

Volunteers Needing Volunteers!  
How do we appreciate them? Let's count the ways.

As officials we are volunteers, but there is also another important group of people. Those wonderful folks are the spine of any track and field competition; they're the **club volunteers** who assist us in carrying out our duties.

We officials have all been at events where we didn't have adequate help, and we know that grinds the competition to either a delay or even a full stop. We're in the unusual position of being Volunteers Needing Volunteers.

What can YOU do to encourage good volunteers, and maybe develop officials at the same time?

- Thank your volunteers. Make sure they know they're appreciated.
- Use them appropriately. Everyone wants to be useful, and if they don't have a specific duty or feel valued they will drift off.
- Train and encourage them in the job. Not everyone will know what to do, they need direction.
- If it's necessary correct someone, do it privately and positively.
- Make sure they get food and drink. If refreshments are brought to you, they should be brought to your volunteers as well. Speak up on their behalf if necessary
- Be sure to also thank the volunteers who bring you that refreshment.
- Make sure your helpers get a chance to use the bathroom and take a break between events. Tell them when to return.
- Remember smiles and laughter go a long way. It's a sport; we're supposed to be having fun!

Hold onto this thought. The positive effect of a happy experience encourages these good people to perhaps become officials themselves! It's safe to say most of us started out that way, and we need to encourage others to do the same.

Credit: Sue Kydd, January, 2017