



EXPERT ADVICE »

LEND A HAND

How to get the most from your event volunteers.

By *Carolee Noury*

Event volunteers can make a hectic day much less so. Whether the free help is family and friends or people you're meeting for the first time, streamlining the process will improve your ability to get the most from your volunteers. When coordinating volunteers, clear communication is essential. Emily Lalone, president and owner of Lalone Marketing, has supervised 25-30 volunteers at each of eight book signing events since 2013.

Lalone shares her best advice: "You must, must, must communicate with volunteers clearly and concisely the 'who, what, when, where, how' of your event. I send all of my volunteers an email two weeks before an event. I attach a Volunteer Packet. It tells when and where they should arrive; what to wear; their assignments; where they can store their things; that they should bring a snack; every single detail about how their day will play out. If they've already had a week or two to digest what they need to do and ask me any questions, it's out of the way before we're even on-site. When event day arrives, I meet with the volunteers first, hours before the event starts, to confirm they know everything about how things will go. Then it runs like clockwork. It's all about empowering people and having fun."



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