



It Takes a Village: Recruiting & Keeping Great Volunteers

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Why Do Organizations Want Volunteers?

Credibility with members/donors

Extend influence and access

Broader point of view

“Luxury of focus”

Experiment with new ideas and services

Give personal touch

Extend the budget

Demonstrate community support

Supplement staff resources & experiences

Allow quick reaction

Trends in Volunteering

- Percentage of adults who volunteered in Oregon– 43.2% (rank 3)
- Of those who volunteer, 82% wanted to hear about the impact of their efforts¹
- 73% of volunteers see volunteering as important part of recovery post-pandemic²
- People are optimistic about the future of volunteering²
- Volunteering is a form of civic participation and is a determinant of health³
- More than ½ of volunteers use digital platforms to find opportunities⁴
- 25% of volunteers give 10 hours or less but range is 1 hour to 500 hours⁴

Sources:

1. Civic Life Today: A look at American civic engagement and a global pandemic, Points of Life, Summer 2020
2. Industry Insights report, Sterling Volunteer & Volunteer Match
3. Healthy People 2030
4. AmeriCorps Research and Evaluation, December 2021

Additional Data

Volunteering Continuing Downward Trend:

2013 65%

2017 64%

2020 58%

2021 56%

Contributions Going Back Up:

2013 ~83%

2017 ~83%

2020 73%

2021 81%

Source: Gallup Poll, December 2021

Who Volunteers?

EDUCATION

< High School	12%
> College	44%

INCOME

< \$40,000	20%
> \$150,000	45%

RACE/ETHNICITY

White	32%
Black	23%
Hispanic	19%

GENDER

Women	26.5%
> \$150,000	45%

Source: AmeriCorps Research and Evaluation, Dec 2021

Multi-Generational Approach

Co-hort	Volunteer Ethic
Traditionalists (1901-1945)	Loyalty & duty; created non-profit structure
Boomers (1946 -1964)	Approach with consumer mindset; driven by skills they can use or learn
Gen X (1965 – 1980)	Seek balance; 1 st to demand flexibility due to need to balance work/life
Millennials (1981-1996)	Raised on community service and introduce use of technology
Gen Z (1997-2020)	Raised on community service; outperform other generations in volunteer service

½ of Gen Z and nearly half of Millennials and Gen X say they will get more involved in community after the pandemic

What Motivates People to Volunteer?

Sharing impact of volunteer service is key to engagement

Increasingly, people are giving time to volunteer for the social aspect

Non-volunteers are more likely to volunteer if a trusted friend asks them to serve

Some people are more likely to serve if they are able to use a skill they already possess, others if they have an opportunity to learn something new

CIVIC LIFE TODAY // VOLUNTEER // POINTS OF LIGHT

Finding the Right Volunteer Opportunity

So you're interested in volunteering but want to find an opportunity that feels like the right fit. Whether formal or informal, large or small, organizations can help channel your time and skills toward real community needs and amplify your contributions by combining them with others' efforts.

Although it's easier than ever to find volunteer opportunities thanks to online volunteer search engines, finding the right organization can be daunting. To find an organization whose volunteer experiences fit the needs of the community but also your availability, skills and work style, consider these questions when reviewing an organization's website, reading the volunteer opportunity descriptions, talking to other volunteers from the organization and even interviewing for the role.

TIME COMMITMENT

If you want...

A regular and predictable schedule, ask:

- ☐ What ongoing volunteer opportunities or service projects are available?
- ☐ Do the volunteer opportunities have regular schedules?

Flexibility in your volunteering, ask:

- ☐ Can volunteers vary their schedules?
- ☐ Can I self-schedule?
- ☐ Is there a minimum commitment of hours, shifts, or projects?
- ☐ How often are volunteer opportunities available?

SKILLS

If you want...

To use your current skills, ask:

- ☐ What skills will I be able to use in this role?
- ☐ How have other volunteers with professional skills been engaged?

To learn new skills, ask:

- ☐ What type of formal training is offered and required?
- ☐ How much informal or on-the-job training is provided?
- ☐ Is continuing education training available?

WORK STYLE

If you want...

To build relationships with community members, ask:

- ☐ Will I have direct contact with members of the community?
- ☐ Are there opportunities to work on a team with other volunteers?

To work independently, ask:

- ☐ Can this work be done independently?
- ☐ How often would I be expected to check in, to participate in meetings, to report back?
- ☐ What support is available if I have a question?

To build relationships with staff or volunteer leaders, ask:

- ☐ With whom would I be working?
- ☐ How often would I be communicating with staff and other volunteers?
- ☐ Where do I go if I have a question or an idea?

LEADERSHIP

If you want...

To be a leader now, ask:

- ☐ Can I use my leadership experience to lead a team or a project?

To become a leader in the future, ask:

- ☐ What is the path to become a leader over time?
- ☐ Do you provide any training for leadership development?

IMPACT

If you want...

To make a difference, ask:

- ☐ How does the organization develop its solutions? Does it involve the community? Engage multiple voices in decision-making?
- ☐ How does the organization currently tell the story of volunteer impact?
- ☐ How does the organization leverage and share data?

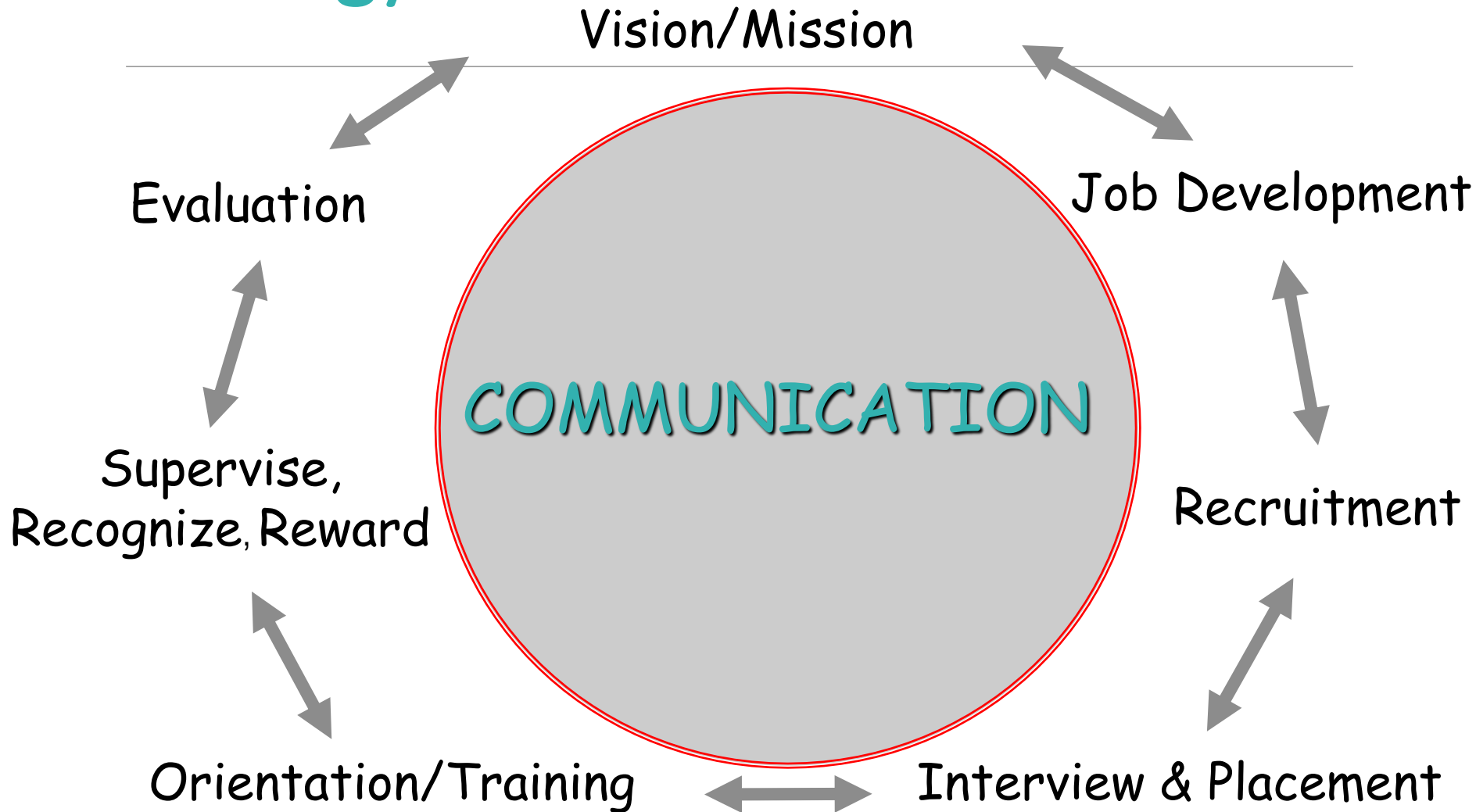
What Stops People from Volunteering?

43% of Americans consider the uncertainty of their ability to make an impact to be a moderate or significant barrier to volunteering

Non-volunteers see themselves as essentially different from volunteers

Fear of time commitment

Developing a Volunteer Engagement Strategy



Job Development

When do you need job descriptions?

What should be included?

- job title
- information regarding your mission
- logistical details like the date and time commitment needed
- tasks that the volunteers will be expected to complete
- specific skills that are necessary to complete the tasks at hand
- reporting responsibilities
- benefits to volunteer

General Recruitment

Technique of widely distributing recruitment information and then sifting through applicants as they come to your door

Makes sense if:

- you need a large number of volunteers (e.g. for a special event)
- your volunteers do not require any particular skill or long-term commitment

Targeted Recruitment

Targeted recruitment is strategically thinking through:

- what do you need to do the job successfully?
- who could provide this things? What types of people are likely to have these characteristics or abilities?
- what would motivate them about this job?
- how can we communicate with them?

Developing a Recruitment Strategy

❖ Do you:

- have a clearly written work plan?
- Know what you want volunteers to do? Have a job description?
- Have a real need & desire to work with volunteers?
- Want lots of volunteers for one day, or volunteers who can make a long term commitment?
- Know how volunteers will benefit?
- Know what your volunteers motivational needs are?
- Know where you are likely to find volunteers?
- Have a recognition process in place?

Recruitment Techniques

social media & website

on-line tools (e.g.,
Volunteermatch)

community bulletin boards

brochures or posters

brown bag lunch/dinner/teas

“walk in” traffic

PSA's

local corporations

neighborhood festivals

community bulletin boards

direct mail/flyers

news article/ads

referrals from other groups

churches

schools/universities

speakers bureau

ask realtors to distribute info

Retaining Volunteers

Increasing responsibility

Tailoring assignments to volunteer interests

Providing training

Providing in-person networking opportunities

3 Types of Training

ORIENTATION

- An overview of the program
 - Vision / Mission
 - Committee Goals / Work plan summaries
 - Local Main Street brochures
- A review of policies & procedures
- Volunteers represent the program
- Intro of staff & key leaders

CONTINUED EDUCATION

Send volunteers to seminars & workshops

- Include them in training sessions & meetings where their work or related subjects are the topics

JOB SPECIFIC

Covers specific tasks the volunteer will be requested to do and will vary according to:

- Special Events
- Special Projects (parking study, market analysis, etc)
- Office Assistance (newsletter, phone, filing, data entry, etc)

Supervision

Provide clear instructions & expectations

Listen to volunteer for hints of discontent

Provide evaluation process

Respect volunteer's schedule

Be tactful & considerate

Promote teamwork

Express appreciation

Create a positive work atmosphere

Volunteer Recognition

Help them feel needed & appreciated

build success into every task

use their time well

create appropriate recognition programs

A good recognition program can reduce turnover rates & provide info to community

Forms of Recognition

personal praise

letters/cards/certificates

ask advice/include in important meetings

newspaper/mass media

awards programs

invites to special events

letters of recommendation

buttons/t-shirts/id pins/etc

*Think of
“Thanks x Three”*

Evaluation

Volunteer Evaluation is a two-way process...it is a great opportunity to gain input from volunteers

Volunteer Program Evaluation is an opportunity to assess overall effectiveness beyond numbers

What to do about unsatisfactory performance?

- Rest, sabbatical
- Re-assign (new setting) skills and interests incorrectly assessed/personality conflict
- Refer to different organization
- Retire

Need to Fire a Volunteer?

Be honest - long-term health of the Main Street program is more important than one unpleasant task

- Doing more harm than good
- Personality conflicts (can't be resolved)
- Outside circumstances
- Exceed limits of authority

Suggest another option that better match the person's skills

Resources

Websites:

- www.pointsoflight.org/civiclife/volunteer/
- <https://www.sterlingvolunteers.com/blog/2021/03/key-trends-in-navigating-the-changing-volunteer-landscape/>
- www.americorps.gov
- www.mainstreet.org
- www.boardsource.org
- www.independentsector.org

Webinar:

- [Navigating the Changing Volunteer Landscape](#)

Exercise – 30 Minutes

Put together a volunteer development strategy that includes:

Recruitment – 10 minutes

- ✓ Who are you seeking to recruit?
- ✓ What techniques are you going to use/

Orientation – 10 minutes

- ✓ How are you going to train your volunteers?

Retention – 10 minutes

- ✓ How are you going to recognize volunteers?
- ✓ What's your management style?