

News of Jobs

You Can Make Volunteering A Rewarding Part Of A Job Search

(NAPSA)—It's often said that searching for a job can be a full-time job. While at times the job search may feel like a never-ending task, there are ways to keep your spirits up and improve your chances of getting that much-desired job offer.

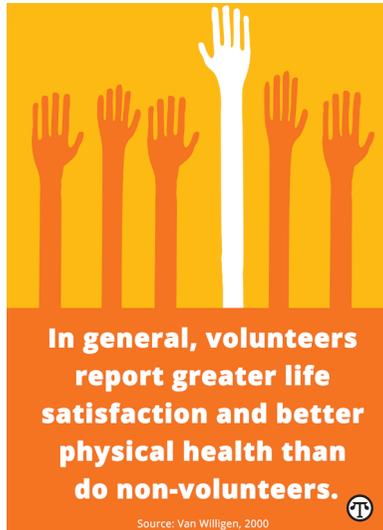
For instance, volunteering can be a great way to learn new skills, keep your current skills in shape and show potential employers you aren't just sitting at home waiting for them to call you.

Employers are aware of economy fluctuations and personal life changes; they also realize that volunteering can provide valuable experience on par with paid work. Plus, donating your efforts to a worthy cause can fill a need in your community, provide personal satisfaction and open doors for job prospects.

"All of our undergraduate students complete service projects in communities across the nation," said Dr. Mary Hawkins, Bellevue University president. "Many of these are working adults who take online classes to complete their degrees. Many have reported the direct and indirect career benefits of these experiences, from making new contacts to expanding their qualifications."

Volunteering can offer a number of benefits, including:

Meeting new people—You never know who you will meet while volunteering. You might meet someone who is hiring, someone who can be a reference and vouch for your work ethic, or someone who can serve as a mentor. Take a personal interest in those you meet—ask where they



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work and why they chose to volunteer. Be sure to mention that you are seeking a new opportunity, or they might not even think to mention openings to you if they hear about positions.

Learning new skills—The nice thing about doing work without pay is there are few prerequisites. Have you always wanted to plan events, run AV equipment or operate power tools? Volunteering can be an excellent chance to grow some skills you may not have gotten the opportunity to pursue in your professional life. Be sure to add these newly acquired skills to your résumé.

Showing diversity—When a potential employer looks at your résumé, items that show you care

about more than just making money are beneficial.

Also, community involvement is a key value for many organizations, as it shows you have taken the initiative to give of your time. Employers want new individuals who will fit into their existing cultures and improve the overall profile of the company. Volunteer experience on your résumé can put you one step ahead.

Adding balance to your life: Volunteering can relieve stress by getting your mind off your own worries and providing perspective on the situations of others. It can also improve your overall health. In general, volunteers report greater life satisfaction and better physical health than do nonvolunteers, and their life satisfaction and physical health improve at a greater rate as a result of volunteering.

Setting an example—If possible, invite friends, family and your children to volunteer with you. Not only are you improving your situation, you can help improve theirs. It is never too early or too late to experience the benefits of giving back to your community. Volunteering with loved ones can also bring camaraderie to your own family and group of friends, as well.

As you continue the job search, your new volunteer experiences will help you maintain an upbeat attitude. Leave no stone unturned—talk to everyone you can and read every career advice article you can. With a little patience and persistence, and some résumé-boosting volunteer work, your job search will pay off.

Learn more at www.makeithappennow.org.