



11 Ways Volunteering Can Help You Find a Job

1. *Volunteering looks great on your resumé*

Giving back can show that you are committed to your community and have skills, connections, initiative, and experience needed in the workplace. Look at it from an employer's point of view: Here's a candidate who's willing to use valuable skills for a worthy cause. What's not to like about that? On your resumé, make sure you include:

- The title of your volunteer position and a written job description.
- Examples of your volunteer activities, skills, and accomplishments.
- How your volunteer experience relates to the job you're applying for.

2. *Volunteering gives you experience*

Your volunteer experience shows that you can get along with others, make a commitment, and that you have the attitudes and skills employers want in a potential employee. Employers will also be able to see that you can manage your time and complete your tasks.

3. *Volunteering lets you practise your work search skills*

Finding and applying for a volunteer position is a lot like finding and applying for a job. You can even use your volunteer search to refine your work search skills.

- Consider what you want and what you have to offer.
- Think about the kind of workplace experience you want from volunteering. Would you like to improve your people skills or find out what it's like to work in a particular field?

Try answering these questions:

- What skills do you want to use or develop?
- Which volunteer positions will further your career goals?
- How much time can you contribute?
- Do you need flexible hours?
- What experiences and features are you looking for?
- What are the must-haves and the nice-to-haves?
- What issues or causes do you feel strongly about?

- Cast a wide net
- Let friends, family, and co-workers know you are looking to volunteer.
- Find volunteer opportunities at Go Volunteer.
- Check for a volunteer centre near you at Volunteer Alberta.
- Search online for volunteer opportunities Alberta.
- Research the organization you want to volunteer with
- Visit the organization's website.
- Attend an information session about the organization.
- Meet with the volunteer coordinator.
- Talk with people who volunteer or work for the organization.

4. *Volunteering teaches you to apply and interview for jobs*

When you apply to be a volunteer, you:

- May need to complete an application and take part in an interview.
- May need to go through a security screening process, including a driving history and criminal record check.
- Should prepare for the interview as though you were applying for a paid position.
- If an organization could use your skills but doesn't have an opening at the time, you can ask to be put on a waiting list.

5. *Volunteering helps you practise and develop skills*

Helping out gives you a chance to build on skills you already have and learn new ones. For example, as a volunteer you might be able to use your second language or public speaking skills. You could also learn a new computer program or develop new customer service skills. Volunteering can also help you maintain skills you may not be using elsewhere. For example, if you work on your own in a parts warehouse, volunteering at a festival could help you maintain and improve your people skills.

The skills and attitudes you develop in your volunteer position can easily transfer to your resumé. Employers value these qualities. For example, you may list that you:

- Know and understand your job description and role.
- Are dependable and show up on time for every shift.



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- Have a positive attitude.
- Work as part of a team.

Some organizations give their volunteers the chance to be evaluated on their performance. You may want to hold onto a copy of your written evaluation for future opportunities. Be realistic about your current skill level when you apply to volunteer. An organization may need people with skill levels more advanced than yours in the position you want. If that's the case, you could look for volunteer experience that develops those skills so that you can later qualify for a more challenging position.

6. Volunteering expands your network

Your network is all the people you know and all the people they know. Volunteering gives you the chance to meet new people and expand your network. Keep a list of the contacts you make while volunteering. These include staff, board members, clients, other volunteers, and suppliers. You never know who might help you and how.

7. Volunteering can help you find a mentor

A mentor is someone who can guide and encourage you in your career. This can be an experienced staff person, board member, or another volunteer who can help you succeed, not just in your current volunteer position, but with your long-term career goals too.

8. Volunteering can provide you with references

By being a dedicated and effective volunteer, you can get a new reference. You can use this reference to apply for a paid job or a post-secondary program. When you ask someone to be a reference, make sure you know how the person feels about you and your work. Some volunteer organizations, like Habitat for Humanity, offer work experience certificates. You can include these in your resumé or provide them in an interview. These certificates can show the number of hours you volunteered and the skills you learned. They also include an evaluation of your work ethic. Ask your volunteer organization if that's something they'd be willing to provide.

9. Volunteering lets you check out an occupation or industry

When you're thinking about a career direction or a career change, volunteering lets you explore different occupations and industries. You get to know the people, chal-

lenges, and rewards involved. You also gain a better understanding of the roles and jobs available. For example, as a hospital volunteer you're exposed to a wide range of health care workers, from front-line nursing and doctors to program administrators. Volunteer experience in a specific field or industry can make your resumé or application stand out. This holds true when you're competing for a job or applying to a post-secondary program in that field. For example, volunteer experience at a senior's centre might increase your chances of being accepted into a nursing program.

10. Volunteering helps you get to know yourself

Knowing your skills, accomplishments, interests, and values is the foundation of career success. Volunteer experience can be a good way to learn more about yourself and your potential. It also gives you a chance to find out how other people view you and your strengths.

11. Volunteering builds your confidence

Maintaining your confidence is especially important if you've never worked before or have been unemployed for a while. It also helps when you're feeling down about your search for a new job or career direction. Volunteering can help you feel active, useful, and productive. Volunteering will help you build a solid foundation for the next phase of your career. The skills you use, the tasks you complete, and the outcomes you achieve through volunteering will bring you closer to your career goals. Plus, you'll have the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

<https://alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/work-options/11-ways-volunteering-can-help-you-find-a-job/>

5 Minute Job Search

Here are some things you can do in the next 5 minutes to help you figure out what job you want and how to get it:

1. Name 3 things you really like to do.
2. Name 3 things you're good at.
3. Name 3 things you like learning about.
4. Name 3 people who are good at the things you like to do.
5. Name 3 jobs you think you might be



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interested in.

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Now you've got a list. Here's what to do with it:

- Notice if any of the items in 1 are the same as the items in 2 or 3. Keep this in mind as you recognize your strengths.
- How do the people you identified in 4 make their living? Do they use the things they're good at? If you know them, ask. If they're celebrities, research them online.
- Try searching the items you named in 1, 2, & 3 and add "jobs" to the search - e.g. "mountain biking" or "snowboarding"+"jobs". Explore what turns up.
- Do the jobs in 5 involve any of the things in 1, 2, or 3? If you don't know, search the jobs to find out.

Now you're 5 steps closer to a job!

Interview with Prospect

VAD was pleased to have an interview with Kathryn Hotte, Business Advisor from Prospect Human Services, here are some of the interesting facts we found out about their program **Entrepreneurs with Disabilities**.

A job is a key part of a person's physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Unfortunately, too many people face barriers to employment. Prospect works with everyone from recent immigrants to ill-and-injured military veterans to people with disabilities. They are a not-for-profit organization, but their main motivation isn't charity. They believe everyone who is ready, willing and able to work and wants a fulfilling job should have one. They are driven to help people who face barriers to employment because society reaps the benefits for years to come.



Entrepreneurs with Disabilities is a program for those individuals that are looking at self-employment by starting their own business.

If I want to participate in the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities program, what are the steps?

1. Contact Entrepreneurs with Disabilities, call or email them to answer some qualifying questions.
2. Fill out their Entrepreneurial Assessment - this

will determine your challenges and success points.

3. Attend the first In-Take meeting - there is a presentation about actual business set up steps, what is involved in the program and an application where you self-declare your disability and you fill out required paperwork such as a non-disclosure agreement and media consent forms.
4. Talk about your business ideas. Program participants do an activity called the Idea Napkin - it highlights 5 areas of business that are needed to create a business plan. Participants are assigned an advisor, can have a mentor up to 2 hours a month, and attend many workshops, including networking or round table events to discuss challenges and get solutions to them.

What if I am receiving financial support from a government agency?

Entrepreneurs with Disabilities works with many individuals of various financial abilities - individuals that have AISH, Employment Insurance and Income Support. Talk to your support worker for information about taking training.

How many people are in an average class?

Entrepreneurs with Disabilities does not run a 'class', but instead a program that is directed one-on-one for each participant.

What if I don't have the technology to learn online?

Entrepreneurs with Disabilities will work with individuals to accommodate their needs, in person or online. Prospect will meet participants where they are most com-

To Get Started...



- What's your Idea? Analysis using the Idea Napkin
- Market Research & Analysis - Is there a need?
- The Business Plan, Cash Flow and Self-Care
- Financing – Rise and other Options



- Type of business structure – sole proprietor, corporation, partnership?
- Registering your business
- A Business License/Permits
- Bookkeeping & tax considerations



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comfortable during pandemic times and most meetings are virtual, however for those that need to meet in person - proper protocols are in place.

How many people complete the program on average?

In 2019/2020 program there were 130 clients, with 35 businesses started.

Do I get help starting my business?

YES! Entrepreneurs with Disabilities works with participants to start businesses and has a financial partner for those that need financial backing. Their partner, RISE, works with entrepreneurial micro loans based on character lending, they have trained and coached over 1000 clients and disbursed more than 1.5 million dollars in small loans to launch over 400 businesses.

After acceptance to the program, Entrepreneurs with Disabilities works with you to create a business plan, cash flow and self-care management, financing options, business structure - legal setup, register your business, license your business, bookkeeping, taxes and provide you with a business startup kit. There is NO COST to the program, contact Entrepreneurs with Disabilities below.

What if I have a learning disability, are there additional supports in the classroom?

Entrepreneurs with Disabilities advisors, work directly with program participants to assist and accommodate individual needs. They make extra effort to ensure that clients meet their individual accommodation needs.

Entrepreneurs with Disabilities helps people who face barriers to employment overcome those obstacles by supporting individual skill development and creating workplace capacity.

For more information about Entrepreneurs with Disabilities contact:

Phone: 780-705-9677

Email: info@entrepreneurswithdisabilities.ca

Web: www.entrepreneurswithdisabilities.ca/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/EDPEdmonton/

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/groups/13586396/



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VAD is working with NAIT 's Bachelor of Technology Capstone Program again to promote Non-Profit as a career opportunity for those individuals entering the workforce for the first time, for those looking to change careers or for those graduating from post secondary.

Watch over the next three months as VAD and partners showcase #WorkForNonProfits on social media, on our web page and through asking our members and poten-



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