

TOP TIPS FOR RETAINING VOLUNTEERS

**Why Retain Volunteers?**

It is important that your Volunteer Coordinator and all your members understand the importance of retaining volunteers. Points to consider include:

* Recruiting new volunteers is costly and time consuming
* The experience of your current volunteers is invaluable
* The club may have invested time, skills and training in the development of volunteers
* Retaining ensures that the continuity of the club ethos is maintained
* The loyalty of the volunteers is vital to the club, especially during difficult or busy periods

There are many reasons why people start, or continue to volunteer. They often want to be welcomed as part of a team, meet new people and have the opportunity to learn new skills. Many people volunteer for the chance to feel useful and valued. As well as giving something back to the community, they usually feel that they are getting something out of the experience. Here are some examples of things you can do that will make volunteering a better experience and, therefore, help retain your volunteers:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What to do | More Detail |
| Have a Welcome Pack and Induction | This should include information on:Club structure and policies (e.g. child protection)Contact DetailsRole DescriptionA welcome and introduction(s)Buddy/ Mentoring arrangementsAdvise on equipment/clothing etc.  |
| Communicate with your volunteers | Clear, regular communication is vitalHold regular volunteer briefing meetingsUse text or email for quick communicationHave a volunteer page or section on your websiteHold one to one meetings where appropriate |
| Make sure they are enjoying the challenge | Variety and challenge is importantGive recognition and reward (say Thank You)Make the volunteer feel wanted and valuedKeep people motivatedUse team work where appropriate |
| Give your volunteers skills and training | Identify with the volunteer, what, if any, training is neededSell training as a positive rewardUnderstand that training will give confidenceInternal – training given by club member including practical supportExternal – provide skills and training courses |

Finally, it is important to retain your volunteers for the right reasons. Sometimes it is the right time for someone to move on or take more of a back seat. Your club should plan for this as part of your retention policy.