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MEDIA RELEASE

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We live in a world where titles are important.

So important that they have become a unique way for people to creatively express their 'workplace individuality'.

Gone are the days when the simple title of 'Manager' was sufficient to inform others that you were in charge of something or someone.

Today, the title of your job role has is limited only by your ability to think creatively and your sense of bravery to be a bit different!

Less than three weeks ago there was a vacancy posted for a 'Happiness Hero' and we are now seeing jobs advertised with titles like 'Manager and Sustainable Ninja'.

As we embrace our desire for individuality and to stand out in a crowd, it can make it challenging for those around us to understand what it is we actually do.

And if we don't know what people do, it can be hard to thank them for their efforts.

A perfect example of this issue are those of us in our community who are managers of volunteers.

Tomorrow is International Volunteer Managers Day, and I will join people across Australia and the globe in thanking these wonderful people who manage volunteers in our communities.

But here's the conundrum - they can be hard to find!

They're hard to find because like those with the quirky job titles, not everyone understands what they do so finding them can be tricky.

A clear give away will be those with the obvious title of 'Manager of Volunteers' or 'Coordinator of Volunteers' and there's many of them out there so make sure you thank them for what they do.

But also take a moment to think about the volunteer managers that don't have such an obvious title and are not as easy to spot.

I'm talking about the people who have deceptive titles like 'Cooking Supervisor' a role that not only involves the ability to cook but also supervise a team of volunteers delivering meals to vulnerable Tasmanians.

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Make sure you thank them.

It's also those in our sporting clubs with titles such as 'Coaching, Roster or Umpiring Convenor'.

In fact they could be the person with the title of 'Equipment Coordinator' who has the unenviable task of wrangling numerous volunteers to return sporting equipment at the end of the sporting season.

Make sure you thank them too.

It's the thousands of 'Presidents and Chairs' sitting on the Boards of our community organisations, who willingly choose to lead groups of passionate, and no doubt feisty and dedicated volunteer Board members.

Make sure you thank them also.

It's also those in our community whose have paid roles with job descriptions that don't mention managing volunteers, yet this is something that they do off the side of their desks, kitchen benches or couches.

They need thanking as well and don't forget those that don't even have a title, like the ladies and gents from your local Rotary and Lions clubs who coordinate volunteers to not only set up local events but also cook the sausages.

Each and every one of these roles requires the management of volunteers.

And they all deserve a very big thank you for the work that they do because at the end of the day it doesn't matter if they're not called a Manager or a Coordinator of Volunteers because they all do the same thing.

They're all in charge of looking after a group of amazing individuals who give their time willingly to help our community.

And in doing so they display the patience of a saint, the multi-tasking abilities of a ninja, and the conflict resolution and negotiation skills of a school teacher.

And whether they are called a manager, coordinator, supervisor, people whisperer or nothing at all - what they do is incredible.

So my challenge to everyone on this International Volunteer Managers Day is to not only thank someone in your community who you know, for certain, is helping to manage volunteers.

But also take a moment to look past the titles and spot the volunteer manager hidden amongst your friends, family and colleagues and thank them too.

Alison Lai is the chief executive officer of Volunteering Tasmania