

REVIEW MEETINGS

What are Review Meetings?

Review meetings are sessions where the volunteer and the volunteer co-ordinator can meet to discuss their experience. This is an important opportunity for personal time to give feedback and receive input on their role. The meeting should be a two way conversation with the outcome being for the benefit of both parties.

Why Have Them?

Review meetings are a chance for volunteers to speak their mind and receive clear feedback. The meeting is an opportunity for you to let them know that you are pleased with their work and also to raise any problems in a solution-seeking manner. Volunteers should leave a review meeting feeling appreciated, motivated and clear on the direction of their role.

The term review is often perceived negatively and is associated in peoples' minds with being told what to do and how to do it. Review meetings are really about enabling you volunteers to make the most of their experience and grow and develop within their roles. They are an essential feature of your volunteer management as they highlight the individual needs of volunteers which can often be overlooked.

What to Cover in a Review Meeting?

It is important to remember that all RDA volunteers are individuals. Some volunteers will need a lot of help and support from the Group and others will need very little, some will be happy to come in week by week and carry out the same role, whilst others will thrive on fresh challenges. In order to ensure you meet the individual needs of your volunteer's structure your review meetings around three key areas of informing, developing and supporting your volunteers.

Informing your volunteers

- Provide information and advice on their role
- Answer any questions they may have
- Identify any further training required

Developing your volunteers

- Set personal goals
- Review progress within their role
- Seek out opportunities for development

Supporting your volunteers

- Encourage feedback on their experience and their ideas for development
- Recognition for their contribution

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation is a great way to help volunteers reflect on their experience and ensure they given an active voice in review meetings. It is worth remembering that people often learn best when they see for themselves what needs to change. The questions you ask within the session can prompt this process.

Some questions you might ask include:

- What has gone well?
- What would you do differently next time?
- Are there any other tasks within the organisation you would like to do?
- Do you feel there is any support or training you need?

Implementing Review Meetings

When developing a system of review meetings involve volunteers to find out what kind of system would be most suitable. It is easier to implement new processes if volunteers are able to provide their own input and understand the benefits to everyone.

It is important to emphasise the nature of reviews as a two way conversation to avoid problems with the status of volunteers within the Group. In a review meeting volunteers are not being grilled by their boss, but are benefiting from a named person to take problems to, who is responsible for ensuring volunteers know what they are doing.

Conducting a Review Meetings

The meeting itself should take place in a quiet relaxed atmosphere and take the form of an informal chat. It is important to make your volunteers feel at ease so they can speak openly and honestly about their experiences.

Use a review form to structure the session and highlight any points for further discussion, but be careful to avoid simply reading through it point by point as this can make the session feel formal and uncomfortable.

- Try to avoid calling the session a review meeting, mention you'd like a catch up about their experience volunteering.
- To ensure you both feel relaxed and at ease have the session in an informal setting, perhaps in a local coffee shop.
- Set aside enough time to ensure everything is covered, the meeting should last around 30 minutes.
- Always finish by thanking the volunteer and recognising their contribution to RDA.