



Task Title: Researching Volunteer Opportunities

OALCF Cover Sheet – Learner Copy

Learner Name: _____

Date Started: _____

Date Completed: _____

Successful Completion: Yes No

Goal Path: Employment Apprenticeship

Secondary School Post Secondary Independence

Task Description: The learner will read about the benefits of volunteering and conduct an internet search for local opportunities that may be of interest.

Main Competency/Task Group/Level Indicator:

- Find and Use Information/Read continuous text/A1.2
- Communicate Ideas and Information/Write continuous text/B2.1
- Communicate Ideas and Information/Complete and create documents/B3.2a
- Use Digital Technology/D.2

Materials Required:

- Pen/pencil and paper
- Computer or digital device

Learner Information

Volunteering is a good way to build skills that will help you in the workplace. It can also be a great way to learn more about a job or industry, and to connect with people who do work you may be interested in pursuing.

Read "6 Ways Volunteering Can Boost Your Career".

6 Ways Volunteering Can Boost Your Career

Do any of the following apply to you?

- Are you looking for a job but don't have the experience you need? But you can't get experience because you can't get a job?
- Do you need more skills or a better network so you can find work?
- Are you thinking of making a change in your career but unsure about what you want to do?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, volunteering could be the boost your career needs.

When you volunteer, you share your skills and time with people and organizations in the community without expecting to be paid. Volunteering takes you right into the workplace, giving you a chance to build your experience and demonstrate your employability.

Here are six ways volunteering can help you reach your career goals:

1. Volunteering gives you experience.

Most employers want workers who have workplace experience. This kind of experience shows employers that you can manage your time, complete your tasks, get along with others and make a commitment. Your volunteer record proves to an employer that you have workplace experience.

When you volunteer you meet and work with people with different attitudes and worldviews. This experience shows employers that you can be flexible and adaptable—qualities they want their employees to have.

2. Volunteering helps you develop skills.

Volunteering gives you a chance to build on skills you already have and learn new ones. For example, as a volunteer you might be able to try out a new computer program, use a second language, develop customer service skills or practise speaking in public.

If you're employed, you may want to look for volunteer opportunities that strengthen skills you have but are not currently using in your work. For example, if you work on your own in a parts warehouse, volunteering for site hospitality at a festival could help you maintain and improve your people skills.

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Be realistic about your current skill level when you apply to volunteer. An organization may need people whose skill level is more advanced than yours in the position you want. You may need to develop your skills before taking on a more challenging position.

3. Volunteering expands your network.

Your network is all the people you know and all the people they know. Every new person you meet becomes part of your network and may potentially connect you with other contacts and career opportunities.

Volunteering gives you the chance to meet new people and through them expand your network, opening up opportunities you might not have otherwise. Keep a list of the contacts you make volunteering—staff, board members, clients, other volunteers, suppliers and others. You never know who might help you and how.

4. Volunteering lets you check out an occupation or industry.

When you're choosing a career direction or thinking about a career change, volunteering gives you a chance to explore different occupations and industry sectors. You get to know the people, challenges and rewards involved and gain a better understanding of the roles and jobs available. For example, as a hospital volunteer, you're exposed to a wide range of health care workers, from front line nursing and medical staff to program administrators.

Volunteer experience in a specific field or industry can make your resumé or application stand out when you're competing for a job or applying to a post-secondary program in that field. For example, volunteer experience at an animal shelter might increase your chances of being admitted to an animal health technology program.

5. Volunteering builds your confidence.

Maintaining your confidence is especially important if you've been unemployed for a while or discouraged in your search for a new job or career direction. Volunteering can help you feel active, useful and productive—all great ways to increase your confidence.

6. Volunteering helps you get to know yourself.

Knowing yourself—your skills, accomplishments, interests and values—is the foundation of career success. Volunteer experience can be a good way to learn more about yourself and your potential to grow and develop. It also

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gives you a chance to find out how other people view you and your strengths.

Volunteering is a win-win situation. By helping others, you have the opportunity to boost not only your career but your own well-being. When you volunteer in a role that's right for you, everybody comes out ahead.

Work Sheet

Task 1: There are six ways that volunteering can help you reach your career goals. Write down which one you think is the most important one and give one reason why.

Answer:

Task 2: List two ways volunteering can help you learn more about an occupation or industry.

Answer:

Task 3: Think about volunteer projects that may be of interest to you. Open up a new page on the web browser of the computer. Conduct a keyword search for your town and volunteer projects that may interest you. An example might be "Kincardine" and "working with animals".

Fill in the Volunteer Research Chart on the next page with information about 2-3 volunteer agencies you might be interested in volunteering with.

Volunteer Research Chart

Volunteer Agency	Skills needed	Time commitment	Website	Other important information