

Helping Members Find The “Best Fit” Chapter Volunteer Roles



Adults who “...volunteer for as little as two hours per week can substantially lower their risk of early death, become more physically active, and improve their sense of well-being compared with those who don’t volunteer.” This is according to a 2020 study from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health that looked at volunteering in adults 50 and older.



Your members are the reason your chapter exists. This is both because the mission of your association chapter includes meeting members’ needs in certain areas, and because your members are the volunteers that keep your chapter surviving and thriving. It’s your responsibility to make your chapter volunteer program one that your members want to participate in, one that will keep them engaged and satisfied.

The more specific you can be when posting available volunteer opportunities in your chapter, the greater the likelihood you’ll find volunteer(s) who are the right fit, do a good job and be happy doing what you’re asking them to.

When you post volunteer openings, what details do they include?

6 items to include in your volunteer job postings

Responsibilities. What will this person be doing? Talk to volunteers in the role currently, those who have done it before and the person who oversees this volunteer. Check out the chapter volunteer job description and see if anything needs to be added or changed. The person you need to design web pages and the one who will write your blog posts are different from each other; they're different from the person who manages your chapter's social media. Need a designer but your posting says you need someone to update your website? You may end up with a burned-out member who is being asked to do things they're not skilled in.

Time commitment. Approximately how many hours will this job take, in a week, a month? Is the work spread out or does it need to be done in a few days at the same time every month? Provide details like this to give people the chance to see if it will fit into their schedules.

Location. Can this be done at home? In person? Or does it require a mix of in-person and remote work, like overseeing your monthly meetings? You may have people who can't work in person on your networking events because they live too far away but would love to work on your virtual speaker series.

Skills required. Do you need an Excel expert to support your chapter treasurer? Or someone comfortable talking on the phone and building relationships? Are there parts of the role that have deadlines? Some people prefer deadlines, while others abhor them. Need someone with strong project management skills? Think about the critical skills you need to have versus those you'd like to have and highlight each group.

Type of person who would be a good fit. If your position requires someone to sit at a computer for hours entering data or writing content or be on the phone cold calling looking for donations, share that. Your introverts probably aren't going to want to make all those phone calls, but they might be perfectly happy entering numbers into a spreadsheet.

Volunteer Category. Is this role creative? Or more of a coordinator? Or perhaps it's purely administrative. Think about the different categories your volunteer needs can fall into, knowing that some could align with more than one category. Providing categories for your chapter volunteer opportunities makes it easier for a member to find a role that matches their skills, availability, desires, etc.



Questions to Help Members Find Chapter Volunteer Roles that Fit

Some of your members probably know the kind of volunteer work they want, while others may need to think about what they do well, what they enjoy (and what they hate doing), how much time they have, etc.

Members can narrow down the roles they would consider by asking themselves questions like:

- What is your goal of volunteering? Do you feel the need to give back or are you doing it for networking opportunities?
- How many hours a week do you have to volunteer?
- Would you prefer to volunteer from home or in person?
- Do you like working alone or with others?
- Do you like to be closely supervised, or do you prefer getting a project and following up when you have questions or when you're finished?
- Are you more comfortable in the background or in the spotlight?
- What skills do you have that could transfer to a chapter volunteer role, like writing, coordinating, organizing, designing, etc.?

Some of your volunteers will decide they'd be good at, and happy doing, content creation, event photography, newsletter design or telling member stories. Others know they're good with details, planning, managing, organizing people and events. Still others prefer behind-the-scenes organization but work well with people. Some might enjoy organizing events and fundraisers, but they could also be good with social media and marketing.

Generic job postings aren't any good for anyone. Just as it's easier to find meaningful volunteer work when a person has a clear idea of their strengths and interests, it's also easier and more effective to match the right volunteers to your chapter volunteer openings when you can give them a clear idea of exactly who you're looking for and what you want them to do.

