

The Ultimate Volunteer Appreciation Guide

Best Practices, Motivation Insights, and Effective Email Strategies for Recognition



Introduction



Volunteers are the backbone of any successful organization. They give their time, energy, and skills to support causes they believe in and make a positive impact on the community. So, it's essential to recognize and appreciate the efforts of these dedicated individuals. This guide will provide tips and ideas you can use throughout the year to recognize your valuable volunteers. Plus, recognizing your volunteers is crucial to maintaining current levels amid ongoing recruitment challenges.

In this guide, you'll see:

- Why people give their valuable time to nonprofit organizations
- Tips for recognizing volunteers
- Inspiration for your recognition messages



Understanding volunteer motivation

Why do people volunteer? For all kinds of reasons—and their motivations can differ depending on the individual and the context. People volunteer to:

1. Help others and impact community

Many people volunteer because they genuinely desire to help others and positively impact their communities or the world. They may feel a sense of empathy and compassion towards those in need and want to contribute to improving their situations.

2. Gain personal fulfillment and satisfaction

Volunteering can provide a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction that comes from knowing you've made a difference in someone else's life or in a cause you care about. It can be gratifying to see the direct results of your efforts and to feel like you've contributed to something meaningful.

3. Build relationships and social connections

Volunteering often provides opportunities to meet new people and connect with others with similar interests and values. It can help individuals expand their social networks and develop a sense of belonging and community.

4. Develop new skills

Volunteering can also help individuals develop new skills, gain valuable experience, and broaden one's perspective. Many volunteers have the opportunity to learn new things, take on leadership roles, and challenge themselves in ways that contribute to their personal and professional growth.

5. Give back to community

Some people volunteer out of a sense of duty or responsibility to give back to their communities or to support causes they believe in. They may feel compelled to contribute their time and energy to address issues they see as important or urgent.

6. Health Benefits

[Research](#) suggests that volunteering can positively affect both physical and mental health. Getting involved in purposeful activities and building connections through volunteer efforts can lower stress levels, boost happiness, and support overall wellness.

Inspirational quotes to add to your volunteer emails

Source: [VolunteerPro](#)

"To ease another's heartache is to forget one's own."

Abraham Lincoln

"We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."

Mother Theresa

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."

William Arthur Ward

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader."

John Quincy Adams

"Volunteer activities can foster enormous leadership skills. The nonprofit professional volunteer world is a laboratory for self-realization."

Madeleine Kunin

Boosting volunteer morale

Six key strategies for appreciation and engagement



1. Highlight volunteers by name in newsletters, on your website, and within your social media channels—spotlight volunteers who go above and beyond.
2. Organize public recognition events, like award ceremonies or appreciation dinners, where you can celebrate volunteers in front of their peers and the community.
3. Nominate volunteers for community awards and recognitions, whether it's a "women of power" luncheon or an AFP "Volunteer of the Year award."
4. Give exceptional volunteers the opportunity to lead a campaign or project, coach and mentor other volunteers, present at a seminar, or meet personally with the executive team.
5. Recognize volunteers with certificates, awards, or badges to acknowledge their dedication and achievements. Consider creating categories that reflect different types of contributions, like leadership, creativity, or longevity of service.
6. Celebrate the milestones in their lives. Surprise them by showing you care, whether it's their birthday, wedding anniversary, or the day they become empty nesters.

[Here](#) are other great ways to show appreciation for your volunteers and foster closer relationships.

How to use this guide

On the following pages, you'll find a comprehensive list of ready-to-use, customizable email templates designed to recognize and encourage your volunteers. Personalized fields, including your volunteer's name and hours worked, makes it easy to tailor emails for each volunteer.

Just copy and paste the template you need into Bloomerang Volunteer, add personalized details, and schedule your email for delivery.

Bloomerang Volunteer personalization fields

The green areas with **{{double curly brackets}}** show how the system can fill in the recipient's details for you using personalization fields. For example, if you insert the **{{First Name}}** field, it will show the first name of the person getting the email.

More customizable fields

The blue areas with **[straight brackets]** in emails are for you to add information about your organization and its goals. This part of the email will be the same for everyone who receives it.

Example email text

Subject: Example subject

Dear **{{First Name}}**,

{{x hours}} achieved!

Congratulations, **{{First Name}}**, on reaching an incredible milestone of **{{x hours}}** with **{{Organization Name}}**. This is a significant achievement, and we're truly grateful for your dedication and support. Your contributions have been instrumental in **[briefly mention a specific project or impact]**, helping us fulfill our mission, and making a real difference in our community. We're excited about your continued involvement and can't wait to see what we can accomplish together next! Thank you for being such an important part of our team.

Warm regards,

{{Organization Name}}

Crafting inspiring volunteer recognition messages

Examples and tips

Recognize volunteers based on hours achieved

Short version

Subject: You have made a huge impact!

Dear **{{First Name}}**,

{{x hours}} achieved!

Congratulations, **{{First Name}}**, on reaching an incredible milestone of **{{x hours}}** with **{{Organization Name}}**. This is a significant achievement, and we're truly grateful for your dedication and support. Your contributions have been instrumental in [\[briefly mention a specific project or impact\]](#), helping us fulfill our mission, and making a real difference in our community. We're excited about your continued involvement and can't wait to see what we can accomplish together next! Thank you for being such an important part of our team.

Warm regards,

{{Organization Name}}



Pro tip

Remember to personalize your email. You're recognizing their specific contributions, so use their first name and include what they achieved.



Feature spotlight

Bloomerang Volunteer can send recognition emails automatically based on the number of hours worked within a day, week, month, or year.

Recognize volunteers based on hours achieved

Long version

Subject: Did you know you're our hero?

Dear **{{First Name}}**,

Here's to you!

We're in awe of your dedication!

When they say "not all heroes wear capes," we're pretty sure they mean you, **{{FirstName}}**. Your remarkable journey of **{{x hours}}** of volunteer service has truly made a difference! Every hour you have so selflessly given us has made a difference, advancing our mission, touching lives, and strengthening our community. From empowering those we serve to driving impactful changes, your efforts embody the spirit of collective achievement.

I know how much you care about [\[insert mission here\]](#). Your generous and kind heart shines in everything you do here at **{{Organization Name}}**.

As you go about your day, today and every day, I hope you feel joy in your heart. Joy in knowing that you matter. That your compassion supports [\[insert mission here\]](#). That you, **{{First Name}}**, inspire me and the whole team at the **{{Organization Name}}** to keep fighting the good fight advocating for [\[target beneficiaries\]](#). You're part of our story and, more importantly, a part of our family. Your commitment has not only advanced our goals but has also set a benchmark for what we can achieve together.

We're excited to continue this journey with you and can't wait to see what more we can accomplish. Look out for a small token of our appreciation coming your way—just a small gesture to say a big thank you.

Your fan,

{{Sender First Name}} {{Sender Last Name}}
{{Organization Name}}

Thank volunteers after they've worked a shift

Subject: Heartfelt thanks for your contribution

Hello {{First Name}},

I hope this message finds you well. We're reaching out to express our heartfelt thanks for your recent efforts as a [Volunteer Role]. Your commitment and hard work on [project] are vital to our collective success and haven't gone unnoticed.

Your performance during your shift was truly inspiring. The challenges you navigated with skill and grace not only addressed immediate needs but also laid the groundwork for lasting impact.

Here's how your contributions have made a difference:

[Outcome 1]

[Outcome 2]

[Outcome 3]

These achievements are direct reflections of your dedication and are integral to our mission. Your work extends far beyond the time you spend with us, leaving a lasting mark on our community.

Thank you for being such a significant part of our mission and for embodying the spirit of volunteering at its best.

We can't wait for more opportunities to work together. Until then, take pride in knowing you are a valued part of our family!

Warmest regards,

{{Sender First Name}} {{Sender Last Name}}
{{Organization Name}}



Pro tip

Provide the specific outcomes of the event they participated in to show their impact and keep them returning for more shifts.



Feature spotlight

Bloomerang Volunteer lets you thank volunteers after they've completed a shift or an opportunity within the organization.

Welcome volunteers to your organization

Subject: Welcome to our community of changemakers!

Dear **{{First Name}}**,

Welcome aboard! We're so excited for you to join us at **{{Organization Name}}**. Your decision to volunteer marks the beginning of an incredible journey. As part of our team—or rather, our family—your passion contributes to our shared goal: creating a better world.

We're here to support you every step of the way with resources, guidance, and the inspiration needed to make the most of your volunteer experience.

Get ready to both empower and be empowered in a role that's as much about learning as it is about giving.

Your unique skills and perspectives are invaluable to us, and we can't wait to see the impact you'll make. If you have any questions or would like further information, please don't hesitate to reach out to **{{Sender First Name}}** at **{{Sender Mobile Phone Number}}**.

Once again, welcome to **{{Organization Name}}**. We're beyond excited to see the incredible things we'll achieve together.

Warm wishes,

{{Sender First Name}} **{{Sender Last Name}}** and the entire **{{Organization Name}}** team

Together, we're not just volunteering; we're transforming lives.

Alternate close: Can we do anything else to ensure you feel right at home? Don't hesitate to reach out!

Looking forward to your participation!

The **{{Organization Name}}** Team



Pro tip

Use this opportunity to request any documentation to finalize their participation in your organization and ask them to join your social community.



Feature spotlight

Bloomerang Volunteer includes an automation that makes it easy to approve and welcome all your new volunteers.

Recognize a volunteer's birthday

Subject: Happy birthday and thank you for making a difference!

Hello **{{First Name}}**,

Happy Birthday! Today, we celebrate you—not just for adding another year to your life but for the incredible difference you've made in ours. Everyone at **{{Organization Name}}** sends you our warmest wishes. Your commitment to our cause has transformed our community in countless ways. I hope on this special day—and every day—you feel loved and cherished. I don't know how we'd get by without your kind and dedicated service. Your kind and generous heart says everything there is to know about you.

As we celebrate:

- **Your impact:** Your time and talents have been pivotal in our journey to make our community a better place, one incredible deed at a time.
- **Our achievements:** Thanks to your dedication, we continue to meet our goals and support those who rely on us.
- **Collective celebrations:** Your birthday symbolizes the collective successes we've celebrated, thanks to your involvement.

While today is for cake (hopefully lots of it!) and joy, we hope you'll also join us for our next event. It's an opportunity to kickstart another year of making meaningful change together.

Sign up here to save your spot with a simple click to be part of our next adventure in volunteering, promising not just impactful work but also fun and fellowship.

Wishing you a day as wonderful as the positivity you spread. Happy birthday, and here's to another year of making the world a brighter place together!

Stay awesome,

{{Sender First Name}} {{Sender Last Name}}
{{Organization Name}}
{{Sender Mobile Phone Number}}

PS Don't forget to make a wish; we hear it's an excellent strategy for manifesting an even more fulfilling year of volunteering!



Pro tip

Keep your messages effective by sharing upcoming volunteer opportunities they might like, which would help them to continue making an impact.



Feature spotlight

Bloomerang Volunteer includes an automation that makes it easy to recognize your volunteer's birthday.

Recognize a volunteer's anniversary

Subject: Celebrating your volunteer journey with us: happy anniversary!

Hello **{{First Name}}**,

Happy Anniversary! A year ago, you lit up our world when you started volunteering at **{{Organization Name}}**. When [target beneficiaries] needed you most, you were there. Because of your kind and compassionate heart, [\[insert great accomplishment here\]](#).

You've infused every project with heart and soul, truly embodying the spirit of volunteerism.

Reflect and share: As we celebrate this anniversary, we invite you to reflect on your journey with us. What moment stands out to you as particularly meaningful? We'd love to hear your story, whether it's a heart-touching interaction, a successful event, or a personal revelation. Please feel free to reply to this email or share your experiences on social media and tag us. Your insights offer invaluable inspiration to our entire community.

Looking ahead: Your journey with us is filled with powerful stories, and we're excited to be part of the next chapters. Let's continue to make a difference, together.

Join us: Please save the date for our upcoming volunteer meeting [insert date here], a perfect opportunity to celebrate achievements like yours and explore what lies ahead.

Thank you for your unwavering support and for being a driving force behind our success. Here's to many more years of making a difference together!

Warmest regards,

{{Sender First Name}} {{Sender Last Name}}
{{Organization Name}}

PS Your impact is immeasurable, and we can't wait to create more memorable moments with you.



Pro tip

Use this communication to update any information about your volunteers, like areas of interest, and get updated waiver consent.



Feature spotlight

Bloomerang Volunteer includes an automation that makes it easy to recognize your volunteer's anniversary.

Three easy ways to re-engage volunteers

1 For volunteers who haven't engaged with you in a while



Bloomerang Volunteer includes automation that makes it easy to re-engage inactive volunteers.

2 For volunteers who haven't logged into your website in a while



Bloomerang Volunteer lets you identify volunteers who haven't logged in over a specified time and automates your email message.

3 For volunteers who haven't contributed in a while



Bloomerang Volunteer makes it easy to send an email to re-engage volunteers based on their last contribution.



Pro tip

To re-engage volunteers, share opportunities they'll be excited about, and let them know about any organizational changes, especially if these changes might impact their roles or the programs they care about. Open communication builds trust and keeps volunteers motivated.

Want to know more about why they're not engaged? Send a survey and ask! Why aren't they volunteering? What's changed since they last volunteered?

Check out [this article](#) from VolunteerPro to better understand why volunteers "quit."

Re-engagement

Short version

Subject: We miss you!

Hi, {{First Name}}!

It's been a while since we last saw you at {{Organization Name}}, and we miss your energy and dedication. Your kind and loving heart has contributed a total of {{Total Hours}}. Thanks to you, [\[insert outcome here\]](#). We have a waiting list of [\[insert # of target beneficiaries\]](#) who need support to flourish. Can we count on you, {{First Name}}?

We're reaching out because we believe in the power of your support and would love to see you back, continuing to make a difference. Our community and projects need you to thrive, {{First Name}}.

Ready to jump back in? Take a look at our current opportunities here and find where your passion meets your purpose once again:

{{Opportunity}}

Your return could inspire countless more positive changes. Let's keep the momentum going together.

Looking forward to welcoming you back!

{{Sender First Name}} {{Sender Last Name}}

{{Organization Name}}



Re-engagement

Long version

Subject: We miss you!

Dear {{First Name}},

We've deeply missed your cheerful spirit and heartfelt dedication, and we're reaching out to say: we miss you! Your contributions have been a vital part of our mission. We just wanted you to know how much you've changed our world:

[Add a personalized point of their impact based on their volunteer history]

[A story or testimony from someone they've helped]

Truthfully, {{First Name}}, we've never needed you more! If you're ready to pick up where you left off, here's what's new and exciting at {{Organization Name}}:

New initiatives: We're tackling fresh challenges that might interest you.

Flexible volunteering: We've adapted our opportunities to fit your schedule better.

Continuous support: Our team is here to support you every step of the way.

You're a part of our family, and we'd love to welcome you back. Consider attending an upcoming event or workshop to reconnect with our community and see how you can make an impact again. Find out more [insert link to events calendar].

We're here to empower you with the information and support to thrive as a volunteer. Whether it's catching up on new developments or finding the perfect fit for your current lifestyle, you're a valued member of our team.

[Insert CTA like "Reactivate Your Volunteer Status" or "RSVP for a Welcome Back Event"]

Together, we can continue to make a real difference. Your skills and passion are key ingredients to our shared success, and we look forward to welcoming you back into our fold.

With heartfelt appreciation,

{{Sender First Name}} {{Sender Last Name}}
{{Organization Name}}

PS Please remember, {{First Name}}, we're just a message away! If you have any questions or want to discuss your return, please reach out to {{Sender First Name}} at {{Sender Mobile Phone Number}}. Your actions create ripples, and we're excited to see the waves we can make together.

Elevating volunteer appreciation

Inspiring headline ideas to boost engagement and morale

Need some simple inspiration for headlines?

Here are some **phrases** to use in your recognition messages:

"Thank you for your hard work and dedication."

"Your efforts are truly appreciated."

"We value your contributions to the team."

"You make a difference every day."

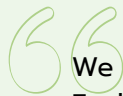
"Your commitment inspires us all."

"We are grateful for your exceptional work."

"You are a valuable asset to our organization."

"Thank you for going above and beyond."

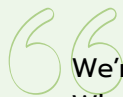
Cheers from peers: creative ways to recognize your volunteers



We do monthly recognitions on our social media and newsletters recognizing volunteers. Each year at our gala in October, we recognize a volunteer or a community partner.

AMANDA ANSCHUTZ

Co-Founder & President
Compassion Delivered



We're actually in the process now of planning an event in Huntsville for our volunteers! When we realized the things we can do with the system that's where we got the idea. Our thought is for volunteers who've come more than once or who have volunteered a minimum of a certain number of hours (easy to filter those in the system), we're going to have a volunteer event or party where we'll be able to email and invite only those people, and they can sign up to come and have some fun with us!

TAYLOR REED

COO
ShowerUp

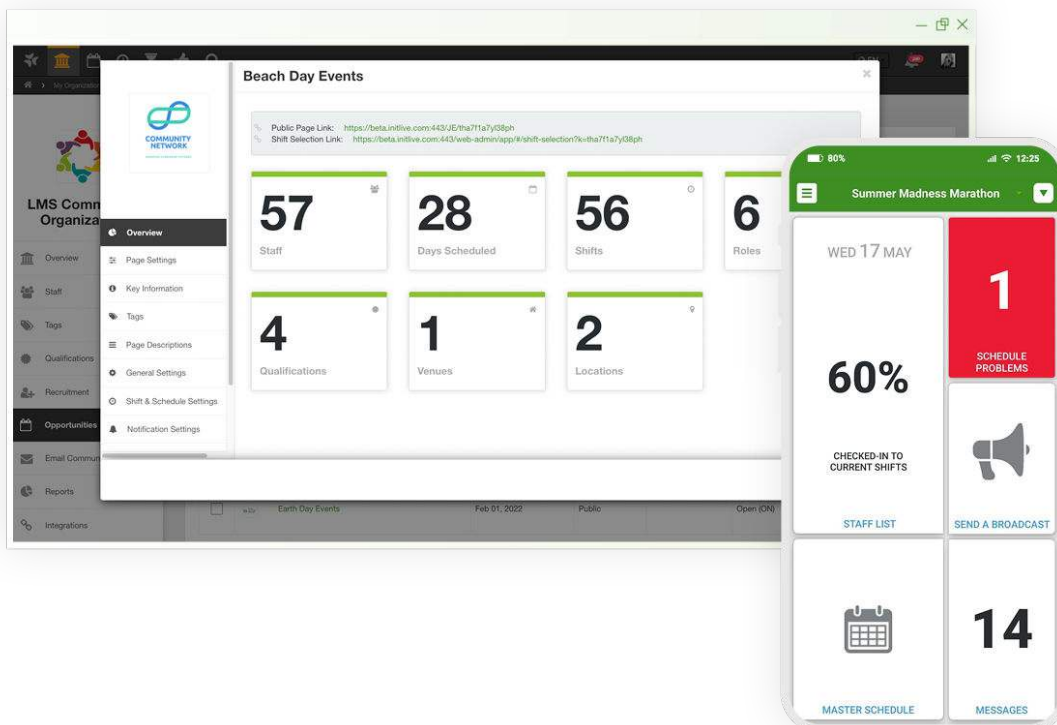
Your next steps to elevate volunteer appreciation

The bond between a nonprofit and its volunteers grows stronger with strategic appreciation and recognition. You can significantly boost volunteer engagement and morale by tapping into expert insights and using targeted communication and digital strategies. From planning memorable appreciation events to using effective communication strategies, each is a building block toward a stronger, more connected community. If you're new to this concept or looking to improve your volunteer program, Bloomerang offers valuable tools and insights.

Just starting on your journey? [Take a tour of Bloomerang](#) to see how it can change your approach to volunteer management.

Already using Bloomerang? [Sign up for a demo today](#) to check out new volunteer add-on features. Don't miss this [short tour](#) to learn about how Bloomerang Volunteer can help you engage volunteers more effectively.

Empower and celebrate your community heroes with strategies that enhance engagement, appreciation, and impact.



The all-in-one giving platform

Donor Management

Volunteer Management

Online Fundraising

Event Management

Peer-to-Peer Fundraising

Auction Fundraising

Payment Processing

Email Marketing

Reporting & Analytics

Integration Hub



Tour Bloomerang Volunteer



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