The Benefits of Volunteering on Your Own Career

The benefits of volunteering can be quite diverse. In relation to your MBA application, the direction of your career or even your personal development, choosing to volunteer for a cause you are passionate about can contribute a lot to a positive outcome.

Very often, students and even graduates avoid volunteering because they just cannot understand why they would work for free for anybody, especially when they come from very privileged homes. However, volunteering is not just about working for free; it is about self-improvement and about giving rather than receiving. It is about learning more than you earn. Perhaps the situation is different for those who find out they have a certain skill or talent and who manage to develop it well enough to ask for payment. But what about those who are not that lucky?

Check out: The Main Steps for a Successful MBA Application

Organisations that are looking for work experience want to know about the kind of person you are and the only way they can find out is by looking at your level of commitment to projects you assign to yourself or projects assigned to you. The human resources managers for instance want to be able to say that "James started working at Sunshine Pharmaceuticals as a volunteer administrator and HR assistant while he was in his 2nd year of school and he rose steadily through the ranks to become the Human Resources Manager when he was in his final year, while still maintaining a GPA of 4.0/5.0." That speaks volumes about the kind of person James is. It tells them he is focused, has great time management skills, and can handle a leadership position without much supervision. It tells them that even though he was not paid much, he still excelled at both work and school, all the more so when the money started to roll in. Nowadays, companies do not just employ people because of their grades but also want to know how positively they would influence the workflow.

To get a clearer view on the subject, let’s define volunteering.

According to Wikipedia, volunteering is an altruistic activity where an individual provides services for no financial gain and it is renowned for skill development. Volunteering is also intended to make contacts for possible employment.

Graduate jobs can be found on MyJobMag.co.ke

The benefits of volunteering include:

- Putting you out there in the field and enabling you to build your portfolio;
- Increasing your social network – your “connections”;
- Building your social skills;
- A sense of purpose;
- Discovering hidden talents;
- A great way to gain career experience as volunteering teaches you valuable job skills.

Check out: How to Write a Good Essay for Your MBA Application

But first, before starting to volunteer, it is important to ask yourself:

What do I love doing?
How can my talents be useful to this organisation?
How can I manage my time so I’m not overwhelmed?
What are my goals and objectives, i.e. what do I want to gain from this volunteering experience?
How would volunteering for this organisation build/enhance my career?

When you volunteer, you reduce the risk of having to change careers later on because you would have been able to decide what you
want to pursue career-wise and what kind of personal brand you would like to build. While volunteering, it is important for you to stand out, stay connected, build relationships, be passionate, and learn more about the organisation, but at the same time it is also important not to lose sight of the main reason for your studies, which is your degree. You are first a student, second a volunteer.

There is a time to learn more than you earn… use that time well.

This article was kindly provided by MyJobMag.