

Friends of Kentucky Libraries

Fourteenth Annual Membership Meeting

Saturday, October 10, 2026

Presentation: Passive Supporters into Active Volunteers

Turning non-profit **members** into **active volunteers** requires bridging the gap between passive support and hands-on action. Most non-profits depend on volunteers to help run projects, raise funds, organize events, and even manage day-to-day administration.

The three R's for volunteering and volunteer management are **Recruitment**, **Retention**, and **Recognition**. Good volunteer experiences help connect you to your members and will help retain them and even attract new members!

Good news – is that they are already members so already have some indication that they believe in your mission. But have you reminded them recently? Regularly? Long term engagement I skey.

Setting yourself up for success, getting started.

How to get started

1. Create a simple volunteer manual. There are many online examples – should be tailored to your organization and size
 - [KY Not for Profits](#)
 - NH [Template for Volunteer Policies](#)
2. Agree upon the need. What do you need volunteers for specifically?
3. Create a simple job description for each volunteer role
 - € Make it clear the expectations – e.g. time, specific talents, lifting, etc
 - € Assign a main contact

Recruitment. Match volunteer needs with interests

- € Know what they are interested in. You need information about your potential volunteers – e.g. membership database – do you even have one? a simple excel is ok.

FOKL Passive Supporters into Active Volunteers Checklist

- € Have you captured information about their interests and skills in your member database? Have you ever even asked them if they are interested?
- € Have you asked them what their interests are when they sign up? Is it *specific* enough that you can match their interests/skills to needs?
- € Recruit through newsletter, social media using that job description.

Retention. Give them a great experience

1. Onboarding
 - € Make it personal and connect to your mission
 - € Don't waste their time
 - € Consider peer support as relevant
2. Volunteer orientation – if appropriate – will depend on the task/job
 - € Make sure they understand your work and policies as applicable – this will depend on the role.
 - € Equip them to speak about your mission and values- they are often on the front line and *your* ambassadors
3. Training orientation – as applicable
 - € Same as above.
 - € Avoid overload- keep it to the basics

Recognition. Gratitude with an **attitude**

- € Be sincere. Make it personal
- € Make it clear how they help with the mission. They make a difference!
- € Continuous feedback – regular check ins/communication

Resources

FOKL Passive Supporters into Active Volunteers Checklist

Making the effort to get your volunteers off to a good start is critical. A comprehensive example checklist (adjust to your needs and size) and resources. Not everything will be relevant or applicable.

[Download checklist](#) from the Wild Apricot website.

<https://ncnonprofits.org/blog/checklist-building-better-volunteer-programs>

<https://commonslibrary.org/new-volunteer-checklist/>

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Kentucky FOL has great resources and webinars! <https://friendskylibraries.org/>