



VolunteerMatch

VolunteerMatch Learning Center  
Introductory Approaches

# The New Volunteer Manager's Toolkit

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# Agenda

- Define a successful volunteer program
- Introduce common volunteer engagement program components
- Discuss the importance of risk management
- Best practices for fostering retention
- Effective recognition strategies

# Successful Program Characteristics

## Apply and integrate qualities for success

- Knowing your volunteers - Initially and ongoing.

## Completing your due diligence

- Risk management, but also a chance to better know your prospective volunteers.

## Making sure you're all on the same page

- Does everyone - volunteers, staff, clients – know what's expected of them? Is it written down? Has everyone agreed to follow the rules?

# Common Program Components

Not all programs need each component, but each component should be evaluated regularly

## Job Descriptions

- Well thought out, detailed, comprehensive

## Recruitment Plan

- Where and when, but most importantly why. Targeted message for each channel. Marketing!

## Application

- Contact information, but start to get to know your volunteers  
“why do you want to volunteer at the library?”

# Common Program Components

## Interview

- Build on the application questions. Ask about skills, interests, experiences – are they a good fit?

## Orientation

- An opportunity to share what you do and why you do it. Introduce the culture, policies, procedures. Can be one on one.

## Training

- What does a volunteer need to know to be successful?

# Common Program Components

## Non-Disclosure Agreement

- Should cover work product, equipment, sensitive information.

## Background Check

- At-risk populations: children, elderly. Positions with access to sensitive information or PII (personally identifiable information.)

## Reference Check

- Consider asking for volunteering references, as well as personal and/or professional.

# Common Program Components

## Policies and Procedures Handbook

- Begin with applicable HR policies. Determine what other policies need to be included – start with instances where things went wrong. Include conflict resolution, dismissal or termination procedures.

## Acknowledgement Form

- I acknowledge that I have been given a copy of the Volunteer Handbook...

## Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement Letter

- Specific for each volunteer/volunteer position. Identifies the who, what, when, and for how long. Use to reinforce the most important policies and procedures.

# Let's talk about risk.

All the pieces in your volunteer engagement program need to do one thing...

Protect your

- Volunteer Engagement Strategy
- Volunteers
- Staff
- Clients and Patrons
- Organization

from all of the things that could go wrong – to manage risk.



# It's not just about risk.

Volunteer management is about identifying potential and making the perfect match.

- Provide meaningful work for the volunteer
- Create work that's important to the organization
- Find the right fit
- Make good use of skills and talents
- Build and maintain personal relationships

# Keep the Volunteers You Have

Why do some volunteers leave and others stay?

## Difference in expectations

- Organizational culture
- Work v job description
- Time commitment
- Communication and style
- Program support and training
- Motivation and philosophy

## Maintain the relationship

- Identify and address signs of disengagement

Volunteers have lives, too. You can't plan for life.

# Saying Thank You

How a volunteer wants to be recognized is unique to each volunteer.

- Ask!
  - Survey, questionnaire. What would they like to do, learn, see?
- Recognize professional work in meaningful ways
  - Credit, public acknowledgement, portfolio
- Don't underestimate a heartfelt, handwritten note
  - Created by clients or staff

# Thank you!

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