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INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO USE THE RECRUITMENT MESSAGING TOOLKIT

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Associate Professor Patrick Dunlop & Hawa Muhammad Farid
Future of Work Institute, Curtin University, Western Australia





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HOW TO USE THE RECRUITMENT MESSAGING TOOLKIT

WHAT IS THE RECRUITMENT MESSAGING TOOLKIT?

One challenge with recruiting volunteers is knowing exactly **what to say** to prospective volunteers about the volunteering experience. You will want to make volunteering sound **appealing** to non-volunteers, but you also need to provide a **realistic** account of the experience and set the right **expectations**.

The Recruitment Messaging Toolkit is an **Excel sheet** containing messages and photos to be used in volunteer recruitment campaigns. The messages contained in the spreadsheet have been analysed by researchers at the Future of Work Institute at Curtin University. These messages:

- Were judged by potential volunteers to be appealing,
- Were judged by current volunteers to be accurate in representing the volunteering experience,
- Have clear links to people's expectations about the volunteering experience.

Depending on what experiences you think your group can offer to volunteers, you may find this toolkit helpful for your next volunteer recruitment exercise.

HOW WAS THE RECRUITMENT MESSAGING TOOLKIT DEVELOPED?

Recruitment messaging refers to the different components that might appear in volunteer recruitment materials (for example, posters, brochures, advertisements, social media posts). A problem that volunteer recruiters sometimes face is that new volunteers hold inaccurate expectations about what the volunteer experience is truly like. To help better manage the expectations of new volunteers during recruitment, we carried out a series of studies. These studies inform how volunteer recruitment messaging can help send attractive signals to prospective volunteers that also set realistic expectations for what the volunteering experience will be like.

In the research, we examined two types of messages: quotes from current volunteers who were describing positive experiences during interviews with us (109 in total), and photographs of volunteers carrying out different operational and non-operational activities (40 in total). In the first study, we consulted with a large group of volunteers and non-volunteers, to learn which of the messages were viewed as attractive and realistic. From this study, we identified 61 quotes and 28 pictures that were rated as being accurate by current State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers, and attractive by both current and potential volunteers in the SES. We considered these messages as viable candidates for a volunteer recruitment campaign.

In that first study, we also asked potential volunteers about the expectations they had of the volunteering experience, given the recruitment message. For example, they would examine a photograph, and be asked whether that photograph set certain expectations (e.g., that there would be teamwork, or that the volunteers will learn new skills). Thus, we now knew both, (a) which messages were attractive and realistic, and (b) what expectations those messages set amongst non-volunteers.



The first study provided us with good materials, however the photographs were all of SES volunteers, and thus for the second study, we expanded the investigation to include the fire and emergency services. We invited current volunteers from the fire and emergency services, and non-volunteers, to examine 45 images of fire services volunteers. The non-volunteers rated how attractive the images were and what expectations they set. The volunteers rated how realistic the images were. Of the 45 images we started with, we retained 21 that were deemed attractive and realistic. These images are included in this toolkit to aid with fire service volunteer recruitment.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE:

While the quotes and photographs included in this toolkit may not be specific to any particular volunteering group, they do depict many key experiences of emergency service volunteering that we observed in our interviews with volunteers and our surveys. If you find that the photographs are not suitable to be used in your volunteer recruitment campaigns, please use the suggested quotes and photos as a guide. Instead, you can substitute quotes from your own volunteers and take or use photographs of your volunteers performing similar operational and non-operational activities, but just be aware that those quotes and photos have not been subject to the research process.

WHO IS THE RECRUITMENT MESSAGING TOOLKIT FOR?

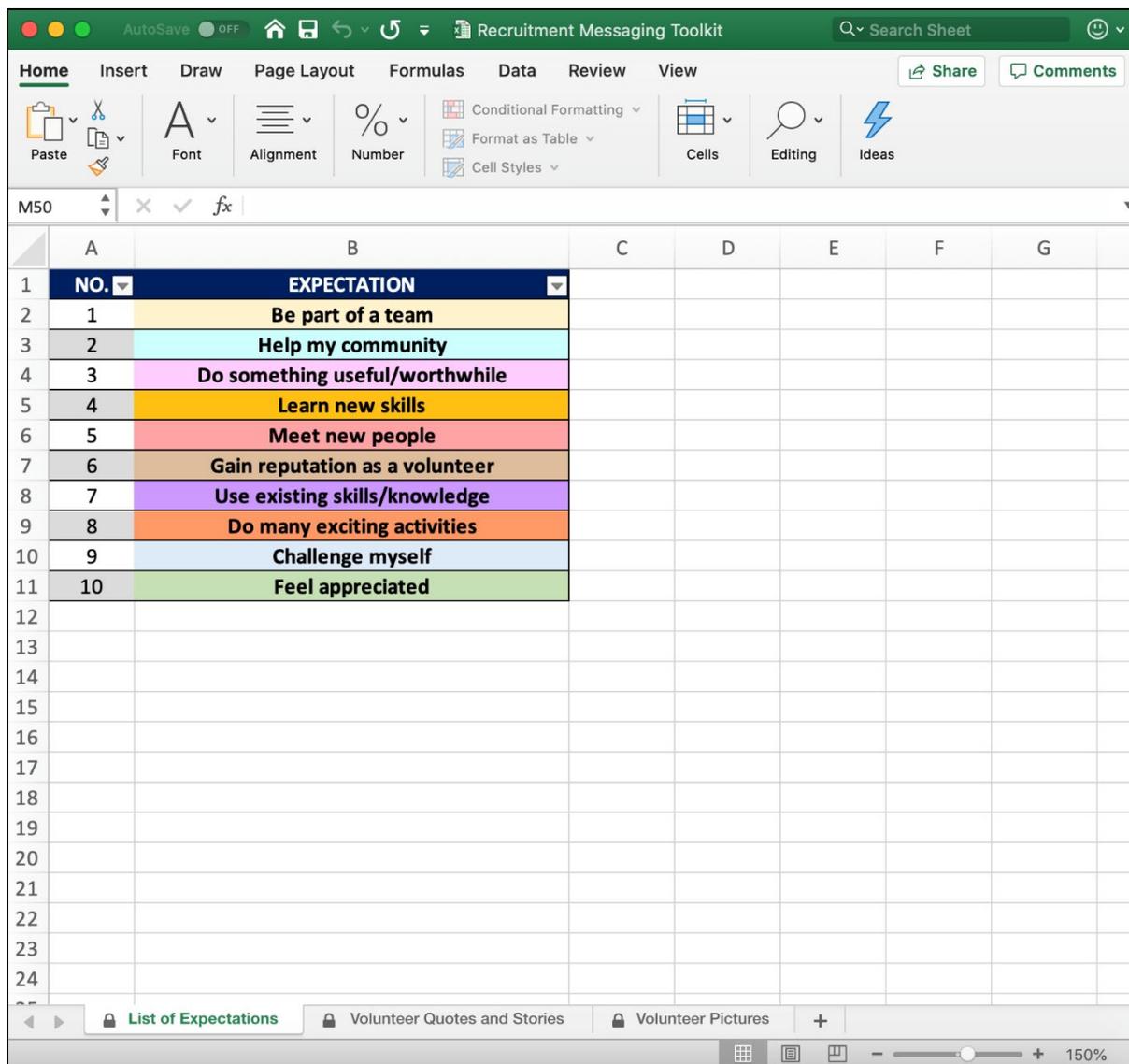
The Recruitment Messaging Toolkit is designed for volunteer leaders, volunteer recruitment officers, and staff in emergency service organisations who recruit volunteers.



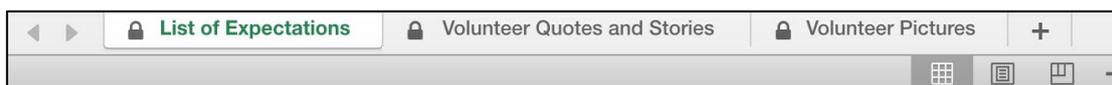
WHAT IS IN THE RECRUITMENT MESSAGING TOOLKIT?

Before we show you how to use the Toolkit, we first want to show you around.

When you open the Excel sheet, this is what you will see:



At the bottom of this Excel sheet, you will notice that there are three tabs:



The first tab, labelled 'List of Expectations', shows 10 expectations people might have about the volunteering experience. To start with, think for a moment about which of the ten expectations you think best describes the experience your group can offer to new volunteers. You can choose as many as you want, but we recommend you focus on the two or three that best describe what your group offers. If you cannot decide, try asking your group members what they think!



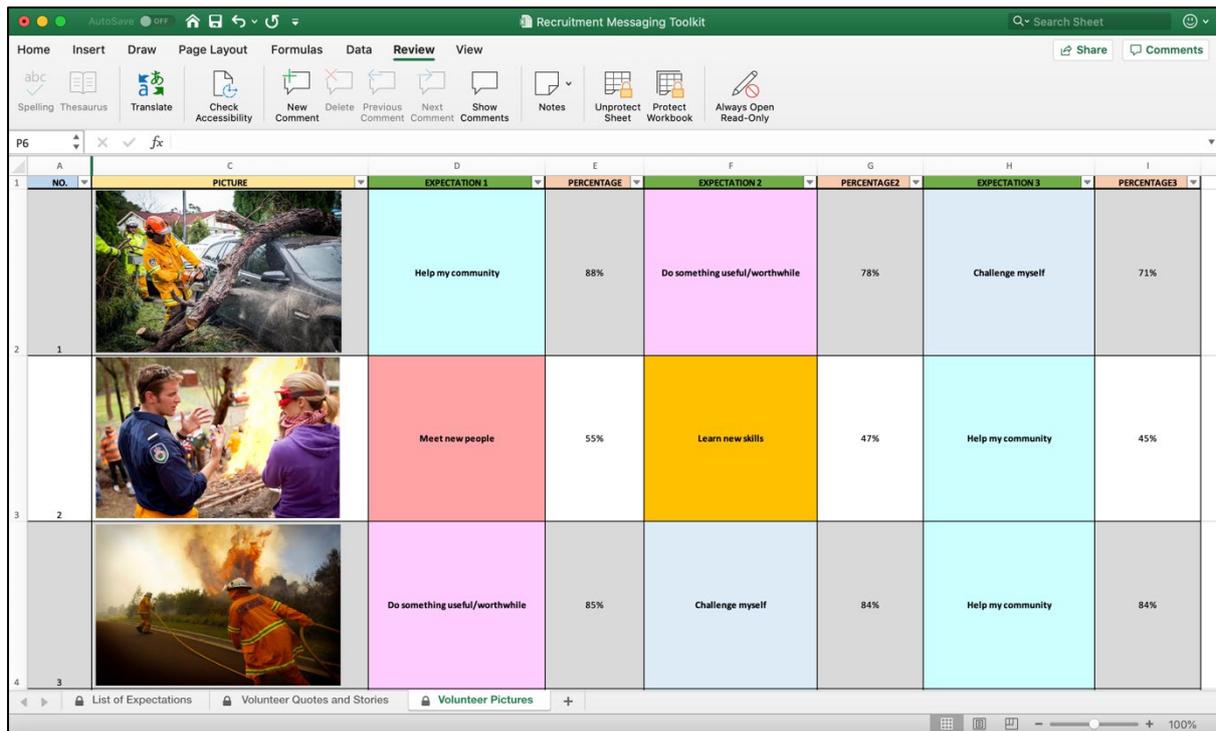
In the second tab, '**Volunteer Quotes and Stories**', you find a list of 61 volunteer quotes and stories. These are all quotes that volunteers in the emergency services said to our research team when asked to describe their experiences of being a volunteer in the emergency services. The quotes you can see in the sheet have been judged by non-volunteer community members as **attractive**, and judged by current volunteers as providing a **realistic** account of the experience of being a volunteer in the emergency services.

NO.	VOLUNTEER QUOTE / STORY	EXPECTATION 1	PERCENTAGE	EXPECTATION 2	PERCENTAGE	EXPECTATION 3	PERCENTAGE
1	I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.	Help my community	65%	Be part of a team	59%	Do something useful / worthwhile	56%
2	It feels good to give back to society.	Do something useful / worthwhile	61%	Help my community	60%	Be part of a team	54%
3	This role gives me the chance to use my professional skills to help the community in an emergency situation.	Use existing skills/knowledge	78%	Help my community	61%	Do something useful / worthwhile	49%
4	I enjoy spending time with the few people I have met in the unit who are decent, fun, and lovely friends.	Be part of a team	75%	Meet new people	65%	Do something useful / worthwhile	35%
5	I found a sense of purpose outside of work.	Do something useful / worthwhile	61%	Feel appreciated	44%	Challenge myself	43%
6	I was alone by myself in a new town and so I volunteered here and met new people and made new friends.	Be part of a team	75%	Meet new people	63%	Do something useful / worthwhile	40%
7	What continues to bring me back is being amongst an incredible group of people that are just action doers. They are selfless servers, they are people that are very welcoming, that are very, very much orientated towards service above themselves.	Be part of a team	79%	Do something useful / worthwhile	54%	Meet new people	49%
8	Different people, different skill sets, all working together; it's really good!	Be part of a team	75%	Do something useful / worthwhile	63%	Use existing skills/knowledge	62%
9	I really appreciate the great mateship that I have formed here.	Be part of a team	75%	Meet new people	72%	Feel appreciated	42%
10	We get on really well together as a team. And we've been through quite a lot together, and so there's quite that, you know, that bit of a family atmosphere as well.	Be part of a team	84%	Meet new people	60%	Help my community	44%
11	You get to learn new skills and be challenged.	Learn new skills	73%	Challenge myself	63%	Do something useful / worthwhile	44%
12	Volunteering here has given me a chance to give something back to the community.	Help my community	77%	Be part of a team	52%	Use existing skills/knowledge	43%
13	The people at the unit are really good, helpful and supportive.	Be part of a team	86%	Meet new people	54%	Do something useful / worthwhile	37%
14	It was a way for me to make friends.	Be part of a team	79%	Meet new people	70%	Feel appreciated	27%
15	Learning new skills every week too, that you wouldn't get otherwise! That's a buzz for me. Just learning new things and using them in everyday life, that's really special.	Learn new skills	77%	Do something useful / worthwhile	51%	Challenge myself	43%
16	Getting involved in all sorts of stuff, it is very broad and that helps it to remain interesting. It's that diversity, not just doing the one thing.	Do many exciting activities	52%	Do something useful / worthwhile	48%	Learn new skills	47%
17	I think we're all here because we're all in the same mind. We all like to volunteer; we all like to help people.	Help my community	81%	Be part of a team	79%	Do something useful / worthwhile	53%
18	You get opportunities to overcome your fears and set goals for yourself.	Challenge myself	75%	Do something useful / worthwhile	51%	Learn new skills	50%
19	The team are really nice and make me feel welcome.	Be part of a team	79%	Meet new people	63%	Feel appreciated	52%
20	Everybody, all passionate, wanting to be here, wanting to succeed and just wanting to						

Here is a close-up of some of the volunteer quotes or stories:

NO.	VOLUNTEER QUOTE / STORY
1	I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.
2	It feels good to give back to society.
3	This role gives me the chance to use my professional skills to help the community in an emergency situation.
4	I enjoy spending time with the few people I have met in the unit who are decent, fun, and lovely friends.

In the third tab, '**Volunteer Pictures**', you will find 21 pictures that depict volunteers in the fire and emergency services in operational and non-operational roles and scenarios. These 21 pictures were selected because they were judged as **attractive** by non-volunteers and **realistic** by volunteers. If the photos are not applicable for your group, use the suggested photos as a guide for the kinds of photos you can use or take of your own volunteers performing similar activities to be used in your volunteer recruitment campaigns.



VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

Next to each recruitment quote and photo, you will find the three **expectations** that non-volunteers saw as **most** represented by that quote and photo.

NO.	VOLUNTEER QUOTE / STORY	EXPECTATION 1	PERCENTAGE	EXPECTATION 2	PERCENTAGE	EXPECTATION 3	PERCENTAGE
1	I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.	Help my community	65%	Be part of a team	59%	Do something useful / worthwhile	56%
2	It feels good to give back to society.	Do something useful / worthwhile	61%	Help my community	60%	Be part of a team	54%

For example, in the picture below, the quote "I want to give back to the community and make our area safer," was rated by 65% of non-volunteers as creating an expectation that one would be able to 'Help my community' by becoming a volunteer.

NO.	VOLUNTEER QUOTE / STORY	EXPECTATION 1	PERCENTAGE
1	I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.	Help my community	65%

This is followed by 'Be part of a team' at 59%, and 'Do something useful/worthwhile' at 56%.

EXPECTATION 2	PERCENTAGE2	EXPECTATION 3	PERCENTAGE3
Be part of a team	59%	Do something useful / worthwhile	56%



USING THE FILTER TO SELECT YOUR RECRUITMENT MESSAGES

Now that you know your way around the toolkit, we will explain how to use the 'Filter' feature in Excel to select your recruitment messages.

First, think back to the expectations you believe your group can fulfil. For example, if you have a team that is welcoming of new volunteers, the 'Be part of a team' expectation might best represent your group and suit the messaging you want to promote in your recruitment campaign. If new volunteers will have opportunities to learn new skills or be involved in challenging activities in your group, perhaps use the 'Learn new skills' or 'Challenge myself' expectations instead. Just make sure that which expectations you choose to focus on is based on a volunteering experience that you can offer to new volunteers!

Once you have identified which expectation you want to focus on, you can then use the 'Filter' function in the Excel sheet to find only the messages that best represent the expectation you want to set. To use the 'Filter' function, click the drop-down triangle shown in the image below to filter the messages shown in the 'Volunteer Quotes and Stories' tab.

A	B	C	D	E
1	VOLUNTEER QUOTE / STORY	EXPECTATION 1	PERCENTAGE	EXPECTATION 2
2	1 I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.		65%	Be part of a team
3	2 It feels good to give back to society.		61%	Help my community
4	3 This role gives me the chance to use my professional skills to help the community in an emergency situation.		78%	Help my community
5	4 I enjoy spending time with the few people I have met in the unit who decent, fun, and lovely friends.		75%	Meet new people
6	5 I found a sense of purpose outside of work.		61%	Feel appreciated
7	6 I was alone by myself in a new town and so I volunteered here and met people and made new friends.		75%	Meet new people
8	7 What continues to bring me back is being amongst an incredible group of people that are just action doers. They are selfless servers, they are people that are very welcoming, that are very, very much orientated towards helping others above themselves.		79%	Do something useful / worthwhile
9	8 Different people, different skill sets, all working together; it's really great.		75%	Do something useful / worthwhile
10	9 I really appreciate the great mateship that I have formed here. We get on really well together as a team. And we've been through quite a bit together, and so there's quite that, you know, that bit of a family atmosphere as well.		75%	Meet new people
11	10 You get to learn new skills and be challenged.		84%	Meet new people
12	11 Volunteering here has given me a chance to give something back to the community.		73%	Challenge myself
13	12 The people at the unit are really good, helpful and supportive.		77%	Be part of a team
14	13 It was a way for me to make friends.	Be part of a team	86%	Meet new people
15	14 Learning new skills every week too, that you wouldn't get otherwise! That's a buzz for me. Just learning new things and using them in everyday life, that's really special.	Learn new skills	79%	Meet new people
16	15 Getting involved in all sorts of stuff, it is very broad and that helps it to remain interesting. It's that diversity, not just doing the one thing.	Learn new skills	77%	Do something useful / worthwhile
17	16 I think we're all here because we're all in the same mind. We all like to volunteer; we all like to help people.	Do many exciting activities	52%	Do something useful / worthwhile
18	17 You get opportunities to overcome your fears and set goals for yourself.	Help my community	81%	Be part of a team
19	18 The team are really nice and make me feel welcome.	Challenge myself	75%	Do something useful / worthwhile
20	19 Everybody, all passionate, wanting to be here, wanting to succeed and just wanting to support each other.	Be part of a team	79%	Meet new people
21	20 We just need to get out and feel that you've helped!	Be part of a team	75%	Help my community
22		Feel appreciated	70%	Do something useful /



First, click on the 'Select All' option indicated in the image below. Doing that should 'untick' all of the expectations that are available in the drop-down bar.

NO.	VOLUNTEER QUOTE / STORY	EXPECTATION 1	PERCENTAGE
1	I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.	Help	65%
2	It feels good to give back to society.	Do some	61%
3	This role gives me the chance to use my professional skills to help the community in an emergency situation.	Use exi	78%
4	I enjoy spending time with the few people I have met in the unit who are decent, fun, and lovely friends.	Be	75%
5	I found a sense of purpose outside of work.	Do some	61%
6	I was alone by myself in a new town and so I volunteered here and met new people and made new friends.	Be	75%
7	What continues to bring me back is being amongst an incredible group of people that are just action doers. They are selfless servers, they are people that are very welcoming, that are very, very much orientated towards service above themselves.	Be	79%
8	Different people, different skill sets, all working together; it's really good!	Be part of a team	75%
9	I really appreciate the great mateship that I have formed here.	Be part of a team	75%
10	We get on really well together as a team. And we've been through quite a lot together, and so there's quite that, you know, that bit of a family atmosphere as well.	Be part of a team	84%
11	You get to learn new skills and be challenged.	Learn new skills	73%

Next, choose the expectation that you want to set in your recruitment campaign. For example, if you want to focus on teamwork, click the expectation 'Be part of a team,' click 'OK,' and it will filter out messages to only show you messages that are best represented by that expectation.

NO.	VOLUNTEER QUOTE / STORY	EXPECTATION 1	PERCENTAGE
1	I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.	Help	65%
2	It feels good to give back to society.	Do some	61%
3	This role gives me the chance to use my professional skills to help the community in an emergency situation.	Use exi	78%
4	I enjoy spending time with the few people I have met in the unit who are decent, fun, and lovely friends.	Be	75%
5	I found a sense of purpose outside of work.	Do some	61%
6	I was alone by myself in a new town and so I volunteered here and met new people and made new friends.	Be	75%
7	What continues to bring me back is being amongst an incredible group of people that are just action doers. They are selfless servers, they are people that are very welcoming, that are very, very much orientated towards service above themselves.	Be	79%
8	Different people, different skill sets, all working together; it's really good!	Be part of a team	75%
9	I really appreciate the great mateship that I have formed here.	Be part of a team	75%
10	We get on really well together as a team. And we've been through quite a lot together, and so there's quite that, you know, that bit of a family atmosphere as well.	Be part of a team	84%
11	You get to learn new skills and be challenged.	Learn new skills	73%



The picture below shows what you end up with when you filter the messages for that specific expectation. When using the filter feature, the messages you see will be all the messages that set the expectation you have selected.

NO.	VOLUNTEER QUOTE / STORY	EXPECTATION 1	PERCENTAGE
4	I enjoy spending time with the few people I have met in the unit who are decent, fun, and lovely friends.	Be part of a team	75%
6	I was alone by myself in a new town and so I volunteered here and met new people and made new friends.	Be part of a team	75%
7	What continues to bring me back is being amongst an incredible group of people that are just action doers. They are selfless servers, they are people that are very welcoming, that are very, very much orientated towards service above themselves.	Be part of a team	79%
8	Different people, different skill sets, all working together; it's really good!	Be part of a team	75%
9	I really appreciate the great mateship that I have formed here.	Be part of a team	75%
10	We get on really well together as a team. And we've been through quite a lot together, and so there's quite that, you know, that bit of a family atmosphere as well.	Be part of a team	84%
13	The people at the unit are really good, helpful and supportive.	Be part of a team	86%
14	It was a way for me to make friends.	Be part of a team	79%
19	The team are really nice and make me feel welcome.	Be part of a team	79%
20	Everybody, all passionate, wanting to be here, wanting to succeed and just wanting to support each other.	Be part of a team	75%
22	You know you're out there making a difference, and you're with people, that's terrific. You're part of a team. I just love it.	Be part of a team	84%

The same 'Filter' function can also be used for the 'Volunteer Pictures' tab as well.

NO.	PICTURE	EXPECTATION 1	PERCENTAGE
5		Be part of a team	69%
6		Be part of a team	89%
11		Be part of a team	76%



MOVING YOUR MESSAGES INTO YOUR RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

Now that you know how to filter and get the messages you want, you can copy the quotes or photographs that you would like to use into your recruitment materials.

Below is an example of an incomplete recruitment poster. Listed in the poster are the benefits of volunteering, roles that new volunteers could sign up for, and contact information. To accompany the information, you can include the quotes and photos from the messaging toolkit that are **attractive**, **realistic**, and setting the right **expectations**.

Insert logo here

Fire and Emergency Services:

Sign up and be a volunteer!

Fire and rescue volunteers play a significant role in helping to keep communities safe. Volunteers serve their respective local communities by undertaking both operational and non-operational roles.

Benefits of volunteering:

- Being part of a team
- Learning new skills
- Helping the community during emergencies
- Challenging yourself
- Meeting new people

Volunteer roles available:

Volunteers can take up roles based on their abilities and interests. Here are some roles to choose from:

- Fire safety and education
- Structural and bushfire fighting
- Communications
- Road crash rescue
- Welfare
- Administration
- First aid
- Vehicle driving both on and off-road
- Social media and public relations

What will I have to do?

- Attend regular training nights once per week
- Attend one weekend of training every 2 months
- Follow instructions given by your team leader
- Help your community be safe!

Insert logo here

For more information
 Contact XXXXX
 Website: XXXXX

Brigade contact information:

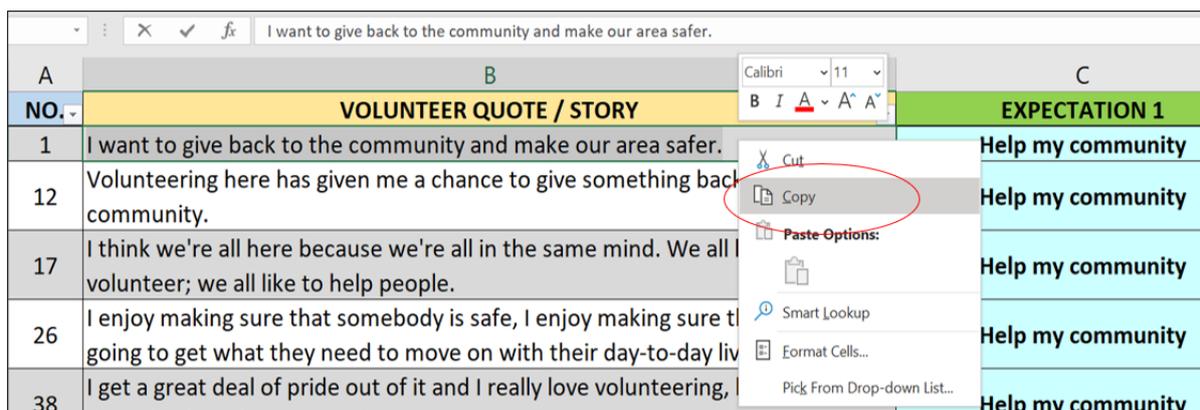
- Name: XXX
- Phone: XXX
- Email: XXX
- Facebook: XXX



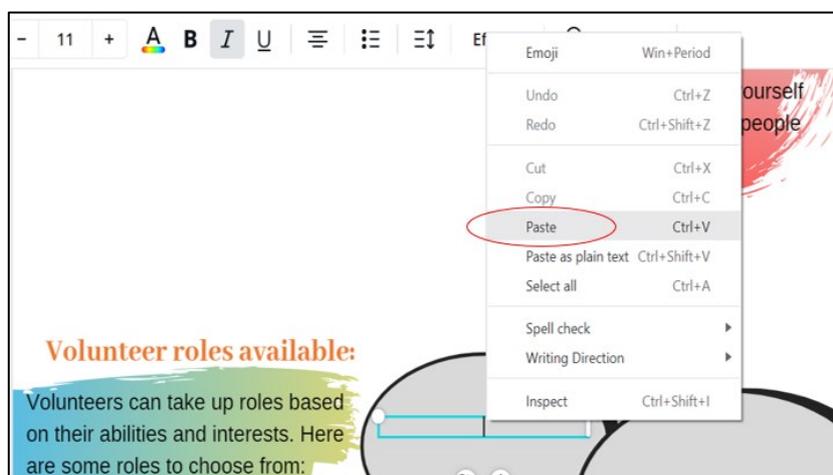
Using the expectation, 'Help my community' as an example, you can use the 'Filter' function to streamline the messages in the toolkit. This is what it will look like:

NO.	VOLUNTEER QUOTE / STORY	EXPECTATION 1	PERCENTAGE
1	I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.	Help my community	65%
12	Volunteering here has given me a chance to give something back to the community.	Help my community	77%
17	I think we're all here because we're all in the same mind. We all like to volunteer; we all like to help people.	Help my community	81%
26	I enjoy making sure that somebody is safe, I enjoy making sure that they're going to get what they need to move on with their day-to-day living.	Help my community	63%
38	I get a great deal of pride out of it and I really love volunteering, because I'm giving back to the community.	Help my community	72%
39	It's an absolute honour and privilege to serve the community in the hour of need, when people are at their lowest point. To have the skills, the training, and knowledge to do that is awesome and I'd recommend it to anyone!	Help my community	67%

From the choices of messages, select the quotes that best represent the volunteering experience you could give to new volunteers. Once you have chosen the messages you want to include, double-click the text you want to 'copy' and highlight it, and with the text highlighted, press 'Ctrl + C' to copy, or you can right-click your mouse and click 'Copy'.



You can now 'paste' it into your recruitment poster by moving your cursor to the appropriate location in the recruitment materials and pressing 'Ctrl + V' to paste, or you can right-click your mouse and click 'Paste.'



You can use the same method with the pictures as well.



When you have copied and pasted your quotes and pictures, this is what your recruitment poster could look like:

Insert
logo
here

Fire and Emergency Services: Sign up and be a volunteer!

Fire and rescue volunteers play a significant role in helping to keep communities safe. Volunteers serve their respective local communities by undertaking both operational and non-operational roles.

Benefits of volunteering:

- Being part of a team
- Learning new skills
- Helping the community during emergencies
- Challenging yourself
- Meeting new people




Volunteer roles available:

Volunteers can take up roles based on their abilities and interests. Here are some roles to choose from:

- Fire safety and education
- Structural and bushfire fighting
- Communications
- Road crash rescue
- Welfare
- Administration
- First aid
- Vehicle driving both on and off-road
- Social media and public relations

I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.

It's an absolute honour and privilege to serve the community in the hour of need, when people are at their lowest point. To have the skills, the training, and knowledge to do that is awesome and I'd recommend it to anyone!

What will I have to do?

- Attend regular training nights once per week
- Attend one weekend of training every 2 months
- Follow instructions given by your team leader
- Help your community be safe!

Insert
logo
here

For more information
Contact XXXXX
Website: XXXXX

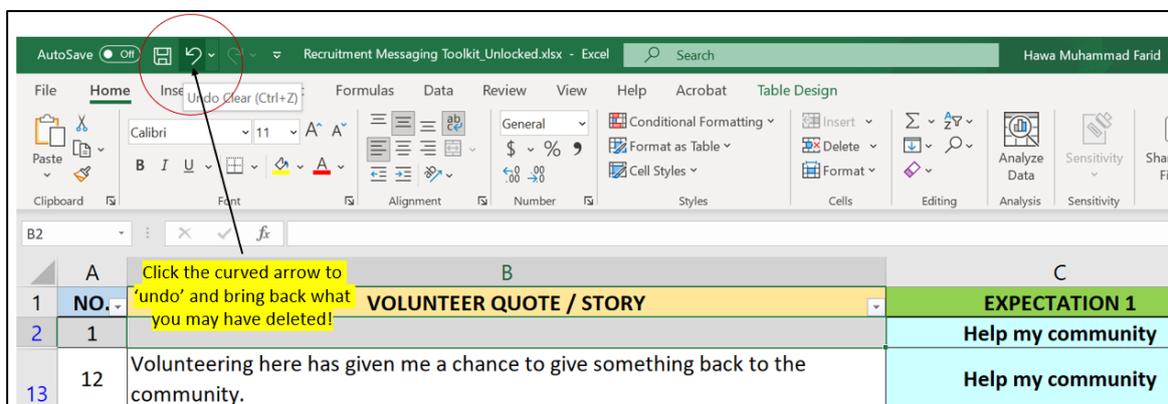
Brigade contact information:

- Name: XXX
- Phone: XXX
- Email: XXX
- Facebook: XXX



If you accidentally delete a quote or a picture in the toolkit, don't panic!

Press '**Ctrl + Z**' or click the '**Undo Clear**' button at the top left of the sheet.



This should bring back the quote or picture that you deleted. For some reason, if you can't get the message or picture back to where it was, you can always download the toolkit again at: <https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/driving-change/future-workforce> [This toolkit sits under the tab '**Sustainable Volunteering Tools**']

TARGETING YOUR RECRUITMENT

Targeting your recruitment is important if there are specific demographic groups you hope to attract more of within your team. Having diverse groups within your team can be useful as different people can bring different skills and abilities to the table.

For example, we found that some of the messages and pictures were rated even more favourably by women. You may wish to consider using these if you want to attract more women to your group. These are listed in the tables below and will be indicated with an 'X' in a column labelled **WOMEN** in the toolkit.

Quotes & Stories (Numbers correspond with the picture number in the toolkit)														
No.	2	5	13	15	16	21	22	28	41	46	48	49	55	57

Pictures (Numbers correspond with the picture number in the toolkit)										
No.	4	5	6	7	8	10	11	12	14	20

The messages below were rated more favourably by those aged 35 and under (indicated with an 'X' in the **UNDER 36** column in the toolkit):

Quotes & Stories (Numbers correspond with the picture number in the toolkit)		
No.	5	55

Pictures (Numbers correspond with the picture number in the toolkit)						
No.	3	12	13	15	17	19



Lastly, there were no differences in picture ratings between those who were born in Australia and those who were not. However, the quotes below were rated more favourably by those not born in Australia and these will be indicated with an 'X' in the **NON AUSTRALIAN-BORN** column in the toolkit:

Quotes & Stories <i>(Numbers correspond with the picture number in the toolkit)</i>				
No.	1	2	14	28

I hope you found this instructional document useful and that it provides you with guidance and support in your recruitment process. Happy recruiting! 😊



PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

The pictures included in the toolkit were approved to be used in volunteer recruitment campaigns. However, please make sure that these pictures are approved by your emergency services organisation to be used in your recruitment campaigns.

Thank you so much to the organisations and talented photographers that contributed to this toolkit!

Photo No.	Organisation	Photographer
1	NSW RFS (New South Wales Rural Fire Service)	Sharon Quandt
2	NSW RFS (New South Wales Rural Fire Service)	Damien Ford
3	NSW RFS (New South Wales Rural Fire Service)	Anthony Clark
4	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
5	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
6	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
7	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
8	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
9	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
10	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
11	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
12	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
13	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
14	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
15	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
16	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A
17	NSW RFS (New South Wales Rural Fire Service)	Ben Shepherd
18	Hazard Reduction Burn	N/A
19	DFES (Department of Fire and Emergency Services)	N/A
20	NSW Deployment (New South Wales Deployment)	Mike Janzs
21	CFA (Country Fire Authority)	N/A