

Ontario Library Association
Super Conference 2007

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

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Presented by:



Friends of Canadian Libraries



No one ever volunteered to experience failure
Trudy Seita

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION TODAY: PART TWO

You will leave with a plan for keeping the qualified, committed and satisfied volunteers who are the backbone of your organization. Share retention challenges, ideas and successes and learn how best to keep volunteers committed to your organization.

Session Outcomes:

- Build on volunteer motivation and enthusiasm
- Identify key components for volunteer support and retention
- Share volunteer recognition strategies and activities
- Ensure that there is ongoing value for both the volunteer and the organization

UPS Foundation Study, 1998

See www.community.ups.com for this study and follow-up research, best practices:

2 of 5 volunteers (40%) stopped volunteering at some point due to poor volunteer management practices including:

26% - charity was not well managed

23% - charity did not use volunteer's time well

18% - charity did not use volunteer's talents well

16% - volunteer's tasks were not well defined

9% - volunteers were not thanked

See volunteers as customers - use a customer service approach with volunteers. Volunteers are your customers because, without them, the organization cannot carry out its mandate and community programs would not be delivered.

Create a positive organizational - the climate expresses shared assumptions, values and beliefs about itself, its members, its paid and unpaid staff, and its clients/participants. Trust or mistrust can have a tremendous impact on the success of an organization. High performance results when there is a spirit of teamwork and trust.

Ensure that your organizational climate supports trust and teamwork. Identify aspects of the organization that need to change to increase volunteer comfort and commitment.

To set people up for success, we need to:

- ❑ Have an infrastructure for volunteer support, and organizational expertise in volunteer engagement (see last page)
- ❑ Provide orientation to the organization and the role of volunteers in meeting organizational objectives
- ❑ Train people so that they have the skills and knowledge to do a good job
- ❑ Provide the resources needed to carry out the duties and responsibilities outlined in a written position description
- ❑ Share predetermined outcomes, and measure volunteer performance against those outcomes
- ❑ Give the volunteer feedback: sincere praise and honest, constructive criticism
- ❑ Ensure that there is the “right fit” on an ongoing basis

Orientation and Training Methods:

1. Provide an orientation manual or materials covering a variety of information about the organization
2. Design a training plan directed at the responsibilities and expectations of the position
3. Ask experienced volunteers to train others
4. Check-in with volunteers to make sure that they feel prepared and confident and to reduce risk

Generally, people stay involved because:

- They feel that they are making a difference
- They see that they have a useful role to play within the organization
- Volunteer work is personally relevant
- They are able to fit volunteering into their busy lives
- There is an opportunity for advancement, learning and growth
- They are involved in problem-solving and decision-making
- Their needs are being met
- They feel valued and appreciated
- They are having fun

The top three retention factors identified by direct service volunteers are:

- 1) Show appreciation and respect
- 2) Provide meaningful and varied experiences
- 3) Communicate with and be responsive to volunteers

Recruiting, Retaining and Rewarding Volunteers: What Volunteers Have to Say, 2002 (see Research Bytes for further information)

Recognize Contributions, both formally and informally throughout the year. People are committed and will continue to work hard if they feel that they are making a difference. Celebrate the positive things that volunteers have accomplished.

Recognition = The ongoing, diverse process of encouraging and appreciating volunteers

Tips:

1. understand who volunteers and what is meaningful to them (link recognition and motivation)
2. think beyond pins and plaques
3. identify both formal and informal/ongoing methods
4. the easiest, cheapest, and often most meaningful way of recognizing volunteers is saying "Thank-you"!
5. show people the impact of their work, and the changes that have come about as a result of their efforts

Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless Mother Theresa

What do People Prefer? (in order of preference)

- ❑ discounts on memberships, tickets, or gift items
- ❑ additional training for volunteer work
- ❑ personal development training
- ❑ lunch with other volunteers
- ❑ employee privileges
- ❑ volunteer job enhancement
- ❑ participation in staff activities
- ❑ individual lunch with agency officials
- ❑ social event with other volunteers
- ❑ gift item with agency logo
- ❑ community recognition
- ❑ personalized gift item
- ❑ award pin



Thank You...Do's and Don'ts

Do

- ✓ Be honest and sincere
- ✓ Acknowledge specific behaviour
- ✓ Recognize everyone in some way
- ✓ Be timely
- ✓ Use a variety of creative methods
- ✓ Make recognition meaningful to the individual

Don't

- X Offer platitudes
- X Recognize everyone in the same way
- X Recognize only high profile or long-term volunteers
- X Wait a whole year to say thanks

Much is done by the few: We need to be careful **not to burn people out**. Identify and deal with causes of stress. Encourage people to be aware of their limits, and match their efforts and goals accordingly. Recruit new people, do succession planning, and delegate to others, providing training and support so that they can help share the load.

In Canada,, 25% of volunteers give 73% of all volunteer hours.

National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 2000
available at www.givingandvolunteering.ca

Best Practices Discussion:

1. How do you supervise and support volunteers during their placement?

2. How do you give/get feedback?
How do you keep volunteers informed about what is happening in the organization?

3. How do you make sure that volunteer needs are being met so that they can continue to meet the needs of the organization? (customer service)

4. How do you ensure that volunteers feel valued, and that their contribution makes a difference? (recognition)

My plan for enhancing volunteer satisfaction and retention:

Retention Factors and Goals (end result that you want to achieve related to that retention factor)	Action Steps (list specific steps to accomplish each goal)	Priority 1 Low to 5 High
Organizational Climate Goal:		
Orientation/ Training Goal:		
Supervision/Support Goal:		
Recognition Goal:		
Avoiding Burnout Goal:		

For more detailed planning based on Organizational Standards, use the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement Audit Tool at www.volunteer.ca

Suggested Internet Sites

www.charityvillage.com

Resources, training, news, lists of discussion groups (Canadian)

www.energizeinc.com

www.energizeinc.com/art/biblio.html

Susan Ellis's site includes newsletter, resources, conferences, book orders
Steve McCurley's extensive volunteerism bibliography

www.nonprofitscan.ca

Imagine Canada site includes downloadable resources and research related to fundraising, the voluntary sector, volunteerism, Volunteer Management and the Canada Volunteerism Initiative.

www.givingandvolunteering.ca

Research and statistics related to giving of time and money in Canada

www.volunteer.today.com

On-line monthly journal on volunteer management including back issues

www.rcvo.org

Alberta-based resource center offers online resources and tools for volunteer quality engagement

www.charitychannel.com

Information and Listserves, Volunteer Management Review (U.S. based)

www.volnet.org

Voluntary Sector Network Support Program connects organizations to the internet and provides computer equipment and training

www.voluntarygateway.ca

Voluntary sector portal to share information and links online. (Canadian)

www.volunteer.ca

Volunteer Canada provides a variety of resources, information, links and recognition materials

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