

Connect with your Community via VolunteerMatch

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Volunteer Engagement: What's it all about?

Volunteer Engagement

How are you engaging volunteers in your library now?

- What kind of work? What types of volunteers?

How could you engage volunteers in your library?

- What's stopping you? Concerns? Resources?

What do we mean when we say “volunteer engagement”?

- What is new model versus traditional model engagement?

What does it mean?

Volunteer engagement describes a cooperative and collaborative relationship between a volunteer and an organization.

- Volunteers contribute to outlining or defining the work they want to do.
- Volunteer management is the foundation or structure on which volunteer engagement can happen.
- New model for collaboration with volunteers – not a traditional model.

Why should we be thinking about volunteer engagement?



Keys to Creating Volunteer Engagement

- 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
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Evaluate your Program

- What are the current pieces of your program?
 - What happens? When does it happen? Who's involved? Who should be involved?
- Why do you do what you do?
 - “I don't know” and “Because we've always done it” aren't necessarily bad answers but you can do better.
- What works and what doesn't? How do you know?
 - Are prospective volunteers a good fit?
 - Do volunteers stay? Do you want them to? Are they aging in place?
 - Are you filling all the needs in your program, your patrons and your library?

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

What are your ideas for volunteer engagement in your library?

Volunteer Management: The Basics

- Get to know prospective volunteers
 - Determine if they're a good fit for the culture and the work.
- Complete their due diligence
 - Risk management, but also a chance to better know your volunteers, and give your volunteers the skills and support to be successful.
- Make sure everyone's 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?

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

- Position Descriptions
 - Well thought out, detailed, comprehensive. We'll cover this important first step in more detail.
- 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?”

- 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?

- Confidentiality/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.

- 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.

Getting Started: Create a Position Description

Parts of a Position Description

- Title
 - Volunteer is a staff category, not a title
- Team or Department
 - Reports to/Works with
- Description of role
 - Brief but explains what the position does
- Primary Responsibilities
 - Secondary Responsibilities
- Skills and Experience & Training
 - What a volunteer needs to know to be successful
- Time Commitment
 - Hours/week, months

Before you get started create a plan and timeline for creating or updating volunteer position descriptions.

- Recruit a volunteer with HR experience
- Have volunteers write their own position descriptions
 - Do the position descriptions written by volunteers match your expectations for the position?
- Involve program managers, team leaders
 - Create a committee with representatives from each constituent groups to coordinate the process

Put Positions in Their Place

Integrate volunteer positions into the organization structure.

- Use the reports to/works with section to determine how positions fit together.
- Can positions be divided into new positions, graded levels or leadership positions?
 - Encourages volunteers to grow or take on more responsibilities.

Responsibilities

- Primary responsibilities
 - Day to day activities
 - Recurring responsibilities
 - What are volunteers expected to do in this position?
 - What behaviors or actions are required for this position?
- Secondary responsibilities
 - Actions or activities that are required of all volunteers
 - Team or program responsibilities

What responsibilities or activities are

- Missing?
- Appear on more than one position description?
- Happen each shift or day? Seasonally or annually?

Have they been included? What's missing?

- Seek feedback from constituents and others from within the organization.

All the things a volunteer needs to know to be successful in the position.

- Skills can be position or team specific
 - May include things that can only be learned in your organization or during a shift (on the job training.)
- Experience or characteristics a volunteer needs to have to be a good fit for the position or organization
- Career skills
 - Are volunteers expected to have these skills before they start, or can they be gained during service?

VolunteerMatch Basics

Intro to VolunteerMatch

- Log into your account
- Create a new opportunity or update an existing one!
- Learn to Repost

Tips for creating a great listing on VolunteerMatch

Compelling titles!

Use a unique title to grab a volunteer's attention.

Keep it brief!

50-100 words are enough information.

Have fun with it!

Include the available hours and days in your description.

Put your best foot forward!

Always use correct spelling and grammar.

I Want to Help! Button

Do not include a URL or library contact information.

Review your posting!

Ask a co-worker or friend to take a look.

Next Steps: Goal Setting & Action Plan

Setting Goals & Creating a Plan

What are one or two of your top priorities for volunteer engagement?

- What are the deliverables or outcomes?
 - These should be measurable and actionable
- Who are the stakeholders?
- Who is accountable and responsible for the outcomes?
 - Work can be delegated, but someone is accountable
- What are the barriers?
- When does it need to be completed?

Questions, Thoughts, Ideas?

Learning Center

Find upcoming webinar dates, how-to videos and more

<http://www.volunteermatch.org/nonprofits/learningcenter/>

VolunteerMatch Community

Ask and answer questions after the webinar – use keywords Volunteer Management

<http://community.volunteermatch.org/volunteer>

California Library Get Involved Resource Center:

Videos, sample documents, policies, and position descriptions, photos and more!

<http://www.library.ca.gov/lids/getinvolved.html>

VolunteerMatch Support

Get help or answers to your account questions

idaholibraries_support@volunteermatch.org

Thanks for attending!

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