

Pillars of Efficient and Effective Volunteer Management: How to Care for Yourself and Your Volunteers

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1. Pillar 1: Prioritize What's Important – Building Relationships
 - a. What is the Value of a Good Relationship with the Volunteer Manager?
 - i. Volunteer Management = Relationship Management
 - ii. Key Indicator of Retention (For Volunteers and For You)
 1. Model Organizational Culture & Good Relationships Between Other Staff/Volunteers
 2. Clarify Expectations & Provide A Standard to Measure Impact
 3. Recognize/Address Potential Problems Ahead of Time
 4. Inspire Enthusiasm, Motivation, and Loyalty
 5. Build the Volunteer Team for A Stronger, More Effective Organization
 - b. Key Elements of Building Volunteer Relationships
 - i. Honesty: Clear Expectations, Provide Explanations, Fair Feedback, Open Discussion, Authenticity
 - ii. Forward-Thinking: Communicate Goals, Set Roles, Observe Skills to Adjust Responsibilities
 - iii. Competency: Delegate, Share Decision-Making, Manage Priorities, Foster Collaboration
 - iv. Inspiration: Model Behaviors, Foster Independence, Celebrate Success
 - c. Volunteer Life Cycle
 - i. Focus on Recruitment/Placement: Starting the Relationship
 1. Get to Know Volunteers: Motivation, Commitment Level, Availability, Interests, etc.
 2. Group AND Individual: Paperwork, Orientation, Interviews, Training, etc.
 3. Walk Through Volunteer Self-Assessment of Strengths, Weaknesses and Motivations
 4. Assess Fit for Current Team Dynamics
 - ii. Focus on Orientation/Training: Traits of An Effective Helper
 1. Empathy: communicate understanding of experiences/feelings
 2. Respect: deep/genuine appreciation for worth
 3. Warmth: positive gestures of concern/affection
 4. Genuineness: being freely and deeply oneself
 5. Concreteness: specificity of expression
 6. Confrontation: ability to acknowledge discrepancies
 7. Self-Disclosure: communication of self-awareness
 8. Immediacy: communicating in here and now
 9. Potency: dynamic/magnetic qualities of helper

- iii. Focus on Retention/Appreciation: Building a Long-Term Relationship
 - 1. Build Trust/Reliability Over Time
 - 2. Understand Goals/Motivations
 - 3. Foster Continuous Open Dialogue
 - 4. Be Flexible and Accommodating
 - 5. Be Sensitive to Gender/Culture/Language/Age
 - 6. Observe Under Pressure
 - 7. Realize That Relationships Grow and Change Over Time
 - 8. Don't Forget to Share Too!
- 2. Pillar 2: Automate What You Can – Leveraging Technology
 - a. Effective Time Management Techniques: Building in High Flux
 - i. Take Time Once a Week to Plan for the Next Week
 - ii. Plan for a Large Percent of Your Day to Be Flexible
 - 1. Email/Phone Communications
 - 2. Finding Last Minute Volunteer Positions
 - 3. Putting Out Fires
 - 4. Building Relationships with Volunteers
 - iii. Plan for a Percent of Your Day to Focus on Non-Volunteer Program Tasks
 - iv. Detail Your Day for Events vs. Tasks (Be Realistic)
 - v. Compartmentalize to Reduce Stress
 - b. Different Task Management Methods
 - i. Lots of Options-Find What Works for You and Be Consistent
 - ii. How I Do It
 - 1. 2 Hrs: Communication/Planning
 - 2. 2 Hrs: Managing Schedule
 - 3. 1 Hr: Training or Substituting
 - 4. 3 Hrs: Project Time
 - iii. Why I like My Method
 - 1. Ability to store information for future and archive
 - 2. Ability to move things around
 - 3. Ability to ignore what I can't do anything about right now
 - 4. Transparency to other staff/volunteers
 - c. Volunteer Life Cycle
 - i. Focus on Recruitment/Placement: Tracking Volunteer Information
 - 1. Save A Lot of Data Entry Time with Technology
 - 2. Ensure Data Integrity with Fewer Players
 - a. Online Forms that Feed Directly into Database
 - b. Website Portals
 - c. Background Check Systems
 - d. Volunteer Scheduling Software
 - e. Mass Communication

- ii. Focus on Supervision: Volunteer Communication
 - 1. Categorize Communication
 - a. Announcements: little response
 - b. Conversations: require discussion
 - 2. Divide Type of Communication
 - a. Announcements = Digital
 - b. Conversations = Face-to-Face
 - 3. Choose Delivery Method: Email, Text Messages, Online Announcement Boards, Social Media, Newsletters, etc.
- 3. Pillar 3: Make Time to Step Back – Thinking Big Picture
 - a. Planning Time for Focused Strategic Thinking
 - i. Make Time Each Week or Month to Think Big Picture- Review Progress to Past Goals and Make Plans for New Goals
 - ii. Building Blocks of Volunteer Engagement
 - 1. Lay the Foundation through Mission and Vision- Do Volunteers Fit in the Way They Want? How Can They Better Support the Mission?
 - 2. Combine Inspiring Leadership with Effective Management- Do You Have A Clear Focal Point? Are You Achieving Your Goals?
 - 3. Build Understanding and Collaboration- What and How Do You Communicate With Volunteers and Involve Them in Program Development?
 - 4. Learn, Grow and Change- What Big New Thing Is Next? How Can We Improve? Who Can I Ask Who Has A Great Idea? What Do I Need to Learn About?
 - b. Volunteer Life Cycle
 - i. Focus on Evaluation: Involving Volunteer Voices in Implementation
 - 1. Identify Volunteer Success Stories to Share With Donors/Community
 - 2. Discover Barriers/Challenges
 - 3. Obtain Fresh Ideas/Suggestions
 - 4. Validate Your Own Experiences
 - 5. Anticipate Future Needs/Concerns
 - 6. Get Support on Making Change
 - 7. Create A Team for Change Implementation

Resources To Check Out:

General Resources:

Community Tool Box (University of Kansas)

Main Table of Contents: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents>

Toolkits: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/toolkits>

The Essential Guide to Managing Volunteers at Your Nonprofit (VolunteerPro)

<https://volpro.net/managing-volunteers/>

Energize Inc. Especially for Leaders of Volunteers

<https://www.energizeinc.com/>

Volunteer Management: The Essential Guide to Engaging (and Keeping) Volunteers (Double the Donation)

<https://doublethedonation.com/tips/nonprofit-software-and-resources/volunteer-management-guide/>

Points of Light Resources (including Volunteer Management Training Series)

<https://www.pointsoflight.org/resources/>

Pillar 1: Prioritize What's Important – Building Relationships

The Day We First Met (Becky Lunders)

<https://trust.guidestar.org/blog/the-day-we-first-met>

I Got Dumped: The Dark Side of Volunteer/Staff Relationships (Becky Lunders)

<https://trust.guidestar.org/blog/i-got-dumped-the-dark-side-of-volunteer/staff-relationships>

Bridging the Gap between Volunteer Programs and Today's Volunteers (Paula Speevak-Sladowski)

<http://www.csaec.com/Portals/0/Membership/Membership%20Promotion/Membership/Bridging%20the%20Gap%20between%20Volunteer%20Programs%20and%20Today.pdf>

Traits of the Effective Counselor (Sidney Wolf)

Pillar 2: Automate What You Can – Leveraging Technology

Salesforce for NonProfits: <https://www.salesforce.org/nonprofit/>

HootBoard: <https://www.hootboard.com/>

HootSuite: <https://hootsuite.com/>

MailChimp: <https://mailchimp.com/>

FormAssembly: <https://www.formassembly.com/>

Sterling Volunteers: <https://www.sterlingvolunteers.com/>

Helping Habit: <https://www.helpinghabit.com/discover>

Volgistics: <https://www.volgistics.com/>

Pillar 3: Make Time To Step Back – Thinking Big Picture

Self Care Wheel (Olga Phoenix)

<http://www.olgaphoenix.com/key-offerings/self-care-wheel/>