

Turning Volunteers Into Fabulous Fundraisers

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Volunteers are people just like you and me. We all have particular things we are passionate about and other things we aren't so into, but also it's pretty clear that there are some tasks that are not the most exciting for anyone. Don't just dump whatever you don't feel like doing onto your volunteers.

Take the time to get to know your volunteers and get a sense of what will be the most engaging tasks for them. Some people love to do things like put labels on envelopes and write notes on thank you letters, while others want more challenging or engaging work like making phone calls to supporters or going door to door canvassing, and others want an even more involved role like helping frame the political analysis for the rap or training others in giving a pitch at an event.

Here are some things to keep in mind when you are approaching a volunteer to do some fundraising for your organization:

- What is the volunteer interested in and excited about?

People are apt to be more successful when they are motivated and inspired by what they are doing. Don't just pass off the most undesirable tasks that nobody else will take on to the volunteers—if you do, most likely they won't stick around. But if you take the time to approach them the same way you would a potential new organizer, they will be way more likely to stay involved and keep coming back for more.

People respond best when you take into account what they are excited about and what they feel their strengths are. Talk to your volunteers, get a sense of their interests, what they are passionate about. You can teach skills, you can't teach passion. Move them in the direction of what they are passionate about.

- With every task you pass on to a volunteer, ask yourself:
 - Are you developing the volunteer's leadership?
 - Would you be excited to carry out this task?
 - If not, what would it take to make it exciting to you?
 - What kind of support will the volunteer need in order to carry out this task?
 - Do you have the capacity to provide that kind of support?

Also, don't forget to THANK your volunteers, no matter how small or large the task they have taken on. People like to know that what they are doing is important and has an impact on the issues they care about. Don't take them for granted!