

Encouraging Volunteers

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NXEA – the volunteer profile

- Many facets to our operation
 - Commuter lines
 - Airport services
 - Inter-city
 - Rural routes
- Station adopters not just on CR lines
- Over 70 stations have adopters
- Mix of ages, skills, time commitments
- Common commitment and enthusiasm!



What benefits do volunteers bring?

- A clear link to the community we serve
- Our eyes and ears at unstaffed stations
- Work on stations
- Promoting the railway in the community
- Identifying local sources of support & funding
- An expanded range of skills
- A resource that we wouldn't normally have
- PR and reputation enhancement



From the volunteer's perspective

- Why is this important?
- What happens if it's not done?
- What does it involve?
- What are the benefits?
- What difference will it make to people's lives?
- Do I have the right skills?
- How much time can I give?
- What will I get in return?



Developing our proposition to volunteers

- A simple idea based on 'The 4 R's':

Recruitment

Retention

Reaction

Reward



Recruitment

- Formal / Informal
- Advertisements
- External programmes
- Projects
- Events
- Promotions
- Word of mouth
- Personal recommendation
- Responding to opportunities!



Retention

- Relationship with TOC local manager
- Early briefings and training where appropriate
- Targets for achievement
- Opportunities to learn
- Opportunities to feed back
- Frequent communication
- Confirm their value



Reaction

- Respond to ideas
- Highlight their achievements
- Comment and congratulation
- PR and recognition



Reward

- Recognise that rewards should be personal and reflect the individual's view of success
- 'Simple and often'
- 'Supported and not forgotten'
 - Free tickets
 - Social events
 - Formal awards
 - Learning a new skill
 - A sense of achievement



NXEA Station Adopter Awards

“Just the simple action of bringing people together on a fairly regular basis is a reward in itself ...”



Conclusions

- Volunteers are a resource with a high value that we mustn't underestimate
- They allow us to widen the scope of the railway's activities and the positive impact it has on the community it serves
- Volunteering is driven by the needs of the individual, and we need to be flexible in return and respond to whatever opportunity presents itself
- **The 4 R's** should be at the heart of our Station Adoption programme.

Recruitment Retention Reaction Reward



Discussion

