

# Best Practices In Volunteer Appreciation

## What is it?

Volunteer appreciation is the act of thanking your community sport organization's volunteers and recognizing their contributions.



## Why is it important?

Volunteers are the heart of community sport organizations. They aren't paid for their work, but they still dedicate a great deal of time to help. They are also fantastic ambassadors for your organization.

Volunteer appreciation is a key component to ensure volunteers understand their positive impact in your organization. It is important that volunteers know that they are making a difference for the sport organization itself, and for its participants.

Showing appreciation for your volunteers will keep them eager to continue their support and to speak positively about your organization to others. In addition, it will build long-lasting relationships and strengthen your organization for years to come.

### 1 Prioritize Volunteer Recognition

Who in your organization has this responsibility?

### 2 Develop a Volunteer Recognition Plan

When will you recognize your volunteers, and how will you show your appreciation?

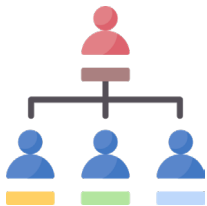
### 3 Feedback

Create the opportunity for volunteers to share their experiences, provide feedback and get their questions answered.

# 1 Prioritize Volunteer Recognition

Who in your organization has this responsibility?  
What is their mandate?

**a.** Is this a responsibility of your volunteer manager or does it fall elsewhere in your organization?



**b.** Develop a job description for this role which will include timely and ongoing recognition, and appreciation for your volunteers



**c.** Recognition and appreciation can take on many forms – creativity is key to this role.



# 2 Develop a Volunteer Recognition Plan

## Timing:

*When will you recognize your volunteers?*



### Beginning of season

Host an **Orientation Session**: provide an introduction to the organization and team, explain volunteers' importance to organization, show appreciation for volunteers' time and commitment

### Mid-Season

Volunteer appreciation event

### End of Season

Ensure volunteer's experience ends on a positive note

### Annually

[National Volunteer Week](#)

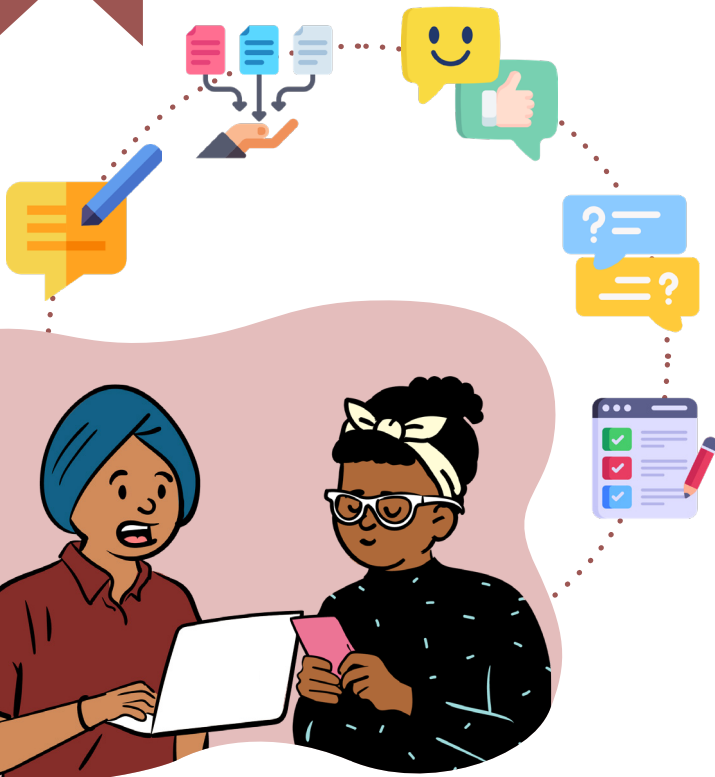
## Activities:

### How will you show your appreciation?

- Spotlight your volunteers and recognize the impact they have on your organization through your newsletter and social media.
- Use storytelling to highlight the important role volunteers play in your organization.
- Create a volunteer of the month award.
- Encourage peer recognition- provide a method for volunteers to recognize their teammates.
- Host an appreciation event.
- Say thank you often.



## 3 Communication, Communication, Communication



**Check in with regularly with your volunteers – learn more about their experience:**

### Be open to feedback and questions

Create the opportunity for volunteers to share their experiences, provide feedback and get their questions answered

### Develop an exit survey for volunteers

1. To collect data that will allow you to modify and improve the volunteer experience in the future .
2. All aspects of the volunteer experience, including their experience applying for the volunteer position, the onboarding process, the training provided, and any other potential areas where feedback, questions and concerns would be valuable.