

HIGH SCHOOL

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT GUIDE

Small group leaders are a unique kind of people. I mean, what kind of person gives up their free time to volunteer in student ministry? What kind of person *chooses* to engage with high schoolers in conversations and long term relationships? What kind of person can balance the spiritual weight of the job with an appreciation for the kind of chaos, fun, drama, and depth that only high schoolers can create?

Answer: The **BEST** kind of people.

We know finding this kind of person sometimes feels like an impossible task, but they're out there. We promise. They attend your church. They park next to you in the parking lot. And right now, they're wondering whether they should get more involved. This is where YOU come in.

When it comes to recruiting high school volunteers, the conversations are SO important. This is your chance to communicate vision and need. This is your chance to determine whether that person could be a great fit for your ministry.

Looking for some help or some tips to get you started?

5 THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

1. Wisdom
2. A sense of adventure
3. Curiosity
4. Emotional Maturity
5. Sarcasm (just kidding). A straight shooter

BEFORE YOU START

- We suggest mapping out all of the important upcoming ministry dates on a calendar—any camps, retreats, special services, mission trips, expected late-night coffee runs, etc. That way, you can be upfront about the time commitment.
 - Secure a handful of current volunteers who would be willing to talk to potential volunteers. These people could be a good resource if potential volunteers want to get a more practical sense of what the job requires. Make sure these volunteers are going to give honest—and also positive—opinions.
 - Line up easy 'next steps'. Before you sit with potential volunteers, make sure you know where or who to direct them to. This might be a volunteer to shadow or an application to fill. At the very least, always ask for a follow-up conversation after they've had time to think and pray about it!
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WHAT TO SAY:

- **Lead with compliments.** If there's a reason that person stood out to you, let them know:
 - » "You're good at asking questions. I love that because . . ."
 - » "You seem so authentic, and that's huge to high schoolers because they care way more about real than they do about cool."
- **In the high school world, authenticity is a BIG DEAL.** So don't be afraid to make that a qualifier for potential volunteers.
 - » "The students asked for you because . . ."
 - » "You're so authentic, and that such an important quality for high schoolers to see modeled because . . ."
- **Debunk myths about the high school phase, and speak to their fears.**
 - » "You might think [insert misconception] about high schoolers, but . . ."
 - » "I love high schoolers because . . ."
 - » "You don't have to have the 'hard conversations' alone. That's what I'm there for. And it's okay to not have an answer ready. Offering to learn the answer with that student teaches them about what it means to own and grow their faith."
 - » "The longer you're in this, the better it gets because they'll trust you more. And they're desperate for connection and real relationships. So if you offer that to them, they'll take you up on it."
- **Ask questions!** Give the potential volunteer PLENTY of opportunity to be heard.
 - » "Why is this phase important to you?"
 - » "What's your story?"
 - » "What were you like in high school? What did you need?"
 - » "What do you think about high schoolers?"
 - » "Did you have mentors when you were in high school? If you did/didn't, why was that important?"
 - » "What makes you most nervous about working with high schoolers?"

WHAT NOT TO SAY:

- **Don't tell your worst stories:**
 - » "Let me tell you about this one time. It was crazy! I almost quit that day."
- **Don't be dramatic because as that can put a lot of pressure on potential volunteers.**
 - » "We lost three volunteers recently, and we're desperate. We need you."
- **Don't overhype and misrepresent.**
 - » "This is the easiest job in the world. High schoolers are a breeze."
- **Don't come to this conversation unprepared!** This communicates laziness or that the job really isn't that important. And it can be a waste of that person's time.
- **Don't be stingy!** In the end, they might not be right for *your* ministry, but they could be perfect in someone else's. And that's alright. **A win for one of us is a win for all of us!**