



# **VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT**



Some NPOs make extensive use of volunteers, while others use volunteers to a lesser degree or not at all. If your organization uses volunteers, it is important to recognize that they are doing a job, even if it is unpaid. You are relying on them to get certain things done, and—depending on their role—they may be representing your organization to beneficiaries and the public. Therefore, it is very important to make sure that you select good volunteers and manage them well.

This tool provides information about developing your volunteer management program. It includes a set of self-assessment questions that will help you identify the strengths and weaknesses of your NPO's volunteer management functions, so that you can work to improve your volunteer management capacity.

# PART I: MAJOR COMPONENTS OF VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

COMPONENTS	WHAT IT INCLUDES	SUGGESTIONS FOR BUILDING YOUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM	WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
<p>1. Designated volunteer coordinator</p>	<p>There is an individual responsible for coordinating the volunteer program. In larger NPOs with major volunteer programs, there may be a designated volunteer coordinator. In small NPOs that do not use many volunteers, volunteer coordination may be part of someone's job, or a volunteer may be used to fill this role.</p>	<p>The volunteer coordinator is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruiting volunteers</li> <li>• Providing volunteer orientation</li> <li>• Assessing volunteer performance</li> <li>• Working with staff to assure coordination between volunteers and paid staff members</li> <li>• Helping to resolve problems involving volunteers</li> <li>• Recognizing the contributions made by volunteers</li> </ul> <p>How the volunteer coordinator role is structured depends on how much the NPO uses volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPOs with many volunteers may have a volunteer coordinator position that works exclusively on volunteer issues.</li> <li>• In NPOs with smaller volunteer program, the volunteer coordinator may also have other duties.</li> <li>• Some NPOs use an experienced volunteer with managerial skills as their volunteer coordinator.</li> </ul> <p>The volunteer coordinator should work closely with the human resources lead to make sure that the NPO coordinates the roles of paid and volunteer staff.</p>	<p>A designated volunteer coordinator will help assure that you attract and retain qualified volunteers.</p>

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2. Volunteer Job descriptions	There is a clear statement of the job responsibilities and expectations for every volunteer position.	<p>The volunteer job description includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications for holding the position</li> <li>• Description of job duties</li> <li>• Reporting relationships</li> <li>• Performance expectations</li> </ul> <p><b>Experienced NPOs</b> with established volunteer programs will have detailed volunteer job descriptions, that include all of the information listed above</p> <p><b>Developing and Start-up NPOs</b> should provide volunteer job descriptions that include at least a basic description of job duties, important expectations for the job ( for example, how often they are expected to volunteer), and who the volunteer reports to.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear job descriptions help make sure that prospective volunteers understand what they are expected to do.</li> <li>• Having job descriptions for both paid and volunteer staff helps NPO management make sure that all required tasks are assigned in the most appropriate manner.</li> </ul>

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3. Volunteer planning	Decisions on what functions should be carried out by volunteers and what functions should be carried out by paid staff are made carefully based on the NPO's needs.	<p>Determine what functions should be performed by paid employees, and which are suitable for volunteers.</p> <p><b>Established NPOs</b> will typically have ongoing management functions filled by paid employees, with volunteers serving in other positions that are more suited for frequent changes in personnel.</p> <p><b>New and developing NPOs</b> with limited financial resources may need to use volunteers temporarily in managerial positions or other jobs that eventually will be filled with paid employees. However, in selecting volunteers for these positions, make sure that the volunteer has the needed skills, and that they understand and will comply with the expectations for the volunteer position.</p>	Some functions are best carried out by paid staff, while other functions can appropriately be done by volunteers. Using volunteers in positions that should be paid may result in lack of continuity or poor performance in key functions. At the same time, using paid employees for positions that could be carried out by volunteers could be an unneeded expense.

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4. Volunteer recruitment	There are clear, written procedures for volunteer recruitment. Volunteers are interviewed before hiring.	Procedures should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What tasks/functions will volunteers be used for?</li> <li>• How volunteers will be recruited.</li> <li>• How volunteers apply.</li> <li>• How volunteers are screened</li> <li>• How offers of volunteer work are made</li> </ul> Prospective volunteers should always be interviewed so that their suitability for the volunteer position can be assessed.	Even though they are unpaid, volunteers are carrying out important duties for your NPO. It is important to have a plan for recruiting volunteers to make sure that you attract reliable volunteers with the skills you need.
5. Volunteer background checks	Background checks are conducted for any volunteer who will work directly with beneficiaries or who will have access to NPO finances or other confidential information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify which volunteer positions require background checks. (ex: Ensure volunteers working directly with children sign agreement on Child Protection Policy)</li> <li>• Assign a staff person to routinely carry out and report on criminal background checks.</li> </ul>	Untrustworthy volunteers put your NPO and its beneficiaries at great risk.

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6. Volunteer Orientation and training	Each new volunteer receives orientation to your NPO, as well as training that they will need to perform their volunteer duties.	<p>Orientation can include written materials describing the NPO, classroom training, or one-on-one meetings with NPO representatives. They may include tours of the facility, introductions to employees or other volunteers, or the opportunity to accompany volunteers with similar duties as they do their work.</p> <p>The type of orientation provided will depend on how many volunteers you have and the type of work they will be doing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPOs with many volunteers may want to have formal orientation programs where multiple volunteers can be oriented at the same time.</li> <li>• NPOs with few volunteers may use less formal orientation processes, as long as volunteers are provided with all needed information.</li> </ul>	It is important for volunteers to understand the NPO and its expectations for their voluntary work.
7. Volunteer performance appraisals	Volunteer performance is evaluated, and the NPO communicates with volunteers about how they are doing.	Volunteer performance appraisal may be less formal than performance evaluation for paid employees. However, it is very important to provide for regular feedback from volunteers. One way of doing this is through scheduled meetings between the volunteer and the volunteer’s supervisor.	Volunteers are carrying out important work for your NPO, and they can benefit from feedback to improve their performance. Performance appraisals also provide volunteers with an opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions to the NPO.

COMPONENTS	WHAT IT INCLUDES	SUGGESTIONS FOR BUILDING YOUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM	WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
8. Volunteer recognition	Steps are taken to make the volunteer experience rewarding and worthwhile for volunteers, and to express appreciation for their efforts.	<p>You can recognize the needs of your volunteers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structuring volunteer jobs so that they provide interest and challenge, and recruiting volunteers who have the right skills to carry out those jobs.</li> <li>• Making sure that volunteers have access to a volunteer coordinator or supervisor with whom they can discuss problems or concerns.</li> <li>• Saying “thank you” frequently, and recognizing volunteer effort and accomplishments.</li> </ul> <p>Recognizing volunteers through ceremonies, certificates, or other formal means.</p>	Volunteers are contributing their time without pay. Therefore, the volunteer position must meet other needs that the volunteer may have. Some volunteers are motivated by wanting to contribute to others; others may want to learn skills or get experience that will help them in the future. Recognizing and responding to the needs of individual volunteers will help ensure their continued contribution.

## PART II: LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

TOPIC	ATTACHMENT
<b>Volunteer Job descriptions</b>	Attachment 1: Example volunteer job description

## PART III: HELPFUL REFERENCES ON VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

AUTHOR AND TITLE	WHERE IT CAN BE FOUND	WHAT THIS REFERENCE COVER
<b>Jan Masaoka</b> <i>The Non Profit's Guide to Human Resources, Managing Your Employees &amp; Volunteers</i> NOLO, 2011		
<b>Thomas Wolf</b> <i>Managing a Nonprofit Organization</i> , Simon and Schuster 2012		
<b>Center for Non-Profit Management</b> " <i>Frequently Asked Questions About Volunteer Management</i> "	<a href="http://www.cnmsocal.org/resources/management-and-supervision/faq-about-volunteer-management.html">http://www.cnmsocal.org/resources/management-and-supervision/faq-about-volunteer-management.html</a>	

## PART IV: NPO SEFT-ASSESSMENT: VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Your NPO can use the following worksheet to assess its volunteer management program. The worksheet is designed to help you identify areas of strength and areas where you can improve your capacity.

For each Volunteer Management program component, check the appropriate box to show whether the described standards are fully achieved, partially achieved, or not present in your organization

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
a. <u>Volunteer coordinator</u> . There is an individual responsible for coordinating the volunteer program.				
b. <u>Volunteer planning</u> . Decisions on what functions should be carried out by volunteers and what functions should be carried out by paid staff are made carefully based on the NPO's needs.				
c. <u>Volunteer job descriptions</u> . There are written job descriptions for every volunteer position, describing job duties and expectations and needed qualifications for the job.				
d. <u>Volunteer recruitment</u> . There are clear, written procedures for volunteer recruitment.				

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
e. <u>Background checks.</u> Background checks are conducted for any volunteer who will work directly with beneficiaries or who will have access to NPO finances or other confidential information.				
f. <u>Volunteer orientation.</u> All new volunteers receive orientation to the NPO.				
g. <u>Volunteer performance appraisal.</u> Volunteer performance is evaluated, and the NPO communicates with volunteers about how they are doing and solicits ideas for improving operations of the NPO.				
h. <u>Volunteer recognition.</u> Steps are taken to make the volunteer experience rewarding and worthwhile for volunteers, and to express appreciation for their efforts.				

# PART V. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS

<b>Volunteer management components where our organization’s performance is strong</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> </ol>
<b>Volunteer management components where our organization needs to develop additional capacity.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> </ol>
<b>Volunteer management component(s) that will be prioritized for improvement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>
<b>Next steps—For each priority component:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What will be done?</b></li> <li>• <b>Who is responsible?</b></li> <li>• <b>What will be the start date?</b></li> <li>• <b>When will planned actions be completed?</b></li> </ul>	