

Volunteering

Task 1 – Jobs: Important factors

Think about the factors that are important to you when you think about jobs.
What are the top three most important factors for you?

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd

Compare your answers with a partner.

Task 2 – Mini survey

You are going to ask five of your classmates a question about voluntary work. Try to get as much information as possible and make notes.

Names					
Have you ever done any voluntary work?					
If so, what did you do?					
If not, would you like to?					

- Now tell the group what you found out.

Task 3 – Bizarre jobs for volunteers

There are some very strange jobs you can do if you want to be a volunteer in Britain. Read these job descriptions and decide which ones you would like to try!

1. Toad warden – help toads cross the road when they migrate for the annual breeding season.
2. Tandem bike rider - be the front rider on a tandem bike so blind people can enjoy cycling.
3. Pet carer – look after pets when elderly owners go into hospital.
4. Festival volunteer – work on a charity stall at a music festival - and get a free ticket.
5. Neighbour dispute mediator – work with communities to resolve local clashes.
6. Lifeboat crew member – go out on emergency rescues as well as giving training sessions on using boats.
7. Radio producer – to make programmes for community radio station.
8. Death row pen pal – make friends with people facing the death penalty in the U.S.
9. Beach watcher – organise cleaning the beaches and do beach surveys.
10. Emergency relief worker – support rescue workers and evacuees in the UK in rest centres.
11. Support worker for prisoners' families – Offer support to families of people in prison.
12. Kids theatre volunteer - work with children to do theatre plays and musical productions.
13. Resuscitation trainer – teach basic life support skills in community centres and schools.
14. Green gym environmental volunteer - get fit through conservation activities like planting trees or improving footpath

Adapted from: http://www.volunteersweek.org.uk/press_unusual.htm

Task 4 – Reading: Volunteering for love?

GROUP A	GROUP B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To give up time ○ To recruit people ○ To win a bid ○ What's in it for me? ○ To squeeze in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A sense of altruism ○ This selfish age ○ Self awareness ○ A life partner ○ Speed dating

Volunteering – for love?

Working as a volunteer can help you to meet new friends or even find romance in unexpected circumstances.

Benefit the community

Doing some form of voluntary work has never been more popular with British people. Over 20 million people were engaged in voluntary activities in 2013. Volunteering means giving up time to do work of benefit to the community. It can be based in the UK or overseas. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) has long recruited people in the UK to fill usually professional roles in developing countries. Volunteering can take many forms, from working with children with learning difficulties, in an animal hospital, or planting trees. When London won its bid to host the 2012 Olympics, up to 70,000 volunteers were needed to help ensure the games were a success.

What's in it for me?

Volunteers can be anyone of any age. Students and full-time workers often manage to squeeze in some volunteer work. But what motivates volunteers? Some do it out of a sense of altruism while others find they have free time available. But in this selfish age more are asking what they can get out of it. Some mention self-awareness. As Pukul, 28, who works in communications in Manchester, says, 'you're no longer doing it for yourself but for someone else'. Many mention the opportunity to get to know people they would not normally meet.

Do you come here often?

A relatively new phenomenon is the hope of meeting new friends or even a life partner through volunteering. In a recent survey 20% of 18-24 year-olds and 8% of over-65s said their love lives had improved since they began volunteering. 'Volunteering is what speed-dating promises but never fulfils - a way of seeing a lot of truth about someone you've just met in a short a time as possible,' says Mukta Das. The same poll found that nearly half of volunteers enjoyed improved health and fitness, a quarter had lost weight - especially those working with children or doing conservation projects - and two-thirds felt less stressed. So, it seems volunteering may improve your life – you may even find the person of your dreams.

Written by Magnus of the British Council's TrendUK team.

- Do you have any organisations that are similar to VSO in your country?
- Why do young people usually decide to volunteer?
- Do you think that volunteering is a good way to meet people? Why/ why not?
- Do you agree that working as a volunteer can help you to keep fit?