

Yes... I volunteered

to present some conclusions
at the PLS conference on volunteering
April 26, 2018

Lena Bondue, Director YouthStart
www.youthstart.be

Volunteering is

- An act of free choice and will
- Unpaid
- For a non profit cause
- Not a substitute or replacement for paid work.

- Formal, by taking on a formal volunteer assignment
- Informal, example : volunteer work in my sports club

Volunteering - main purpose

- To make a difference !
- Benefits to yourself and your career are secondary

Volunteering in Europe

- Is big, estimated at 100 million volunteers
- Estimated 25 % of all youth volunteer
- Big difference in volunteering rates per country. Toppers are Slovenia, Denmark, The Netherlands, Ireland.

Volunteering, does it do YOU good ?

Maintaining your confidence is especially important if you've been unemployed for a while or are discouraged in your search for a new **job** or **career**. **Volunteering** can help you feel active, **useful** and productive. Knowing your skills, accomplishments, interests and values is the foundation of **career** success.

Volunteering gives YOU experience

Most employers want workers who have workplace experience. Volunteer experience shows employers that you can manage your time, complete your tasks, get along with others and make a commitment. Your volunteer record can show an employer that you have the attitudes and skills they are looking for in a potential employee.

Volunteering helps YOU develop skills

Volunteering gives you a chance to build on skills you already have and learn new ones. For example, as a volunteer you might be able to use your second language or public speaking skills, learn a new computer program or develop new customer service skills.

Be realistic about your current skill level when you apply to volunteer. An organization may need people whose skill level is more advanced than yours in the position you want. Seek opportunities to develop your skills so that you can later qualify for a more challenging position.

Volunteering expands your network

Your network is all the people you know and all the people they know. Volunteering gives you the chance to meet new people and expand your network. Keep a list of the contacts you make while volunteering, which could include staff, board members, clients, other volunteers and suppliers. You never know who might help you and how.

Volunteering is a job reality check

When you're considering choosing a career direction or thinking about a career change, volunteering gives you a chance to explore different occupations and industry sectors. You get to know the people, challenges and rewards involved and gain a better understanding of the roles and jobs available.

Volunteer experience in a specific field or industry can make your resumé or application stand out when you're competing for a job or applying to a post-secondary program in that field.

Volunteering builds confidence

Maintaining your confidence is especially important if you've been unemployed for a while or are discouraged in your search for a new job or career direction. Volunteering can help you feel active, useful and productive.

Volunteering to know yourself

Knowing your skills, accomplishments, interests and values is the foundation of career success. Volunteer experience can be a good way to learn more about yourself and your potential to grow and develop. It also gives you a chance to find out how other people view you and your strengths.

Summary

Volunteering is a win-win situation. By helping others, you have the opportunity to boost not only your career but also your own well-being. When you volunteer in a role that's right for you, everybody comes out ahead.

Volunteering is indeed A LEVER FOR SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL INCLUSION OF YOUTH, our theme of today.

I want to thank the PLS team for their dedication to help our youth find their paths and for shedding light on the value of youth volunteers and volunteering