VOLUNTEERING FOR 'PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES-
AN INFORMATION KIT

COMPOSED BY MELISSA RYAN
mellissamelissa@hotmail.com
WHY DO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

People with a disability share the same reasons to volunteer as everyone else: they want to learn new skills, want to meet new people, contribute to their community and build their self confidence.

It is sometimes falsely assumed that people with disability have to be on the receiving end, when it comes to volunteering. People with disabilities can contribute to their community just like anything else so long as the volunteer role concentrates on the things they can do, not on the things they can’t do. Everyone has gifts, talents, strengths and abilities–people with disabilities are no different!!

BENEFITS OF INCLUSIVE VOLUNTEERING

People of all abilities share the same reasons to volunteer. This includes, learning new skills, meeting new people, making a valuable contribution to the community, and building on their self-confidence and self-worth. Organisations that offer inclusive volunteering to all members of the community, including people with a disability, will expand and enhance on their organisation and the services they provide.

The benefits of developing an inclusive volunteer program that supports volunteers with a disability include:
- Access to a larger group of volunteers;
- A more diverse group of volunteers that will offer a wider range of skills, expertise and motivation;
- A volunteer program with a greater reflection of the diversity of the larger community;
- Increased opportunities to develop partnerships; and
- Improved understanding of diversity and inclusive practice amongst staff.

Inclusive volunteering offers the opportunity to refresh and reinvigorate a community organisation, target a greater reach of community members and provide a more positive and productive contribution to the community.

VOLUNTEERING AND SOCIAL ROLES

Volunteering can also lead to the reduction of social devaluation of people with disabilities within society, as volunteers are seen as having valued roles within the realms of the community. Instead of being seen as the “boy with the intellectual disability”, people may begin to described the person as the “young man who comes here and volunteers in the garden on a regular basis”, or simply the “gardener”.
VOLUNTEERING AS A WAY OF CONNECTING TO THE COMMUNITY

Community connectedness relates to a person’s sense of belonging within the community. It is closely linked to quality of life and general well-being. Community connectedness involves areas of life such as relationships and friendship networks, self-esteem and day to day support networks. The connections we have with our community enrich our lives. Volunteering is just one way in which people with disabilities can make connections within the community and potentially extend their day to day support networks.

SOCIAL ROLE VALORISATION

Social role valorisation is a theory developed by Wolf Wolfensberger to address devaluation. Devaluation occurs when a person or group is perceived by society as different and that difference is negatively valued. So, in Western society, people who are devalued include people who are elderly, people who have nowhere to live and people with disability.

Wolfensberger has defined social role valorisation as:

“The use of culturally valued means in order to enable, establish and/or maintain valued social roles for people”(Wolf Wolfensberger: 1988)

The theory emphasises using the appropriate methods to achieve valued social roles the person with disability doing activities and accessing settings and support which are valued by the general community for people who are the same age as the devalued person.

Roles can be relational (e.g. sister, mother, father), work related (e.g. teacher, doctor, librarian), around daily routine (e.g. cleaner, shopper, gardener), related to recreation (e.g. tennis player, reader, card player), around civic membership (e.g. tax payer, voter) or around inner self spirituality (e.g. church goer, meditator).

Volunteering is one way in which people with disabilities can be seen as having socially valued roles in society. Instead of being seen as passive recipients of services or welfare, by volunteering, people with disabilities can be seen as making a contribution to the community- a role that is socially valued within society.

TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Regardless of whether a community is large or small-it will have numerous volunteering opportunities, below are some examples of where such opportunities can be found:

- Faith Communities
- Youth Organisations
- Assisting with special one off fundraising events
- Working in community gardens
- Libraries
- School/child care
- Nursing Homes and Hospitals
- Crisis services such as food banks and homeless shelters
- Arts organisations
- Charitable organisations
- Park and recreation programs
- Historical Societies/Museums
- Food Co-ops
- Disaster Relief Efforts
- Senior Citizen Centres
- Animal shelters and Wildlife Rehabilitation Centres.

**HOW DO I CHOOSE THE RIGHT VOLUNTEERING ROLE FOR ME?**

Gifts, talents and interests are basically things that people do well and they generally enjoy doing on a regular basis. While everyone’s gifts, talents and interests may be different, everyone has them. While someone is good with talking to people, someone else may be better at working with their hands. The question someone should ask when trying to find volunteering opportunities for a person, are:

- What are the person’s gifts and talents, strengths and abilities? What does this person do well? A simple exercise that may make things a bit clearer is to draw a table, such as the one below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GIFTS/TALENTS</th>
<th>INTERESTS</th>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
<th>ABILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EG: mowing,</td>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>can do most gardening tasks eg:</td>
<td>Can work in a garden with minimal assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>growing vegetable</td>
<td>Going to the park</td>
<td>mowing, planting, weeding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gardens</td>
<td></td>
<td>very fit &amp; healthy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(This task may take a while, but is worthwhile)

- What volunteer roles would best incorporate these gift/talents, interests, strengths and abilities? In the example of gardening it could be volunteering in Parks, Botanical Gardens, mowing lawns for unit complexes, assisting with gardening at nursing homes or schools, or helping elderly people maintain their gardens.
- How will the person be supported to find and maintain a volunteering role within the community?
- How will this role connect the person to the community?
A volunteer role should always suit the individual needs of the volunteer undertaking that role for example: if someone doesn’t like loud noises, they shouldn’t be expected to work in an atmosphere with loud noises.

If a person with a disability needs a support worker to assist them to fulfil their role as a volunteer, it is imperative that the organisation providing the volunteering opportunity is made aware that the person will be accompanied by a support worker. It is also important that volunteers with a disability are not discriminated against, because they need the assistance of a support worker and all “reasonable” effort should be made to accommodate the support worker.

**Finding a Niche volunteer role**

To explain how to find and possibly help an organisation to design a niche volunteering role for an individual, here is an example of what other people have done. Please note names have been changed.

Susan is a young woman living in Brisbane and has a diagnosis of Autism. Susan undertook the planning and research stages of this process and came up with this table (this is just a brief version).

### Assets table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Personal Assets</th>
<th>Community Assets</th>
<th>Possible barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Lives in own home</td>
<td>Can rent a car from local service if needed</td>
<td>Low energy at times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loving and Kind</td>
<td>Colours</td>
<td>Owns all furniture</td>
<td>Joe – connection at local garden store</td>
<td>Concentrate for 2 hours or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient</td>
<td>Being with people</td>
<td>Has support of family</td>
<td>Connections with local support services</td>
<td>Only a little speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organised</td>
<td>Being outdoors</td>
<td>A little funding to help get started</td>
<td>Sandy – Local cafe owner</td>
<td>Needs a a support worker/person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can count and put things in alphabetical order</td>
<td>Viv – Friend and Accountant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From this Susan undertook a brainstorming session with her supporters. This is what they came up with (again a brief version).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community places/types of businesses</th>
<th>Assets that would be useful</th>
<th>Possible roles in the workplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Accountancy business                | Patient  
Organised  
Being with people  
Colours  
Can count  
Can put things in alphabetical order |                                                          |
| Gardening centres or conservation centres | A little funding  
Joe  
Lives in own home – could use home to grow something if needed  
Friendly |                                                          |
| Delivery                            | Can rent a car from local service  
Friendly  
Kind  
Music (can listen)  
Support from local services |                                                          |

Because Susan and her supporters were not sure of what types of roles there might be for Susan they decided they would need to contact some of the local places that offered these services. Let’s use accountants as the example. They began by listing the people they knew who were accountants. These were:

- Viv – Friend
- Accountants at local support services
- People who they knew that worked in administration jobs
- Bob – Accountant used by family

In addition to this they googled all the local accountants and wrote them down in a table.

Susan and one supporter then went about contacting them and asking them questions about what sorts of tasks they undertake. Some great questions would be:

- What tasks are in your workplace that everyone hates doing?
- What are some tasks that take a long time or that people don’t usually have time to do?
Is there any additional services that you would like but are not on offer? (eg. Lunch delivery)

What types of Niche tasks do you have that you don't need a qualification of but that you would like assistance with?

You will also need to design your own questions based upon your own strengths, interests and assets. For Susan an example might be is there anything in your office that requires meticulous organising?

After this information has been found you can then begin to think about which volunteer roles could be suggested. Here is Susan’s example table for an accountancy workplace.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community places/types of businesses</th>
<th>Assets that would be useful</th>
<th>Possible roles in the workplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountancy business</td>
<td>Patient, Organised, Being with people, Colours, Can count, Can put things in alphabetical order</td>
<td>Filing, Sorting information, Sorting clips or coloured tabs, Waiting for clients at the reception and making them a cup of tea, Keeping people’s spaces organised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding an opportunity where this role can be used

Start with your assets and ask them whether they would like some help in their workplaces. If this is not possible then, take your list of local places and begin with those.

When approaching a place about a niche role it is important that you approach them with the following things in mind:

1. The person with a disability is being presented in the best possible light – eg. Dressed nicely, resume in hand, skills and strengths highlighted
2. You have the Niche role outlined clearly in your mind and you have planned out what you will say
3. What will the person with the disability say? If they are non verbal, how can they be included in the pitch
4. You have thought about what barriers people might put up. eg. We cant have volunteers because of insurance concerns. In this case you may offer to get your own insurance.
5. Highlight the benefits the person can bring to their workplace
KEEPING THE NICHE ROLE AND ENSURING THE ROLE MEETS IT PURPOSE

It is important in any job to evaluate and assess whether it is working for you, and it is the same for volunteer roles. Many people get a volunteer role but it does not last because they have not managed problems that arise. There are many problem solving strategies you can try, most of them are common sense. Here are a few examples of what you might do if problems arise at the workplace:

- Talk to the staff and see if they need some extra support while the person is there
- Talk to the staff and seek feedback on how the person is going
- Get some feedback from the person with a disability. The role may need tweaking a little to keep it a success.

When evaluating a niche role always think “Is this role meeting it’s original purpose?”. If not then it may be time to look for something new. Try not to become stuck in the role because you think there is nothing better. If it is not working there is something better out there, you just have to go looking again!


SOCIAL CAPITAL AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The fact that social capital keeps us safe, sane and secure cannot be understated. Most of us tend to think that institutions or organizations are key to safety. Places like hospitals or systems like law enforcement are thought to keep us safe, but the bold truth is that these systems have never really succeeded in keeping us safe or healthy. Rather, it is the opportunity for relationships that community offers us as well as the building of social capital. Simply stated, your circles of support and the reciprocity they create are the most important element in your safety. In fact, it has been suggested that social isolation, or the opposite of social capital, it responsible for as many deaths per year as is attributed to smoking.

When we consider social capital for people with disabilities, we must recognize the void. We know that people with disabilities still are separated from the greater community and mostly involved in special programs or services designed for them. In these realities, the major outlet for social capital is found only within the borders of the special programs. To this extent then, the relationships that constitute the social capital of many people with disabilities are other people with disabilities. The narrowness of this reality leaves a significant void.

Consider the notion of reciprocity. The more you become connected with your community, the more people begin to watch out for each other. If one day a regular member of your group doesn’t show up, a natural inclination would be to check up on them. This sense of group reciprocity is what leads to individual safety.
If the major social capital outlet for people with disabilities is other people with disabilities, then the reciprocity factor can become narrow. The more narrow the confines of reciprocity the less impact it offers.

Putnam’s ideas of how social capital builds tolerance and lessens pugnaciousness also fit closely to the concept of cultural shifting. Anthropologists have found that for communities to get better, new and different ideas, people or products are necessary. Yet intolerant and angry communities are not as open or as ready to absorb new things. Consequently, cultural shifting is more difficult when communities remain narrow. Social capital helps build tolerance because the exposure to others challenges us to consider new things. This developing openness then has an effect on pugnaciousness. Simply put, if you become more exposed to difference, anger levels have a greater potential to go down.

**VOLUNTEERING AS A WAY OF BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

Unlike specialist “day programs” that reinforce the differentness of people with disabilities, conveying the notion that they are a burden on society, volunteering raises the social capital of such persons. Instead of being passive recipients of welfare and disability support services, volunteering is an avenue in which people with disabilities can have a socially valued role within the community, contribute to the community in a meaningful way, build connections in the community and help break down the intolerance of “differentness” or “otherness”, within our community.

Organisations and fellow workers not only benefit by the contributions made by volunteers with disabilities and having exposure to people who are considered as being “different” from the rest of society, the volunteers themselves benefit by developing new skills and confidence. Volunteering can also be a catalyst for connecting people with disabilities to the community, as well as broadening their social networks.

**VOLUNTEERING AS A POST SCHOOL OPTION**

While volunteering can be seen as just another way of filling in time when a young person with a disability has left school, more importantly it can be a way of developing new skills and can ultimately lead to paid employment. It does not matter that these skills may be very basic, ie: what to wear, when to have a break, how to use the photocopier, etc, these are all skills we can use in the workplace.

Volunteering is also another way in which people who have traditionally been marginalised in our society can gain socially valued roles. Instead of being seen as “burdens on society”, people are seen as making a meaningful contribution to the community.
Volunteering can also help to strengthen people’s work capacity, while initially someone may be only to work one morning a week, as the person gains more confidence, strength and ability, they may spend more time volunteering—until they have the capacity to take on either part time or full time employment.

People with disabilities who already volunteer can prove to be positive role models for those wishing to volunteer in the future. Volunteering is one way in which the focus can be placed on people’s abilities, instead of their disabilities.

HOW VOLUNTEERING CAN LEAD TO PAID EMPLOYMENT

As well as providing the volunteer with the opportunity to develop new skills, volunteering for a period just after leaving school, can lead to the enhancement of a person’s resume. It shows that a person is willing to work and to learn new skills. It also gives people experience, it’s the old adage “if you need experience to get a job, how do you get experience in the first place”. It can directly open doors or pathways to employment, especially if where the person is volunteering—are happy with their work.

If the person is excelling in their volunteering work, but there’s no chance of moving on to paid employment—where they are volunteering, it may be beneficial for them to look for paid employment utilising similar skills elsewhere, where their skills will be valued.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING VOLUNTEERS WITH DISABILITIES

Organisations need to develop policies and procedures that encourage and enable people with a disability to contribute as volunteers. Volunteering policy and procedures usually sit amongst the organisations’ broader policy and procedures documents and will need to include references to occupational health and safety and code of conduct.

Policy and procedure documents usually demonstrate a clear and logical process, and should demonstrate compliance with various standards. Volunteering policy and procedure documents can contain references (or online links) to the forms used in a volunteering program, for example, consent forms and induction checklists.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT
The individual’s training and development needs should be assessed both in terms of effective performance in the role and in their retention and development. As with employees, training helps volunteers feel valued, and gives them confidence that they can undertake the role. It might equally be critical in helping to achieve a desired outcome of becoming a volunteer, eg as a stepping-stone to work.

Training for disabled volunteers may be needed in a number of areas:

- in the tasks to be undertaken
- in using any adjustments applied such as screen reader software for a visually impaired person
- in health and safety (especially how the organisation will use reasonable adjustments to ensure the safety of the disabled volunteers and others they work with)
- in first aid (do not assume that disabled people are unable to administer first aid to other people)
- for managers, supervisors and those who will be working alongside the disabled volunteer.

Any training must be accessible to the disabled volunteer irrespective of their impairment and barriers should be identified and overcome in advance, eg training materials in alternative formats, using appropriate language, providing facilities for assistance dogs and support workers. You should discuss the training format and delivery with the disabled person in advance, so that reasonable adjustments can be made if required. Such considerations should apply to internal and external opportunities.

**THE PERSON AND ROLE SPECIFICATIONS**

A good person and job specification can help volunteers to be clearer about what is expected of them. However, many organisations can tend to fall into the trap of trying to define the person too rigidly, rather than concentrating upon the role and tasks that need to be performed, and looking at how these can be undertaken, involving different types of reasonable adjustments.

When drawing up a job specification care must be taken to ensure this is not discriminatory, for example, by asking for unnecessary levels of formal qualifications when the requirement should be to do the role, or requiring a person to hold a driving license when other arrangements could be made.

Good person and role specifications should:

- be clear about what is required in terms of outputs
• indicate what is involved and how flexible the opportunity can be to accommodate particular circumstances, for example, time needed for hospital visits or the requirements to comply with Jobseeker’s Allowance rules.

VOLUNTEERS WITH DISABILITIES WHO REQUIRE ASSISTANCE FROM SUPPORT WORKERS

Some people with disabilities may require assistance from a support worker to assist them to undertake their volunteer role, as well as any other support needs that they may have eg: personal care needs, communication, etc. If any specified training or police checks are needed by the support worker, please let them know as soon as possible. Organisations should be prepared to make all “reasonable adjustments” to accommodate support workers, in an effort to have a fully inclusive volunteering program.

While every effort may be made to ensure there is consistently in support workers assisting the person with a disability with their volunteer role, this may not always be possible, due to changes in support staff.

THE NEEDS OF ORGANISATIONS

Volunteering should not only benefit the person with a disability, but also the organisation providing the volunteering opportunity. Volunteering should not be about “just filing in time” or a supervisor running around just before the volunteer is due to arrive at work – trying to find tasks for them to do.

It should be about trying to marry up what really needs to be done within the organisation, with the skills, abilities and interests of the volunteer. For example someone who likes stacking shelves may be able to volunteer at a Foodbank, where they desperately need someone to stack the shelves.

Volunteering should mutually benefit both parties, providing a meaningful activity to the volunteer, as well as providing much needed assistance to the organisation.

STRATEGIES TO ASSIST VOLUNTEERS WITH DISABILITIES UNDERSTAND WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Strategies To Assist Volunteers With Disabilities Understand Workplace Health And Safety Policies And Procedures Include:

1. Breaking instructions down into simple steps
2. Try to illustrate instructions in pictures as well as words
3. Keep reinforcing important Workplace, Health and Safety messages
4. Offer information in alternative formats
5. Provide positive role models
6. Is there someone willing to mentor the person, when it comes to Workplace Health and Safety issues.

THE ROLE OF SUPPORT WORKERS
When volunteers with disabilities are being supported by support workers, it is essential that these workers are also aware of the WH&S policies and procedures of the organisation, particularly if the volunteer has intellectual disabilities. Support Workers can assist volunteers to understand the importance of Workplace Health and Safety and provide the necessary supports i.e. prompts/reminders in this area.

**STRATEGIES TO COMBAT THE EXPLOITATION OF VOLUNTEERS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

The table below lists some of the issues that can occur regarding the exploitation of volunteers with disabilities and what strategies can be used to combat such exploitation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers shouldn’t be asked to do anything that a paid worker is not asked to do—what should people be asked to do without pay</td>
<td>• find out the values of the organisations, do they treat their staff, including volunteers in a decent manner? What are their expectations of staff?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Get a clear position description with specific tasks agreed upon by both organisation and volunteer (if volunteer has intellectual disability, ensure advocate is with them—when signing agreement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Maybe look into the volunteer having a mentor, who has considerable knowledge of the organisation and knows what should and shouldn’t happen in the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shadow the person at work occasionally (watch them at work, without them knowing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Interviewing people with disability | • Provide the organisation with some information on the person's disability, including difficulties they may have during the interview process  
• Have a support worker—someone that knows the person well to assist with the interview  
• Present information in alternative format if necessary  
• Always verify information—ask organisation to clarify if necessary. |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Doing “secret deals” with support workers | • Be clear on the role of the support worker.  
• Make it VERY clear the volunteer is the person with the disability, NOT their support worker  
• Be very clear that it is unacceptable for support workers to accept any forms of gifts. |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Discrimination | • Discuss incidents of discrimination with supervisor—in the first instance—if not resolved;  
• Get advice from Anti—Discrimination Commission, or go to:  
  • Fair Work Ombudsman  
  • Check other legal remedies |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Volunteering is a waste of time | • Have clear position description with specific tasks  
• Ensure organisation has information on person's abilities and interests  
• Review volunteering situation on regular basis |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Volunteers should not have unfair demands on their time | • Be aware of time limitations and ensure the organisation knows about these limitations  
• Check with organisation about timelines  
• Make sure the expectations of both volunteer and organisation are realistic!! |
| volunteers with intellectual disabilities may not understand workplace health and safety | • Keep on reinforcing workplace health and safety concepts with volunteers  
• Get support workers involved in the process  
• Consider someone who could mentor the person in this area  
• Provide information in alternative formats eg: pictures |
|---|---|
| Is the organisational ethical? | • Get information on organisation’s values, beliefs and mission  
• Is there any information about the organisation’s reputation?  
• Research the organisation thoroughly. |
| Is the organisation efficient? | • Check whether the organisation efficient with its’ time and resources  
• Are volunteers always waiting around for something to do, because work hasn't been organised for them. |
| Are organisations giving volunteers with disabilities the information they need, if necessary in alternative formats? | • Check whether information is available in alternative formats |
| Is the volunteer insured? | • Check whether organisation has insurance for volunteers |
| Is personal information being treated in a confidential matter? | • How does the organisation keep confidential information-is it kept under lock and key? |
| Common attitudes, myths and beliefs on intellectual disabilities | • Suggest that the organisation undertake disability awareness training, including social role valorisation |
| Volunteers are given meaningless tasks | • Review volunteer arrangement on a regular basis  
• Inform organisation on the full extent of the person’s capabilities  
• Ask the question: does the organisation value their volunteers? |
| Do volunteers have access to grievance procedures? | • Ask the organisation for a copy of their grievance procedures |
| People going nowhere with their volunteering efforts | • Discuss with supervisor the |
what the volunteer has achieved? What has the supervisor got in mind when it comes to the volunteer’s role within the organisation?

- Consider why the person is volunteering: is it about developing new skills and confidence or is volunteering, a pathway to employment for the person?

| No promise of employment or recognition-taken for granted!! | Ask the question: is the person volunteering for the right organisation?
- Have a set period in which volunteering for an organisation is acceptable and then approach the organisation about the prospect of employment, encourage the organisation to find out avenues of government support open to them by employing someone with a disability
- Apply for jobs that utilised similar skills that the person has developed during their volunteering roles? |

| Organisations taking advantage of open ended agreements | Set a designated period-two years maximum and then ask about the future of the volunteer’s role, discuss the prospect of continued volunteering or paid employment |

| Volunteering is pointless compared to paid work | Ask the question: what is being gained by volunteering, some people gain a sense of personal achievement by volunteering, while others may want to move on to paid employment
- Ask the question: what is the volunteer getting out of volunteering? |

<p>| Fellow workers luring volunteers with intellectual disabilities into illegal activities | Try to teach such volunteers the difference between appropriate and inappropriate relationships with fellow workers |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explain the concept of true friendship and what doesn't constitute friendship</td>
<td>Ask the organisation, what are the consequences for fellow workers, if they try to lure such a volunteer into illegal activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Fellow workers bribing or bullying volunteers with intellectual disabilities to cover up illegal activities | Make sure volunteers know their rights at work  
Encourage volunteers to tell someone, if a fellow worker is trying to give to them money, or bullying them at work.  
Allow access to independent advocacy  
Link volunteers up with workers who can be trusted-buddy system |
| Giving volunteers tasks that the organisation knows they can not do | Try to discuss situation with supervisor, however if situation remains unsolved, seriously examine whether it is worth still volunteering for organisation  
Consider making a complaint to the Anti-Discrimination Commission |
| Volunteers given tasks, fellow workers do not want to do | Advise supervisor of situation, if unresolved, contact Fair Work Ombudsman |
| Volunteers given no respect | This is in breach of the organisation’s responsibilities to volunteers, contact both Volunteers Queensland and the Fair Work Ombudsman |
| Volunteers being denied breaks | Contact the Fair Work Ombudsman |
| Support workers not being allow to assist volunteer | Discuss and clarify support worker’s role with organisation  
Suggest disability awareness training  
Explain why assistance from a support worker is necessary |
<p>| Disrespect being shown to support workers-not being made to feel welcome | Explain that this behaviour is unacceptable and support workers are part of the deal when it comes to some people with disabilities. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the person really need a support worker or can they work independently?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not making “reasonable adjustments” in regard to a person’s disability, including behavioural patterns and medical conditions</strong></td>
<td>• Ensure that the organisation fully understand why these adjustments have to be made, if the organisation is unwilling to make these accommodations- maybe this is wrong organisation for the volunteer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Expecting volunteers to follow unreasonable instructions** | • Ensure all instruction are clarified  
• Discuss with supervisor  
• Discuss with volunteer co-ordinator |
| **Isolating volunteers with disabilities from other workers** | • Disability awareness training  
• Does the role require people to work collectively or individually?  
• Does the volunteer like to be on their own and need encouragement to socialise with others?  
• Do other workers need guidance/ encouragement to socialise with the volunteer. |
| **Volunteer entitlements** | • Does the volunteer get the same entitlements as other volunteers? |

**HOW TO FIND ORGANISATIONS WHO ARE UNLIKELY TO EXPLOIT VOLUNTEERS WITH DISABILITIES**

Here are a few tips on finding organisations that are unlikely to exploit volunteers:

- The organisation is a not for profit;
- The purpose of the organisation matches your own values and beliefs;
- The organisation carries volunteer insurance;
• The volunteer’s role is clear and specific;
• The organisation can provide you with written information about its purpose and activities
• The organisation has a strong stance on inclusive volunteering, including making “reasonable adjustments” to accommodate volunteers with disabilities.
• The organisation is very ethical in the way it does business.
BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES


Safe Work Australia, Date Unknown, “THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR VOLUNTEERS” Safe Work Australia.


Volunteering Australia, 2011, “PATHWAYS TO SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH VOLUNTEERING”, Volunteering Australia, Pages 7 & 30

Volunteering Australia, 2001, “NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR INVOLVING VOLUNTEERS IN NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS”, Volunteering Australia, Melbourne, Australia, Page 41.