Involving Volunteers

Best Practices for Recruitment and Management
Agenda

- Volunteers as non-paid staff
- Episodic volunteers
- Key volunteers – the hybrid
- Your questions
Why Involve Volunteers?
In 2012:

- 64.5 million Americans (26.5 percent of the adult population) volunteered.
- They gave 7.9 billion hours of volunteer service.
- That’s an average of 123 hours per person.
- Valued at $175 billion.
Trends Affecting Volunteerism

- More people are volunteering, but for fewer hours each
- There are more choices for volunteers
- People are living longer
- Many 2-parent families are dual-income
- Parents with children under 18 are more likely to volunteer
- Rise of Service-Learning
- Desire for tangible civic engagement
- Hourly wage earners volunteer less than salaried employees
Reasons People Volunteer

- Because they care deeply
- To give something back
- To be a part of something
- To socialize
- To network
- To build skills
- To fulfill a requirement
- To set an example for their children
- Because someone asked them
Finding Great Volunteers
Standards of Volunteer Recruitment

- Identify and document the job
- Create the compensation package
- Advertise, post and talk it up (make presentations to groups)
Where to Look – and Why

- Individuals
- Community Organizations, Service Clubs, and Groups
- Government Agencies
- Local Businesses
- Schools – Kindergarten through Higher Education (more later)
1 and 2: Path of least resistance
Don’t discount groups 3 and 4 – Once informed:

- Could add diversity and fresh ideas
- Help prevent burnout for those in groups 1 and 2
- Broaden support for your project with their own connections
“Hiring” the Volunteer

- Volunteer Applications
- Interviews
- Negotiation
Volunteers on the Job
Volunteer Management – the Culture Shift

- Training and Supervision
- Performance Appraisal
- Inclusion
- Special Recognition
Letting Go of Volunteers

- Using the appraisal process
- Performance improvement plan
- Exit interviews
Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

- Volunteer Policies
- Handbook
The Power of Episodic Volunteerism
Creating Excellent Volunteer Projects
Excellent Volunteer Projects...

- Are community-driven
- Are inclusive
- Last only a few hours in duration
- Provide visible results
- Build the community’s ability for future action
Vision Statement
Building a Vision Statement

- Describes your passion...the why
- Describes your project...the what
- Helps you talk with others and figure out who will help and how we will do it
Defining Your Project

- Set reasonable & measurable goals
- Consider scope and scale
- Think about future action
Assessing Volunteer Needs for Your Project

- Key Volunteers (the hybrid)
  - On planning committees
  - Sponsors and project partners
  - Project site leaders (crew leaders)
- Event day (episodic) volunteers
  - Special skills
  - Tools & supplies

Exercise

Worksheet: Volunteer Planning
Recruiting Volunteer Support
Recruiting Support...Groups are Great!

- Prepare to ask for support: develop a script, use your vision
- Research the stakeholder
  - Know who is the right person to approach the stakeholder
  - Understand any obstacles in attitudes and perceptions
  - Know what the stakeholder needs for a successful experience
- Know what you need from them
- State the benefits for the project and for the stakeholder
- Leave something behind: a concise packet

Exercise

Worksheet: Volunteer Analysis
School-Based Volunteers

- **Service-Learning**
  - A teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with academic study and reflective practice to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.
  - Real service + real learning

- **Complementary needs**
  - Community projects need volunteers
  - Schools need community projects with academic outcomes
Liability, Safety & Waivers

- Plan well
- Assess risks
- Train volunteers
- Deliver a safety talk
- Implement first aid & emergency procedures
- Use registration & waivers
- Assess event liability insurance
- Insurance for key volunteers
Planning for Event Day...
The Week Before...

- Review event-day plans & procedures – anticipate problems
- Confirm
  - Leadership roles & responsibilities
  - Facilities & site
  - Supplies & donations
  - Media & public officials
- Collect & stage supplies
- Write & rehearse event day scripts
  - Opening ceremony
  - Safety talk
  - Closing ceremony
- Create event-day packets
Event Day

- Arrive early
- Meet with leadership volunteers
- Confirm supplies, equipment, food, etc. is in place
- Make sure registration area is ready
- Registration, waivers & safety
- Take pictures
- Formal opening & closing ceremonies
- Thorough wrap-up & tear-down
- Be flexible – encourage flexibility
- Recognition... recognition... recognition
Opening Ceremony

- Set the tone for a successful event with a great “Welcome & Safety” talk:
  - Welcome, introduction, and pep talk
  - Reminder about vision: Why is this being done? What is the benefit to the community? Why is this volunteer time spent so valuable?
  - Reminder about goals: What do we want to have accomplished when we leave?
  - Plan of activities for the day
  - Logistics: bathrooms, parking, etc.
  - Safety talk
  - Thank everyone: sponsors, partners, key volunteers, etc.
Closing Ceremony

- Post-project talk
  - Thank everyone
  - Review progress made – share funny anecdotes
  - Review next steps, if any
  - Review future opportunities to volunteer, if any
  - Thank everyone again
  - Announce post-event celebration
- Tie up loose ends... “Turn Out the Lights”
  - Return equipment and other items
  - Clear the site of anything left-behind
Follow-Up
Keeping Volunteers Happy

- Say thank you
- Send project results
- Stay connected: newsletter, interim reports, appreciation events
- Introduce future projects

Call-out: Recognition Ideas