



# EVALUATING DATA QUALITY IN VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY POSTINGS

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# INTRODUCTION

## **Today's Session will focus on:**

1. Understanding how important various fields are for different types of searches and search results
2. Using Advanced Search to identify missing information, stale information, and style issues
3. When and how to change your View search settings
4. Multiple Views: Making sure your records are in the right place
5. How to encourage good practices from those submitting volunteer opportunities

# HOW DO PEOPLE FIND OPPORTUNITIES?

The first step to evaluating the quality of postings is understanding how people are searching for positions...

- Review the search options you have enabled in each View/Portal
- Identify key search terms by reviewing the statistics of your Volunteer Profiles
- Identify special needs and communities you want or need to target (court orders, new Canadians, workplaces, families, etc.)
- Talk to your potential Volunteers about their needs
- Verify that you are search-engine and user friendly (mobile-first, secure, tidy, and timely)

# IMPORTANT FIELDS FOR PUBLIC SEARCH

Let's Review some of the most commonly searched fields:

- Location
- Areas of Interest
- Commitment Length
- Suitable For
- Organization Name
- Update or Created Date (“What’s New?”)
- OSSD or Age (Youth Opportunities)

Less often searched:

- Duties
- Position Title

Don't use “Dates & Times”!  
This field can be useful information when reviewing an Opportunity, but for searching is often misleading.

# IMPORTANT FIELDS FOR CHOOSING

There are lots of other fields that help people *choose* an Opportunity once they have gone as far as bringing up the Opportunity for review. Some significant fields when reviewing an opportunity include:

- Duties (*What will the work be like?*)
- Interaction Level, Clients, Benefits, Training (*What do they get out of it?*)
- Location, Transportation (*Is it virtual or in the local area?*)
- Dates and Times, Start and End Date, Minimum Hours, Commitment Length, Application Date, Cost (*Does it fit their time and budget?*)
- Suitability, Police Check, Skills & Experience (*Do they qualify?*)

# SAMPLE DATA QUALITY SEARCHES

Let's try out some example data quality searches:

- Find “Duties” that are too long or short
- Find Records that are missing key classifications (Location, Areas of Interest, Commitment Length, Suitable For, etc.)
- Find Records that have more or less than a certain number of classifications
- Ensuring that popular categories are applied properly (deep dive on a specific Area of Interest)
- Finding and refreshing or hiding “old” records
- Looking for duplication

# EVALUATING CONSISTENCY AND STYLE

The best way to evaluate data consistency and style is through mass review of information via search results

Bring up all your records, or specific segments

Use “Change Display Options” to view and sort on various fields to look for inconsistencies and problems

Review lists of records by Category, review the list of Organizations and position counts in “Browse by Organization”

# OTHER WAYS TO ENSURE ACCURACY AND STYLE

Good Position Titles matter! Don't allow names like "Volunteer", "Helper", "Various Positions", etc.

Consider asking posting Agencies to combine or split postings if appropriate

Run a link checker (see <https://kclsolutions.desk.com> for instructions)

Run a spell checker (<https://www.w3.org/2002/01/spellchecker> or save search results with many records and open the file in Word/Excel)



# CONFIGURING SEARCHES

You may love a search, but if your data isn't "ready" – it will work against you!

Don't turn on searches if you don't have the data needed for good results. Follow up with posting Agencies to fill in the gaps, and then turn on the searches when you are ready.

Don't be afraid to create "custom" searches to meet a need in your community. In most cases, searches you create in Advanced Search can be bookmarked and added to public menus, website links etc.

# MULTIPLE VIEWS: A COMMUNITY SET OVERVIEW

“Community Sets” drive which Communities are listed on search pages and as defaults on record forms, but they also have a role in determining which records are available.

Community Sets are often used when Volunteer Centre partners share a database, but they can also be useful for creating special purpose portals that contains a sub-set of all Opportunities

If you work in a database with multiple Community Sets...

- Ensure that data management staff know to check the Community Set listing at the top of the record update form
- Regularly review the Community Set summary pages and use the Community Set management tools to make sure records appear where needed

# ENCOURAGE GOOD PRACTICES FROM AGENCIES POSTING OPPORTUNITIES

Have a Posting Guide that identifies important fields. If possible, include style or marketing suggestions.

Ensure that you have added Field Help to as many fields as possible

Remove low-value fields from your forms

Ensure that you mark key searching fields as “required”

If you receive an incomplete Opportunity request, immediately send out a request to update the newly created record that includes specific information about additional information needed and a link to your Posting Guide