Why Should I Volunteer?

Volunteering is a great way to practice your skills, gain some experience, make some new friends, build your network of contacts and get references that will help you obtain future employment. Volunteer positions are available in a wide variety of companies and organizations. Some of the large non-profit and healthcare agencies that use volunteers also have paid positions, so a volunteer position can help you show them your skills and abilities so that they will think of hiring you for future paid positions. Here are some questions to consider before applying for a volunteer position.

What are your goals?

Think about what you would most like to gain from a volunteer position. Is meeting new people the most important factor, or is it gaining work experience and obtaining a reference? Being clear about your goal will help you when choosing the best volunteer position for yourself. Also, be clear with the Volunteer Coordinator during the interview about your goal so that they can find you the best position suited to your goal.

Should I treat a volunteer position as a job?

You should absolutely treat a volunteer position as a job. Employers are not giving you a volunteer position just for fun; they do it because they sincerely need your help. You want to make the best impression by working hard, showing your skills and being willing to take on responsibility. Many organizations prefer to hire new employees from within and, as a volunteer worker, you are considered an internal worker and would usually be given preference over outside applicants.

How do I get the best out of a volunteer position?

A volunteer job is as good as you make it. When you first begin a volunteer position, you will probably be given fairly simple, monotonous tasks. As soon as you get good at these tasks, be sure to do your best to get involved in more complicated projects and tasks. By involving yourself in projects that require collaboration with other employees, you build your network of contacts.

Can I put my volunteer job on my resume and use it for a reference?

Whether or not a position is paid does not take away from the responsibilities you had or the skills you developed in the volunteer position. You should never feel like you were “just a volunteer”. Record all of your volunteer job duties and accomplishments on your resume so that you can share with future employers how you added value and contributed to the organization. Volunteer Coordinators are always very happy to provide their volunteers with a reference. This reference is a very valuable asset in your job hunt which will let future employers know of your reliability, accomplishments, skills and abilities. This reference will add more credibility to your application.

Volunteering is an excellent way to help others and get valuable experience
Visit govolunteer.ca and find an exciting volunteer position