



Phone Rap: Contacting a Community Partner

Before contacting a community partner it is important that you have a firm grasp of what information you are looking for. We recommend having a pad of paper with a list of your questions and space to write the answers. Make sure to research the organization first online to find out more about what they do, what volunteer positions they have available (if any specifically), and if they have a Volunteer Coordinator.

Once you are in contact with the person who would be working with you, work with them fit the placement to your needs and theirs. REMEMBER, even if there isn't a specific volunteer opportunity that may fit advertised online, you can speak to the organization to see if maybe they might have a special project that you could work on. Below is a list of questions you will want to ask, in no particular order.

- I am interested in volunteering for your organization. Are there positions or opportunities available?
- Do you have a volunteer coordinator? If so, what is their name, email, phone number? If not, who would I talk to regarding volunteering with your organization?
- I found your website very interesting. Can you tell me more about what you do?
- Are there any requirements that you ask of prospective volunteers?
- I am taking a course where I need to volunteer for at least 30 hours over the next 6 weeks, is that possible?
- Where are you located/where would I be working?
- What hours/days can I work? I have certain limitations but I am flexible.
- As a part of my 30 hour commitment, I have to create and implement an advocacy project to help you accomplish your mission.
- What types of tasks would I be performing for your organization?
- Are you interested in working with a college student?

Sample Phone Rap - Generic

You: Hi, my name is Chris Griffin and I am interested in volunteering with your organization. Who should I speak to regarding volunteer opportunities with your organization?

Transfer to Volunteer Coordinator, if they aren't available ask for their email, phone, and the best time to reach them.

You: Hi, my name is Ralph Wiggum and I am a student at Pace University taking a class that incorporates working with a community organization into its curriculum. I found your organization online and found you interesting so I gave you a call. I need to perform 30 service hours by July 5th. Might there be a way that we could work together?

Them: *(description of volunteer opportunities.) Look for opportunities that fit with course requirements.*

You: Excellent, I am interested in (opportunity or opportunities) What exactly would my responsibilities be with your organization?

Or: Hmm, I'm not sure if any of those opportunities will work. The course requires me to implement an advocacy project where I work to support your mission by increasing awareness of or getting support for your mission. Might there be a way that I could help in this area?

You: If I were to volunteer with you what location would I be working and with whom?

You: What hours/days will I be needed? I have certain limitations but I am flexible.

You: Are there any requirements/paperwork that prospective volunteers have to meet/complete?

You: Thank you very much for your time! I have to run this information past my professor before I can accept, but I am definitely interested. So I can get back in touch with you, what is your full name, phone number, and email?

You: Thank you for your time. It was nice speaking with you!

Other Notes:

- They may want to hear about any skills you might have, like computer knowledge, writing skills, web design, outgoing personality, etc. Often it is a good idea to let them know what you could bring to their organization even without them asking you first.
- Contact SEVERAL community partners and find out information about all their opportunities, even if you think they aren't interesting, don't fulfill course requirements, etc. Having comprehensive list allows you to pick and choose and if one opportunity falls through for whatever reason, you can fall back on another.

- As always, be personable on the phone yet also have a professional demeanor. Community organizations are looking for volunteers that are going to warrant them spending valuable time on training and supervising.
- Persevere. Contact several partners. Leave messages. Write emails. If you don't get responses back in a day or less, call/email again. Putting the work into finding a partner that fits is one of the most important things you will do in this class.
- The students who do not get a quick jump on finding a partner; that do not persevere and make follow up calls, these are the students that do not do well in this course and are always playing catch-up.