

# How to create a positive volunteer experience



Volunteers are a crucial part of every squash club. It's important that we value their contributions, offer help and advice when required, and continue to create a positive volunteering experience for all. Remember to make sure the volunteer is happy with the role you have in mind for them. Make them feel welcome and give them all the support and training they need to carry out this role.

## Benefits of a positive volunteer experience

- Volunteers who enjoy their experience are likely to spread the word.
- A welcoming environment encourages new volunteers.
- A positive culture enhances the experience and ensures volunteers feel valued.
- Supported volunteers can perform better, aiding club operations.
- Happy volunteers improve club members' experiences.

## Definition of a volunteer experience

Volunteer experience is defined by the interactions and experiences your volunteer has with your club throughout the entire volunteer journey, from first contact to becoming a happy and loyal volunteer.

## Key ideas to create a positive experience

- Create a volunteer induction and provide an information pack.
- Offer club kit to make volunteers feel part of the club.
- Assign buddies to new volunteers.
- Give tasks they enjoy and understand.
- Match volunteers with others who share common interests.
- Organise social events.
- Clarify roles with descriptions.
- Allow task-based and flexible volunteering.

## Recognition and social benefits

- Encourage members to thank volunteers.
- Create volunteer achievement awards.
- Celebrate personal milestones.
- Personalize thank-you messages.
- Provide freebies if possible.
- Use social media to build community spirit.

## Training and development

- Encourage volunteers to own their development.
- Offer training and subsidise costs.
- Foster a culture of sharing knowledge.
- Provide support, references, and feedback.

## Avoiding conflict

- Create a Volunteer Code of Conduct.
- Watch for and address cliques.
- Ensure availability of support.
- Address unfair criticism and promote kindness.
- Highlight the impact of volunteers.

## Volunteer motivation and challenges

### Motivators:

- A passion for the sport/club.
- Being part of a community.
- Giving something back.
- Developing new skills.
- Seeing others grow.

### Challenges:

- Lack of time.
- Unclear information or expectations.
- Not feeling needed.
- Cliques and lack of recognition.

Note: 41% of volunteers feel undervalued. Kindness and compassion go a long way.

