

Do you give chance to volunteers who wish to volunteer in the areas they are not skilled in?

Audience: There are some volunteers who wish to have a different work experience apart from the fields that they are skilled in. How do you assess them? Are they provided with a chance to work in different areas of an NGO?

Speaker: We first try and assess if the volunteer is capable of working in any other areas. If we find that the person is not that capable we do not put him in an impact project but ask him to first start with generic volunteering.

Audience: How do you assess these volunteers who wish to volunteer in areas they are not skilled in?

Speaker: We do not assign such volunteers to impact projects as they lack the experience. For example we cannot risk giving a volunteer an NGO HR project where he has no previous experience in HR. Practical experience is a must.

Suppose I am an accounts person who is bored with the monotony of maintaining ledgers, invoices, etc. and is seeking to have a new experience of teaching and spending time with kids.

Such a volunteer should not be rejected outright but should be started on generic volunteering. Over a period of time it can be assessed whether the volunteer is capable of handling and teaching the kids. But denying the person the first chance to volunteer will keep him away from volunteering itself.

Typically assessment can also be done using simple techniques. Example: a person with IT background wants to volunteer in HR, he can be given a small task of writing an HR policy to assess the basic skill required. The volunteer himself will be able to assess his skills with such tests.

Audience: I want to cite the example of my organization. We do give generic assignments to our volunteers but along with this we also have an internship program where we use individuals with specialized skills to do time bound assignments related to functionality.