

Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and
Recognition Strategies

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Today's Objectives

The 3 R's

- * Recruitment
- * Retention
- * Recognition

Understanding Generational Differences and how they affect
the 3 R's

Considering the Principles and Practices for Nonprofit
Excellence

Recruitment Learning Objectives:

- Understand what recruitment is and the impact of doing it well
- List some objections and barriers that people might have to volunteering at your organization - and some strategies to overcome them
- Design an effective recruitment message
- Describe characteristics of effective recruiters

Volunteer Recruitment

A process to attract and invite people
to *consider* volunteer involvement.

Key Concepts of Recruiting Volunteers

1. Until you identify and address possible resistance to volunteering within your organization, you will not reach your potential in volunteer recruitment.
2. For volunteer recruitment to be successful, the needs of the organization and the needs of the volunteer must be met simultaneously.

Key Concepts of Recruiting Volunteers

3. The recruitment invitation must, minimally, include three elements:
 - The statement of need - the consumer's need, not the organization's!
 - How the volunteer can help
 - The benefits of the job
4. It is important to have effective, trained people recruiting new volunteers.

Key Concept #1

Until you identify and address possible resistance to volunteering within your organization, you will not reach your potential in volunteer recruitment.

Activity

Identify any organizational or personal barriers that may keep prospective volunteers from responding positively to opportunities to work with your organization.

Send in ideas.

Key Concept #2

For volunteer recruitment to be successful, the needs of the organization and the needs of the volunteer must be met simultaneously.

Why do people volunteer?

Send in ideas.

Recruitment Techniques to Avoid

- We're desperate, anyone will do...
- Cast your nets and see who swims in
- You're an accountant. We could use one of you!
- We have lots of needs...HELP!
- I'm tired of doing it... Anyone else want to do it?
- There's nothing to it...

Key Concept #3

The recruitment invitation must, minimally, include three elements:

- The statement of need - the consumer's need, not the organization's!
- How the volunteer can help
- The benefits of the job

Essential Elements of Your Recruitment Message

- The statement of need

In building a recruitment message, you want to indicate the needs of the individuals that you serve, the problem that you are addressing - not your organizational needs.

Sample Message

We have the boards, the nails, and the tools...now we just need a builder!

A family of four is waiting for a home.

Call our office to see how you can help us build their home together. (800) 555-1212 or email@email.com.

www.yourwebsite.com

Essential Elements of Your Recruitment Message

- How the volunteer can help

Essential Elements of Your Recruitment Message

- Benefits to the volunteer

Key Concept #4

It is important to have effective, trained people recruiting new volunteers.

Best Volunteer Recruiters

Individuals who are:

- Satisfied
- Enthusiastic
- Articulate
- Connected with the person or group being recruited

Retention Objectives:

- Develop meaningful ways to retain effective volunteers
- Discuss innovative plans to motivate volunteers and help them get the most out of their time with your organization
- Identify when volunteers are not working out and are using more staff time than they are worth
- Review effective retention strategies

Key Concepts of Retention

1. Develop a meaningful orientation process including the implementation of a volunteer handbook.
2. Create volunteer positions and outline descriptions of each position.
3. Develop a plan for motivation of successful volunteers.
4. Have a strong supervision team in place and include periodic performance reviews.

Key Concept #1

Develop a meaningful orientation process including the implementation of a volunteer handbook.

Volunteer Orientation

- Provide an orientation to each new volunteer that describes your organization and organizational culture.
- Make sure each volunteer has enough information about your organization to explain it to the public - they are now as much an ambassador of your organization as paid staff.
- Give each volunteer a handbook outlining the information in the orientation. This is also a marketing piece for your organization. Remember that volunteers are often donors as well, so look at this handbook as a donor information leaflet too.

Orientation

- Written job description
- Introductions to staff and volunteers
- Work area preparations
- Supervision and evaluation system explained
- Risk management issues handled
- Relevant policies and procedures shared

Sample Orientation Handbook



Key Concept #2

Create volunteer positions and outline descriptions of each position.

Volunteer Position Descriptions

Do you think they're necessary?

Create Volunteer Positions - Understand the Trends

- Short term volunteering
- Desire for freedom, ability to act quickly
- Volunteers want challenging, interesting assignments
- Volunteers come from a broader cross-section of society
- Volunteers expect to be treated professionally
- People are more interested in helping causes than organizations

Create Volunteer Positions - Understand the Trends

- Volunteers need flexibility in hours
- Family and group volunteering is popular
- Volunteers are often looking for job experience, training, re-entry to employment
- Many people with professional skills are interested in volunteering

Create Volunteer Positions - Responses to the Trends

- Design episodic short term jobs
- Offer job sharing
- Provide group volunteer opportunities
- Targeted recruitment (youth, professionals, retired, ethnic groups, etc.)
- Offer flexible hours and locations
- Organize a substitute system of volunteers

Create Volunteer Positions - Responses to the Trends

- Reimburse volunteer expenses
- Break down committee work into time-limited task force work
- More efficient use of volunteer time
- Broaden ways volunteers are utilized
- Develop positions for evenings and weekends
- Develop jobs that can be done off site

Create Positions Descriptions

- Clear understanding of what is expected
- Marketing tool for recruitment
- Guide for screening
- Basis for supervision and evaluation
- Contract between volunteer and organization
- Volunteer jobs understood by co-workers

Create Positions Descriptions - Key Elements

- Job Title
- Supervisor
- Goal or purpose of job
- Major responsibilities
- Time commitment
- Qualifications (Required, Desired)
- Work location
- Benefits to volunteer
- Date of job design or re-design

Key Concept #3

Develop a plan for motivation of successful volunteers.

Initial Thoughts on Motivation

- People are motivated to volunteer by a great variety of reasons. One person's nightmare could be another's dream
- Many organizations never ask why a person is volunteering.
- When your motivational needs are cared for, you will most likely continue to volunteer.

Motivation

Important question to ask:

What can we as an organization do to keep you involved as a volunteer?

You are very important to us and we sense your interest is waning.

Motivation

Many motivational issues/problems are rooted in the organization's need to update its understanding of who volunteers are and why they contribute their time.

Expanding motivations for volunteering:

- making a difference
- training or educational requirements
- business contacts
- socialization
- leadership opportunities

Key Concept #4

Have a strong supervision team in place and include periodic performance reviews.

Poll Question

How many of you have a formal evaluation process in place for volunteers?

If you **do** have a formal evaluation process in place for volunteers, please "raise your hand."

Volunteer Supervision

- Staff and volunteers who are asked to supervise volunteers must clearly understand the expectation of them in this role.
 - Preparation/Orientation of volunteer to job
 - Ongoing support and resources
 - Evaluation
 - Reporting requirements
- Ongoing Support and Resources
 - Training
 - Coaching
 - Appreciation
 - Materials/information

Volunteer Performance Reviews

- Successful performance reviews provide for a periodic opportunity for communication between a person who assigns work and the person who performs it.
- There are numerous benefits to the volunteers and the organization when volunteer performance reviews are incorporated into the volunteer management system.

Volunteer Performance Reviews

- The components of a good volunteer performance review include:
 - Job description with success indicators
 - Mutually agreed upon outcomes
 - An implementation plan
- Outcomes from volunteer performance reviews range from commendation to dismissal - by the organization or the volunteer.

DISMISSAL???

Yes, Dismissal.

How many of you have had to dismiss a volunteer?

If you have had to dismiss a volunteer, please "raise your hand".

Volunteer Performance Reviews - Essential Elements

- Volunteers learn about review system when they enter the organization
- Mutuality is key
- Performance reviews are based on previously agreed upon job description, standards, etc.
- No surprises!

Volunteer Performance Reviews - Benefits

- It is a good time for the organization to express appreciation for volunteer efforts and acknowledge accomplishments.
- It provides an opportunity for plans to be made to improve volunteer performance in the future.
- Sends the message that volunteers are important and that both volunteers and the organization are held accountable to their agreements.

Volunteer Performance Reviews - Benefits

- Allows volunteers to express concerns and "escape" an unfavorable situation.
- Volunteer feels valued because they receive the same quality time and feedback as paid staff.
- Gives the supervisor the opportunity to address the questions and concerns of the volunteer and any of his/her own.

Recognition Objectives:

- Understand the impact of recognition in your own life
- Identify organizational barriers to giving recognition and propose solutions
- Explore ways of offering formal and informal recognition in your organization
- Discuss creative, low-cost recognition ideas
- Review essential guidelines of effective recognition

Personal Recognition Experiences

Think about volunteer (or any) recognition in your own life:

- What kind of recognition have you received?
- Was it meaningful?
- Why? (Submit a few examples)

Key Concepts of Recognition

1. Recognition is an ongoing, integral part of the management process.
2. Recognition can be formal or informal and can be given on many occasions during a volunteer's involvement.
3. Recognition should be meaningful to the recipient and should be given in a timely manner.
4. Recognition can be creative and fun to give and receive and is best when associated with the organization's culture and the volunteer's type of service.

Key Concept #1

Recognition is an ongoing, integral part of the management process.

Barriers to Recognition

Can you identify any organizational barriers to giving positive feedback and recognition to your volunteers?

- If so, what are the barriers?
- How can you overcome them?

Perceived Barriers and Possible Answers

1. Time

Many forms of recognition require little time (for example: a handwritten note, an e-card, a re-tweet, a smile and a thank you)

2. Paid staff not feeling recognized

Give joint recognition to paid and non-paid staff, recognized as a team

3. Funds

Many forms of recognition require little money (for example: thank you notes, items made by consumers)

Key Concept #2

Recognition can be formal or informal and can be given on many occasions during a volunteer's involvement.

Formal Recognition

Major benefits of formal recognition:

1. Building community spirit among volunteers
2. Publicly recognizing volunteers attracts others to join
3. Boosts volunteer motivation
4. Volunteers see that their service is valued

Cautions Regarding Formal Recognition

1. Presuming they replace daily thank yous
2. Lack of personal presentations
3. More costly and some people believe that money should be spent solely on programs
4. Poor attendance at formal recognition ceremonies; lack of promotion; time constraints
5. Others?

My Agency Recognizes Volunteers...

- How and when does your organization currently recognize volunteers?
- How could you improve on this?

Times for Recognition

- Daily/weekly basis
- Monthly/yearly basis
- Special Occasions (birthday, anniversary date with the organization, holidays, etc.)
- At the end of a large project
- When a volunteer leaves

Key Concept #3

Recognition should be meaningful to the recipient and should be given in a timely manner.

The Appropriate Recognition for the Individual

- What kind of recognition do people motivated by accomplishment like?
- What kind of recognition do people motivated by social interaction enjoy?
- What kind of recognition do people motivated by power like?

Recognition Notes:

- Personalize the Recognition
- Recognize in a timely manner

Key Concept #4

Recognition can be creative and fun to give and receive. It is best when associated with the organization's culture and the volunteer's type of service

Innovative Ways to Recognize Volunteers

Think about several ways your organization could recognize the following volunteers:

- Day-of event volunteers
- Office volunteers
- Year-round volunteers
- Committee members

Essential Guidelines of Effective Recognition

- The key to volunteer recognition is placement in the job most suitable to his/her motivations and talents.
- Recognition must be meaningful to recipients, not to the person giving the recognition.
- Many acts of recognition can be spontaneous and personal and are often not costly

Essential Guidelines of Effective Recognition

- Short term volunteers are best recognized at the work-unit level in the group with which they interact
- Long term volunteers generally like recognition within the larger group setting

Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence

Questions?

Resources

Central Kentucky Association of Volunteer Administrators - <http://ckava.onefireplace.com/>
National Wildlife Foundation, Volunteer Handbook - <http://www.nwf.org/resources/pdfs/volunteerhandbook.pdf>

Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Bluegrass - <http://www.rmhclexington.com/how.html>

VolunteerMatch.org - <http://www.volunteermatch.org/>