

# WAA VOLUNTEER- RECRUITING QUICK GUIDE

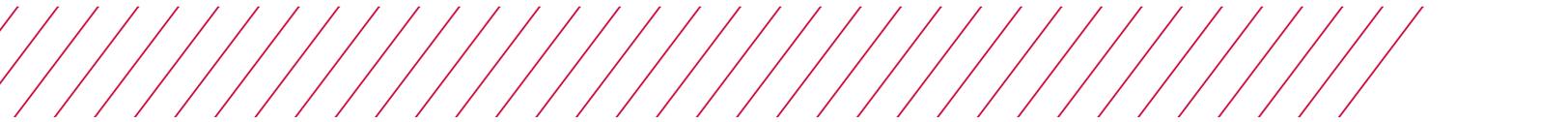


You should always be on the lookout for new chapter leaders or people who could lend their skills to your organization. Here are some easy ways to spot potential recruits:

- Do they show up at events?
- Do they seem interested in getting more involved?
- Do they show Badger spirit and have passion for UW-Madison?
- Do they have time to volunteer?
- Could they add their expertise (e.g., public relations or event planning) to your chapter?

Being a chapter officer right off the bat may seem a bit daunting, but if you get people involved in something that doesn't require a huge time commitment and is something they enjoy, your volunteers are more likely to become chapter leaders later on. According to research, the most likely groups to become chapter leaders are recent grads, alumni who are 55+, and individuals who are seeking professional-development opportunities.

So begin to think about how to engage people, and then use their talents in ways that are satisfying to them and helpful to the chapter and to you as a chapter leader.



## GET PEOPLE INVOLVED

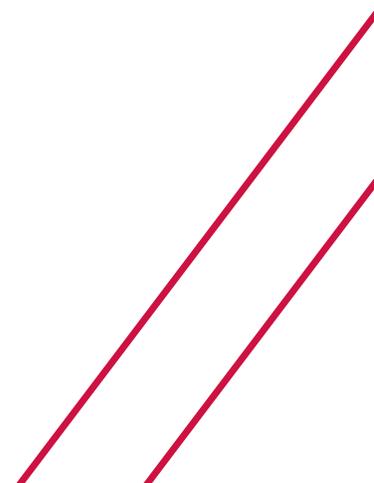
- Send out a welcome email to each new member with information about your chapter.
- Have a board member speak with new members during their first visit.
- Encourage new members to become active with one or more committees.
- Recognize active members during an annual appreciation event.
- Match skills and strengths with appropriate leadership positions.
- Promote chapter leadership as a professional-skills-development opportunity.
- Establish a relationship with potential leader candidates and mentor volunteers early on so they can progress into leadership roles.
- Conduct an annual leadership summit, inviting all alumni in the area to a chapter meeting to hear about opportunities.

Now that you've identified some potential recruits, how do you approach them to volunteer? There's more to it than just barricading the door and making people sign up before they can leave. You'll need to be patient and cultivate their interests before approaching them to do work on your behalf:

- Every attendee should be viewed as a potential volunteer — even the wallflowers standing in the corner. Make everyone feel welcomed, and encourage them to return. Break the ice by asking when they graduated or where they got that snazzy red shirt — anything to get them talking.
- Although happy hours are easy to plan and can be fun, they might not appeal to people who prefer gallery openings instead. Be sure to offer a variety of events, and you'll see a lot of new faces.
- The easiest way to gauge interest is to ask people to tell you what they like. Encourage them to fill out interest surveys before they go. A great way to boost response is to offer a raffle prize if they submit a form.

- Once you have the interest surveys, use them! Call the folks who indicated they want to get involved.
- Make sure to tell members about the programs that WAA offers, too. They might want to attend one of our events or get involved with a career-mentoring program. Tell people to visit [uwalumni.com](http://uwalumni.com) to learn more.

You can be an ambassador just by talking about the UW and WAA in everyday life. It really is a small world, and you'll be surprised by how many alumni you'll meet at the grocery store or at a business lunch just because you're wearing red and white. Many alumni want to stay connected to their alma mater but simply don't know how. You can show them the way.





## DEVELOPING AND TRAINING NEW VOLUNTEERS AND LEADERS

As you've probably guessed, finding and keeping great volunteers doesn't happen by accident, but the effort you put in will render a huge payoff for your chapter. New volunteers bring with them new ideas and a bright-eyed, bushy-tailed enthusiasm that will spill over into your events.

## TIPS FOR MANAGING VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT

- Have a formal, structured orientation plan for leaders who are assuming new positions. Use WAA-sponsored training to further strengthen their leadership skills.
- Develop written position descriptions detailing the volunteers' specific duties, levels of commitment, and what will be expected of new volunteers. Don't just throw them into the thick of things without an overview of what they will be doing.
- Keep important documents for incoming leaders (e.g., notes, timelines, contact people, systems, and processes).
- Review these documents with incoming leaders as part of your mentoring process.
- Provide opportunities to practice new skills and tasks, such as event planning and meeting administration.
- Pair veteran and new leaders to perform specific tasks, such as running meetings, giving speeches, delegating, and following up on tasks. The more experienced mentor should be in regular contact with the new volunteer and should be able to answer questions as they arise. The mentor should also be conscious of the difference between mentoring and bossing!
- Provide emerging leaders with group or individual feedback and constructive criticism.
- Delegate and allow freedom: let volunteers work creatively to make their job a success. There is more than one "right" way to accomplish something. Also, if no one steps up to the plate, consider whether there is enough interest to hold that event or begin that initiative as part of your chapter's operations. It might be better to let an event have a one-year hiatus; then, if members complain, tell them that you need help to keep the event alive.
- Hold an informal, get-to-know-you session for new recruits and current volunteers to allow them to learn more about your chapter before the first major event or board meeting.
- Determine who will hold leadership positions in your group six months or one year in advance. Have those people "shadow" the current leaders for the remainder of their terms.
- Lend this *Chapter Leader Handbook* to your volunteers. Ask them to review it and to check out [uwalumni.com/chapterleader](http://uwalumni.com/chapterleader).