

Ontario Library Association

Super conference 2007

**Volunteer Recruitment and Retention
Today – Part One**

Facilitator: Reva Cooper,
*Providing training and consulting to
maximize volunteer engagement
Phone 519.894.0151 Kitchener*

Date: Saturday Feb. 3rd

Location: Metro Toronto Convention Centre

Presented by:



Friends of Canadian Libraries



Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world...indeed it is the only thing that ever has.
Margaret Mead

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION TODAY: PART ONE

Successful recruitment requires new ways of thinking about who volunteers, why they volunteer, and how to increase your volunteer pool opportunities. Learn about target recruiting, marketing and new program models. Share best practices for volunteer recruitment and engagement.

Session Outcomes:

- understand volunteer motivation to attract enthusiastic and committed volunteers
- rethink what, where and how volunteers are involved in libraries
- be flexible and innovative to expand and diversify your volunteer base

Individual Outcomes:

As a result of what I learned in this session, three action steps that I would recommend our organization take to enhance volunteer recruitment are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The Recruitment Environment

based on 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, available at www.nsgvp.org

Trends related to Recruitment:

- Decrease in numbers of volunteers
- People are too busy to volunteer
- Competition for leisure time
- People are seeking flexibility, short-term or task specific involvements
- Other –

Risk Factors:

- ◆ 1 million fewer volunteers between 1997 and 2000
- ◆ Ontario: decrease from 32% to 25% of population
- ◆ 7% of Canadians give 73% of volunteer hours
- ◆ 5% "super volunteers" give 34% of all volunteer hours
- ◆ 162 hours volunteered on average (split amongst several charities)
- ◆ social needs growing?

Cornerstones of Community: Highlights from the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations, 2004

www.nonprofitscan.ca

Canadian organizations report these challenges:

- recruiting the types of volunteers the organization needs (57%)
- obtaining board members (49%)
- retaining volunteers (48%)
- providing training for volunteers (41%)
- a lack of paid staff to recruit and manage volunteers (34%)

It is more difficult to recruit and retain volunteers than in the past. The more creative and proactive we can be in our responses to trends and issues, the more successful we will be in meeting the goals of our organizations.

Volunteerism Opportunities

- 1) people want to participate, make a difference, and add meaning in their lives
- 2) volunteering has significant social, psychological and physical benefits for those who participate
- 3) we can show people that they can meet their own needs as well as community needs through volunteering
- 4) we can attract a broad range of volunteers, engage them in new ways, and build commitment to our worthwhile causes

Volunteers are looking for new ways of volunteering, have greater expectations of volunteering, and are being more selective about their choice of volunteer activities.

Environmental Scan on Volunteering in Canada,
Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, 2001

Have you made changes to when, where and how people participate as volunteers?

Have you reached out to diversify your volunteer base?

A Volunteer Management Process

➤ Identify Need for Write Volunteers ⇒ Program Planning ⇒ Design and Descriptions

➤ Identify Recruitment Requirements ⇒ Outline Recruitment Plan ⇒ Target Recruit

➤ Match:
Meet and Screen ⇒ Orient ⇒ Train

➤ Placement: Retention = Supervision → Support
Recognition → Valuation
Ongoing Training → Development
Evaluation → Feedback

➤ Reassignment and Mobility ⇒ Identify Need for More Volunteers ⇒ Start Again

Volunteer Management is the capacity of an organization to organize, monitor, manage, motivate, recognize and reward its volunteers. From "Working Together" Voluntary Sector Initiative, 1999

Why Do People Volunteer?

- To help a cause they believe in (95%)
- To use their skills and experience (81%)
- Have been personally affected by the cause (69%)
- To explore one's own strengths (57%)
- To improve job opportunities (23%)

People also volunteer to have fun and gain a sense of personal achievement.

Discussion Questions:

What motivations can we appeal to?

What groups of potential volunteers might have something to give and something to gain through volunteering with us?

Where could we find these people?

Target Recruitment Steps

1. Identify Who is your target?
2. Differentiate What do they want?
3. Interact How can you reach them?
4. Customize What is your message?

Recruitment is about asking people to help in such a way that they can say "yes".

Recruitment is also about taking away people's reasons for saying "no".

Why People Don't Volunteer?

- Do not have the necessary time (69%)
- Unwilling to make a year-round commitment (46%)
- Give money instead of time (38%)
- Were not personally asked (37%)
- Already made a contribution to volunteering (22%)
- Did not know how to become involved (20%)

What does this mean for our program?

What can we do to remove these barriers?

The most effective recruitment strategy is: _____

The most effective recruiter is: _____

What recruitment methods and messages have worked for you?

Recruitment Tips:

1. Write clear, comprehensive position descriptions
2. Be honest about the position
3. Use the "targeted" versus "warm body" approach
4. Appeal to motivations and describe benefits
5. Show impact of volunteer participation
6. Tie into existing marketing practices
7. Make sure everyone knows what you are looking for
8. Use technology to recruit

Welcoming diversity means mobilizing all of the resources of the community. It also involves being open and accepting of new ideas, ways of doing things, and respecting a range of opinions. Ask yourself:

- does our organization have a diverse volunteer component? if so, in what way is it diverse?
- if not, how can we welcome the involvement of a diverse range of people?
- does our organization reflect/accept diversity in every aspect of its' operations?(Board composition, recruitment practices, communications, etc.)

Position Design Tips:

1. Clear link between work and mission
2. Flexibility in how, how much, where and when people contribute
3. New models of participation; family, corporate, virtual
4. Short-term roles to build long-term involvement

Being Flexible means understanding who is volunteering and what they have to give. We need to be sensitive to changes in peoples' lives, and the variety of commitments that people have today. We also need to continually strive to meet the needs of our customers (volunteers).

Ask yourself:

- do our positions reflect the time, interests, and motivations of today's volunteers?
- have we made changes to what we ask volunteers to do, or to when/where/how the work gets done?
- do we support changes in degree and type of commitment; either breaks and sabbaticals, or advancement and growth?

Sample Volunteer Position Description

Position Title: # of Volunteers Needed: _

By when:

Goal of Position:

Duties Involved:

Time Required - # of Hours: (per week or month, when?)

Length of Commitment: (6 months, 1 year)

Skills or Qualifications Needed:

Training Provided: (orientation, upfront and ongoing)

Benefits to the volunteer:

Out-of-Pocket Expenses: (what are they, will they be re-imbursed)

Supervision: (person, method)

Date Description Developed:

Date Updated:

Be a matchmaker - Match the interests, motivations, skills, and time availability of individual volunteers with specific needs in your organization.

- Be honest about the requirements, time and qualifications
- Interview all potential candidates including volunteers moving to new positions
- Check-in to make sure match is working

New Models of Engagement

Family Volunteering:

Family volunteering occurs when more than one member of a family volunteers for an organization or project. Volunteers may come from different generations, in combinations such as parent-child or grandparent-parent-child or from the same generation such as two adult partners, friends, or siblings. *Create opportunities for families to volunteer together.*

Corporate Volunteering

Corporate or employer-supported volunteerism refers to a range of ways that corporations encourage and enable employees to volunteer in their communities. This opportunity is increasing; between 1997 and 2000, the number of employed volunteers who reported receiving approval from their employer to modify their work hours in order to volunteer rose from 22 per cent to 27 per cent, and the number of employees who received recognition from their employer for volunteering in the community rose from 14% in 1997 to 22% 2000. *Approach companies for help.*

Check out Volunteer Canada's resources on engaging youth, boomers, virtual, family and corporate volunteering at www.volunteer.ca

Write down 3 action steps on page 2, and keep up the good work in support of our libraries!

Vision with action can change the world.