

Volunteer Management - Engaging Volunteers as Unpaid Staff



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Reasons people volunteer

- **Relate to the mission.**
- **Desire to make a contribution.**
- **Feel better being involved with something larger than individual.**
- **Inspired by a dynamic leader who is building and moving the organization forward.**

Author Unknown

"Volunteers are love in motion!"

Reasons people volunteer (cont.)

- **Want to meet and network with interesting and successful people.**
- **Believe serving on board is way to advance professionally.**
- **Want to build new skills and learn about new areas.**
- **Find board service more fulfilling than career.**

Tom Brokaw

"It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference."

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More reasons

- **Volunteers have passion.**
- **Volunteers give more than money.**
- **Volunteers want to chart the course for the organization's future.**
- **Volunteers are great marketers and influencers.**

(Source: AFP Exchange, Derek Feldman, Achieve LLC)

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Volunteerism

- **Volunteers give of their time**
 - by choice
 - without monetary reward, and
 - for the benefit of the community.
- **Volunteer management consists of planning, recruiting, orientation, training, supervision, evaluation and recognition of those who volunteer.**

African Proverb

"One volunteer is better than ten forced men."

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A 9 Step Model

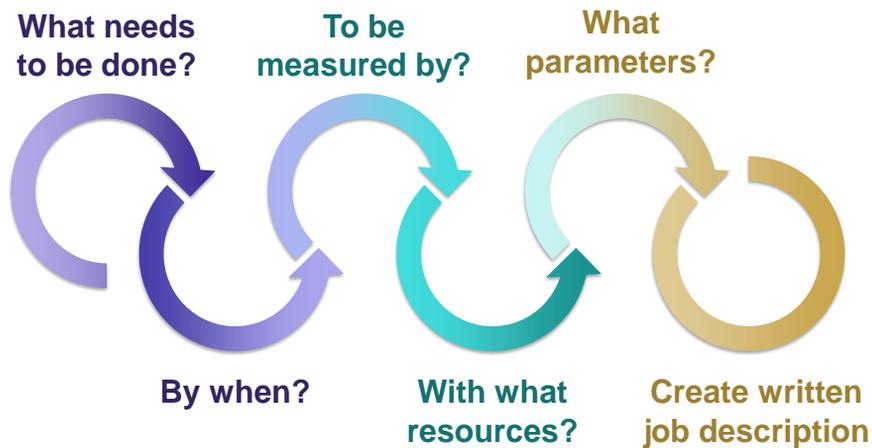
1. Clarify what needs to be done
2. Identify
3. Recruit
4. Orient/Train
5. Place
6. Manage/Encourage/Support
7. Evaluate
8. Recognize and Thank
9. Goodbye or Recycle

(adapted from Sue Vineyard)

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1. Clarify what needs to be done



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2. Identify prospective volunteers

- What skills, abilities, access and linkage to which circles of influence are needed?
- Who might possess the above abilities?
- Review list of names
- Brainstorm with others
- Get background information
- Check out past involvement as a volunteer

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3. Recruit members

- **The Power of the Ask – % Who volunteered***
 - 71% - volunteered when asked
 - 29% - volunteered even though not asked
- **Preparing for the ask**
- **Ways to ask**
- **Who asks**

*Independent Sector

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4. Orient and Train

Materials to consider:

- **Mission Statement**
- **Committee minutes for past year**
- **Brief history of the organization**
- **Listing of current volunteers with titles, addresses, phone numbers**
- **Job description and committee structure**
- **Organizational chart**

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Orient and Train (con't)

- Relevant board-approved policies
- Yearlong calendar of events
- Long term plans
- Ensure that all volunteers are able to serve as ambassadors (30 sec elevator talk)
- Provide training specific to the role

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Orient and Train (con't)

Specific to development:

- Donor confidentiality (sign agreement)
- Need to know basis
- Appropriate cultivation
- Appropriate solicitation/approach



Emily's Observation: Volunteers who come up through the fundraising side of the organization are generally excellent prospects for board membership.

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5. Place

- **Sign agreement**
- **Connect volunteer with chair and others**
- **Establish ways to integrate (social, meetings, organizational events, etc.)**
- **Buddy system for first meeting**

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6. Manage, Encourage, Support

Once the plan and timeline have been agreed on, get to work!

- **Make good use of their time**
- **Good communication, thank often**
- **Make it meaningful and fun**
- **Help them feel successful**
- **Staff support for the details**
- **Acknowledge and celebrate accomplishments**

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7. Evaluate

- **Establish protocols, tools, timing**
- **As compared to goals, objectives, timeline agreed upon at the start**
- **Processes – as individual, as team, as staff**
- **What went well? What can be done differently next time?**

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8. Recognize and Thank

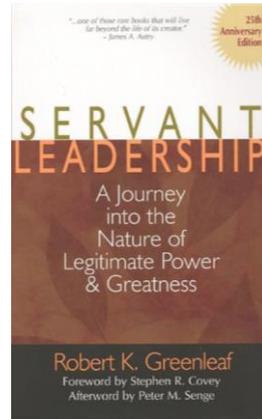
- **Recognize in groups - meetings, conference calls, and other venues those who are excelling**
- **Provide genuine, specific verbal thank you at every opportunity**
- **Photos, notes to employer/others**
- **Publicity (appropriate to the target audience)**
- **Organization hosted events – invite, thank, nominate**

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8. Recognize and Thank

- **Be a Servant Leader**
(support volunteers to success and they get the spotlight)



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9. Goodbye or Recycle

- **Acknowledge service in a meaningful way for the individual**
- **If it's time, let them go in peace**
- **Leadership development – suggest they be placed in another role/committee/task force**

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Retention Strategies

Volunteers, and paid staff for that matter, stay in a program where the factors that surround them ENCourage them to continue. They leave when factors DIScourage continued involvement.

The primary factors that determine whether volunteers stay (“retention”) or leave (“rejection”) are:

- **Expectations for Behavior:** What the agency expects of the volunteer in relation to work, clients, others and themselves.
- **Rules:** Formalized regulations for how work is done; demands of the program on those involved.
- **Systems:** The processes for carrying out work.
- **People:** Appropriate relationships with others.
- **Communication:** How information is shared.

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Retention Strategies (con't)

- **Rewards:** What is rewarded, how and when.
- **Climate:** Norms or unwritten rules governing behavior.
- **Setting:** The physical surroundings and factors.
- **Success & Impact:** Perceptions and definitions of making a difference.
- **Individualism:** What the volunteer brings to the position: expectations, time constraints, skills, adaptability, wellness, experience, energy, stability, commitment, needs, motivations, self-image, etc.

(Vineyard)

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Tips for Volunteer Managers

- **Match veterans with rookies**
- **Follow up verbal instructions/conversations in writing and promptly**
- **Provide clear deadlines for completion of tasks**
- **Clarify what type and level of support staff is available**
- **Groom future volunteer leaders**
- **Invite and encourage input**
- **Assist volunteer leaders in developing their team (volunteer management skills)**
- **Keep them involved (don't let the good ones get away)**
- **Constant and never ending improvement of your skills – facilitation, meeting management, etc.**

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References & Resources

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