

Presenting Volunteer Work on Resumes

Volunteering is a most rewarding opportunity for gaining work experience (unpaid) and developing valuable career-related knowledge, skills and abilities, and attitudes. Below are a few examples of different ways for presenting volunteer experience on your resume.

A. Create Skills Categories and Include Volunteer Examples

Prepare your resume by taking a customized, functional approach:

- Analyze the job posting to identify the requirements—note the *keywords* (e.g., skills, attitudes).
- Sort the requirements into categories and give each a name (headings).
- Under each category (e.g., Administration, Computer, Leadership), briefly describe your related volunteer work. Also include relevant examples from academic and/or employment experience.

Resume Examples

RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Program Development

- As a _____ volunteer, collaborated with team members to develop _____
- Assisted with planning and conducting an after-school program for youth with a focus on _____ (Star Bright Volunteer)
- ___ years of volunteer experience developing and facilitating programs for _____

Client / Patient Support

- Responded to distressed clients over the phone to hear their concerns, assess their needs, intervene as needed, and refer to appropriate community services (Crisis Line Volunteer)
- Interacted with patients (all ages) to provide companionship and care during convalescence from surgery (Hospital Volunteer)

Administration

- As Treasurer (Community Association), accurately entered membership information into databases, processed donations (cash, cheques, credit card), and prepared related reports
- Utilized Excel to create various record keeping and accounting databases for a non-profit association (Robotics Association Volunteer)

Communication, Personal Skills & Attitudes

- As a Museum Volunteer, demonstrated ability to lead engaging workshops for school groups
- Communicate and interact respectfully with people of diverse backgrounds (Event Volunteer)
- Commended for skills in maintaining composure and quick thinking when resolving team conflicts (Volunteer Referee)
- Empathic, responsible and resourceful when assisting individuals with health conditions (Admitting Volunteer)

*The above headings and statements are examples only.
Revise as needed to suit your purposes and preferences.*

B. Present Volunteer Positions as Work Experience

Some volunteer work is like an unpaid job that requires considerable commitment, as well as specialized knowledge and skills. When applying for a related job, consider highlighting your volunteer work by describing it as work experience. Include a job title (volunteer) and description of key responsibilities.

Resume Examples

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Program Assistant (volunteer) 20XX – present

Mental Health Support Services, Somewhere, SK

- Assist the Co-ordinator with facilitating workshops for youth on stress management and _____
- Effectively engage and provide appropriate support to youth who have a mental illness (e.g., depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia)
- As a member of the Organizing Committee, plan and coordinate Mental Health Awareness Week

Marketing Coordinator (volunteer) 20XX – present

Annual Funday Festival, Somewhere, SK

- Oversee marketing and promotions including _____
- As Chair of the Promotions Committee, serve as the media representative in all interviews (newspaper, radio, television)

Resident Assistant (volunteer) May – Aug., 20XX & 20XX
(summers)

Respite Services, Somewhere, SK

- Assisted the Program Coordinator with facilitating recreational and social activities for children and youth with disabilities (e.g., autism, Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy)
- Aided with bathing, personal hygiene, dressing and grooming

Program & Fundraising Coordinator (volunteer) 20XX – 20XX

Community Sports Council, Somewhere, SK

- Collaborated with schools and community organizations to plan recreational programs for children and youth, including sports camps and tournaments (e.g., Children's Garden, Canoe Challenge)
- To help raise funds, delivered presentations on the program to community groups and businesses, which resulted in raising over \$_____

Soccer Coach (volunteer) 20XX – 20XX

Northwest Tigers, Prairie Junior League, Somewhere, SK

- Planned and conducted a safe training program for 15 children (9 – 13 years of age)
- Introduced motivational strategies for facilitating team development (e.g., goal setting, _____)
- Recognized with league award: "Most Improved Team 20XX"

Junior Counsellor (volunteer) 20XX
(summer)

Summer Camp, Somewhere, SK

- Supervised and ensured the safety and well being of 8 campers (7–9 years of age)
- Assisted with planning and leading a variety of social and recreational activities for campers (e.g., crafts, canoeing, campfires)

C. List Recent and Relevant Volunteer Experience

If your volunteer work is *not* directly related to the job that you're applying for, no need to highlight it as work experience. Instead, consider including a brief list of volunteer activities at the end of your resume.

Be selective—don't list all your volunteer work. Focus on more recent and notable volunteer experience. Even if not directly related to the job requirements (essential skills), many employers will be interested in reviewing your volunteer work for evidence of your:

- a) Personal assets such as communication, teamwork and leadership skills.
- b) Shared interests and values (e.g., community development, health and wellness).
- c) Ability to maintain a work/life balance and not get burned out.

Resume Examples

MEMBERSHIPS & ACTIVITIES

Memberships

- Association Name – Student Member 20XX-present
- Association Name – Member 20XX-present

Volunteer

- Community Association – Newsletter Committee, Somewhere 20XX
- Summer Exhibition – Day Trip Attendant, Sun Valley Homes, Somewhere 20XX
- Fundraising Campaign – Canvasser, Somewhere 20XX
- South East Daycare – Board Member, Somewhere 20XX-present

D. Practice Presenting Your Volunteer Work

Think of some volunteer work that you've done and give it a position title. What did it take to do this work in terms of your knowledge (nouns), skills and abilities (verbs) and attitudes (adjectives)? What values did this work demonstrate about you? What does this all mean? Describe in writing.

_____ (volunteer)	_____
<i>Position Title</i>	<i>Dates</i>

<i>Organization, Location</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	