



## Recognising and rewarding volunteers

Volunteers contribute to clubs in many ways. They carry out almost 80 per cent of a sporting or recreation club's administration functions by filling formal committee positions (such as treasurer or coach) or contributing to club projects by lending their skills (like accountancy, marketing or counselling).

That makes volunteers integral to your club's success. Without them, many sport and recreation clubs wouldn't exist.

To attract and keep these important volunteers, they need to feel genuinely valued. Recognition is one of the main tools for motivating volunteers to stay with clubs, so use it wisely and often!

Many clubs also appoint a volunteer coordinator to ensure these valuable resources are looked after.

### How to recognise and reward your volunteers

Generally, volunteers don't want a lot of fuss to thank them for their contribution. A smile in the hallway, using their name when you speak to them and inviting them to your club's events will go a long way.

Involving volunteers in club programs is another genuine way to make volunteers feel valued. For some, simply being asked for input is recognition.

STARCLUBs have developed a proactive plan to recognise and reward volunteers for their efforts. Remember that simple, cost-effective ways to recognise volunteers are often as well received as higher-cost gestures.

### Reward and recognition ideas

#### Free

- List volunteers in the club newsletters and website and include a regular volunteer profile
- Have the club president or teams write thank-you notes to each volunteer
- Download volunteer recognition certificates from government or sport websites, personalise and present to volunteers at club meetings
- Thank volunteers by name in all speeches
- Nominate your volunteers for local and state volunteer awards
- Name an event or a new facility/building after a volunteer.

### Low cost

- Make a personalised CD for volunteers with photos of them in action, thank-you messages and club achievements, set to music
- Send volunteers get-well, birthday and Christmas cards
- Reimburse volunteers' out-of-pocket expenses
- Award life membership to exceptional volunteers
- Reduce club membership fees for volunteers, depending on their level of involvement.

### High cost

- Present volunteers with tickets to concerts or special events.
- Create a 'volunteer of the year' award at your club with a special gift for the incumbent.
- Hold special 'thank you' or social functions in honour of the club's volunteers.

### Daily opportunities to say thank you

Recognising your volunteers and their important contributions to the club doesn't just have to be part of a formal plan. STARCLUBs make volunteer appreciation a central part of their volunteer program by doing things like:

- providing magazines, quality coffee and tea and homemade biscuits/cakes
- offering to write a personal reference (especially appreciated by young volunteers)
- posting a list of volunteers' birthdays on club bulletin boards
- providing volunteer name badges.

### Things to remember

Volunteer recognition should be:

- Timely – recognise efforts as soon and often as possible.
- Specific – give personal recognition rather than general if possible.
- Consistent – recognise everyone's achievements and avoid favouritism.
- Sincere – mean what you say and be genuine.
- Enthusiastic – be positive and upbeat.

### Other resources

Find more information on Volunteers and Growing Your Sport [click here.](#)