

The ASA's Top Tips for Recruiting Volunteers

Attracting new volunteers to your club can be challenging, but with the right advertising in the right places you can increase your potential audience and attract the right volunteers.

Here is the ASA's guide to recruiting new volunteers:

1. Identify what you need

Most clubs are in need of a bit of extra help, but in order to attract the right volunteers your first task is to identify exactly where you need it – would your club benefit from a computer whizz to run your website and social media channels? Is your secretary drowning in paperwork and could use some admin support? You could identify the extra help you would benefit most from at a committee meeting, or by asking your volunteers individually where they would like support. By giving careful consideration to what you really need to help your club flourish you can start to identify any skills gaps you need to fill.

2. Create a vacancy advert

Once you have an idea of the role you need to fill and the necessary skills required you can create a vacancy advert. The advert should include a description of the role, the skills your ideal volunteer should have, their responsibilities and any other useful information such as how many hours a week they may be asked to commit, or if their role is home-based etc. Prospective volunteers will be looking for roles that are fun and rewarding so your vacancy advert should be short and catchy.

Example role descriptions can be found at

<http://www.swimming.org/asa/library/category/3159> which you can download and amend to suit the role you are looking for.

3. Advertise

If you are looking for volunteers with specific skill sets, you will need to think carefully about the audience you want to reach and the most suitable advertising platforms for the roles you have available. Through clever advertising you can attract volunteers from outside the club and the world of swimming with the skills that can really benefit your club.

There are a number of options, most of which are completely free of charge:

- **Careers In Aquatics** <http://www.swimming.org/careers/>
The ASA and British Swimming's online advertising service, which is free of charge to any ASA, Scottish Swimming or WASA affiliated clubs.
- **Volunteer Centres** <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/where-do-i-start?view=map>
Located throughout the country, your local volunteer centre is a great place to advertise your vacancies. They will also post on a number of volunteer sites free of charge on your behalf

- **Websites**

There are a number of websites offering free listing of volunteering roles:

- JobAid - <http://www.jobsite.co.uk/jobaid/about.html>
- The Guardian - <https://www.guardianjobsrecruiter.co.uk/>
- Timebank - <http://timebank.org.uk/>
- Charity Job - <http://www.charityjob.co.uk/>

Depending on the role you are advertising, you should also hunt for more skills specific sites e.g. 'web design vacancies' 'fundraising volunteers' to open up even more avenues for promotion.

- **Social Media**

Sites like Facebook and Twitter are great for spreading the word on roles available in your club. Make sure you include @ASAAquatics in your post so we can retweet for you to help reach a wider audience.

- **Universities**

Most universities have volunteering programmes and students are often looking for ways to build their skills and experience, so a local university could be a great source of enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers for your club. Most universities will advertise volunteer vacancies free of charge so get in touch with the careers centre at your local university for further information.

4. Induct new volunteers

Once you have successfully attracted volunteers to your club it is vital that they are given a full induction. A club environment can be quite daunting to a new volunteer – particularly if they are not from an aquatics background. A supportive and inclusive induction will help to ensure your volunteers are happy in their role and committed to the club.

- Invite them along to a training session or competition to see what goes on. Even if their role doesn't require it, experiencing first-hand what their time is doing for the club will really motivate your new volunteer and give them a better understanding of their role
- Introduce them to key people at the club such as coaches, committee members and team captains
- Ensure they have all the information they need such as their role description, codes of conduct, relevant contact details etc.
- Buddy them up with a more experienced volunteer to act as a mentor and answer any questions they have
- Try not to overwhelm them – there can be a lot to take in for a new volunteer so keep this in mind and be patient. Introduce tasks and responsibilities gradually and ensure your new volunteer is clear and comfortable with what they need to do

It may seem like a lot of effort, but once you have put the time in to complete these steps your new volunteer should be happily settled into their role and making a tangible difference to your club. Keeping up the reward and recognition of all volunteers will help to ensure your club goes from strength to strength.