

Back Up Ambassadors

Do you or a family member have a spinal cord injury? Then maybe you'd like to become a Back Up Ambassador and raise funds and awareness of our vital work.

Our Ambassadors are people whose lives have been affected by spinal cord injury, either directly or through someone they know. They come from all across the UK, can be of any age group and come from all walks of life. The one thing that really unites them is their pride and commitment in representing Back Up and raising funds for the charity.

What do Back Up Ambassadors do?

Our team of Ambassadors use their experience to raise awareness of spinal cord injury and challenge perceptions of disability. There are lots of activities YOU could get involved in as a Back Up Ambassador including:

- ❖ Speaking at a Back Up fundraising event
- ❖ Speaking at your workplace
- ❖ Talking to schools about your experience
- ❖ Hosting a fundraising event
- ❖ Talking to groups in your community about our work and telling them how they can help. For example in Rotary Clubs, churches, schools, gardening clubs, luncheon clubs, and women's groups.
- ❖ Looking for local opportunities to raise awareness and funds for Back Up.

What we ask from you

This role would suit you if you are:

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| Punctual and reliable | ✓ |
| Well presented | ✓ |
| Friendly, approachable and enthusiastic | ✓ |
| Able to speak confidently and articulately about personal experiences with spinal cord injury | ✓ |

This role requires:

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| Previous experience with Back Up through any of the following: courses, mentoring, volunteering, corporate relations, under 18's service, wheelchair skills, schools inclusion service | ✓ |
| A good knowledge of Back Up services, vision, mission and values | ✓ |
| Excellent interpersonal skills | ✓ |

What you can expect from us

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| Dedicated members of the staff to support, encourage and enable you to fulfill your role |
| Agreed out-of-pocket expenses will be covered. Please see attached expenses policy for further details |
| Resources and information |

What will you gain?

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| Opportunities to meet new people |
| Make a difference and support our vital work |
| Enhance your CV |
| Experience of organizing your own event or presentation |

Involve your local community

In addition to the talks and presentations that we will ask you to do on our behalf, we encourage you to go out and raise awareness and funds in your local community. There are many ways you can do this:

Clubs

It's worth contacting local groups such as the Round Table, Rotary Club, Women's Institute, etc. You could offer to give a talk about Back Up and ask for a donation to the charity.

School

Most schools will be more than happy to make a donation to Back Up in return for an assembly. All our ambassadors are provided with tailor-made presentations for both primary and secondary school children.

Company recruitment

Could you convince your colleagues to give Back Up a regular gift or sign up for one of our fundraising events? We have a range of exciting year round events that companies can get involved with, from our annual Snowdon Push to skydiving. Why not give a talk or presentation within your company and help us recruit even more fundraisers?

Press

Try to use the press to your advantage. Writing a press release and supplying your local paper with photographs will get you some great coverage. The best way to get some publicity is by sending out a press release. For help writing your press release please contact Mark Reed at Back Up on 020 8875 1805 or email mark@backuptrust.org.uk

How to write and prepare for a speech

Preparation

Thorough preparation is the starting point of any good presentation or for public speaking. You need to master your speech and deliver it in a natural way. This means you need to focus on the key points rather than scripting every word.

- ❖ Write down the key points that you want to get across
- ❖ Rehearse until you are confident that you have mastered the delivery of all the points
- ❖ Practice in front of friends and family – feedback from a real audience will help you tailor your delivery

Conviction

If you have been asked to be an Ambassador it means we feel you are an ideal person to represent us and talk about what we do.

- ❖ Speak about what you believe in
- ❖ Stay within the comfort zone of your knowledge base
- ❖ REMEMBER – you are talking about your own personal experience. You're the expert!

Motivation & Information

It is vital that you have a connection to the topic. It is not just about being mildly passionate about your subject, but you have to have some enduring reason that you want to talk about this and be able to pass that on to your audience.

Your speech needs to have a structure, you must highlight at the beginning what you're going to talk about. The middle part needs to be coherent and you must end with a clear message.

- ❖ Tell them what you're going to tell them
- ❖ Tell them
- ❖ Tell them what you've told them!

To keep your audience engaged you can make it personal, and talk about yourself or people you know, or experiences you've had. This will give your audience the possibility to identify and connect with you. Think about structure - start and end with a clear message

- ❖ Make your piece personal
- ❖ Be concise.
- ❖ Don't waffle

- ❖ Adapt to your audience
- ❖ Keep it relevant

Try to keep your audience involved by making your presentation interactive and asking questions

Does anyone here know what spinal cord injury is?

Have you heard of Back Up before?

Do you know how many people in the UK have a spinal cord injury?

Successful speaking

- ❖ Slow down, don't speak too quickly
- ❖ Don't read from a script
- ❖ Make it as natural as possible
- ❖ Stay in control

How to speak to young children

In addition to the points above, there are a few other things you need to consider when talking to children and young people

- ❖ Keep the structure simple and clear: introduction, body of speech, conclusion. Children, just like adults, appreciate knowing what is going on and knowing why they're being asked to listen
- ❖ Adapt simple language for younger children but don't be patronising
- ❖ Limit the number of main points you wish to make about your topic to one or two
- ❖ Allow time for, and encourage questions. Return questions to them; ask for their opinions/thoughts. Audience participation will ensure they stay connected all the way
- ❖ Use humour and personal storytelling to get your points across. This is an extremely powerful technique. Children of all ages love stories, especially personal ones
- ❖ Use questions to ensure they are following you throughout your speech, e.g. 'Have you got that? Nod your heads if you have.'
- ❖ Use visual aids/pictures/drawings as much as you can to explain your points

How to answer difficult questions

Each person will have a different interpretation of what they believe is a difficult question to answer. What we feel 'comfortable' with is very subjective and some questions can also be perceived as too personal.

- ❖ You are not obligated to answer the questions exactly as asked

- ❖ You can give ‘an expert’ answer, i.e. remove all personal elements from the question and provide an answer based on several different scenarios/examples
- ❖ You could also open the question to the audience for them to come up with an answer that will avoid you having to go into the details yourself.
- ❖ Finally if the topic is really something you do not wish to discuss than come right out and tell the asker you prefer not to answer his question. You don't need to offer any explanation or justify why you prefer not to answer.

The below example is an actual question that was asked in a school assembly by a five year old boy. Our Ambassador has tailored their response to answer the question without going into great detail.

Can you still go to the toilet?

Once you've had a spinal cord injury your bodily functions will change. You can still do a lot of the things you used to do, but sometimes you just have to learn a different way of doing them

Our message

We pride ourselves on changing people's attitudes towards disability and as an Ambassador you are helping us to do this. This section highlights the language we use.

If you are asked for a description of Back Up or an explanation of what we do, the below example can be used as a guide. You can adapt the wording where necessary to cater for your audience.

Back Up is a national charity that has helped thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds rebuild their confidence and independence after a spinal cord injury. Our wheelchair skills training, mentoring service and rehabilitative activity courses are all run by people who have a spinal cord injury themselves. We also support people to overcome the challenges of returning to work or school. We understand that a spinal cord injury can be devastating, but believe it should not prevent anyone from fulfilling their potential. Our services open people's eyes and inspire them to look forward to a more positive future.

Language do's and don'ts

| DO USE | DO NOT USE |
|---|--------------|
| Spinal cord injured | SCI |
| Disabled people or people with a disability | The disabled |

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| Paraplegic/tetraplegic person/service user/participants | Paras/tetras or person with paraplegia/tetraplegia |
| Person who is able to walk with the aid of sticks | Walker |
| He/she has a higher lower level injury (but avoid comparisons based on degree of disability) | More/less disabled |
| Wheelchair user | Wheelchair bound/confined to a wheelchair |
| Sustained/has a spinal cord injury | Suffers from a spinal cord injury |
| Service user | Beneficiary |

The below phrases and facts may help you in your own talks and presentations.

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| Spinal cord injury is permanent. It can happen to anyone through accident or illness and is as easy as falling down the stairs |
| Back Up understands that a spinal cord injury can be devastating, but we believe it should not prevent anyone from getting the most out of life |
| We understand that spinal cord injury affects the whole family |
| Back Up has helped thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds, and their families, to rebuild their lives following a spinal cord injury |
| Our services are led by volunteers who have a spinal cord injury themselves |
| We provide wheelchair skills training, mentoring and rehabilitative activity courses. We also support people to overcome the challenges of returning to work or school |
| Back Up is the only charity in the UK that provides dedicated services for children and young people with a spinal cord injury |
| Every year around 1,000 people sustain a spinal cord injury. It is estimated that there are around 40,000 people living with spinal cord injury in the UK. There is no cure |
| We only reach half of newly injured patients every year |
| Our mission is to reach 100% of newly injured patients – this is why our fundraising is so important |

What's next?

Make sure you let the office know if you are planning on arranging your own talks or presentations. We will send you all the materials you need including presentation templates, copies of our magazine Transform, services leaflets and collection tins.

Once you have given your presentation you should send any donations, cheques or sealed envelopes to the below address.

The Back-Up Trust
4 Knightley Walk
London
SW18 1GZ

If you have arranged a collection with tins, we advise that you transfer the donations into our account. Details below:

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| NatWest Wandsworth Branch 98 Wandsworth High Street London SW18 4ZD | Account name: The Back-Up Trust Sort code: 60-22-28 Account number: 81493118 |
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Please provide as much information as possible when transferring donations into our account (e.g. Ambassador collections) or inform the office that you are transferring donations with the location of the bank and amount you are transferring.

And finally...

We hope this pack has given you some ideas about how you can support our work.

Remember – to make sure you let us know what you get up to and send us any photos of you in action!

If you have questions or queries about fundraising ideas or anything in this pack then please call Emily on **020 8875 1805** or email emilyc@backuptrust.org.uk