

Fifteen Tips for Keeping Staff, Volunteers and Yourself Happy

1. Choose the right people in the first place through behavioral interviewing, competency assessments, and matching interests.
2. Communicate and get agreement on expectations – making sure those expectations are appropriate to the job and to the mission of the organization.
3. Reinforce goals and expectations with written job or volunteer role descriptions.
4. Help staff and volunteers understand how their contributions fit into the mission and vision of the organization.
5. Give regular, timely and relevant positive and constructive feedback about performance.
6. Schedule regular face-to-face meetings – and keep those appointments.
7. Listen to others' ideas, and use them – giving full credit, of course.
8. Pay attention to how the relationship is working, and be willing to talk about what works, and how to make things better. (Download [25 Questions that Can Dramatically Improve Your Relationships](#)).
9. Publicly and privately acknowledge the contributions of staff and volunteers.
10. Engage and employ the unique talents and special interests of each person.
11. Recognize each person's preferred communication style, and adapt where you can.
12. Make sure you have the person-power you need (with both staff and volunteers), so that workers feel challenged but not exhausted and burdened.
13. Support your staff and volunteers in achieving work-life harmony – and model it for them. (Really!)
14. Positively reinforce desirable behaviors (such as going above and beyond the job description) and negatively reinforce undesirable behaviors (such as lateness).
15. Provide multiple opportunities for staff and volunteers to develop themselves through training, coaching, mentoring and shadowing opportunities.

Sound great – and totally unrealistic? Whether you are a staff person, volunteer, or a manager of staff and volunteers, ask [Deborah](#) how starting small can make a BIG DIFFERENCE!