



MEALS ON WHEELS

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The 3 R's of Volunteer Engagement: Recruitment, Recognition & Retention



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INTRODUCTIONS

Traci Lato-Smith, Owner & Principal Consultant,
Volunteer Management Consulting

***Helping organizations build infrastructure
for sustainable volunteer programs***

- Customized professional development for new volunteer coordinators
- Data management support, with a specialty in Salesforce NPSP
- Project-based contract work to support all aspects of volunteer engagement
- Interim volunteer management for organizations in transition



INTRODUCTIONS

Experience & Clients:

- Boomers Leading Change in Health
- Colorado Healthcare Directors of Volunteer Services
- Environmental Learning for Kids
- Denver DOVIA (Directors of Volunteers in Agencies)
- The Denver Hospice
- Denver Scholarship Foundation
- DOVIA of Weld County
- Colorado Main Street
- Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council (DRMAC)
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- Jewish Family Service
- K9 C.A.R.E.S.
- Kavod Senior Life
- Project PAVE
- National Conference for Community and Justice
- Spark the Change Colorado
- St. Louis NORC (Naturally Occurring Retirement Community)
- University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- Volunteers in Action



SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

Volunteer engagement should be a **mutually beneficial experience** for the volunteers *and* the agency.

PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

➡ Needs and Program Assessment

➡ Position Descriptions

➡ Intake and Screening

➡ Orientation and Training

➡ **Recruitment**

➡ Managing Requests & Assignments

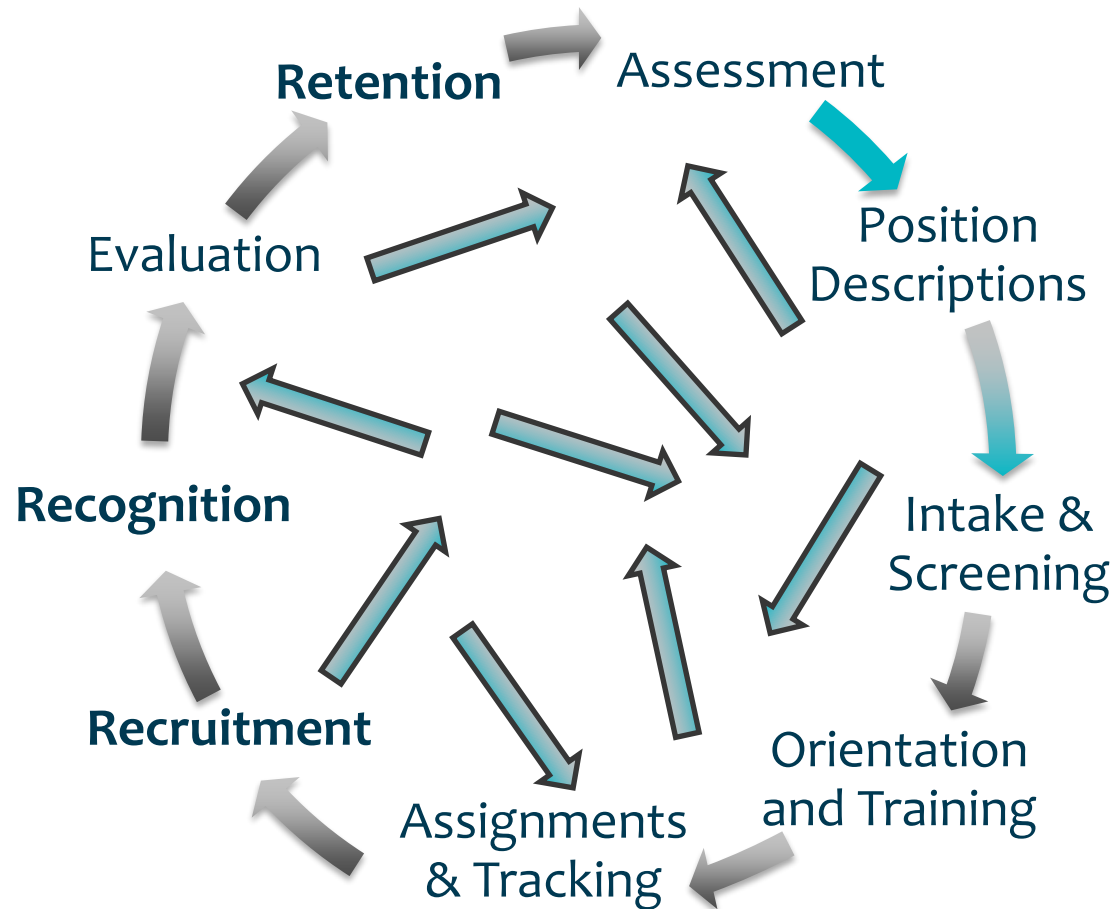
➡ **Recognition**

➡ Evaluation

➡ **Retention**

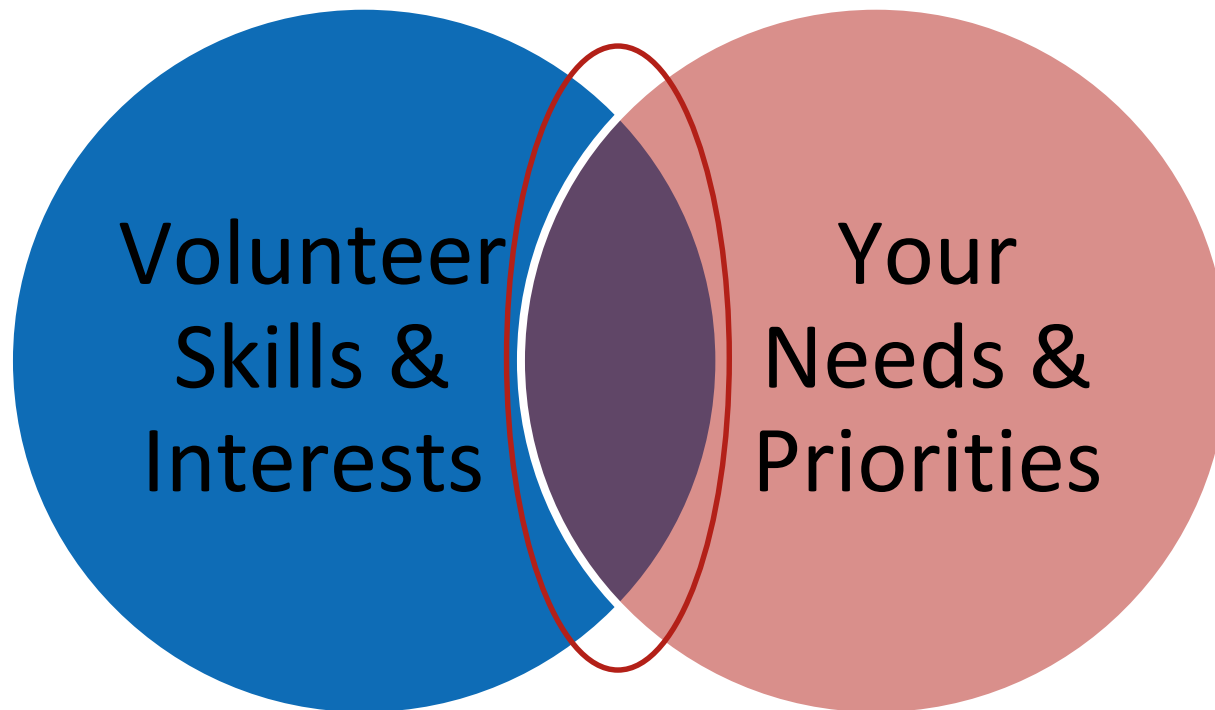


INTERCONNECTEDNESS



Foundations for Recruitment

NEEDS & PROGRAM ASSESSMENT



POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Why?

1. Clarify roles – reduce ambiguity and confusion
2. Manage expectations
3. Establish the basis for supervision and evaluation
4. Provide meaning and purpose
5. Assist in creative planning and enhanced service delivery
6. Promote good working relationships with paid staff
7. **Support recruitment**



POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Key Components of Effective Volunteer Position Descriptions:

1. Position Title
2. Mission and Purpose
3. Responsibilities and Specific Duties
4. Qualifications
5. Time Commitment
6. Work Location
7. Training
8. Benefits
9. Application and Screening Procedures
10. Volunteer Supervisor and Contact Information
11. Signatures



PROVIDING MEANING



← Spectrum of Experience →



Come in, do filing, leave.

When someone asks what they did, they say “I did some filing for some nonprofit downtown.”

Learn about your organization, learn about what this project is all about and how it contributes to the larger mission.

When someone asks what they did, they say “I helped the Denver Scholarship Foundation process scholarship applications for low-income students to go to college in Colorado...”

Recruitment



RECRUITMENT

How do you
define
Recruitment?

Points of Light Definition...



The process of matching an organization's needs with a volunteer's interests and skills

Betty Stallings Definition...

A process to attract and invite people to *consider* volunteer involvement within your agency, faith community, or organization.

Rehnborg & Clubine Definition...

Recruitment is the act of identifying groups and individuals for service, ***and then actually asking them to volunteer.***

Rehnborg & Clubine
“Volunteer Recruitment: Tips from the Field” (2004).

Types of Recruitment

Warm Body Recruitment

- Send a message to a broad audience (e.g., organizational website announcement, email blasts, recruitment websites, social media, etc.)
- Good for large number of volunteers, short time period

Targeted Recruitment

- Sending a message to an audience who has the specific time, skills, and/or traits required for the position (e.g., previous volunteers, people who have experience with the organization, etc.)



Active vs. Passive Recruitment

- #1 Reason why people don't give?
Because they are never asked!
- Ask people to do a specific job
- Don't say "no" for them

Adkins, Lauren. "Managing Volunteers for a Stronger Main Street Program."
Main Street News. February 1996.

Identifying Your Needs

- How many volunteers do you currently have?
- How many volunteers do you need?
- How many volunteers *can you handle*?
 - *Think not only about how much need you have for volunteers, but also your capacity to manage them all!*
- How much recruitment do you need to do?
 - Set realistic expectations for your recruitment efforts - don't be disappointed when volunteers aren't flooding in
 - A steady “trickle” of committed, reliable volunteers is very often all you need

Identifying Your Target Recruit

1. Who would have the skills and interest to do this assignment?
2. Where will you find them? Who knows them?
3. What information will the prospective volunteer need to make an informed decision?
4. What information will you need to make this placement?
5. Who are your potential recruiters for this assignment and how will you train them to do recruitment?
6. How will you track the effectiveness of recruitment?

Identifying Your Target Recruit

Who are you looking for?

- Picture your superstar volunteer
- How did you get that person?
- What skills do they need?

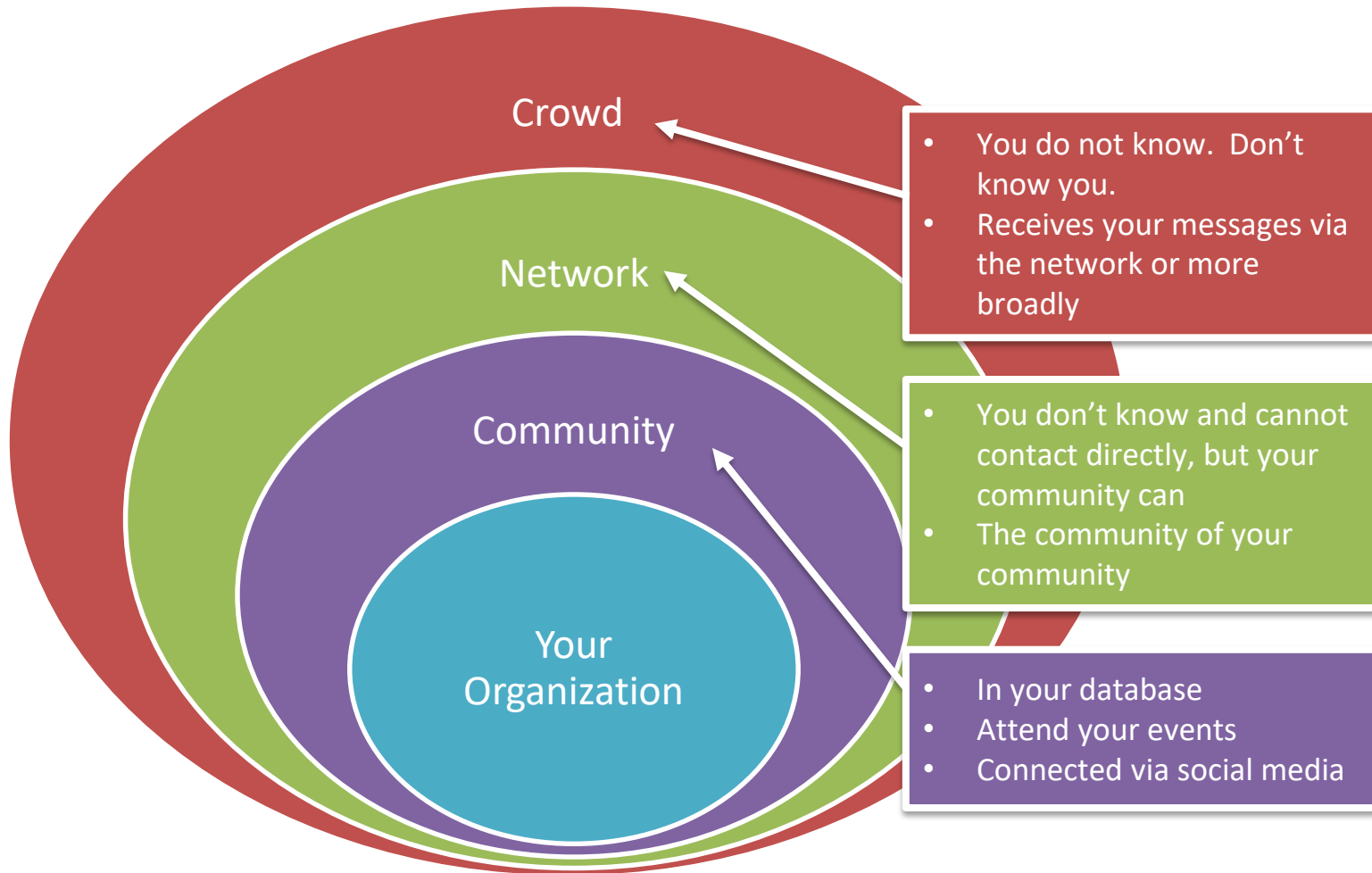
Where might you find them?

- Are they still working? – look to corporate volunteer outreach
- Are they retired? – present to retiree groups
- Are they 4x4 drivers?
 - Connect with local car dealerships
 - Connect with off-road driving clubs

Who finds your cause compelling?

- Your Board members?
- Your clients' family members?
- Your neighbors? Your clients' neighbors?
- Religious communities

Spheres of Influence



Adapted from A. Kapin and A. Sample Ward, Social Change Anytime Anywhere. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2013

Crafting Your Message

Impact-Driven Approach

In just a few sentences (or less) each, describe:

1. Mission of Organization
2. Purpose of Position
3. Tasks and Commitment

Start with the impact of this volunteer role

Crafting Your Message

Need-Driven Approach

In just a few sentences (or less) each, describe:

1. Statement of Client Need
2. How the Volunteer Can Help
3. Benefit to the Volunteer

*Open with the needs of your community
(not your organization)*

Recruiting Tips

- Your Website
 - How prominently featured are volunteer opportunities?
 - How many clicks does it take to get to volunteer information?
- VolunteerMatch.org
- Your Local Volunteer Center
 - Metro Volunteers in Denver
- Your Newsletters and E-Newsletters
- Your Peers!
 - Military base support, CSR, volunteer job-sharing, and more!





Online Recruitment

Share your opportunities/posts across platforms.

For skilled volunteer opportunities: If you tag your VolunteerMatch opportunity with at least one skill, it will automatically cross-post on LinkedIn's volunteer marketplace.



Recruitment Techniques to Avoid

- Bait and switch
- “There’s nothing to it.”
- “We’re desperate; anyone will do.”
- Cast your net and see who swims in.
- “You’re a CPA. We could use one of you!”
- “We have lots of needs...HELP!”
- “I’m tired of doing it. Anyone else want to?”



ACTIVITY

What are your challenges?

Identify barriers that may keep prospective volunteers from becoming active volunteers.

What are your solutions?

Discuss possible solutions – brainstorm ideas and share successes!

Recognition



Recognition & Appreciation

- Do your volunteers feel valued and appreciated?
- Is appreciation of your volunteers both formal and informal?
 - **Formal Appreciation:**
 - Appreciation Event(s)
 - Thank you cards; Appreciation gifts/gift cards
 - Newsletter recognition
 - Mutual Performance Reviews
 - **Informal Appreciation:**
 - “Thank you” in *every* communication you have with volunteers



Recognition & Appreciation

- Are your appreciation efforts meaningful to your volunteers?
 - Is your event a relic?
 - Have you asked your volunteers how they would like to be appreciated?
 - Are your appreciation efforts a good use of your organization's resources? *Do volunteers agree?*



Recognition & Appreciation

- Do you recognize volunteers alongside of staff?
 - They are teammates!
- Do you share results?
 - Make sure volunteers know they've made an impact!



Recognition & Appreciation

Happy, valued and appreciated volunteers stay with you and say good things about volunteering with you!

Retention



Retention

- Are your volunteers sticking around?
- Are your volunteers happy? Why/why not?
- Are you following up with those that leave to find out why?



Measuring Retention

- No best practice metric for retention
- How do you define retention?

*“The percent of volunteers who have fulfilled the commitment that they made.”
([Volunteer Engagement 2.0](#). John L. Lipp. “Chapter 7: Keeping the Volunteers You Have”.)*

- If you have 10 people at an orientation and 6 apply, that means that those 4 opted out because they knew it wasn't a good fit before you invested in them
- Come up with your definition of retention, and work toward maximizing that for your organization

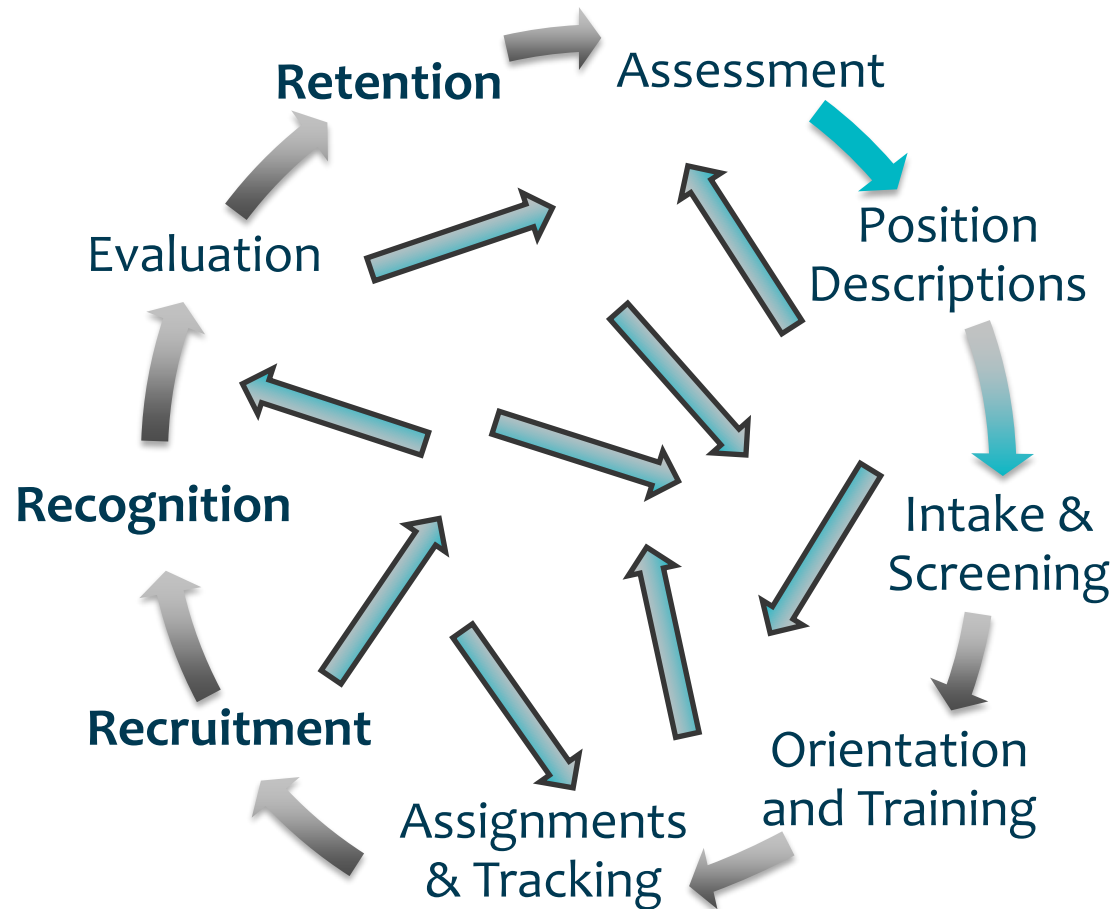


Retention

The professionalism of
each aspect of your program
impacts retention!

Wrap Up

INTERCONNECTEDNESS





Wrapping Up



Questions?



Thank You & Good Luck!

Looking forward to hearing from our panelists at the next session!

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