

Can volunteering lead to paid employment?

Yes - but it's not a quick fix.

People who are unemployed can sometimes think that after volunteering for a short while they will get into paid work, either at the organisation where they volunteer or elsewhere. But this rarely happens. This expectation can lead to frustration and disappointment.

To get the most out of volunteering it helps to have realistic expectations.

Volunteering can genuinely improve employment prospects but it can take longer than expected.

What we say to unemployed clients

Volunteering can really help you get a job - but not always as quickly as you'd like.

If you take on a volunteer role, and are committed, you will get huge benefits. For example you can:

- Keep your skills fresh
- Get new skills and experience
- Increase your confidence levels
- Get references
- Socialise

The experiences you gain through volunteering will really help when you come to complete job applications and do interviews. But of course you will still have to apply and compete for any job. You may or may not get the first job you apply for, but you will be on the road to getting paid work.

Some facts and figures

In a government poll of people in employment, 41% reported that volunteering had helped them get into paid work.

Volunteering is a unique opportunity to try out different work-based roles, have regular, hands-on experience, receive training and support, and get a reference. 88% of people out of work and looking for a job said (in another national survey) that they believed volunteering has a positive effect on job prospects.