

Why you should work in the charity sector

Working for a charity can be very rewarding – after all, this is a career path that focuses on driving change and helping improve the lives of others. Here are some compelling reasons why it could be the ideal career move.

1 A sense of fulfilment

Let's face it, we're all going to spend many hours of our lives at work. Wouldn't it be nice to know that some of them are spent making a difference? There are many reasons why people choose to work for a charity. Some choose a particular organisation because they've got a real interest in its ethos and the sector it assists. Having a true passion for a charity's ethics and values can place a candidate head and shoulders above others when it comes to an interview. Candidates should

also consider how the charity's cause personally affects them when making an application for a job there.

A true positive in working for a charity is the overwhelming sense of driving change. Your role focuses on enforcing the message of doing good by others, and employees will have an ethical and moral code to follow as a representative of that charity. The work should be varied, too – one day an employee might be helping out at a homeless shelter, the next they could be assisting in fundraising activities.

The work is value-driven, prioritising ethics over profit.

2 Meeting a wide range of people

Charities are full of inspirational people from many different backgrounds, and each has a story to tell. Some working in the charity sector have experienced significant life events that brought them to where they are now. Social interaction is a big part of a charity role, and leads to many positive experiences that come

with working in the sector. There can even be opportunities for international postings and the chance to travel.

Interacting with so many kinds of people can also be a great opportunity for personal and career development. Charities value people who can turn their hands to many tasks, especially as they rely on funding and can sometimes be understaffed, so there will be many chances to move around internally within a company and develop skills.

3 Job stability

According to Tori Utley's article for Forbes magazine in 2016, charities are less likely to take risks in their expansion. They are therefore less likely to suffer financially when compared to companies that focus purely on profits. Many non-profit organisations do not have private owners, and they do not issue stock or pay dividends as rewards. That said, charities do have their own challenges. According to a 2017 Lloyds Bank Foundation report, Facing forward: how small and medium-sized charities can adapt to survive, uncertainty surrounding Brexit and overstretched local authorities are big stumbling blocks, and there are concerns in many charities that the UK's departure from the European Union will result in the loss of European funding, which could impact job stability. According to Kirsty Weakley's article for Civil Society Media, both medium and small charities are particularly vulnerable when local funding is cut, so this is worth bearing in mind.

4 Happiness and flexibility

Job satisfaction, career opportunities and a varied working day are all reasons why the charity sector can make for a very happy place to work. If a 9-5 working style that is target-focused and highly pressured is no longer favourable, the flexibility offered by charity work can only be seen as a positive factor – this is especially given the nature of UK working hours and how they are changing. According to a recent



YouGov study of 4,000 people, more than half of those surveyed were working flexibly or job sharing, or working compressed hours to juggle other commitments. Charity work can offer similar flexibility while giving a job seeker a fresh start to revamp their career, and the opportunity to stop and assess where they want to be from time to time.

5 Good pay and benefits

Jobs within non-profit organisations usually have higher rates of pay. The average UK charity sector salary was £32,673 in 2017. According to the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), average gross annual earnings for full-time employees was £27,600 in 2015. There's also a sense of caring on the part of employers. Charities want people to work for them and stay working for them, so

the benefits are usually very positive. Home working and flexible hours, a good pension scheme, generous annual leave (a minimum of five weeks is typical), good maternity leave and other benefits such as income protection are all positives that may not be available in other jobs in the corporate world. Charities are all about commitment, and putting in years of service should reap rewards.

Charity work is extremely fulfilling, but it requires a dedicated person with a true passion for the charity and cause they are representing, which is why it's so important for jobseekers to research the kind of charity they'd like to work for before beginning their new career journey. With such specialised areas within the charity sector, there is sure to be a vacancy that appeals, all while making a difference in the world.