# **You Make the Difference Initiative**

# **Create Your Volunteer Outreach Plan**

Purpose:

Now that you’ve built momentum with your grasstops and grassroots work, it’s time to intentionally design your outreach plan. A clear plan will help you recruit, engage, and retain volunteers by knowing exactly who you’re reaching, how you’re reaching them, and what success looks like.

## **Step 1: Define What You Need**

Break your volunteer needs into three categories:

* Specialized Volunteers:  
    
   (Example: bookkeeping, marketing, legal advice, technical support)  
  + What specific skill is needed?
  + How much time is required?
  + Is it project-based or ongoing?
* Preferred Volunteers:  
    
   (Example: people with related skills who need minimal training)  
  + What general skills are preferred?
  + How much time is needed?
  + What support can you offer?
* General Volunteers:  
    
   (Example: event helpers, parking assistants, ticket takers)  
  + How many people do you need?
  + What physical requirements are involved (standing, lifting, etc.)?

**Step 2: Build Your Target List**

* Who do we know that fits the specialized or preferred categories?
* Who do our contacts know that could help?
* Which businesses, service clubs, churches, or groups can help us recruit general volunteers?

Tip: Assign board members or leaders to approach people they know personally.

## **Step 3: Plan Your Approach**

* Specialized Volunteers:  
  + Use personalized, relational outreach.
  + Clearly explain expectations and value exchange.
* Preferred Volunteers:  
  + Combine relational outreach and targeted postings.
* General Volunteers:  
  + Use flyers, Facebook posts, newsletters, and public announcements.

**Step 4: Communicate Clearly**

When asking someone to volunteer:

* Be specific about the time, task, and commitment.
* Describe the value they are providing.
* Share why it matters personally and to the community.

## **Step 5: Over-Recruit Slightly**

* Plan for 10–15% extra volunteers to account for no-shows.

# **Quick Outreach Planning Notes**

Specialized Volunteer Targets:

Preferred Volunteer Targets:

General Volunteer Outreach Ideas (Flyers, Posts, Partners):

Recognition or Value Exchange Offers:

Who Will Reach Out to Each Person:

**Reminder:**

A written outreach plan ensures you stay intentional, focused, and successful.Your volunteers are ready — you just have to ask them the right way!