



VolunteerMatch

VolunteerMatch Learning Center  
Advanced Practices

# Developing a Strategic Plan for Volunteer Engagement

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# Agenda

- Why do you need a strategic plan?
- What can a strategic plan do
- What needs to happen first?
- Creating a vision
- Building a team
- Communicating up and out
- Things to think about

# Why a strategic plan?

## What is your vision for volunteer engagement?

- What does your program look like now?
- What will it look like in 5 years if you maintain the status quo?
- What could it look like?

Have you thought about what's possible around expansion of impact, or identify trends in recruitment, volunteers aging in place, or expanded roles?

# What can a strategic plan do?

For you? Your program? The organization?

- Focus energy and resources.
- Reenergize a static program.
- Allow for innovation to address current and future needs.
- Identify Library priorities and create meaningful measurement.

# Where to start?

Identify and gather the information you'll need to inform the discussion around strategy.

- Qualitative and quantitative – reports, focus groups, surveys.
- Identify or clarify the position of your current volunteer engagement program – SWOT analysis
- Understand how leadership and stakeholders are involved now – actions, ideas, beliefs
- Determine your timing – is there a busy season or is your program cyclical?
- Should you engage someone from outside your Library?

# Creating a vision

## What could volunteer engagement look like in your Library?

- Creating outcomes and the implementation will be collaborative, but there needs to be a leader.
- Don't be constrained by history, or funding – get beyond yes, but – and think big
  - What are the opportunities, weaknesses?
- Solicit feedback. Don't create in a vacuum.
  - Remember focus groups and stakeholder's needs

# Engage others

What are the outcomes for the Library? Create common goals:

- Who else will be accountable or impacted by the outcomes?
- Does leadership understand the need for vision and change?  
Know how this work impacts mission?
- What work needs to be done – analysis? Evaluation?
  - Can it be done by you? Should it?
- Implementation and support should be organization-wide
  - Even if this strategy isn't incorporated into the larger Library strategy

# Building the team

Who should be involved? Who needs to be involved?

- The team that creates the plan should be inclusive but not overwhelming.
- Include stakeholders and leaders
  - But outcomes must be realistic
- Volunteers need to have a voice as well
- Library size and diversity of volunteer roles can increase stakeholders
  - This is not the only opportunity for involvement - committees, working groups
- Develop a team that create outcomes and goals



# Communicating up and out

It's as important to create a plan for communication as it is to create the strategic plan.

- Not everyone can (and should) be at the table – how will you share discussions or information about how decisions were made?
- Focus groups allow participation prior to planning, town halls, informational meetings, updates can provide participation after.
  - Share work from committees, working groups, task forces
- Share information back to stakeholders and participants.
- Remember to share this work to your community as well.

# Make your Plan a Reality!

## The strategic plan is just the beginning

- Create the working groups or committees to begin identifying the individual actions that will make the strategic plan outcomes a reality
- Refer your strategic plan and goals back to your vision
  - It's okay to reevaluate where you're going as the program starts to evolved.
- Don't get discouraged
  - Tout your successes and evaluate and learn from your mistakes.

# Strategic Planning Resources

## Colorado Parks & Wildlife Strategic Implementation Plan

<http://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/Volunteer/VolStratPlan.pdf>

## American Diabetes Association Annual Report and Strategic Plan

[http://main.diabetes.org/dorg/PDFs/American\\_Diabetes\\_Association-2012-2015-Strategic-Plan.pdf](http://main.diabetes.org/dorg/PDFs/American_Diabetes_Association-2012-2015-Strategic-Plan.pdf)

## Strategic Planning for Nonprofits

<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/strategic-planning-nonprofits>

## From Bridgespan, Living Into Your Strategic Plan

<http://www.bridgespan.org/Publications-and-Tools/Strategy-Development/Living-Into-Your-Strategic-Plan/FeaturedPublications2/Living-Into-Your-Strategic-Plan-Tools-and-Temp-%281%29.aspx#.UqeZMeLjVCM>

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