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Developing Volunteer Leaders

Volunteers are the backbone of your CTA activities. Most of the work your association does will be done by volunteers. Because of this, volunteer recruitment is essential to having a strong and lasting CTA.

Recruiting volunteers can be achieved through careful planning and marketing. The challenge in doing this involves educating the public about your cause while also generating excitement about the organization. When presented effectively, volunteer opportunities should be met with intrigue and wonderment.



Potential volunteers are everywhere. They only need to be directed to a cause. How can your local CTA seek out those who would be willing to help? All volunteers need a motivation to work for the cause. Here are some factors that motivate people to volunteer:

- **The need for achievement:** To know that I am accomplishing something—that the work is purposeful and that I can see tangible results.
- **The need for affiliation:** To belong to a group, to be loved and accepted, to have a feeling of connectedness to a community.
- **The need for power:** To make an impact, to take a position of leadership where I can influence and persuade, to achieve a level of status in the group, organization, or community.
- **The need for growth and balance:** To know that I am growing in skills, self-knowledge, or experience. That somehow by meeting this need, I am a more balanced and happier person.
- **The need for fun:** To remove myself from the stresses of everyday life and change my pace, for pleasure and enjoyment, to be playful.
- **The need to serve:** To give of myself to others, that altruistic part of me that wants to be of service to others, to give back or fulfill my sense of responsibility to the community or organization.

Motivations that individuals have when they start volunteering are not always the reasons they stay. Volunteers will continue to serve as long as they feel that their efforts are accomplishing something, that their talents are appreciated, and that they make a difference. And if they like the people with whom they work, so much the better!

There are many places you can locate volunteers with the skills you are looking for to fill your vacant positions.

- **Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, High Schools, and Special Education Schools:** Contact the principal of the school or the head of the Parent-Teacher Association.
- **Colleges, Universities, and Community Colleges:** Contact the Dean of Student Personnel.
- **Private Clubs:** Contact the general manager or program director
- **Trade Unions:** Contact the president of the union.
- **Professional Organizations:** Contact the president of the organization.
- **Business Organizations:** Contact the president of the organization.
- **Professional Associations:** Contact the president of the National Education Association, American Medical Association, Bar Associations, and others.
- **Chamber of Commerce:** Contact the president.
- **Self-Help Groups:** Contact the president of Alcoholics Anonymous and others. These groups encourage profitable use of leisure time for their members.
- **Veterans Organizations:** Contact the post commander of the VFW, American Legion, AMVETS, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Disabled American Veterans, Viet Now, Gold Star Wives, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Vietnam Veterans Groups, Jewish War Veterans, Catholic War Veterans, and the auxiliaries of these groups.
- **Student Councils (High Schools) and College Fraternities and Sororities:** Contact the president of the group, principal of the high school, or dean of student services, or personnel.
- **Social and Business Organizations:** Contact the executive in charge of the local Elks, Moose, Lions, Rotary, 4-H, Federation of Women's Clubs, Knights of Columbus, Masonic Order, and other social organizations.
- **Special Interest Groups:** Camera, garden, sports, literary, music, stamp, and many other types of hobby interest clubs.
- **Your Local Phonebook Yellow Pages:** Check under headings: clubs, social service organizations, societies and associations, and professional associations.
- **Internet:** Search for local volunteer organizations that may have websites.

Tell the Truth from the Start

Making a volunteering task sound easy does not necessarily make it more appealing. Many people are intrigued by the challenge of doing something that can be both time-consuming and rewarding. In addition, this approach tends to attract people who are up to the challenge. It is OK to scare away a few people who likely would not have fulfilled your expectations by telling them how much work is really involved from the start.

Change the Public's Perception of Volunteering

Many people share the perception that volunteer work is for those who are unskilled. Some think it involves nothing more than stuffing envelopes. One of your goals should be to raise awareness of what volunteering truly entails. It involves people of all ages using a variety of skill sets to work toward a particular goal. In most cases, volunteering requires the same skills that one uses at his or her full-time job.

Volunteer Job Description

A volunteer job description should accurately define what work is anticipated for each position. To get maximum performance from your volunteers, and to keep them happy, they should know exactly what is expected of them. Here are key elements in a volunteer job description:

- Job title
- Brief job description
- Anticipated results
- Agency name, address, and phone
- Supervisor's name
- Time parameters of the job
- Qualifications for the job
- Responsibilities
- Benefits
- Training requirements
- Work site
- Evaluation requirements

Training Volunteer Leaders

A critical component of CTA development is the creation of a comprehensive plan for training and educating community leaders. People are your association's biggest asset. To keep them happy and effective, volunteers must see opportunities for education and growth. Anyone assisting with your association—including board members, other volunteers, staff, and on-court instructors—should participate in your training program. The USTA offers national, regional, and local training opportunities that provide community leaders with knowledge in a variety of areas. Call your USTA section office for more details on these training opportunities. (See Appendix C for more.)

What Types of Training Do Volunteers Need?

Your volunteers will likely benefit from a variety of training opportunities. We have found the most important to include:

- Volunteer management, including recruitment, retention, and recognition of volunteers' efforts and good work.
- Fundraising from the basics to more advanced approaches
- Business and organizational management, including budgeting and strategic planning.
- Technology training, including website management, software, and computer training.
- Human resources management
- Overview of USTA organization and services.

Where Can Volunteers Go for Training?

As mentioned above, the USTA offers national, regional, and local training opportunities. Call your USTA section or district office for information about these opportunities. In addition, common tools and methods for implementing training and education plans include, but are not limited to, manuals, training tapes and videos, expert journals, hands-on staff support, and Internet training.

The USTA, through its network of sectional and district offices, stands ready to help your community build a clear pathway of tennis programs. National, sectional, and district staff, in concert with dedicated volunteers, are available to help you build a strong, effective CTA.