

Information blitz 7 | **interpersonal skills and interaction**

Volunteer activities are often conducted together with others. You can, for example, pick up garbage on your own, but most volunteer tasks are communal, involving other people. When performing volunteer tasks, you will meet unique, different kinds of people. Therefore, it is good for you to think about your own interpersonal and interaction skills. These are skills that should be practiced, since they continuously teach you new things.

Next, you will hear some tips given by a community worker at a citizens' house and an instructor of volunteer activities. You can utilize the tips if you are a volunteer in tasks that include encountering other people. Here are the tips:

- Meet other people with an open and respectful attitude.
- Be interested in others.
- Listen and support.
- Be reliable and take care of tasks agreed upon.

When you talk with other people, you will learn courage and social skills. As a volunteer, you often act in a group together with other volunteers and employees. It is important to respect differences because people are different due to their backgrounds and life situations.

Sometimes you may encounter difficult situations as a volunteer. For example, somebody may expect more help from you than you can give. The people whom you help or support may have stories that are burdensome, or their behavior may be challenging due to their life situation or loneliness. It is important that you do not try to do too much or carry the burden all by yourself. Ask for your instructor's help whenever you face a difficult situation.

In the beginning, you may doubt whether you are good or capable enough. Nevertheless, you will be inducted in the tasks, and you can talk with other employees and volunteers. You will learn by doing, and receiving feedback will help you develop.

Very often, you will make friends and gain the feeling of community togetherness while engaged in volunteer activities. Many feel that they belong to a group. At the same time, volunteers' interaction, group work, and presentation skills improve. Volunteer work may also help you find employment or gain a study place.

Volunteers can often influence the contents of activities. Tell us about your ideas and participate in planning. This will ensure you that your action has significance.

In conclusion, remember to:

- Appreciate others as human beings

- Respect differences
- Be reliable
- Recognize your own limits
- Discuss situations
- Be brave enough to ask for help
- Give us feedback
- Participate in planning