

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

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Finding effective ways to communicate with local community members has always hampered volunteer efforts. We try to engage on social media, local bulletin magazines, posters and community flyers and word of mouth. We still always have community members unaware of what we do or trying to achieve in our local area or even unaware of the events we are putting on. People generally make time to attend local events but struggle to find time to help organise them. This is due to work/ life commitments mostly. In a small town there is not much opportunity for sports so parents and kids are always travelling after school/work to go to sports training in the larger towns and also attend the competitions on weekends. This takes away a lot of our younger generation volunteers due to those family commitments. This is generally also the same for work - the employment opportunities are limited in the local area and a lot of people travel the 40-60km everyday for work. This takes away after hours volunteering and even during the day volunteering. There is no easy solutions to try and gather more volunteers. It really should be a mandatory thing to commit X amount of time to volunteering each year, some incentive via tax deductions for X amount of volunteer time. Businesses are always hit hard for sponsorship as general fundraising has gone by the wayside due to volunteer numbers, but something I found successful in the past when I managed businesses was to offer up paid volunteer days to the staff for them to volunteer with not for profit organisations. This means they do not miss out on pay but also gets them involved in the groups and likely helps them to stay committed and continue their relationship with these groups into the after hours scene. I would love to see the generated through our schools as well. There has to be local community pride and while there are a lot of people that have it and willing to volunteer all the time, you will see these same people across 3 or 4 committees in our local area to keep things running and this burns out those wanting to help. We are always open for new ideas to engage with people and keep making our communities the wonderful places they are now to live in.