



5 QUICK TIPS FOR VOLUNTEERING

ONE

UNDERSTAND YOUR MOTIVATION

There are lots of reasons to volunteer; to gain professional skills, build relationships, earn course credit, or be altruistic. Any reason is a good reason! Knowing your reason, however, is essential to a quality volunteer placement since it will drive the type of organization you volunteer with and the extent of your commitment.

TWO

DO THE RESEARCH

Take the time learn about all the opportunities available to you since you want to match your motivation with the organization. There are volunteer placements that require specific skills while others don't require any. If an organization peak's your interest, find out how the organization is run and how volunteers are managed. Current or former volunteers are great sources of information.

THREE

DO YOU HAVE THE TIME?

Evaluate how much time you have to give. Some placements may be just a couple of hours while others may be a 2 year commitment or more. If your motivation is for academic or professional credit, there may be a specific number of hours you must complete which makes it easier. If you are volunteering to be build relationships or raise your professional profile an extended time commitment may be more fitting.

FOUR

BE PATIENT

Being a volunteer may not come with immediate rewards (like a paycheck), but it can be an incredibly valuable experience. Patience can be a great resource if the volunteer placement requires an extensive training period up front or throws you right into the deep end. Once you understand your role and develop relationships, you'll get more comfortable with the placement and will reap the rewards.

FIVE

GIVE 100%

A good volunteer is a committed volunteer. A lot of effort goes into the recruitment, training, and coordination of volunteers so do what you say you're going to do and give it a 100%. Many organizations rely on volunteer assistance so whether you're dishing up soup or handling a crisis line call, your commitment will make a difference to you and the lives of the people you are serving.