

THE THIRD AGE TRUST



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

# Recruiting and Valuing Volunteers

# Recruiting Volunteers



- Domestic
- Introductions

# Involving Volunteers



CHALLENGE

What are  
your biggest  
challenges?

# Workshop Objectives

- To identify what motivates people to volunteer
- To discuss how to develop a 'culture of volunteering'
- To network and share ideas on valuing and recruiting volunteers
- To maintain a solution focused approach

# Guiding Principles

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What do the principles mean?

How are they relevant to recruiting and valuing volunteers?



# The U3A Story (in brief)

- Founded in 1981
- Three academics
- Based on the French model
- Guiding Principles
- Self-financing
- Charitable status
- By the members for the members
- Learn, Laugh, Live
- 1043 U3As 400 000+ membership

# The object clause

the advancement of education, and in particular the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work, by all means including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development, in ..... \*[and its surrounding locality]

# Volunteer Motivations

Why do people  
volunteer?

What do people gain  
from volunteering?





- Motivated by/attachment to the cause
- Make a difference
- Contribution to my community
- Build social networks
- Learn new skills/use existing skills
- 'Somebody asked me'
- Constructive use of leisure time/had spare time
- To help people/improve things

# Volunteering Research

- Highest rates of volunteering found among 65-74 year olds with 32% volunteering once a month and 42% once a year.
- 1 in 5 people aged 50-64 are caring for a relative
- 80% of grandparents provide some form of childcare
- Decline of around 5% in rates of volunteering amongst over 55s

## Barriers to volunteering:

- Change in circumstances impacting on time
- Illness/declining health
- Caring responsibilities

# Survey results

## Barriers and challenges:

- Lack of confidence - intimidated by success of existing committee
- Too much responsibility - too little respect
- Lack of understanding of the philosophy of mutuality
- Trustee role is viewed with suspicion
- I'm retired!
- U3A is for 'fun'

# Survey results

## Barriers and Challenges

- Too bureaucratic with all the recent changes
- Minutes are taken but hours are wasted
- Personality clashes are off putting
- Worried about the level of commitment or already committed elsewhere
- Committee members staying on for longer periods than the constitution allows

# Survey results - what works?

- Individual approaches
- Nurturing potential
- Invitations to meetings
- Shadowing
- The 'Nuclear' option
- Coffee mornings
- Appeals in newsletter
- Notices on seats
- 'Jobs board'



# Creating a Volunteer Culture

What do you  
think this means?

Why do you think  
this is important?



# Creating a Volunteer Culture

- Raising the profile of the U3A and volunteering
  - Internal promotion
  - External promotion
- Recruiting new members
- Recognition and retention
- Review



# Raising the profile

- Refer to volunteers
- Social media
- Website
- Newsletter
- Good news stories
- Links with external agencies/media
- Profiling via the Trust
- Monthly/members meetings





# Recruiting new members

- Is your membership growing, static or declining?
- Volunteer centres
- Diversity in recruitment
- Open days/local events
- Posters/leaflets
- Networking
- Welcoming new members
- Explaining the ethos of the movement
- Culture of the U3A

# Recognition and Retention

- Group leaders/convenors meetings
- Saying thank you
- Remember your unsung heroes
- Run effective meetings
- Acknowledge when Trustees move on
- Adhere to the Trustee code of conduct
- Join in with national recognition events and days
- Find ways to profile the contribution of group leaders/convenors



# Induction

## **Committee Members**

What induction do you currently do?

What could you do?

What do they need to know?

## **Group Leaders**

What induction do you currently do?

What could you do?

What do they need to know?

# Practical Steps



- Identify your volunteer roles
- Develop role descriptions
- Review your 'messaging' around volunteers
- Jobs/roles board
- Inductions - new members/new committee members/new group leaders
- Group leaders handbook
- Deputising/buddying
- Ask new members what skills/interests they have and follow this up

# Practical Steps

- Sharing roles
- Conveying the U3A ethos and culture
- Inspiring interest
- Meetings/training
- Paying expenses
- Creating interesting roles
- Talent spotting
- Invest in the role of the Groups Coordinator
- Provide training and social events for volunteers

