

Volunteer for a happier career

If you know anyone who does volunteer work, you've probably heard them say that they get back so much more than what they give. Well, they're right. They do.

But apart from the obvious feel-good factor of knowing they're contributing to the greater good, what else do people get out of volunteering?

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Over and above that already impressive list, volunteering can also make you happier at work, give you self-confidence, boost your skills base and expand your professional network.

Volunteering can guide you towards a happier career by helping you:

- **Grow skills:** As a HR manager Anna McNaughton, General Manager Career & Change at recruiter Chandler Macleod Group sees the tangible benefits of staff members growing their skills through their voluntary work. It makes no difference to employers, she says, whether the skills have been gained from managing their children's footy team, sitting on a not-for-profit board, or from a day job. They're all credible skills.
- **Forge new connections:** The connections you make as a volunteer can lead to your name being put forward for roles that you might not have considered. Your growing network also means there are more people out there with their ear to the ground for you and who can also act as referees. Often, they can

open doors for you in other industries where you can use your transferrable skills.

- **Find mentors:** When you're working as a volunteer you will meet people from all walks of life who can be invaluable mentors for you and give you a totally new perspective on your career path. Keep your eyes and ears open for these opportunities.
- **Creating business opportunities:** Ross and Ramona Headifen are the classic grass roots volunteers who are passionate about plastic and keeping it off our beautiful beaches and out of our waterways. They put their passion into practice by taking over Beach Patrol in Melbourne and organising regular community clean-ups as well as educating the public about the environmental impacts of plastics. This led to them starting their own business Plastic Waste Solutions, which produces biodegradable and recycled plastic products.
- **Make you happier at work.** Volunteering simply makes people happier, says McNaughton. And happier in life very often translates to happier at work by making you look on the good side of things. "Volunteering allows (people) to view the job differently and appreciate the good things they have in their role," she says.

Ultimately happiness is a choice and taking steps such as volunteering can have a really positive impact on your life, work and career. Never underestimate how much helping others can pay off personally and professionally. Visit [SEEK volunteer](#) today to discover all the volunteer opportunities available to you. Choose to volunteer!