

Tip Sheet for Better Volunteer Testimonials

Use this tip sheet to ask better questions and find the right opportunity for volunteers to show their support and build your credibility in the community.

Why Testimonials?

The opportunity for authentic, compelling information about social causes, generated and disseminated by volunteers throughout their networks, has the potential to change public awareness and perception and build the case for increased support.

Volunteer testimonials are one of the most powerful ways to tap into the psychological phenomenon of social proof. They let the community, and people who may be considering a volunteer opportunity, know that your organization is worthy of support.

When existing volunteers share information about their relationship with your program and what they have achieved, it also helps set expectations and inspire hope in newcomers.

Where to Place Them

Volunteer testimonials can be used in a variety of creative places. Consider the following:

- On home page
- On event registration page
- On volunteer application, registration, or informational page
- At the bottom of emails
- In volunteer marketing materials
- In volunteer position descriptions
- In volunteer manuals
- Wherever you need the feature the “voice” of the volunteer

Where to Get Them

Testimonials are not hard to get, if you plan. For example, create a “photo” or interview booth at special events. Here are a few places to consider:

- At special events
- After trainings
- At conferences
- Anywhere volunteers gather

When to Get Them

Ask when the opportunity is ripe! The best time to request a recommendation is after a volunteer has experienced a positive experience with your organization. Here are a few instances when you might want to make your ask:

- After a team achievement
- When a volunteer thanks or compliments you
- At celebrations

Questions to Ask

Below are some questions that are more likely to prompt a thoughtful and unique response than simply “tell us why you like us.” They will also be more interesting to those who read them.

- Why does this cause matter?
- Why is this cause important to you?
- What impact does your volunteer role have on the clients or community?
- What happened when you volunteered (or supported this organization)?
- How do you feel about your experience?
- What do you like most about it?
- What does it like to be a [insert volunteer role]? How has it changed you?
- What would you say to someone might consider volunteering?
- Would you recommend this experience to others? Why?

Other Tips

- Feel free to edit testimonials down to a reasonable length, but don't edit grammar. Authenticity is good!
- With testimonials, use text and photos together for more impact.
- Make sure you have the volunteer's permission to share their image and quote widely.
- If the volunteer is concerned about protecting their privacy, use first name and last initial and then, event volunteer or their role name.