

How to keep volunteers engaged

Strategy	Why it works
▶ Talk to them about what they most want to do.	Many may come in because they want to be challenged, engage in personal growth, or learn something new.
▶ Keep them busy with purposeful tasks.	Most of them won't be there because they want to just "hang out." And while menial tasks can be one aspect of what they do, they will stay engaged longer if it is clear what they are doing has an important purpose within the organization.
▶ Listen to their ideas.	Many of these are adults with vast life experiences who both have good ideas and often want to be heard as having something to contribute.
▶ Pay your volunteers with praise for a job well done.	Appreciation can go a long way toward keeping people motivated.
▶ Motivate them with reminders of how much their work is helping the students, and be specific about how their contribution has helped.	Most of the volunteers will have selected your organization because they believe in what you are doing for the students.
▶ Train them well.	A clear understanding of what they need to do will keep them from getting frustrated and deciding not to return.
▶ Have volunteers work together, create a sense of community.	Many volunteers get involved for the social aspects of the work.
▶ Maintain clear and quick communication with them.	They are volunteering because they want to do something now.
▶ Be aware of how much they are interested in doing. Make sure you are clear from the beginning how much time the tasks will take.	Burnout can cause volunteers to leave. Requiring more than they want to do may work at first, but you may lose them soon.
▶ Be careful to be clear that you are not giving them a task because you don't want/like to do it yourself.	That is the ultimate de-motivator. If you are saying the work is not interesting, they may believe you.

to avoid and potentially deal with inappropriate situations. Tutoring programs should have clear guidelines in place regarding where tutoring can happen. Screen tutors carefully and provide training and guidance

both regarding not only language instruction but also cultural competency.

- Facilitate drop-in conversation classes, particularly if they have experience in training, facilitation, or teaching.