

Cheat Sheet

VOLUNTEERING WORK: WHAT, WHO, WHY, WHERE AND HOW



HOME FOR CHILDREN



A VOLUNTEER IS A PERSON WHO

took his/her own initiative to help others who are in need. He/she does so without receiving any forms of monetary rewards such as salaries or commissions. There may be many reasons that motivate him/her to be involved in volunteering efforts, such as the desire to give back to the community of people in need.¹ Here are two scenarios demonstrating the spirit of volunteerism in two young students.

SCENARIO 1:



Jay and his dad have been visiting Mr Chan at his home in Punggol once every month. They have been doing so for the past three years. Besides cleaning Mr Chan's home, they also spend time chatting, eating and reading with him. Mr Chan, who lives alone, enjoys their company.

SCENARIO 2:



Singapore played host to a mega sporting event recently. It was well attended by some 5000 foreign athletes and delegates. Susie and her classmates spent some quality time as volunteers at the event. They helped in the organization, crowd control, liaison and logistical set-ups of the event, all of which contributed to its successful execution.

WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

FORMAL AND STRUCTURED MANNER -

This form of volunteer work can be done through organized channels or organizations such as foundations, government agencies, schools and clubs.

INFORMAL MANNER – Individuals or a group of individuals can take the initiative to carry out volunteer work within their communities. A good example is a crime watch group that safeguards the neighbourhood.

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING WORK



PERSONAL LEVEL

- ★ Shapes one's character
- ★ Enhances the inculcation and internalization of positive values such as empathy and the spirit of caring
- ★ Builds confidence, especially in communicating with other people
- ★ Develops leadership skills
- ★ Provides greater exposure at social engagement platforms

COMMUNITY LEVEL

- ★ Inculcates social responsibility
- ★ Enables the sharing of the joy of giving
- ★ Facilitates the learning of soft skills (such as emotional connection with others) through peer modeling
- ★ Leads to the formation of a network of support
- ★ Allows the appreciation of issues and challenges facing specific groups within the community
- ★ Inspires others to help and contribute in a positive manner

STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS



It is understood that volunteerism has been gaining widespread interest in recent years. "The United Nations Volunteers (UNV), in its Annual Report 2012, mentioned having a database of over 25,000 accessed candidates with 35 UN nations.² In another report by the Demos titled 'Youth Social Action in the United Kingdom', information on youth volunteerism in these four countries - the United States of America, Australia, Canada and Britain can be found.³ Some statistical highlights are as follows:

23%

Age: 16 to 21 years



United States of America
(2012)

27%

Age: 18 to 24 years



Australia
(2010)

58%

Age: 15 to 24 years



Canada
(2011)

>30%

Age: 10 to 20 years

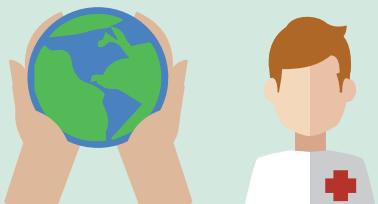


Britain
(2013)



AREAS OF WORK

Be it at local, national or global, there are numerous volunteer organizations/groups formed. It is also a common practice for volunteer organizations/groups to choose specific groups of targeted recipients mainly for the purpose of providing the desired kind of help and level of support given to them.



There are also bigger problems which may require massive support, such as addressing global causes and issues like hunger, disasters, poverty eradication, peace and development work, health and nutrition, agriculture and farming, environmental threats, crisis prevention and recovery, democratic governance, education, homelessness, animal cruelty and many more.⁴

EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC GROUPS OF RECIPIENTS



Specific to certain fraternities such as musicians, artists, athletes, cancer patients, migrant workers and many more.



Groups based on age or gender such as children, aged, teenagers, families, boys, girls, women and many more.

SUSTAINING A VOLUNTEER'S COMMITMENT: THE "BATHTUB EFFECT"

John used to spend time volunteering in his teenage years.



However, he stopped doing so as he needed to spend more time to pursue his studies, build up on his career and start a family.



Fortunately, he resumed his voluntary work recently, after a 20-year break.

VOLUNTEERISM PROGRAMME : THE SINGAPORE EXPERIENCE

The number of youth volunteering in Singapore is increasing. For school-going youth, volunteerism programmes are embedded into their school's curriculum.⁵

VALUES IN ACTION (VIA)

Students in Singapore schools have been encouraged to be involved in community work as early as 1997 with the implementation of the Community Involvement Programme (CIP).

This programme was reframed in 2012 and resulted in the implementation of the current programme known as Values in Action (VIA). This new programme provides a meaningful student involvement that can hopefully instill sustained commitment in volunteering to help build a more caring society. It focuses on students acquiring values which emphasize the new Character and Citizenship Education curriculum.



REFLECTION

Students are given choices in identifying community issues that they are concerned with and proposing actions to bring about improvements to the community. Curriculum time is set aside for students to reflect on their learning experiences gained from VIA.⁶ Here are some benefits of the programme:

- ★ Interact with others of different backgrounds
- ★ Develop empathy for others
- ★ Allow students to contribute their strengths and talents for meaningful purposes and reach out to the community

NATIONAL YOUTH SURVEY 2013 HIGHLIGHTS:

In a study conducted by the National Youth Council, it is interesting to note the participants' thoughts on volunteering work⁷:

41%

Important to help the less fortunate

39%

Important to contribute to society



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Does the growing pervasiveness of the Internet and social media



LEAD TO

Increased awareness of social causes and platforms for active participation?

Let's help baby Timothy!



INFORMATION LITERACY

Sometimes known as the Uniform Resource Locator, the URL is the unique address for accessing a file on the Internet. It contains information on webpage title, domain name, country code and other file details such as file name and file type. The domain name is used to identify the Internet Protocol (IP) address of a webpage. The latest addition to the existing domain name is .co, which stands for company.

SPECIFIC DOMAIN CODES



- .co - Company
- .com - Commercial
- .edu - Education
- .gov - Government
- .int - International
- .mil - Military
- .net - Network
- .org - Organization

DISSECTING THE URL

To be able to read and understand the information presented in a URL is a critical skill because it helps us to identify the credibility of a website or online source.

http://www.unv.org/about-us/contact-us.html

Organization name :
United Nations Volunteers

Domain name:
Organization

Sub-title: "About us"

Sub-title: "Contact us"

File type: HTML format

http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Youth_Social_Action_in_the_UK_-ver_3.pdf?1373620410

Organization name:Demos

Domain name: Company

Country code:
United Kingdom

File title: Youth Social
Action in the UK

File type: Pdf format

REFERENCES

- 1 Ziomba, Elizabeth. (2009). The complete idiot's guide to giving back. New York: Alpha. Call no. : 361.7 ZIE
- 2 United Nation Volunteer. Annual report 2012. Retrieved on 12 January 2015 from http://issuu.com/unvolunteers/docs/unv_ar2012_creating_lasting_impact).
- 3 Birdwell, Jonathan, Birnie, Rutger & Mehan, Rishab. (2013). Youth Social Action in the U.K. Retrieved from Demos on 12 January 2015 from (http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Youth_Social_Action_in_the_UK_-ver_3.pdf?1373620410)
- 4 Volunteer: A traveller's guide to making a difference around the world. Footscray, Vic., Australia : Lonely Planet Publications, 2007-. Call no. : 361.370725 V
- 5 Kok Xing Hui. (2015, May 25). "Are youth really not volunteering enough?". The Straits Times. p.A19.
- 6 Speech by Mr Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Education, At Assisi Hospice Charity Dinner 2012. Retrieved on 12 January 2015 from <http://www.moe.gov.sg/media/speeches/2012/11/04/speech-by-mr-heng-swee-keat-at-assisi-hospice-charity-dinner.php>
- 7 National Youth Council. (2013). National Youth Survey 2013. Retrieved on 12 January 2015 from https://www.resourceportal.nyc.sg/nycp>ShowDoc/WLP+Repository/nyc/resources_fs/nys2013/info_pdf