



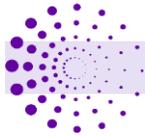
Designing Volunteer Positions

Handouts

Volunteer Impact Leadership Training Series

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Designing Volunteer Positions

Guide to Handouts



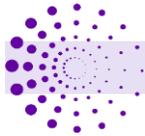
- H-1: Learning Objectives and Key Concepts
- H-2: Do Your Homework – Organizational Readiness Checklist
- H-3: Delegation
- H-4: Benefits of Delegation and Cardinal Rules for Delegation
- H-5: Trends in Volunteering
- H-6: Skill Based Volunteering
- H-7: Position Descriptions
- H-8: Suggested Reading Resources

Attachments to Handouts

- Attachment A: Sample Position Description
- Attachment B: Volunteer Orientation and Training

The main information from the PowerPoint presentation is included in the handouts.
To follow the handouts along with the PowerPoint slides,
note the handout number in lower right corner of the PowerPoint (“H-1” etc.).





Handout 1

Learning Objectives and Key Concepts

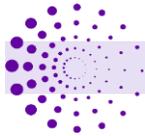
Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the importance of assessing organizational readiness to accept volunteers
2. Understand why delegation may be difficult for staff while also being critical to an organization's ability to maximize volunteer resources.
3. Understand the necessity of written position description
4. Know how to design positions that will attract the current volunteer workforce

Key Concepts

1. Assess organizational readiness before bringing volunteers on board.
2. Many difficulties in delegation arise from: attitudes toward releasing work, not understanding what delegation is, and lack of organizational rewards for effective delegation.
3. It is important to understand and appreciate the potential benefits of delegation and to practice the cardinal rules of effective delegation.
4. Understand trends in volunteering when you write volunteer position descriptions.
5. Position descriptions should include all essential information in an easy-to-understand format.



Handout 2 Do Your Homework—Organizational Readiness Checklist

Key Concept #1

Assess organizational readiness before bringing volunteers on board.

Do you understand volunteer motivation?

- Why are volunteers attracted to your organization?
- Why do they stay at your organization?
- Do you know how to match volunteers' interests and skills to the volunteer positions at your organizations?

Are volunteer opportunities appealing and meaningful?

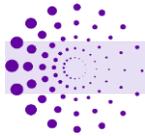
- Have Position Descriptions been prepared?
- Will volunteers' time and talents be utilized effectively?
- Is there flexibility to change a position description to meet the volunteer's needs?

Is your organization ready to accept volunteers?

- Will the environment be respectful and nurturing to volunteers?
- Are effective communication systems in place?
- Will volunteers be adequately recognized and rewarded?

Are other infrastructure elements in place?

- Do you have adequate orientation and training for volunteers?
- Are staff prepared to delegate to volunteers?
- Are staff prepared to supervise volunteers?
- Do you have a structure and budget to support your volunteer program?



Handout 3 Delegation

What is delegation?

- Delegation is the accomplishment of the mission and goals of the organization through the efforts of others.
- Delegation is the art of letting go while staying in charge.
- Assigning mutually agreed upon results, an appropriate means of authority and support to get those results, and a follow-up system which allows you to inspect what you expect.

Key Concept #2

Many difficulties in delegation arise from:

1. Attitudes towards releasing work
2. Not understanding what delegation is
3. A lack of organizational rewards for effective delegation

What Does Delegation Entail?

- Assigning mutually agreed upon results
- An appropriate means of authority
- Needed support and training
- A follow-up system that allows you to inspect what you expect

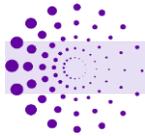
Four Ways to Get a Job Done

1. Doing it all Directing others (when, how, etc.) Dumping (indiscriminate, poor timing)
4. Delegating (mutual results, authority/support inspection system)

Many difficulties in delegation arise from

1. Attitudes towards releasing work
2. Not understanding what delegation is
3. A lack of organizational rewards for effective delegation





Handout 4 Benefits of Delegation and Cardinal Rules for Delegation

Key Concept #3

It is important to understand and appreciate the potential benefits of delegation and to practice the cardinal rules of effective delegation.

Benefits of Delegation

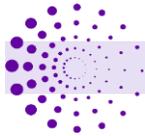
It is important to understand and appreciate the potential benefits of delegation for you, for the volunteer and for the organization:

- Release time for you to do other things
- The organization saves money, can do more, and involves more people in achieving the mission
- A way to "grow" people
- And more...

Cardinal Rules of Delegation

1. **You must assess work requirements with the corresponding abilities and time availability of a volunteer.** (In other words, do you have the right person for the assignment, not simply someone who has agreed to do it? Does he/she have the time and is he/she willing to give the time needed to get the job done?)
2. **Give the assignment in terms of results.** Don't just give activities for volunteers to follow; share with them what is to be accomplished. Communicate that the "how" of accomplishing the task is up to the volunteer, as long as results are achieved.
3. **Define the level of control.** Indicate how much authority the volunteer has to make decisions without "checking in." (Note that this is a critical part of success that will be dealt with further in Key Concept #4.)
4. **Communicate any guidelines and assess volunteer's understanding of them.** Volunteers should be forewarned about any constraints that must shape their decisions or activities (e.g., confidentiality).
5. **Make resources and training available.** It is important that volunteers have the assistance and resources needed to successfully accomplish their tasks. Ask volunteers what you can do to help assure their success.
6. **Determine criteria for success.** It is important that the supervisor and the volunteer reach an agreement on how results will be measured. (e.g., results of a recruitment outreach: recruit and train six new counselors for our program by June 1.)
7. **Set up checkpoints.** To be certain that the job is progressing, times should be established to check in on progress or on any need for change or additional support. Actually calendar your initial check-in meeting.
8. **Provide feedback and recognition along the way and at the completion of a project.** People appreciate knowing they are on track and are being noticed for good progress or, if needed, given additional resources to be successful.





Handout 5 Trends in Volunteering

Key Concept #4

Understand trends in volunteering when you write volunteer position descriptions.

Trends in Volunteerism

Changes organizations report seeing in volunteers inquiring to volunteer:

- 55% see increased interest in short term volunteering
- 37% see increased interest in developing or utilizing workplace skills
- 32% see increased interest in volunteering on evenings and weekend

MAVA 2014 Shifting Environment Survey, <http://www.mavanetwork.org/shiftingenv>

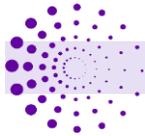
Changes in Volunteers

- Volunteers have increasing demands on their time.
- Volunteers are looking for short term (episodic) volunteer opportunities.
- Most volunteers are employed.
- Volunteers are expecting challenging and interesting assignments.
- It is important to volunteers (especially Boomers) for their work to have impact, and to be able to see that impact.
- Volunteers (especially Boomers) expect to be part of designing their volunteer position – a mutual process of coming up with how they can contribute the most instead of just being put in an existing volunteer slot.
- Volunteers are coming from a broader cross-section of our society (i.e., growing number of professionals, youth, and unemployed).
- Today's volunteers expect to be treated professionally.
- Nearly all volunteers need more flexibility and find it difficult to commit to regular hours.
- As communities become more diverse, so does the pool of potential volunteers.
- Family and group volunteering are gaining in popularity.
- People are interested in working for causes, not organizations.
- Many are looking to volunteering for job experience, training or as a re-entry experience.
- There are many people with professional skills available to nonprofit organizations.

Designing Positions for Today's Volunteers

1. Offer a wide choice of volunteer opportunities in all aspects of the organization's operations.
2. Include some short term and seasonal volunteer positions to align with current volunteer availability.
3. Offer skills-based volunteer opportunities to maximize what volunteers can bring to the organization. Move volunteers into project leadership roles. Be open to project ideas that volunteers propose.





Handout 6 Skill Based Volunteering

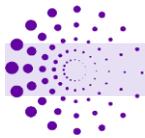
Definition

Tapping the specialized skills, talents, and expertise of volunteers to help the organization meet its mission.

- The volunteer is using specific skills, credentials, and experience that is not available in the general population.
- You are seeking volunteers to have skills or talents they bring with them when they volunteer.

Designing Skill Based Volunteer Positions

1. Create a culture that values skill-based volunteers.
2. Work with staff to define skill-based roles for volunteers. Discuss:
 - What ways are you currently involving volunteers where they use their skills?
 - What new skill-based positions might be useful at your organization?
3. Start small in a section of your agency that is open to skill-based volunteers.



Handout 7 Position Descriptions

Key Concept #5

Position descriptions should include all essential information in an easy-to-understand format.

Pivotal for Success

Good volunteer position design is pivotal to the ultimate success of a volunteer program.

Purpose of Position Descriptions

1. Provide volunteers with a clear position description (To what are they saying "yes"?)
2. Marketing tools for recruitment. (The jobs are what you are "selling" to volunteers.)
3. Serve as a primary guide for screening volunteers.
4. Basis for supervision and evaluation. (It is difficult to reward, supervise or fire someone in a job with unclear expectations.)
5. Serve as a contract between the volunteer and the agency. (It is important to indicate the benefits volunteers receive on the job to make it an exchange between the volunteer and the organization.)
6. Provide information about job responsibility, etc., to co-workers of volunteers, thus giving role clarity to both paid and unpaid staff.

The ideal position description contains the following elements:

Position Title

Purpose of organization

Goal or purpose of the position (Why was position created and how does it relate to purpose of organization?)

Major responsibilities (What are the key expectations of the volunteer?)

Impact of the assignment (What is the initial impact of the assignment? and what are the long-term outcomes from the work done by this position?)

Qualifications (required and desired)

Benefits to volunteer (e.g., job training for marketable skills, free meals, tickets, free parking, admission, reimbursed expenses, opportunity to make a difference, etc.)

Supervisor (reporting requirements and supervisory assignment)

Time commitment (Hours, dates, days, time commitment needed)

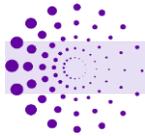
Work location (Where will volunteer report to work?)

Signatures of volunteer and supervisor (Sign and date)

Review Position Descriptions at least on an annual basis.

See Attachment A for a sample volunteer position description.





Handout 8 Suggested Reading Resources

Websites

“Volunteering and Civic Life in America” – Corporation for National and Community Service, <http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/>. This website has the national rankings for states regarding their rate of volunteering, updated annually plus great information on who is volunteering and where they are volunteering

Articles

“7 Top Tips For Effective Delegation: Skills Towards Work-Life Balance” at *Management for the Rest of Us* <http://www.mftrou.com/effective-delegation.html>

“12 Best Practices for Engaging Boomers and New Generations of Volunteers” at the MAVA website (www.mavanetwork.org) under Resources>Research and Initiatives>Boomer Initiative https://www.mavanetwork.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=286912&module_id=201953

Eisner, David and Robert T. Grimm Jr.’ Shannon Maynard, and Susannah Washburn, “The New Volunteer Workforce,” Winter 2009, http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_new_volunteer_workforce/

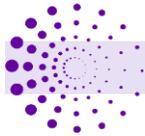
“Keeping Baby Boomers Volunteering,” Corporation for National & Community Service, http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/07_0307_boomer_report.pdf

Johnson, Tobi, “Re-Designing Volunteer Jobs That Are “Too Big,” April 2013, <http://www.tobijohnson.com/2013/04/18/re-designing-volunteer-jobs-that-are-too-big/>

“Reinventing Aging Baby Boomers and Civic Engagement”. Harvard School of Public Health-MetLife Foundation Initiative on Retirement and Civic Engagement. http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/general/boomers_engagement.pdf

“Volunteer Managers and Delegations: Part 4,” Michigan State University Extension, April 2014, http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/volunteer_managers_and_delegation_part_4





Books

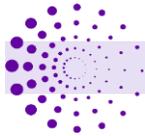
Fixler, Jill and Sandie Eichberg with Gail Lorenz, *Boomer Volunteer Engagement: Collaborate Today, Thrive Tomorrow*, 2008, AuthorHouse. Available for order from Amazon (\$34.95, used copies also available) <http://www.amazon.com/Boomer-Volunteer-Engagement-Collaborate-Tomorrow/dp/1434385906>

Genett, Donna M., Ph.D. *If You Want It Done Right, You Don't Have To Do It Yourself*. Quill Driver Books/Word Dancer Press, August 2003. Available for order from Amazon (\$8.99/e-book, \$14.75 hard copy) <http://www.amazon.com/Want-Done-Right-Dont-Yourself/dp/1884956327>

Graff, Linda L. "Volunteer Position Design." Chapter 3 in *Best of All: The Quick Reference Guide To Effective Volunteer Involvement*. Dundas, ON: Linda L. Graff & Associates, 2005. Order from Linda Graff and Associates (\$35 hard copy, e-book or book on CD with introductory video) <http://www.lindagraff.ca/books.html#BestOfAll>

McCurley, Steve and Rick Lynch. "Creating Meaningful Experiences for Volunteers." Chapter 5 in *Keeping Volunteers: A Guide to Retention*. Olympia, WA: Fat Cat Publications, 2005. Available for order (\$10 e-book only) at <http://www.energizeinc.com/store/5-218-E-1>

McCurley, Steve and Rick Lynch. "Creating Motivating Volunteer Jobs." Chapter 4 in *Volunteer Management: Mobilizing all the Resources of the Community*, revised ed. Kemptville, ON: Johnstone Training and Consultation, Inc., 2011. Available for order (\$29 e-book only) <https://www.energizeinc.com/store/5-224-E-2>



Attachment A

Sample Position Description

Tournament Champion



Overview: If you're looking to make a difference, this is the job for you. DARTS Golf committee is comprised of enthusiastic, dedicated and experienced volunteers. What they need is leaders they can turn to for guidance and praise. DARTS Tournament Champion will take the helm as DARTS Golf committee leader.

Service Impact: The Golf tournament is DARTS largest fundraiser of the year. Dollars raised help DARTS fulfill our mission to support the full participation of all generations in our community, regardless of their ability to pay for the services they receive.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide leadership, experience, motivation to Golf Planning Committee
- Plan tournament and banquet in collaboration with Golf Co-Chair, DARTS staff and Planning Committee volunteers
- Attend and co-facilitate scheduled Golf Planning Committee meetings
- Serve as liaison between sub-committee chairs
- Provide personal signature on selected pre- and post-event letters to golfers/sponsors (DARTS letterhead & materials)
- Share knowledge of community contacts/networks – work together (w/DARTS staff & Planning Committee) as determined to invite them to participate in the golf event through: sponsorships, golfing, attending banquet, volunteering
- Participate in Golf Classic (part of a foursome)

Time Commitment:

January – June for two consecutive years for 5 – 20 hours per month, increasing as golf event nears

Qualifications:

- Have a broad knowledge of all aspects of DARTS golf event
- Good organization and communication skills

Supported By: Co-chair, Resource Development staff and the Director of Volunteer Resources

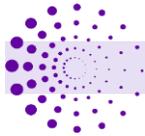
Benefits:

- Gain new experiences, skills and friendships
- Work with caring committed staff and volunteers
- Discover self fulfillment and strengthen our community by supporting others

1645 Marthaler Lane, West St. Paul MN 55118 651- 455-1560 www.darts1.org

Thank you to DARTS and Colleen Fritz for sharing this position description





Attachment B

Volunteer Orientation and Training

Experts know that a well-trained volunteer is a happy volunteer. One important sign that an organization is ready to accept volunteers into its midst is the presence of both:

- Comprehensive and welcoming orientation for new volunteers
- Ongoing training for established volunteers

Below is an outline of the typical contents of a volunteer orientation session. The content of ongoing training will depend on your organization's mission and its unique needs and opportunities. Volunteers who are well trained for the position into which they have been placed are volunteers likely to succeed at it. Remember that volunteers are your ambassadors in the community, so the more they know about your organization, the more they will be able to generate support for it in the community. They will also feel more connected to the organization and its mission, which will lead to greater retention.

Typical Components of Volunteer Orientation:

- Information about the organization
- Mission
- History
- Programs and clientele
- Information about the volunteer program
- Volunteer handbook and policies
- Benefits of volunteering
- Volunteer training schedule
- Volunteer supervisor
- Record-keeping requirements
- Sign the volunteer agreement
- Information about the facility
- Meet staff and volunteers
- Tour
- Use of equipment
- Logistics and parking
- Information about the specific volunteer opportunity
- What is my job?
- How do I do it?

Volunteer Handbook

A volunteer handout book is a good tool to use in the volunteer orientation and a means to communicate key information to the volunteers. See the resources in the "members only" section of the MAVA website for examples of a volunteer handbook.

Additional Volunteer Training

Increasingly, organizations are inviting volunteers to attend staff training as a way to be informed and as recognition for their work.

Resources

See the "Community Tool Box" sections on volunteer program orientation and training at: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/volunteers/orientation-programs/main>

