

What Frustrates Volunteers...

- 1. Bureaucracy and red tape.** Too often, involvement seems clouded by bureaucracy and red tape.
- 2. No clear vision; lack of focus.** When committee efforts or volunteer projects lack clear focus or direction, they immediately appear less attractive. “Why should I spin my wheels on this if I don’t know it will ever be used?” They have little interest in or patience for “going through the motions” of volunteer service.
- 3. Not fun.** While it is understood that fun is not the primary reason for getting involved volunteers are not looking to have their involvement be a painful experience or negative drain on their energy and passion.
- 4. No end to commitment.** So-called permanent appointments hold little appeal for the younger volunteers. Typically they are more attracted to shorter-term, project-specific involvement opportunities, one with a clear focus, beginning, and end.
- 5. Not open to innovation and creativity.** Minds closed to creativity seem to be one of the greatest frustrations of the pool of younger volunteers. If their involvement efforts are predetermined to allow only for “same old, same old,” young people will most likely seek other opportunities.
- 6. Bad meetings or bad planning.** Volunteers have little patience for lack of organization or poorly run meetings. They are eager to spend their time making a difference, not sitting around with others trying to figure out how to get a project started. Leaders who fail to manage meetings or projects well are major sources of frustration.
- 7. Fear of change.** They have little patience for more established leaders who are fearful of change. While they acknowledge “don’t fix what isn’t broken,” they often find themselves in meetings with people they believe are denying the reality of the true conditions of an initiative or the organization. Younger volunteers can be willing to take risks and expect others to feel the same.
- 8. Lack of appreciation.** Failing to provide ongoing feedback (right in the moment) or acknowledge or recognize volunteer contributions is a major error. When they don’t feel appreciated for their efforts, they are quick to move on to a different involvement opportunity where they are acknowledged more.
- 9. No sense of community and spirit.** Diversity and inclusivity are key for volunteers, and they don’t see themselves involved where those core values aren’t being implemented. Having a sense of connection to others involved in the organization is important to them.
- 10. Talents not taken advantage of; perspectives not respected.** A theme of “don’t waste my time” runs through, but that was most apparent in situations where volunteers feel their significant talents weren’t tapped. They feel they had the skill and knowledge to make meaningful contributions but were never provided the chance to do so.