

Volunteer For Work Experience

Do you want a job but do not have work experience? Do you need to learn additional skills to get a job? Do you want to find out what a job is like before you commit to it? To help answer these questions, you may decide to apply for a volunteer position in your school or community. Volunteering is a win-win situation. You win when you find a volunteer position that is right for you — the people you help win, too.

How does a volunteer job benefit me?

A volunteer job benefits you by providing an opportunity to:

- 1) Get work experience to place on your applications and resumes.
- 2) Meet employers you may use as references on applications and resumes.
- 2) Learn new skills such as how to operate high tech equipment.
- 3) Meet people who may know of good job openings for you in the future.
- 4) Try out a career area that interests you.
- 5) Demonstrate to potential employers that you are a good worker.
- 6) Improve your confidence that you can succeed in the work world.
- 7) Express yourself and your creativity in an area that interests you.
- 8) Feel great because you are helping people and your community.
- 9) Gain maturity by learning how to think beyond your needs and wishes.



What does it take to be a volunteer?

- 1) Desire to find something that is interesting to you.
- 2) Action to apply and get a volunteer job.
- 3) Self-discipline to report to your volunteer job on time and every day you are scheduled to work.

Where can I find a volunteer position?

At your school: Ask your school principal, teacher, or counselor for a list of volunteer jobs that are available at your school or in the community. In addition, ask for a list of adult advisors for school clubs and activities such as athletics, school newspaper, yearbook, and drama. Go and ask these adult advisors to tell you about volunteer jobs available in the clubs or activity areas at your school.

In your community: Go to the following places in your community and ask adults who work there if volunteer jobs are available: city recreation department, police department, fire department, hospital, elderly assisted living center, library, church, animal shelter, YMCA, or other.



How do I select a volunteer job that fits me?

Before you accept a volunteer job, ask yourself:

- 1) Does this volunteer job match my interests?
- 2) Am I comfortable with the people I will be helping?
- 3) Will I be able to learn new technical skills?
- 4) Will I learn new social skills like customer service?
- 5) Will I be trained in the duties and tasks of the job?
- 6) Will I be able to use my creativity in this position?
- 7) Is this volunteer job near my home?
- 8) Do I have transportation to get to this volunteer job?

- 9) Do I have the free time to spend working at this volunteer job?
- 10) Is there an opportunity for paid employment in the future?
- 11) If I do a good job, will the supervisor allow me to use him or her as a reference on my future resumes and job applications?
- 12) Will the supervisor give me a letter of recommendation?



How do I leave a volunteer position?

- 1) Give one to two weeks notice to your supervisor just as you would for a paid job. It is best to give your notice in writing but your notice may be verbal (spoken).
- 2) Thank your supervisor for the opportunity to learn new skills and gain work experience.
- 3) Ask your supervisor for a letter of recommendation to help you with your future job searches.

Should I document the volunteer experience?

Yes! Write down information about your volunteer job **before you forget it**. Put the information in a **safe place** so that you have the information when needed for a future resume or application. Write down:



- 1) Name, address, and phone number of where you volunteered.
- 2) Job title for your volunteer job.
- 3) Your supervisor's name and job title.
- 4) List of the duties and tasks you did, equipment you used, computer software programs you used, and any skills you learned.

Will a volunteer job look good on my application or resume?

Yes! A volunteer job **PROVES THAT YOU**: a) can help others; b) can manage your time; c) can successfully work with people; d) learned skills that are useful in the work world; e) have a positive attitude.

QUICK CHECK:

1. Who are the 2 people who win when you volunteer?
2. A volunteer job benefits you by providing an opportunity: a) To get what? b) To meet who? c) To demonstrate to what? d) To improve what?
3. What 3 things does it take to be a volunteer?
4. a) List 3 people you can ask for list of volunteer jobs available at your school. b) About what may you ask adult advisors to tell you?
5. List 3 places in your community that may have volunteer jobs available.
6. Write down 4 (from the list of 12 questions) that you think are most important to ask yourself before you accept a volunteer job.
7. Describe the 3 steps to take when you leave a volunteer job.
8. Why should you write down the information about your volunteer job?
9. Where should you put the information?
10. List 4 things to document about volunteer jobs.
11. List 5 things a volunteer job proves about YOU.
12. a) List 2 types of volunteer jobs at your school or in your community you might like to do in the future. b) Give reasons for your selections.
13. a) Pretend you are a owner of a clothing store. One job seeker has a volunteer job on his job application; and the other job seeker does not. Would you think better of the job seeker who had a volunteer job and possibly hire him? b) Give a reason for your answer.