



5 Ways to  
**Show**  
**Your Love**  
To Volunteers

February 11, 2021

- Suzanne Smith, [Social Impact Architects](#)
- Tawnia Wise, [Wise Resource Development](#)
- Aimee Sheahan, [Sheahan Communications](#)

# The 5 Love Languages



Words Of Affirmation



Physical Touch



Quality Time



Acts Of Service



Gifts

**Free Quizzes at:**

<https://www.5lovelanguages.com/quizzes>



## Words Of Affirmation

VOLUNTEERS



## Share Their Role in Your Mission

**WHAT:** Words of affirmation serve an important purpose: they demonstrate that you understand the other person's inherent worth and the unique value they bring to your relationship.

**HOW:** Put your volunteers in the center of your organization's mission story.

### THINK ABOUT:

- Shifting from organization-centric to supporter-centric language.
- For every ask, deliver at least three communications that thank, affirm, educate, share impact or ask for feedback.
- Make your volunteers heroes in your storytelling.
- Recognize the person not the action.
- Show the volunteer directly connected to the beneficiary.
- Focus on emotion and meaning over logistics and resumes.
- Pitch a story to the press about a volunteer.
- Trust volunteers to tell their story themselves.



## Physical Touch

**WHAT:** The love language of physical touch can be reflected in the different ways we learn new information - know your volunteer's dominant learning preference!

**HOW:** Research shows that the more ways we learn information, the more likely we are to retain it and take action.

# VOLUNTEERS



## Amplify the Results From Your Messages

### THINK ABOUT:

#### Auditory

- When starting a presentation, do you have an attention-grabber?
- When moving from one point to the other, do you signpost (let people know where you are and where you are going)?
- When giving presentations, do you vary your tone and include points of inflection when making an important point?
- When sharing lots of information, do you pause effectively to let listeners gather their thoughts and possibly ask questions?
- When you end a presentation, do you share key takeaways and next steps?



## Physical Touch

VOLUNTEERS



Amplify the Results  
From Your Messages

### THINK ABOUT:

#### Visual

- Are you using infographics to share your data?
- Are you including enough pictures to illustrate your story?

#### Reading/Writing

- Do you think ahead about the best form of communication - writing an email, texting or making a phone call?
- Do you write concisely?
- Are your emails getting opened?
- Do you use power words and effective use of emphasis to highlight key points?

#### Kinesthetic

- Do you have tours so your supporters can see your mission in action?
- Do you have "hands-on" experiences to involve them in the mission?
- Do you give handouts and share examples at events and meetings?



## Quality Time

# VOLUNTEERS



## Create Quality Brand Interactions

**WHAT:** We demonstrate our love to the people in our lives is by having quality interactions with them. To keep our supporters engaged, we must do the same.

**HOW:** Quality interactions aren't just at one point of contact, but across many touchpoints. In fact, recent research shows that an individual must have at least seven touchpoints before becoming a volunteer.

### THINK ABOUT:

- How do you answer the phone?
- How quickly and effectively do you respond to social media comments and messages?
- How welcoming and professional is your lobby?
- Is your website up-to-date and responsive to mobile devices?
- Do you personalize your email communications with a name instead of "Dear friend"?
- How many clicks does it take on your website to get to your volunteer interest form?
- Do you respond to volunteer emails and phone calls within 24 hours?
- Do you segment your email lists and customize your communications to the needs and interests of specific audiences?
- Do your communications help create an emotional connection with supporters?
- Do all staff members have a mindset that they share responsibility for engaging volunteers and keeping them happy?



## Acts Of Service

**WHAT:** Acts of service is a love language in which your time and energy is used to meet another person's needs.

**HOW:** When it comes to your volunteers and donors, this can best be shown by tailoring cultivation plans or journeys that bring them into a deeper level of engagement within the organization.

## VOLUNTEERS



## Meeting Their Unique Needs

### THINK ABOUT:

- Inspiring them
- Understanding them
- Engaging them
- Thanking them
- Engaging them again



## Receiving Gifts

**WHAT:** The love language of giving gifts is about the sentiment and energy behind the gift.

**HOW:** In this context, the gift is the token of appreciation. You can give this gift to your volunteers in many ways; the key is to make it meaningful, genuine and personal.

# VOLUNTEERS



## Thank Early & Often

### THINK ABOUT:

- An email
- A handwritten card (from CEO, development director, board member)
- Tickets to an event
- A personal gift (i.e., their favorite candy)
- A note or handmade gift from a client
- An appreciation event
- An award or a nomination for an award
- A donation in their honor
- Asking their opinion



# Q&A via Chat



“Nonprofits are in the ‘love business.’ Employees and supporters alike fall in love with our missions but stay because they are loved.”

# Additional Acts of Love Resources

- 5 Ways to Show Your Love to Nonprofit Donors & Volunteers
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/nonprofit-donor-engagement/>
- They're Engaged (Our Employees, That Is!)
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/nonprofit-employee-engagement/>
- More Than Marketing: Storytelling is the Shot of Adrenaline Your Nonprofit Needs
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/storytelling-tips/>
- Do You Have an Impact Culture?
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/impact-culture/>
- What the Ice Bucket Challenge Continues to Teach Us About Marketing
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/ice-bucket-challenge/>
- How to Land the Big Fish: Try a Nonprofit Prospectus
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/nonprofit-prospectus/>
- 5 Tips for Taming Email Clutter
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/email-etiquette/>
- The Art & Science of Donor Engagement
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/donor-engagement/>
- Are Nonprofits in the Customer Service Business?
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/customer-service/>

# Additional Acts of Love Resources

- 4 Steps to Turn Your Nonprofit's Volunteers into Evangelists
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/volunteers/>
- Stand Out From the Crowd: Develop a Unique Value Proposition
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/value-proposition/>
- Keeping Nonprofit Volunteers Engaged During COVID-19
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/nonprofit-volunteers-covid-19/>
- Turning Donors into Investors through Your Annual Appeal
  - <https://socialimpactarchitects.com/annual-appeal/>