

Retention & Acquisition of Volunteers

SWA Club Conference

9th October 2021

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HANCOCK PROSPECTING

Acknowledgement of Country

***Swimming WA** acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures; and to Elders both past and present.*

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Sessions Overview

- What do I know about volunteering?
- Motivations & benefits
- Sport Australia Segmentation
- Barriers to volunteering
- Common volunteer problems
- Time to move on
- Succession planning
- How to lose good people
- Supporting volunteers
- Questions and contacts

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What do I know about volunteering?

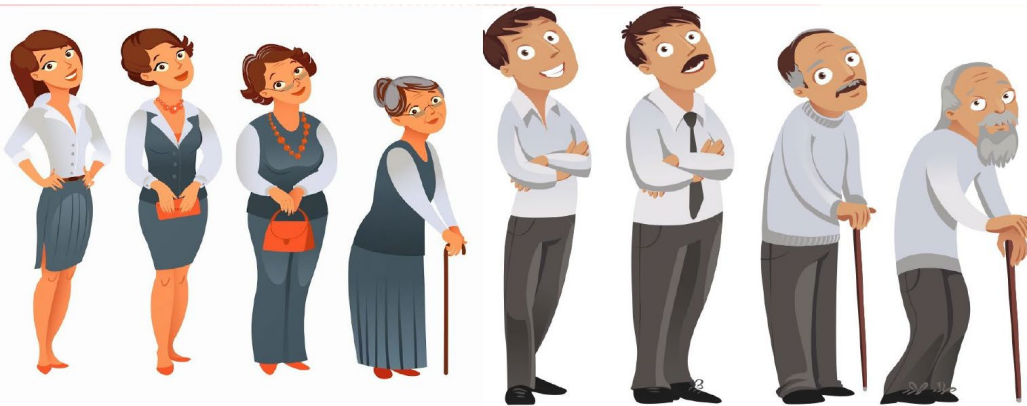
- Parents and extended family have always volunteered
- Studied volunteering during my MBA
- Personal experience of volunteering for past 15 years
 - Secretary of a sports club
 - President of a sports club
 - Team Manager
 - Age Coordinator
 - P&C member
 - Charity Committees
 - Class rep (school)
 - Year group coordinator (school)
 - Currently a Non-Executive Director on two boards

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Who are your volunteers?

- Volunteers are a diverse population
- Age, employment status, socioeconomic status and cultural background helps us to understand the motivations and barriers to volunteering
- Over a third of Australians participate in voluntary work
- 14% of the adult population volunteer in sport and recreation organisations



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Motivations & benefits

Motivations for volunteering are generally either altruistic or egoistic

Function	Description	Examples
Values	To express values related to altruistic and humanitarian concerns	“I feel it is important to help others” “I can do something for a cause that is important to me”
Understanding	To learn new things and utilise existing knowledge and skills	“Volunteering allows me to gain a new perspective on things” “I can learn how to deal with a variety of people”
Social	To engage with friends or do something perceived positively by others	“My friends volunteer” “People I’m close to want me to volunteer”
Career	To achieve benefits related to a job or career	“Volunteering experience will look good on my resume” “I can make new contacts that might help my business or career”
Protective	To avoid negative aspects of one’s own life	“Volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles” “By volunteering I feel less lonely”
Enhancement	To achieve a positive sense of one’s own self	“Volunteering makes me feel needed” “Volunteering makes me feel better about myself”

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Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI, Clary et al., 1998)

Sport Australia Segmentation

	Segment		Reten- tion	Acqui- sition
Volunteers	Happy Helpers	Volunteers to support their family in their activities, with volunteering in club sport only one of the multiple activities they are likely to help out with.	✓	✓
	Community Committed	Volunteers for the social interaction and enjoyment that volunteering offers, along with feeling a of identity and commitment to a community organisation and its future.	✓	✓
	Opportunists	Volunteers to gain a personal benefit, such as practical skills or work experience, being part of the buzz or atmosphere, or having the chance to meet someone famous or elite.	✓	✗
	Altruists	Volunteers through a desire to help other, to give back to the community and to help the disadvantaged.	✓	✗
	Overcommitted	Volunteers because they feel is expected of them. A risk of attrition due to feeling like could use their time better elsewhere.	✓	✓
Non-Volunteers	Occupied Observers	Not averse to volunteering for club sport. That is, they are not disinterested or against it, they simply have other priorities at the moment. Likely to volunteer if the child participates.	✗	✓
	Sidelined	Open to volunteer for a club sport as have relatively high participation levels. Injury and lack of time due to family or work commitments are the main barriers.	✗	✓
	Self Servers	Yet to find a cause they are passionate about. May be motivated if they were to receive a personal benefit, e.g. work experience, a financial benefit or to meet someone famous.	✗	✓
	Well Intentioned	Have no real reason to volunteer within sport, with low to none current or future participation in sport and any motivations to volunteer grounded in the altruistic.	✗	✗
	Uninvolved	Little interest in both volunteering or in club sport. Volunteering is seen as very low priority and there is very low segment participation in sport.	✗	✗

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Happy Helpers

Who are they?	Acquiring	Retaining	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically mums from higher SES • Volunteers to support family & friends • Spend time with child • Ensure club continues • Club sport on of multiple, parent related volunteer activities • Seasonal – do what needs to be done • Satisfied as long as they feel useful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the child participates in the sport, acquisition is possible • Motivate by offering a wide variety of roles • Reinforce that volunteering offers time spent with child • Ensure open, approachable environment to maximise involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a wide range of roles and communicate importance of help • Reinforce the motivation – spending time with child • Allow time for social interactions with others • Ensure clear communication of the role and any necessary support/help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politics • Criticism/negative feedback • Overwhelming due to taking on too much • Perceptions of lack of support/poor communication • Subject to lifestyle change

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Happy Helpers – ways to communicate

- Directly in person, asking if they will volunteer
- Sign-on day in club, in person during the season
- Then direct communication via email
- Ensure they have the website and Facebook contact for the club

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Community Committed

Who are they?	Acquiring	Retaining	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically older male • Volunteers for social reasons & enjoyment, sense of identity and commitment to organisation's future • More likely to only be involved in one club • Club sport volunteer is on a seasonal/all year round basis • More likely to be an administrator than other segments • Satisfied as long as they have a strong role to play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless lifestyle changes, such as a child entering a club, full acquisition unlikely • Already 'committed' to their other organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not necessarily linked to a child's participation • Will continue to volunteer • Offer roles with authority, passing on knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Others suggesting things be done differently • Prone to being martyrs leading to burn-out • Offputting to other volunteers as tend to do things the way things have always been done • Belief their way is better • Belief others should put in more effort and therefore unappreciative of others

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Community Committed – ways to communicate

- Directly in person, asking if they will volunteer
- Especially likes to be asked for their help (makes them feel important)

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Opportunists

Who are they?	Acquiring	Retaining	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teen or young adult • Low incidence of sport volunteering, using welfare or charity • Motivations are personal benefit – career, social, experience • Club sport volunteering only done if playing the sport • Seasonal • More satisfied with roles that allow them to be active (e.g. coach) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rates of acquisition as linked to personal gain being fulfilled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles/tasks that are strongly social or where they're active in the sport • Roles that provide a personal benefit – career, skills, taking authority • Provide adequate training (eg refereeing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't feel confident in their role • Often feel ill-equipped or trained for their role • Don't like receiving criticism from others • Change of life stage will see them cease volunteering

Opportunists– ways to communicate

- Directly in person, asking if they will volunteer
- Electronic and social media

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Altruists

Who are they?	Acquiring	Retaining	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically older adult with mature or no children • Volunteer to help others, give back and pass on knowledge • Club sport volunteering is incidental and will be one of multiple activities • Seasons • Satisfaction is linked to recognition and gratitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low acquisition rate unless a personal link to club sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally happy in their role • Thank and recognise their contribution • Physical ability may threaten their ongoing volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not feeling valued • Not being thanked or given recognition • Physical ability of older volunteers

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Altruists– ways to communicate

- Directly in person, asking if they will volunteer
- Community noticeboards

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Overcommitted

Who are they?	Acquiring	Retaining	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young families, skew to males and higher incomes • Volunteer because they were asked and feel it is expected – high potential to lapse due to over commitment of time • One of multiple parent volunteer activities • Tend to undertake general duties/support roles because they are at the sport anyway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible transference to other clubs as child moves sports • Not emotionally committed • Feeling of obligation to ‘help out’ because they are there anyway • Motivate by keeping roles short and active, thanking and highlighting that every little bit helps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity of time requirements • Focus on roles that can be completed while at the venue in a short time period (micro-volunteering) • Ensure they see how their contribution is helping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor communication and support in role from the club exacerbates negative feelings • Criticism from others and/or the club on performance • Overall feeling of not being used productively or appreciated for their time

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Overcommitted– ways to communicate

- Directly asking but informally

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Occupied Observers – Non Volunteer

Who are they?	Acquiring	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young families, some skew to females • Positive attitude to volunteering, may have volunteered in the past • Motivated for future volunteering to spend time with child, role modelling for children, family & friends • Will become a target as 'happy helper' when child comes of age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key demographic for future acquisition • Acquisition strategies could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddy system • Provision of clear instruction • List of what to do • Compulsory part of registration (voluntold) • Provide some benefit to entice them (social) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juggling priorities & time

Ways to communicate

- Through friends or family and informal events at school or sports
- Directly convey the ability to help out in small roles

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Sidelined – Non Volunteer

Who are they?	Acquiring	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of the broader population • Attitudes to volunteering linked to personal benefit • Motivations are to support family/friends • Often past volunteer so open to future volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight roles that don't require physical effort/ability • Roles with lower levels of time commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical ability (injury/medical condition) • Family commitments and lack of time • Lack of involvement in sport

Ways to communicate

- Open to direct communication

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Self Servers – Non Volunteer

Who are they?	Acquiring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skewed to young adults (18-24) • Volunteering is low priority • Social motivations potentially • Intend to volunteer in the future (1/3) • Motivated to club sport • Possible future acquisition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer broader career/work experience • Practical use beyond the sport (e.g. leadership, administration) • Social element • Through education/training institute – e.g. Duke of Ed Scheme

Ways to communicate

- Electronic media
- Through schools/universities
- EDMs/noticeboards

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Well Intentioned – Non Volunteer

Who are they?	Acquiring	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Older females with 'mature' families• May be motivated for altruistic reasons• May volunteer in the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low likelihood of volunteering in sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Injury/medical condition• Lack of involvement in sport

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Uninvolved – Non Volunteers

Who are they?	Acquiring
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Across all demographics but typically male 25-34 with no children• Least interest in volunteering• Seen as a chore for others to do• Little interest in club sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very low priority

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What puts people off!

- People not knowing exactly what needs to be done
- Out-of-pocket expenses
- Bureaucracy (Police checks, WWWC)
- Discrimination
- Competing agendas
- Lack of training
- Treating people unequally
- Bullying and harassment
- The 'purple circle' – an elitist group of people that congregate to the exclusion of others
- Fear of time commitment

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Common volunteer problems

- Reliance on the same handful of people
- Volunteers feeling stuck with doing everything leading to 'burnout'
- Asking for help from others and not getting a response
- Martyrdom
 - Are you a victim of your own success?
 - Who is entrenched and can't extricate themselves

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Time to move on

- When do you know it's time to hand over the goggles?
- Are you still
 - Flexible?
 - Fast-paced?
 - Open to new ways?
 - Open to receiving feedback?
 - Enjoying the role?

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Succession Planning

- Identify all volunteer roles required to be filled
- Identify segments that may be suitable to fill the roles
- Approach people and ask for help
- Set up a 'voluntold' registration process
- Promote the Duke of Ed Award scheme
 - Approach schools in your area
 - Promote on your social media page
- Avoid volunteer burn-out by:
 - Recruiting more volunteers to share the load – break roles down into smaller tasks if needed
 - Micro-volunteering – give specific tasks
 - Advise of the time commitment
 - Provide clarity around the role description

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How to lose good people

- Conflict
- Bullying
- Factionalism
- Exclusion
- Neglect
- Martyrdom
- Not recognising contributions

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Support volunteers for success

- Understand the motivation for each volunteer
- Be selective and choose wisely
- Reward and recognise – frequently!
- Treat equally – NO EXCEPTIONS
- Manage expectations
- Resolve disputes
- Have clear behavioural expectations – code of conduct
- Handle dismissals
- Create a team
- Make it easy to participate
- Say ‘thank you’ often!

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Questions and Contacts

<https://www.volunteeringwa.org.au/#/>

<https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/sport-and-recreation/People-and-industry/volunteers>

<https://sportscommunity.com.au/>

<https://www.sportaus.gov.au/volunteering>

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