



VolunteerMatch

VolunteerMatch Learning Center
Advanced Practices

Where do I go from Here? Engage Volunteers in New Ways

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Post-Presentation Questions?

Email Jennifer: education@volunteermatch.org

Agenda

- Where can volunteers go in your program?
- Keys to evolving your program
- Creating involvement, flexibility and connecting with volunteers
- Tools for evolving your program
- Things to think about
- Questions

Where do your volunteers go?

What does your volunteer program look like to a volunteer?

- Cul-de-sac
 - Nowhere to go when you get there
- Country Road
 - If you hang in there it goes somewhere, eventually
- Highway
 - It's a direct route to impact and engagement

Keys to Evolving your Program

- Develop work that is meaningful to the volunteer and important to the organization.
- Create a connection between volunteers, clients and your mission
- Establish the foundation necessary to support a diverse program of volunteer engagement
- Know and share the impact of the work volunteers do

Create More Involvement

Training and experience pathways

- Do volunteers know what they need to do to be able to fill each role in your program?
- Is it clear how that happens, or
- Is it mysterious or based on longevity?
- Do you offer those classes or have on the job experience checklists?

Create More Involvement

Leadership positions

- Do you have opportunities for volunteers to move into leadership roles?
- In your program? In the organization?
 - Shift leaders, committee leaders, subject matter experts, pro bono consultants

Create more Flexibility

Different types of opportunities levels of involvement

- One size doesn't fit all
- Doesn't allow for growth or retraction as a volunteer's life changes
- Do you offer project-based opportunities, virtual opportunities

Bring more positions into your engagement program

- Let volunteers help you!
- Volunteers know the work that volunteers do - empower them to document or create the foundation and flexibility you need.

Create more Understanding

Keep volunteers informed

- New ideas or theories in your impact area
- New policies, practices or projects in your program
- Milestones in your organization

Incorporate impact into recognition

- Don't just say thank you - share the work the volunteer has done
- Include clients in the thank-you message
- Spread the thank you outside of your volunteer program

Create the Connection

Turn your volunteers into Advocates!

- Do volunteers know your mission?
 - Major accomplishments, funders
- Do they know about other programs?
 - Areas and impacts besides their own
- Empower them to spread the word
 - Keep them up to date - Use social media
- Do you know which of your volunteers are also donors?

Tools for Evolving your Program

Think strategically!

- Do you have a 3 or 5 year plan for your program?
 - Get off the hamster wheel
- What type of program do you have now?
 - What type of program do you want to have?
- Where and why do volunteers drop out?
 - Ask them!
- Survey past and current volunteers about what they like, are proud of, don't understand about your program
 - Don't do this alone!

Tools for Evolving your Program

- Start with the easy (easier?) stuff
 - Create or document the structure that exists now
 - Identify volunteer position descriptions, how they fit together, what volunteers need to know to do them.
- Create more flexibility
 - What did your volunteers tell you they wanted to do, but couldn't - so they left?
- Where does the rigidity come from? You, organization leadership, the past, or perceived ideas about volunteers?
- Create a communication plan to turn volunteers in to advocates

Things to Think About

- You don't have to change everything right now
 - Putting pathways in is an easier first step
 - Identify the priorities or critical positions
- Invite volunteers to take on leadership roles
 - Volunteers want to tell you what they like (and don't like) about your program
 - Invite your superstar volunteers to take the lead
- Share your milestones and successes with the organization
 - Manager, leadership, co-workers and, of course, the volunteers!

Resources

The Learning Center

Find upcoming webinar dates, how-to videos and more

<http://learn.volunteermatch.org>

VolunteerMatch Blog

Visit Engaging Volunteers, our nonprofit blog for articles and tips

blogs.volunteermatch.org/engagingvolunteers/

Related Webinar Topics:

- Walking the Walk: Engage Volunteers in your Volunteer Engagement Program
- Engaging Pro Bono and Skilled Volunteers
- Managing Difficult Volunteer Transitions

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