



Interview guidance

For recruiting Local Campaigners

When we're approached by a potential volunteer, it's important to ask a few key questions. This ensures both parties are clear about the expectations of the role and volunteering.

In order to recruit suitable volunteers and ensure their experience is a quality one, find out about their skills, experience and aspirations. It's a two way process and the potential volunteer may have questions for you so they can assess the organisation **is the right fit with their reasons for volunteering.**

Below are a few questions you may want to consider when meeting a potential volunteer – it doesn't need to be a long meeting and you could limit the questions you ask to around six. Below are some suggestions.

We recommend you prepare your interview approach, using questions that suit the needs of your campaign, and define positive and negative indicators before you go into the conversation. This is so you can be clear on why you may say no to a prospective volunteer, what follow up questions you may have or what additional plans for learning and support you may want to make with them.

e.g.

What previous experience do you have of campaigning?

- Positive –
 - yes, can articulate what made it successful or why it wasn't and what might be done differently next time
 - no, shows a willingness to learn (NB – ask follow up questions so you can determine the level of support required).
- Negative –
 - yes, but only wants to campaign on issues we can't support e.g. legalising cannabis
 - no, sees no point in trying to change things.

About campaigning:

Tell me something about the campaign you'd like to run in your area? (If appropriate)

Prompt - Why is this important to you? What do you want to change? Do you have any idea about how you'd achieve this change?

What previous experience or skills do you have that are relevant to campaigning?

This will obviously help to assess their suitability to carry out the role. Looking for previous experience of campaigning, managing the activities of others, working as part of a team?

Tell me about a campaign you're inspired by?

Prompt - Have you seen any campaigns, nationally, or in your local area that have really made a difference?

About volunteering:

Why are you interested in this volunteering role with the MS Society?

Find out more about the potential volunteer's connection to MS and/or local groups. This helps to identify their motivation for volunteering. It may be that they have a connection with MS or that they are looking to gain experience. Someone might be interested in volunteering for the MS Society but might not be aware of all the roles available.

Prompt - If you're looking for experience, will this role fulfil your potential?

Are you aware of the work of the MS Society? And of this campaign? (if appropriate)

It's always helpful to give potential volunteers information about the organisation and the support/activities of the branch – although this is also included in the Welcome package online and available from the volunteering team.

Prompt - Visit our website www.mssociety.org.uk for more information about our campaigns.

What do you hope to gain from volunteering?

It's a good idea to seek out a volunteer's aspirations before talking about the role description.

Are you happy to undertake the tasks and commitment outlined in the role description?

Go through the role description together to clarify what the role involves. You can make amends to this document to record what has been agreed (only deletions of tasks, not additions). Some volunteers may be happy to do some of the role but may not be comfortable with all the activities listed. This will form the principles of involvement.

Do you have any other commitments/issues that may affect your volunteering?

The potential volunteer may be working, studying, caring for someone, have another regular commitment or specific access requirements. This does not mean they can't volunteer or that they will be unreliable. It does mean however, that we can plan for the future and consider the flexibility of the role and supporting the individual's needs from the outset.

Do you have any questions for us?

This may be obvious but it's an easy question to forget to ask!

Finally, assuming both parties are willing to progress with volunteering in the role, are there any key considerations that need to be shared at this stage?

For example, if the role requires public speaking or an in depth induction training, it's wise to ensure the volunteer is aware of this from the outset.

These stipulations will be included on the role description but ensure you're prepared before the interview with all the information you need to impart e.g. training dates.

If the volunteer isn't suitable or they feel the role is not for them, it's ok for you or the potential volunteer to say no.

The reality is that not everyone is suitable or wants to volunteer with us.

Campaign Organiser toolkit - Interview guidance	
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