

Checklist of insurance policies:

- Don't ask them too many questions. Many people are just looking for further information at this stage and 'grilling' them, however nicely, may put them off.
 - Don't sound desperate (even if you are). Put a positive slant on it. Volunteers are needed because: we've just been successful with a funding bid / are running a special project / need to replace a volunteer who's moved away / have more clients needing help.
 - Send out your information pack immediately
- Note:** On this point it's worth remembering that not everyone has worked for a voluntary organisation before and they don't understand that checks and training need to be undertaken. Many have unrealistic expectations.
 - Call them a couple of days later to check they've received the pack.
 - If you haven't heard back from them after a week, give them a call. Ask if they have any questions, or maybe suggest the opportunity of a 'no obligation' talk to a current volunteer.
 - If they decide, after looking at your pack, that the work isn't for them, suggest another agency or refer them to the Volunteer Centre.
 - If all goes well, book them in for an interview (we'll be looking at interviews in a future email).

These are of course, general suggestions and won't suit every organisation. But if you are able to action as many as possible, then your enquirers will be back for more.

Contact us

Bournemouth Volunteer Centre
Boscombe Link
3-5 Palmerston Road
Boscombe
BH1 4HN
Telephone: 01202 466130
Email: volunteeradmin@bournemouthcvs.org.uk
Website: www.bournemouthcvs.org.uk
Hours of opening: 9-30am - 2pm, Mon - Fri
Appointments available outside of these times

Poole Volunteer Centre
The Advice Centre
54 Lagland Street
Poole
BH15 1QG
Telephone: 01202 675100
Email: gill.harris@poolecvs.org.uk
Website: www.poolevolunteercentre.org.uk
Hours of opening: 9am - 5pm, Mon - Fri



*Good practice guides for
Volunteer-involving
organisations*

Following up enquiries from Volunteers

Jane drummed her fingernails on the table while she waited for the charity "We're Desperate for Volunteers" to answer the phone. This was the third time she'd rung them and no one had got back to her even after leaving two messages. The answer phone clicked on and she slammed the phone down. She'd been so keen to volunteer and had even talked her husband into helping with some driving. A business friend of hers wanted to see how she could help too.

When I worked for the Volunteer Centre I used to phone people who had been in looking for voluntary work and ask them how they were getting on. I found some calls very frustrating when I learnt they weren't volunteering because despite leaving messages, their chosen charity hadn't got back to them. This wasn't an odd one or two either. There were at least ten every year. That may sound small, but if they'd all been like Jane in the above scenario, the charities concerned lost potentially 30 volunteers between them.

Some of those volunteers may have been prepared to donate money as well as time. They may also have encouraged their friends to do likewise. So by not getting back to the initial caller they lost valuable volunteers and possibly funding too. And because ten people had a bad experience, they would have moaned about it to their friends and family. Friends and family who, had they heard positive things about volunteering, might have offered to work for **you!**

So let's see how we can do our best not to lose any potential volunteers in the future....

- First draw up some guidelines for dealing with initial enquirers and the time scale involved. Mention this in your Volunteer Policy, e.g. All enquiries about volunteering with us will be responded to: immediately/the day of enquiry/ within 24 hours etc.
- Put a friendly message on your answerphone and mention how you welcome enquiries from prospective volunteers. Give an alternative number for volunteer enquiries if you know messages won't be picked up immediately on the usual number.
- Organise a special message book for volunteer enquiries only (see diagram). If you wanted, you could also add a box on the end for noting whether they went on to become a volunteer.

Date	Name/ address/ phone no.	Position interested in	How heard	Date details sent	Follow up date	App form	Date of I/view

Comment: here you could mention...

- Not suitable, referred on to Volunteer Centre/another organisation
- Not available yet – wants to start when retires in 6 months
- Only interested in one-off events so contact when these arise
- Lives abroad during winter only interested in work during summer
- Is under 16 - check with insurance company about cover
- Put on waiting list

Tip: Refer to your message book every time a new vacancy arises. Contact the people who didn't go on to volunteer with you and see if the new vacancy appeals to them.

- If you have enough volunteers, assign one or two of your more established ones (and ones you can trust to give a good impression) to take the initial phone calls. Also ensure that your team knows you are currently looking. Otherwise prospective volunteers could find themselves hearing "Oh, do we need volunteers then? I thought we had enough already!"