new lifesaving member should have:

- A clear understanding of the club and its structure; what it does and who it caters to.
- An understanding of all administrative procedures, particularly those that the volunteer will be directly involved with.
- Knowledge of both their own job and those of other volunteers, and of any rules, rights and responsibilities applying to volunteers.
- Met with other volunteers and any personnel with whom they'll be working.

Training

Don't expect new volunteers to have all the skills and expertise necessary to carry out their position. It could be that the particular job requires specific skills or that the volunteer initially feels a little unsure.

All positions require some form of training, whether it is merely an initial introduction to the job or considerable skill-building in specific areas. It is up to the club to find out what sort of training volunteers need and to provide appropriate opportunities. One of the reasons people volunteer is to gain new skills or to develop existing ones.

3.6 Retention

Well done! Some people have been successfully encouraged to join your lifesaving club and have had jobs assigned to them... So now what?

The club now has to work hard at making the volunteer feel an integral part of the membership.

Make sure the volunteers are properly inducted, trained and rewarded. Offer them lots of support and encouragement.

- 🚩 **Retaining existing members is vital to the growth and sustainability of lifesaving clubs and is far cheaper and less time consuming than recruiting new ones. Clubs that are able to successfully retain a large portion of their membership from year to year have less reliance on recruiting new members as their source of income. In addition, clubs that keep their existing members happy are likely to not only retain them but increase the likelihood that these members will recruit friends and family. This section outlines some of the key components of membership retention and provides tips and strategies to assist clubs to improve their success at retaining existing members.**

Tips for retaining existing members

Identify what your members want from their time in the sport/activity and/or with your club and identify what changes need to be made to your club to meet those needs. You need to ask them, as you may think you know, but often they have a different idea!

Consult with every member about;

- How they are going
- Their needs
- Changes they would like to see at the club



Note: this may involve allocating a committee member to the role of membership officer with the duty of member satisfaction. It should be scheduled, but can be an informal chat. However some basic notes of feedback are critical to identify trends that appear within your club. Otherwise, you can utilise a questionnaire.

- Regularly reinforce the benefits of being involved with your club (e.g. fitness, friendships, competition, and fun). Re-state the value you bring to the club members.
- Periodically take the time to assess whether individual members are meeting their goals and/or performance targets.
- Periodically host a social day/night at the club to reinforce the fun of being involved with the club. Run it on a cost recovery basis not a fundraiser. If funds allow, make it free to members.
- Recognise and act on the key signs of when a member is dissatisfied. This should be easier if people are regularly checking where a member is at (again use the questionnaire).

3.7 Member development & training

In the competitive market for volunteers, the ability to deliver memorable experiences and high quality services is a key factor in keeping people involved in the club. One key way that lifesaving clubs can begin to do that is to continue to develop the people within their club (including patrolling members, instructors, competitors and committee members) to ensure their skills are of the highest quality. This section highlights the strategies that lifesaving clubs can adopt to develop their people to deliver higher quality services and experiences for their members.

Benefits for clubs in developing their people

Ability to deliver better services and more memorable experiences for members. Clubs that have better skilled and qualified instructors / coaches, volunteers and administrators are able to deliver services and experiences to a level beyond their competitors (other clubs, sports, activities, and interests).

Increased ability to attract new and retain existing members. Clubs that have better skilled and qualified instructors / coaches, volunteers and administrators are likely to receive greater acclaim from their existing membership and therefore are likely to have a greater success at attracting new members through word of mouth promotion. Also, those members that join are likely to enjoy their experience more and therefore want to remain involved with the club.

Increased parental support for the club. Particularly for parents of younger children as they know their child is being looked after and developed by quality instructors.

Increased ability to charge more for services. If the service is of higher quality and the experience more memorable then the members or parents of the members are likely to see more value in their membership and therefore may be prepared to pay higher fees to receive this level of service.

Increased exposure and awareness of the club. Clubs that have better skilled and qualified instructors / coaches, volunteers and administrators are likely to be better recognised throughout the industry and the local area due to media exposure and word of mouth promotion. This is particularly the case if the club does things that are above the level that is being done by other clubs e.g. the club has a high profile coach, innovative training program, major event etc.



Potential for new people to enter the club. This may occur in instances where an individual or parent of the individual hears about the quality of the club / people at the club and sees that it would be a good club to be involved in.

Increased ability to retain volunteers, instructors / coaches and administrators involved in the club. This will occur if the people involved feel a sense of accomplishment in that they have developed their skills and knowledge base as a result of being involved with the club.

Tips for clubs to develop their people

Training. Provide training to improve areas where the individual may need further skill development.

Mentoring. This is particularly important for younger people who are looking to move into a new position within the club. Clubs can utilise their more experienced instructors / coaches / volunteers to mentor younger, less experienced instructors / coaches / volunteers to provide guidance and support.

Utilise past and existing resources. Many times clubs continue to “reinvent the wheel”, developing new systems, procedures and manuals without fully utilising past resources. Clubs should seek to utilise existing / past resources, where possible, to maximize efficiency and build upon existing knowledge. Clubs should also encourage their existing instructors / coaches / volunteers to continue to build upon existing resources, adding their knowledge and expertise which would then be captured and utilised in the future.

Feedback. Often simple feedback is the most effective way of developing people, as it can be provided quite quickly and can address a specific issue whilst the individual has a particular incident / behaviour clear in their mind.

Two-way feedback. An extension of providing feedback is to provide two-way feedback in which the individual being given the feedback has the opportunity to provide their thoughts and opinions on the matter. This is often an excellent way of identifying the thought process of the individual in question and therefore the root of the problem can be addressed.

Skill assessments. These are best undertaken with some type of criteria by which the individual can be assessed. Criteria may also help to measure the progress of the individual in that particular skill area over time, tracking their progress.

Peer reviews. These can be a great way of helping individuals to improve without having the feedback and/or criticism coming from the same source. Peer reviews also have additional benefits in that they are often more readily accepted by the individual and save on resources.



Information sharing. A simple way that clubs can develop their people is share information that is available. This could include information that the club already possesses, industry data, statistics and report, information from LSV or information from other clubs. If propositioned correctly, many clubs would gladly share information that provided mutual benefit.

Performance targets. Many individuals perform better when they have a specified target to strive for. By setting realistic and achievable performance targets (these can be set by or in conjunction with the individual) the individual clearly understands what is expected of him/her and understands how they will be evaluated in their role.

Recognition programs. In many cases recognition of the individual's performance or contribution to the club will have a dramatic impact on their future performance. Clubs should seek to establish recognition programs whereby they systematically assess and recognise the contributions of all people involved in their club.

3.8 Recognition

Finally, but most importantly, recognise the efforts of the volunteers. Don't leave this to the end of the season or when the volunteers finally retire from the club. Do it now, be consistent about it and keep it ongoing.

By understanding the needs and interests of the volunteers, appropriate rewards for each person can be devised. Personalised recognition means so much more than being treated the same as everyone else. Be creative about the way it is done and personalise it so that each volunteer is recognised in a way that is special to him or her.



Remember, volunteers work without pay and their motivation for continuing to work depends on their feeling of value and accomplishment. Recognition is extremely important.

Here are some ideas:

- Formal certificates of appreciation.
- Recognition of outstanding effort on notice boards, in newsletters or in committee meetings.
- Special awards for volunteers, presented at annual or monthly functions.
- Provision of clothing appropriate to the award gained by the volunteer.
- Get well cards to volunteers when they're ill.
- Birthday cards for 'special numbers'.
- Mention their efforts at an AGM and note this down in the minutes.
- Hold an annual volunteer day where their efforts can be formally recognised and hold a formal event such as a dinner or lunch.
- Allow time to listen to their ideas.
- Respect individuality and uniqueness.
- Keep track of the length of time worked so as to recognise accurately.
- Nominate your volunteers for local and state awards.
- Naming an event after a volunteer.
- Use the Member Recognition Manual.



Involvement

The volunteer has now become a valuable club member so be sure to involve them in all aspects of the club.



Tips on making your club members feel valued

Involve volunteers in any decisions made concerning their own jobs, or to do with the volunteer program in general.



Communications must be a top priority. Be sure to let volunteers know what's going on in the club.

- Keep in touch by:
 - Holding meetings
 - Sending out a monthly newsletter (**refer to www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au – Club Members section for a newsletter template**)
- Don't let the new volunteers do all the unpleasant tasks - share these out among everyone. This encourages a sense of fairness and team work among all members of the club.
- Recognise the volunteer's own priorities - exams, holidays, children, etc., and be flexible enough to suit their needs.

Supervision/support - mentoring

It is a good idea to assign each new volunteer with a supervisor or mentor until such time as the volunteer feels confident in their role. The member plays a number of roles. They give support and ideas, advice, comment on progress and maintain regular contact with the volunteer. Essentially they act as the link between the volunteer and the club. Obviously, it's important that this person is friendly, sympathetic and easily approached as the volunteer will initially rely heavily on this person for encouragement.



Remember to provide recognition and praise when it's due and if the volunteer is doing a good job then reward them for it. Likewise, if the volunteer is not coping well, find out what's wrong and help put it right.

3.9 Volunteers and paid staff

As time constraints make it difficult for volunteer club members to deal with the day to day administration, of clubs, more and more clubs are looking to employ paid staff to ease the load.

Relationships between volunteers and paid employees

As it becomes more common for clubs to appoint a part-time paid officer to run their administration it is essential to have clear lines of responsibility between paid staff and volunteer members to ensure there is no friction.

Volunteers may feel resentful when they realise someone is being paid to do something they once did for free. Paid staff should recognise this and do all they can to make volunteers feel valuable. At the same time, volunteers should hand over appropriate responsibilities. While staff are being paid to do a job, they are not there to be overworked.

Poor definition of roles, lax supervision and poor communication are the most common cause of problems between the two parties. To prevent these, both staff and volunteers should have clear and precise job descriptions. Many volunteer concerns can be eased by involving them in planning and development. Paid staff should be advised on how to relate to volunteer workers and a streamlined communication system between the two groups established.

Hiring the right person

If a club is considering taking on a paid staff member, the club management should first have a clear idea of what the job is and whether they really need to pay someone to do it. Even in the planning stages, a job description is vital (**see www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au – Club Members section for a job description template**).

Begin by writing down a list of aims. Write down a list of the programs and tasks to be worked on over the next three years in order to achieve those aims. This will show how much work has to be done.



Work out who is responsible for each program or task and how many of them can be carried out by volunteers and designate which tasks could be performed by a paid employee and who they will report to. This should clarify for club management whether they need a development officer, a coaching director, an administration manager or a clerk. Problems come, not so much from bitterness, but from improper expectations and poorly written job descriptions.

Ask these questions:

- Is this a realistic collection of tasks?
- Does the list contain all the boring, uninviting tasks that no-one else is prepared to do?
- Think about what you expect to pay them; is it worth it?
- Is the pay linked to the skills?
- What skills are needed to perform these tasks?

A full-time employee is going to cost more than just their salary as overhead costs are bound to expand e.g. sick leave, holiday pay, work compensation etc. Make sure you budget for at least 20% in on-costs.

The job description

This should include:

- Job title
- Purpose
- Responsibilities
- Duties
- Who they report to
- Hours
- Salary or package

Club management should also be clear about the work experience, qualifications, skills and personal characteristics they are looking for in their new employee. Remember, a CV will tell you most things you need to know but you may have to conduct an interview to assess various personalities.



Interviews

Work out who to interview on the basis of CV's and references they have given. An interview panel should include three or four of the people the employee will be working closely with. One person should direct a basic sequence of questioning in relation to the key selection criteria and the duties, another should take notes. Often officers and/or club members apply therefore the panel conducting interviews should be carefully selected and be very small.

Ensure that all applicants are thanked and notified of the final decision. Ensure confidentiality of all personal material made available.

An interview assessment form is a good idea, particularly if there are a large number of applicants. This can be drawn up to cover specific areas (e.g. skills, experience, presentation, potential) and used to rate each applicant.

Provide each applicant with clear details of: what the position involves, the employment contract, how performance would be judged, the salary package and conditions of termination for either party.

If there are two or three suitable applicants, draw up a shortlist for a second interview. When the decision has been made, advise the successful candidate and confirm their acceptance. If he or she withdraws, approach the second candidate. Advise the unsuccessful candidates personally and ask their permission to keep their applications on file.

Written comments may be sought by applicants under the Freedom of Information act. (www.foi.vic.gov.au)

The salary and entitlements package should be decided in line with your budget. Be reasonable and remember professional people demand professional payment. Check that your package is similar to that provided by similar groups or associations. **Check the award rate with Industrial Relations Victoria – awards, wages & conditions (www.irv.vic.gov.au)**



Efficient use of a professional employee

- Employing a full-time worker involves substantial investment, which could be wasted unless the work environment is geared to extracting the best out of him or her.
- The employee must be allocated freedom to express and implement new ideas.
- These ideas may not always coincide with those of the establishment. Good communication between the employee and employer is vital to the success of the arrangement.
- A clear list of priorities should be established within a firm framework. Often there are so many jobs that need doing, that some must be put on the back burner.
- To prevent conflict, employer and worker should both know which jobs have priority. Remind all concerned that the employee has only a certain number of hours in the day.



Remember - An employee will take time to settle in. They will often have to work within long-established and inefficient systems so don't expect an immediate dramatic impact.



3.10 Human Resources checklist

What is your drop out percentage each year of junior member, qualified members and associate members?

Junior
Qualified
Associate

What are the reasons for juniors staying in your club and what reasons do they give for leaving?

Reasons for staying

Reasons for leaving

What key areas contribute to the success of your club?

Marketing

How

Administration

How

Instruction / training

How

President and committee

How

Events organization

How



Which of the following do you have in place to ensure that your members and volunteers operate effectively (tick box)?

- Develop clear expectations (job description)
- Monitor the success of the member / volunteer based on known expectations
- Provide instruction / training
- Assign roles and responsibilities
- Dedicate a support system
- Other (please specify)

When recruiting new volunteers who is responsible for their induction?

What information about the club do you provide to a new volunteer during their induction for example information kits, event schedules, contact details of club representatives, hours of operation etc.?

Does your club provide new volunteers with a position description (tick box)?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Mostly
- Always

Once you have taken a new volunteer on board how often do you consult with them on how they are enjoying their role (tick box)?

- Once a month
- Once a quarter
- Every 6 months
- Once a year
- Never

What methods do you use to ensure that your members are recognised for their contribution to your club (tick box)?

- Formal certificates of appreciation.
- Recognition of outstanding effort in newspaper, on notice boards, in newsletters or in committee meetings.
- Special awards for volunteer, presented at annual or monthly functions.
- Provision of clothing appropriate to award gained by volunteer.

- Get well cards to volunteers when they're ill.
- Mention their efforts at an AGM and note this down in the minutes.
- Hold an annual volunteer day where their efforts can be formally recognised and hold a formal event - a dinner or lunch.
- Allow time to listen to their ideas.
- Respect individuality and uniqueness.
- Keep track of the length of time worked so as to recognise accurately.
- Nominate your volunteers for local and state awards.
- Naming an event after a volunteer
- Other (please specify)

Does your club have a regular newsletter?

- Monthly
- Quarterly
- 6 Monthly
- Yearly
- Never

Does your club have paid staff?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what position do they hold in your clubs?

Do they have a clear job description of their role and responsibilities?

- Yes
- No



Human Resources feedback form

LSV welcomes feedback to help us improve the quality and effectiveness of this Club Development Manual. If you would like to provide feedback on this section please do so using this form.

Please consider each question and rate them on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent (please circle the appropriate number).

How did you rate the quality of information?

1 2 3 4 5

How can it be improved?

How did you rate the design and presentation of this section?

1 2 3 4 5

How can it be improved?

If you would like to see additional information in this section please specify;

Please photocopy this form, complete and return to:

Administration Life Saving Operations

200 The Boulevard

Port Melbourne Vic 3207

Or fax to: (03) 9681 8211