

THE DO'S & DON'T'S OF VOLUNTEERING

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UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO



CENTRE FOR CAREER ACTION

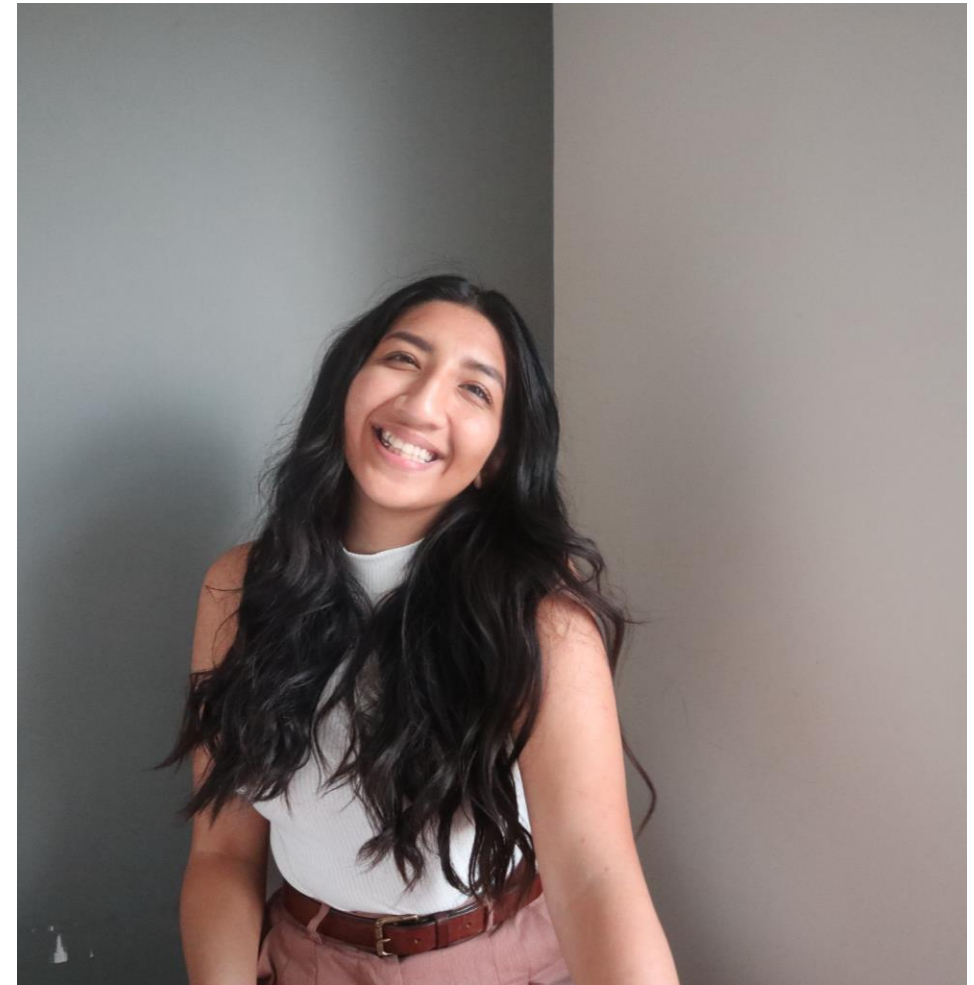
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Career Leader, Workshop Facilitation

My pronouns are she/her and name is pronounced Mel-A-Knee

Fourth year BA Psychology student with a minor in English lit

Fun facts: I have 8 years of customer service experience, I am a Gryffindor, and I am currently in my final year of my undergrad!



Hawa Patel

Career Leader, Workshop Facilitation

My pronouns are she/her

Fourth year Biomedical Sciences student with a minor in Sociology

Fun facts:

- My favourite movie is a tie between the first Grown Ups movie and Interstellar



TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Waterloo is located on the territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples and is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers on each side of the Grand River.

O:se Kenhionhata:tie Land Back Camp: <https://www.facebook.com/osekenhionhatatie/>
Outside of KW area? Check out: <https://native-land.ca/>

WE AIM FOR THIS TO BE A SAFE(R) SPACE

We are entering this space with the intention of creating as safe a space as possible for you. Safe space means something different for everyone, but we promise you that we will try our best!

- Participate in the way that feels most comfortable for you! Take what works for you, leave what doesn't.
- Ask questions whenever! Please use the chat during presentation time, but you can use your mic during the Q&A if comfortable.
- Feel free to send me a direct message to participate anonymously
- If having tech issues, our fabulous student staff will be able to troubleshoot with you. We appreciate patience if any tech problems arise on our end 😊
- Please be respectful of other participants and facilitators

LEARNING GOALS

- 1 Determining the skills you can bring to a volunteering experience and the skills you can further develop through volunteering.
- 2 Being able to find volunteering opportunities on and off-campus that are tailored to your interests and provide you with relevant experience that you can use towards your future career goals.
- 3 General guidelines to follow for your volunteering journey. During applications, after securing and while completing your position.
- 4 How to be successful in a new environment

PART 1

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEERING (GENERAL TIPS FOR SUCCESS)

BEFORE YOU START YOUR VOLUNTEERING POSITION

- Ask yourself:
 - "Why do I want to volunteer?"
 - "What places align with my values?"
 - "How much time can I commit to volunteering?"
 - "Are there any places I know that are looking to fill volunteer positions?"
- Research different companies that are seeking volunteers
- Write down 2-5 things you can offer a potential work environment
- Write down 2-5 skills you hope to learn or enhance while on this position
- Create a plan about how you will go about applying to different places
 - Are you volunteering with somewhere you've worked before?
 - Are you applying online?
 - Is someone in your network connecting you to the opportunity?

AFTER YOU'VE SECURED YOUR POSITION

1. Create a schedule for yourself based on your agreed upon requirements
2. Make proper arrangements to successfully do your job
 - Is it virtual? Do you need to set up any technology? Download software?
 - Is it international? Do you need to make housing accommodations?
3. Plan how you will track your accomplishments! Use tools like Word, Excel, Google sheets, etc., to have a history of all the work you will do while in the position.



HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR FIRST DAY/WHILE COMPLETING YOUR VOLUNTEER ROLE

- Knowing who you will be reporting to
 - How can you reach them?
 - Is there anything you need to do/arrange before your first day?
 - Complete all necessary documentation
- Set goals
- Keep track of what you are learning (this will help later when you are putting it on your resume!)



Source: [GIPHY](#)

USEFUL VOLUNTEERING SKILLS

OVERVIEW OF THE SKILLS TO HAVE:

- 1) Effective collaboration skills that display good teamwork
- 2) Being able to problem solve and adapt to resolve conflicts
- 3) Empathy, and compassion with a drive to help (help other people, an organization, etc.)
- 4) Organization skills that demonstrate reliability, punctuality and dependability
- 5) Effective communication skills and active listening capabilities



1) EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION ABILITIES

- A collaborative person can take feedback and make adjustments based on what others think
- Can offer people constructive criticism help others improve
- Effective collaboration involves:
 - Working well w/ others towards shared objectives
 - Striving to understand others,
 - Challenging, supporting, and building on ideas with the team,
 - Taking on roles and responsibilities to achieve team objectives



2) PROBLEM SOLVING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION



- Able to use analytical thinking and critical thinking to make decisions and solve problems
 - "Critical thinking is the analysis of available facts, evidence, observations, and arguments to form a judgment" [[Wikipedia](#)]
- Able to weigh all relevant factors before choosing the best course of action.
- Able to think quickly, communicate clearly with team members and those you are helping, and ultimately find a sound solution

3) EMPATHY AND COMPASSION

- Oftentimes volunteering is also within environments where you work with vulnerable populations, and others in the same position as you -- thus, working with empathy and compassion is key.
- Includes:
 - Being conscious of other people's needs
 - Understanding of other people's perspectives
 - Encountering people of many backgrounds and being able to work with them in an empathetic manner



4) ORGANIZATION SKILLS + RELIABILITY

- Being organized and punctual can indicate reliability
 - Being organized can make a volunteering experience much easier
- Includes:
 - Managing your time well for the tasks you're assigned so that you don't fall behind
 - Knowing how to prioritize and delegate work so that you can meet deadlines, goals, requirements, etc.



5) EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION + ACTIVE LISTENING



- Having good communication skills entails:
 - Being able to understand others, and actively listen to them
 - Engaging in discussion with others so that the work you do is completed properly and without miscommunication
 - Being able to ask questions,
 - Discussing any issues that arise,
 - Listening to the feedback of others' about you and providing constructive feedback to others as well

RECAP OF THE SKILLS TO HAVE:

- 1) Effective collaboration skills that display good teamwork
- 2) Being able to problem solve and adapt to resolve conflicts
- 3) Empathy, and compassion with a drive to help (help other people, an organization, etc.)
- 4) Organization skills that demonstrate reliability, punctuality and dependability
- 5) Effective communication skills and active listening capabilities

Keep in mind: if you don't have all of these – or you want to develop these skills further, volunteering is a great way to do so.



INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN VOLUNTEERING INTERNATIONALLY...

- Learn about the location where you'll be volunteering and ensure appropriate behaviour that doesn't disturb or disrespect the community you're helping
- Think about whether you are aware of your motivation and intention for volunteering overseas



...CONTINUED



- While selecting a volunteering placement, take your expertise* into account. This necessitates carefully considering how your beliefs and life experiences relate to the causes you support.
 - *expertise ≠ that you must be an expert to help
- Establish boundaries for yourself so that the volunteering experience is something enjoyable for you, and something you have enthusiasm towards.
 - Setting boundaries also helps with avoiding burnout

SUCCESS IN A NEW ENVIRONMENT

Confirm Expectations with Supervisor

- How do they want you to contact them?
 - Phone, email, Skype, etc.
- Volunteering hours
 - Start and end time
 - Lunches and breaks
- Volunteering after hours
 - Projects, emails, messages
- Management style?



Considering Safety, Boundaries and Wellness

- What does safety mean to me? What does it look like? Feel like?
- How do I know when I feel safe/unsafe?
- What boundaries are important to me?
- What resources are available to me if I feel unsafe?
- What are some coping tools/strategies that I can use if I am feeling overwhelmed?
- Who can I talk to if work is getting to be too much?
- What do I need to set myself up for success? (e.g. drinking water regularly, taking breaks throughout the day, etc.)
- What can I do to build myself up?

Disclosing Identity

It is up to you **when** you want to share, **whether** you want to share, and **how much** you want to share.

Can choose to disclose before you start or during

You are protected by law from discrimination

Review various resources to consider what makes sense for you such as:

- [Your Journey: A Career Guide for Trans and Nonbinary Students](#)
- [6 strategies youth use to disclose disabilities at work](#)
- [Employees with disabilities: guidance and resources for COVID-19](#)

Your Rights

Remember you have rights to be treated with respect in the workplace and any volunteering spaces

Under the Ontario Human Rights Code you are protected **by law** from discrimination in employment on the following protected grounds:

- Age
- Ancestry, colour, race
- Citizenship
- Ethnic Origin
- Place of Origin
- Creed
- Disability
- Family Status
- Marital Status (including single status)
- Gender Identity, Gender Expression
- Record of offences
- Sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding)
- Sexual Orientation

PART 2

HOW TO FIND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES (ON AND OFF CAMPUS)

ON-CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES + RESOURCES

- [WaterlooWorks](#)
- [WUSA Clubs Listing:](#)
 - Students Helping Seniors UW
 - UW Global Public Health Brigades
 - UW Brain Exercise Initiative
 - MEDLIFE UW
 - Students For Life, UW (UWSFL)
 - United for Literacy – University of Waterloo
 - UW Supporting SickKids
- [MATES \(Student-Run Service from WUSA\)](#)



ON-CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES + RESOURCES CONT'D...

- Faculties and departments have volunteer programs that are geared towards that field of study:
- [Health Faculty's Center for Community, Clinical and Applied Research Excellence \(CCCARE\)](#) which has volunteering programs and volunteer research opportunities
 - UW WELL-FIT – volunteer one-on-one with cancer patients
 - Brain & Body – volunteer one-on-one with clients living with any form of dementia
 - STEPS – volunteer one-on-one with individuals post-stroke
 - Research participants or assistants



ON-CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES + RESOURCES CONT'D...

- Faculties and departments have volunteer programs that are geared towards that field of study:
- Psychology Department:
 - [Psych Soc](#)
 - [Psychology-based apprenticeship courses](#)
- Science Faculty:
 - [SciSoc](#)
 - [Community Outreach Program](#)
- Math Faculty:
 - [MathSoc](#)
 - [Math Faculty Ambassador Team](#)



MORE ON-CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES + RESOURCES

- [Access Ability Services](#)
- [Don positions at the student residences](#)
- [Early Childhood Education Centre](#)
- Research opportunities – find your department’s research page for more details (i.e. Google search “[Department Name] department University of Waterloo Research Opportunities)
- [Student Success Office Volunteer Openings](#)



OFF-CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES + RESOURCES

- [Volunteering - Waterloo Region](#)
- [Volunteering Canada](#)
- [Charity Village](#)
- [CUSO](#)
- [Idealist](#)



BUILDING SKILLS

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS/MAINTAINING CONNECTIONS

- Build relationships with the people you are working with!
- Reach out to your contacts periodically after your volunteering comes to an end to keep the line of communication open
- People love to keep connected especially in a time like this – *if they don't want to connect with you, their loss!*
- Lean in to the awkward



Source: [Into Action Lab](#)

WHAT DO I NEED TO THINK ABOUT?

- Ask yourself...
 - "How does this position and what I've learned, relate to my career goals?"
 - "Did this work provide insight on what I want to do next? Another volunteer position? Paid work that is similar?"
 - "Did I learn anything technical? Did I learn any soft skills? Did I enhance skills I already had?"



Source: [GIPHY](#)

REFLECT ON YOUR LEARNING AND GROWTH

- Volunteering can help develop communication, interpersonal, organizational, problem-solving, and computer skills among countless others!!
- Review the notes that you made throughout your time at this workplace
- If you haven't kept notes, write some notes down on your learning, projects you took on, etc.



Source: [GIPHY](#)

YOUR CAREER JOURNEY (HOW DOES VOLUNTEERING FIT?)

VOLUNTEERING + YOUR CAREER JOURNEY

- Allows you to learn in environments often tied into your interests and hobbies whilst providing skills that can translate well to a workplace environment.
- You can learn a variety of skills such as quality leadership, problem-solving, time management, organization, etc.
- Can be a means to gain experience while being flexible with your time and contributing at a pace you can manage



VOLUNTEERING + YOUR CAREER JOURNEY

- It can help you connect with your community, likeminded peers, which can be a form of networking
- It can help boost your confidence and reach professional goals
- Keep in Mind: Volunteering itself is a privilege that not everyone might have the ability to do



RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

RESOURCES

Used in Creating this Workshop

- <https://www.volunteersarnia.com/top-10-volunteering-tips/>
- [GoAbroad.com](https://www.goabroad.com) - articles, opportunities + more about volunteering abroad
- [How and Why you should Volunteer; an article targeted towards fresh graduates but would be useful for all](#)
- <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/tips-volunteering>

SUPPORTS FOR VOLUNTEERS + OTHER WELLNESS RESOURCES

- [MATES Peer Support](#) (WUSA service)
- [OK2BME](#) (Free counselling for LGBTQ+ individual and couples up to 29 years old)
- [Co-Op Connection](#) (connecting students on co-op work terms)
- [Carizon Quick Access Counselling](#)
- [KW Counselling Quick Access Counselling](#)
- [Crisis Services](#)
- [Delton Glebe Counselling](#)
 - [Andrea Areguy](#) (she/her), anti-oppressive, trauma informed lens
- [Empower Me](#) (multilingual, culturally sensitive, gender inclusive, faith inclusive)
- [UW Counselling Services](#)
 - [Washington Silk](#) (they/them), ample experience supporting LGBTQ+ communities
 - [Melissa Zettel](#) (she/her), Embedded Wellness Counsellor

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 : Effective collaboration skills, problem-solving abilities and empathy go a long way when volunteering, especially if you are volunteering internationally; but know that these skills can also be developed **THROUGH** volunteering experiences.

3. Be kind to yourself during this process! Volunteering can be as draining as classwork or paid work. Take time for yourself, set boundaries. This will help you be successful!

2 : There are many on-campus (i.e. WUSA clubs, faculty programs) and off campus resources and opportunities for volunteering + these can help you develop skills and gain experience to prepare you for success in your future career.

CCA SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES

Resources: CCA Appointments and Workshops/Events



Job Search Tactics
Résumé
Cover Letter
Interview Prep
Career Exploration



Individual Appointments
Drop-ins
Workshops
Online Resources

uwaterloo.ca/career-action

QUESTIONS?

FAQ

1. Is volunteer experience less valuable than paid experience? Can I still include it in my resume?
2. Do all volunteer experiences look the same on a resume?
3. If I've volunteered in multiple places, do I list them all?
4. How do I get the most out of my volunteer experience?
5. How much time should I spend volunteering? Does the time commitment make a big difference?