

The Lie That Is Holding Volunteer Managers Back

Better Impact webinar
3 December 2025



Who am I?

- Over thirty years working in the volunteer movement
- Global thought leader on volunteer engagement
- Writer, speaker, trainer and consultant
- International client base
- Music collector, book lover, dog owner and former roadie



Question

What is a favourite myth or lie you've heard about volunteers?



A lie **we** tell

People today just don't want to volunteer







Explaining the
contradiction



Explaining the
contradiction



Bestselling author of *Purple Cow*, *Linchpin*, and *Poke the Box*

SETH GODIN

**ALL
MARKETERS**

~~**ARE LIARS**~~


Tell Stories

The Underground Classic That Explains
How Marketing Really Works—and Why
Authenticity Is the Best Marketing of All





"I wasn't being completely truthful with you when I named this book. Marketers aren't liars. They are just storytellers. I was trying to go to the edges. No one would hate a book called All Marketers Are Storytellers. No one would disagree with it. No one would challenge me on it. No one would talk about it."






"Marketing is about taking something people may or may not want and telling a story to turn that something into a thing people definitely want."



"All marketers tell stories. And if they do it right, we believe them. We believe that wine tastes better in a \$20 glass than a \$1 glass. We believe that an \$80,000 Porsche Cayenne is vastly superior to a \$36,000 VW Touareg, even if it is virtually the same car. We believe that \$225 Pumas will make our feet feel better – and look cooler – than \$20 no names. . . and believing it makes it true."





Next steps



Group opportunities





Opportunities that use
people skills and talents



Opportunities that
empower, not control





Opportunities that don't
require a lifetime commitment



Opportunities that are
well advertised





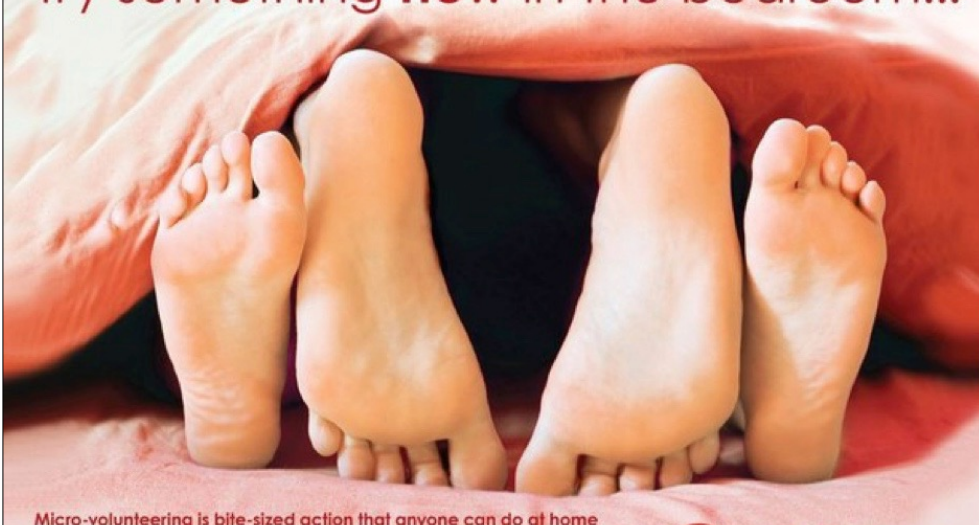
How you imagine people feel
when they hear you desperately
need volunteers



How people **actually** feel feel
when they hear you
desperately need volunteers



Try something **new** in the bedroom...



Micro-volunteering is bite-sized action that anyone can do at home

Controversial?



**DON'T JOIN THE ARMY.
DON'T STAND ON YOUR OWN TWO FEET.
DON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
DON'T MAKE FRIENDS THAT LAST A LIFETIME.
DON'T FIND OUT WHAT YOU'RE CAPABLE OF.
DON'T BECOME A BETTER YOU.**

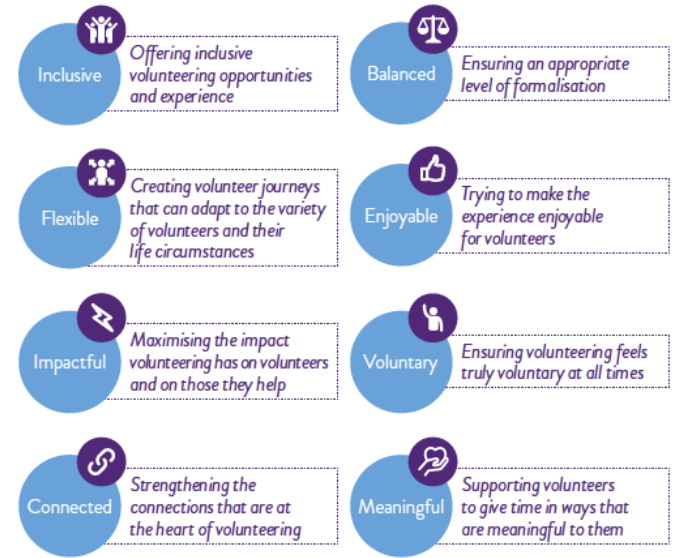
[Search Army Jobs](#)



Some people will remember an ad of ours forever. They were where you are now. Enjoying a lovely tube ride. Looking forward to the winter streets above. Going to work. Going home. Same old same old. **But they read our ad on the tube one day.** They decided it was time for a change. Not just in their lives, but in the state of the world. They are not on this train anymore. They are living and working in the poorest countries in the world. They volunteered to share their professional experience. To leave behind the ordinary and the everyday, and make every day extraordinary. They are doing it now. So can you. This is another of those ads. This is the website: vso.org.uk. This is the number: 020 8780 7500. Is this your day?



Story telling



Volunteer experience



CONCLUSION

We aren't all liars, but
we do need to change



The task ahead is not to restore volunteering to what it once was – but to recognise and support what it is becoming. The energy, willingness and care are all still here. The question is: will our institutions, practices, and strategies evolve to meet them?

2025 State of Volunteering Report
Volunteering Victoria



2025
State of
Volunteering
Report



QUESTIONS?

Choose your
**One Key
Message**
to bring across

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