



Handouts Strategies for Success with Short Term Volunteers

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12 Strategies for Success with Short Term Volunteers

1. Gain buy-in of key leaders for why shorter term volunteer positions will help achieve mission.
2. Train and support staff for working with shorter term volunteers.
3. Design high functioning volunteer roles for positions that are three months or less. Assess ROI before implementing positions.
4. Write simple position descriptions for the shorter term position.
5. Simplify volunteer application process, assignment and scheduling.
6. Build a pipeline to bring volunteers to your organization.
7. Identify efficiencies in orienting and training volunteers.
8. Convey the impact of the volunteer position.
9. Develop quick ways to build personal relationships with volunteers.
10. Simplify recognition to be appropriate for the scale of time volunteered, but still meaningful to the volunteer.
11. Keep key data to evaluate effectiveness of shorter term volunteers.
12. Develop systematic ways to ask volunteers to help again.

Attachment A

Readiness Assessment for Involving Shorter Term Volunteers

	In place to a LARGE degree	In place to SOME degree	STARTING on putting place	Not currently being done	N/A or not relevant
Have developed some volunteer position descriptions designed to work well for shorter time commitments.					
Have an orientation and onboarding process for shorter term volunteer position that is a scale for the shorter commitments.					
Provide staff training to thinking in a new way about volunteer time commitment and to work with some volunteers in shorter-term roles.					
Developed organizational culture that accepts involving volunteers in some shorter time roles.					
Have given attention on how to develop relationships with shorter term volunteers that work within the scale of their time commitment.					
Have an online system in place for volunteers to self schedule for volunteering or other electronic means to save time.					
Have a sense of when to say “yes” or “no” to what will work for a volunteer making a shorter time commitment.					

Attachment B
Score Card for Role Play of Meeting with Leadership on Involving Shorter-Term Volunteers

	Yes	No
Starts with an opening that engages the person you are talking with and asks for their thoughts		
Makes case why change is needed		
Connects the needs for change with the organization's mission		
Uses data		
Articulates a plan for change		
Gets feedback on the plan		
Ends with identifying next steps		

Sample Case Statement for Discussion with a Supervisor or Executive Director

Thank you for meeting with me today. I would like to talk with you about some changes we are seeing in our volunteers and ideas on how to address the changes. Have you noticed any changes in who is volunteering here or what volunteers want to do?

When I am meeting with new volunteers I hear that many of them looking to volunteer for just a few months, but still want help and believe in our mission. This fits with trends other agencies are seeing. In survey done by MAVA 86% of organizations were seeing a trend of volunteers wanting to make shorter time commitments.

I have tried a few shorter term volunteer roles that have worked well, and would like to try a few more. It will allow us to bring more volunteers to our center, which will provide more connection to our community and maybe some will become donors. Would you be open to our adding a few more roles designed for shorter term volunteers, such as some roles in our food shelf that are?

I know that these might be new ideas for our staff, and would like to introduce it in a way that it will get good support. My suggestion for next steps is:

- Hold a training session for staff to help them understand this trend in volunteering and how we can address it. I was recently at a workshop at MAVA and got a great outline for staff training on this topic that we can use.
- As part of that training, we would include a brainstorming session to identify new volunteer roles that will help meet our mission.
- Then, I will work with staff to decide which of the volunteer roles we developed will have good return on the time invested and implement the project.

Does this sound like a good plan to you?

Attachment C

Sample Training for Staff on Engaging Shorter Term Volunteers

1. Opening Activity – What changes are you seeing in volunteer time commitment?
2. Data on shorter term volunteerism trend
 - Changes you have noticed at your organization
 - MAVA Survey that asked organizations, “Have you seen an increase in volunteers wanting to make shorter term commitments”
 - 38% Yes, seeing a large increase
 - 48% Yes, seeing a little increase
 - 14% No, not seeing an increase
3. Discussion – What ways are one time and shorter term volunteers currently contributing to our mission?
4. Brainstorm – Volunteer roles specifically for shorter term volunteers? (See Attachment D)
5. Tips for success working with shorter term volunteers:
 - Design high functioning volunteer roles specifically for shorter term volunteers instead of counting on volunteers to stay longer and being disappointed when they do not.
 - Systematize getting a new volunteer started so it is less effort.
 - Tell volunteers logistics upfront, such as where to come, what to what wear.
 - Have prepared packets of materials ready for new volunteers to save time.
 - Have a sign up to greet new volunteers, or a way to greet them so the volunteer experience starts positively.
 - Involve other volunteers in training a new volunteer.
 - Convey the impact of the volunteer position to the volunteer realizing that even if they are just there for a short time, they still want to have an impact.
 - Help volunteers connect what they are doing to the organization’s mission.
 - For groups, give them a pre-printed sheet that you fill in to show the impact of what they accomplished on the mission. (For example: ____ blank number of pounds of food were processed, which reduce hunger for ____ people).
 - Use online scheduling to reduce the time to schedule volunteers.
 - Develop quick ways to build personal relationships with volunteers.
 - Take a few minutes to personally talk with a new volunteer.
 - Call a volunteer after the first time they volunteer.
 - Use language that makes them feel part of the team.
 - Communicate that they are valued.
 - Simplify recognition to be appropriate for the scale of time volunteered, but still meaningful to the volunteer.
 - Don’t lose the opportunity to invite them back. Appreciate their work and let them know you would like them to come back. Learning their interests and mention volunteer roles that might appeal to them.
6. Wrap up discussion – Next steps for working with shorter term volunteers
 - Ask staff to jot down ideas they want to try.
 - Ask a few participants to share ideas they wrote down.

Attachment D

Brainstorming Sessions to Hold with Staff to Development New Volunteer Roles

A key way to develop volunteer positions specifically designed for shorter term volunteers is to hold brainstorming sessions with your organization's staff. Below are four topics for brainstorming different aspects of involving shorter term volunteers. You could discuss all of these at one session, or pick the one that is more pertinent for your organization right now.

1. New Shorter Term Volunteer Roles

What new volunteer roles - that are for three months or less- could we add that would contribute to mission?

2. Break Current Volunteer Positions into Shorter Term Positions

How could some of our current volunteer roles be divided into segments, or shared by volunteers, to allot work to get done by shorter term commitments?

3. Develop Volunteer Positions that Could Work for an Evening Drop In

What could we have volunteers drop in to do in an evening that would contribute to mission?

4. Design New Approaches (Programs) to Meet Mission through Shorter Term Volunteers

Are there ways our organization could take a new approach to meeting our mission that could tap the volunteer power of shorter term volunteers? A way to redesign programs to be less dependent on long term volunteers and better tap shorter term volunteers?

Attachment E Return on Investment Calculator

Do the calculator for volunteer positions designed for three months or less to estimate the time that will be returned on the investment.

Investment

Staff time to:	Time in Hours
Recruit _____ number of volunteers	
Onboard the targeted number of volunteers	
Train the targeted number of volunteers	
Supervise and support a targeted number of volunteers	
Other related staff time	
TOTAL	0

List other costs to consider such as background checks and project costs:

Return

	Number of volunteers		x		=	0
Number of hrs. expect each volunteer will give:						

List any other benefits of volunteers such as outreach:

ROI

Return divided by Investment =	
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Analysis:

Set an expected ROI for a viable volunteer position. Question ROI of less than 2:1, unless there are other factors to consider such as outreach benefits of the volunteers in the position.

Attachment F

Sample Position Description for Shorter Term Volunteer Role

Holiday Gift Program Gift Distribution Carry-Out Volunteer

Purpose

The Interfaith Outreach Holiday Gift Program provides holiday gifts, free of charge, to registered families or individuals. This program is made possible through the support of community members who sponsor recipient families, purchasing gifts that match the needs of the family and then delivering the gifts to Interfaith so the service can be received and donated anonymously. The Carry-Out Volunteer helps our client families carry their gifts out to their vehicle throughout this one-day distribution.

Requirements

- Ability to lift 20 pounds or more.
- Volunteers in high school or older are welcome.

Process

- When a Gift Table Volunteer indicates that gifts are ready for transport to client vehicles, proceed to the Gift Table.
- Greet the client family and offer to carry the gifts to their vehicle.
- Upon completion, tell them to have a great day and a happy holiday season.
- Return through the food shelf to your assigned waiting area.

Time Commitment:

December 11, 2016, 12:30-3:30 p.m. or 3:00-6:00 p.m.

Support

Training provided at the beginning of your shift. Staff and lead volunteers will be available to assist you throughout your shift: Liz Erstad-Hicks (staff), Lynn Vettel (staff) or Cathy Roth (Volunteer Chair)

Refreshments are available for volunteers and restrooms are located down the hall. Please inform Holiday Gift Program staff when you intend to take a break so that coverage can be provided. Help us keep the refreshment areas clean by picking up and cleaning your break space.

Thank you for your willingness to help! This weekend is very special to Interfaith Outreach and the families we serve. We could not do this without you!