

Adapting Volunteer Management for your Audience

Presented by: Kim Cusimano, Executive Director and Emily Vincent,
Program Coordinator, PIN – The People and Information Network

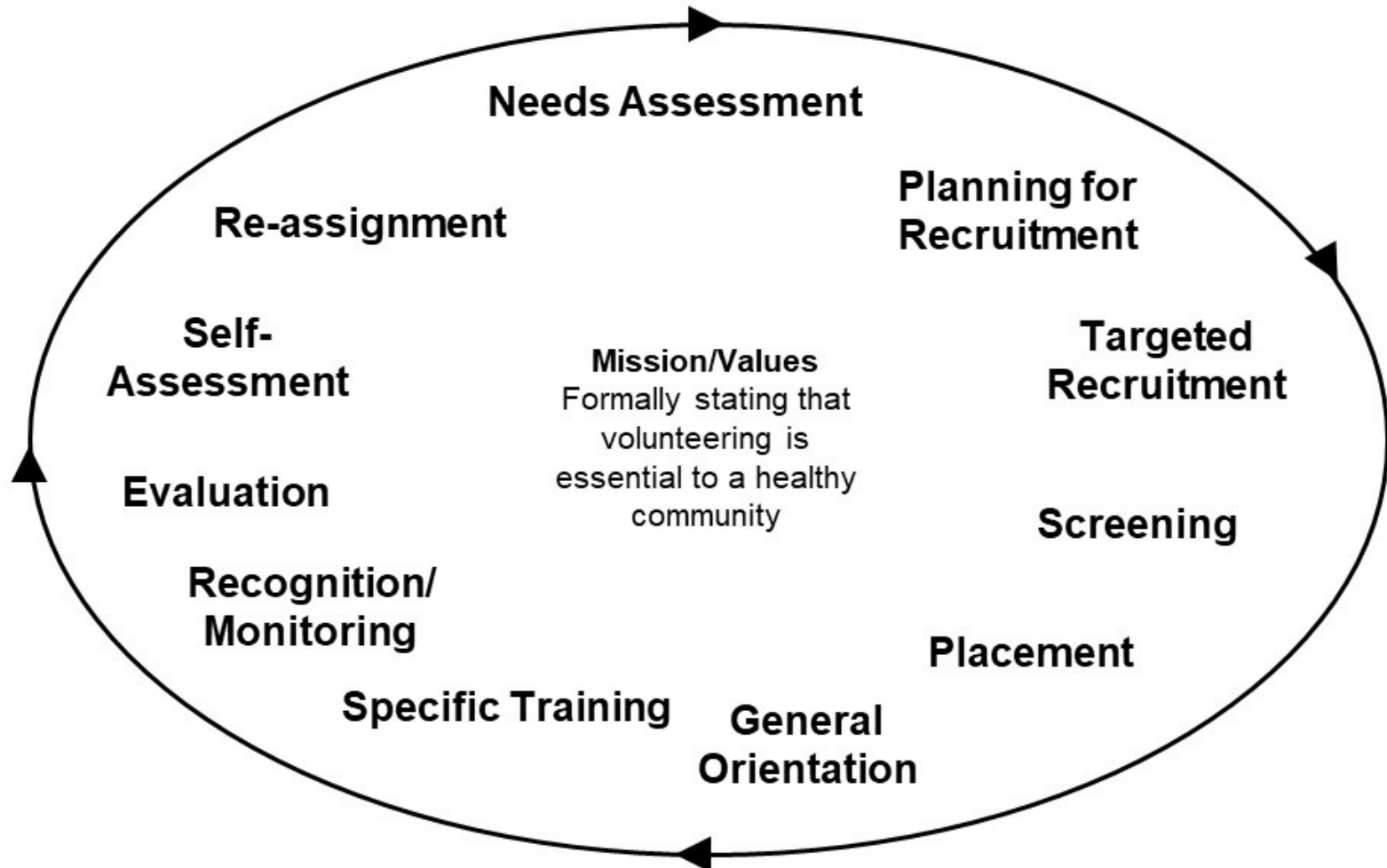
Presentation Objectives

- To provide an overview of the trends of volunteering and why people volunteer
- Recognize the importance of diversity in your volunteer base
- Understand the motivations of various volunteers

Presentation Topics

1. Overview of the Spectrum of Volunteerism
(from informal to formal volunteering)
2. Planning for effective volunteer recruitment
(What do you want volunteers to do?)
3. Diversifying your volunteer base

Volunteer Development Cycle



The Changing Landscape of Volunteerism

Volunteering benefits all community members.

From opportunities for families to volunteer together, youth, adults and those in their senior adulthood – whether long term residents or new to the community, belonging and participating are an integral lifeblood to health and well-being.

By leading as the source of volunteerism in the community, it's important for your organization to have knowledge of volunteer involvement to effectively engage the right people to help you fulfill your community benefit organization's mission.

*“In 2018, **12.7 million people volunteered** on behalf of a group by contributing time to organizations, including charities and non-profit organizations, such as schools, religious organizations, sports or community associations. That is, **41% of Canadians dedicated more than 1.6 billion hours to their formal volunteer activities, a volume of work equivalent to about 863,000 full-time year-round job equivalents.**”*

Statistics Canada. (2021). Volunteering counts: Formal and informal contributions of Canadians in 2018.

41% of Canadians volunteered formally; 79% of Canadians volunteered informally.

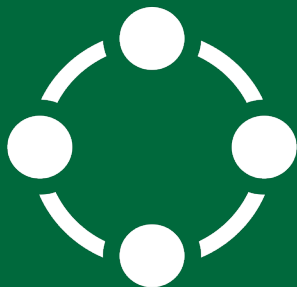
Informal Volunteering

Informal volunteering is volunteering that takes place outside an organizational setting. Volunteering Australia, 2017

Informal volunteering is literally all around us; helping a neighbour with grocery shopping or snow shoveling, organizing a food drive or a rally for a cause you are passionate about.

“When seen through the lens of community participation, volunteering becomes less of a service delivery model and more of something that people do everyday in their communities.” - Millora, C. (2020, September). Tolerance and inclusion: Volunteering enabling community cohesion and embracing diversity. International Association for Volunteer Effort.

It moves away from a service provider and service recipient relation or a colonized relationship to one based on common ground, mutual respect and understanding. It's about creating opportunities for people to do more of what they do everyday in their communities



Informal relationships are usually formed in the community where people are.

- Meet with community leaders to gain a better understanding of their needs.
- Be genuine.
- Let go of preconceived ideas or plans.
- Listen, first to understand and then to be understood. Then be willing to find out how you may help support the needs of the community. Informal relationships generally take time to develop and foster but can lead to stronger connections.

Formal Volunteering

‘Formal volunteering that takes place within organizations, including institutions and agencies.’

Volunteering Australia. (n.d.). Volunteering Australia’s definition of volunteering frequently asked questions.

Formal relationships in the Community Benefit Sector may include funders, donors, board of directors and professional bodies. Organizations that provide leadership, financial support or professional standards require accountability for the use of resources provided for service delivery and standards of practice.

What formal and informal relationships does your volunteer program and organization already have in place?

Is there a balance of formal and informal relationships?

For example:

- Does your organization focus on food security or homelessness and yet not have any relationships in the community where people living with low income or poverty? Or people who have precarious housing or none at all?
- Do you offer youth programs yet have no relationships with youth of colour?



Why Do People Volunteer?



Top Motivations for Volunteering

- Believe in the cause
- Use skills and experience
- Affected by cause
- Explore one's own strengths
- Improve job skills

*It's more about the **CAUSE** vs. the name of the organization.*

Focusing on causes in recruiting may attract potential volunteers who may not recognize your organization's name.

***Our society is global** now, and **organizations are collaborating** more in order to be efficient and better meet the needs of the people they support and community members.*

Organizations and groups that provide services to end poverty, homelessness and food insecurity coming together to create partnerships and apply for funding.

Why Don't People Volunteer?



Barriers to Volunteer Involvement

- Lack of time
- Unwilling/unable to make longer term commitment
- Don't know how to become involved
- Because they give rather than volunteer
- Nobody asked them

Have you considered that barriers to volunteering may also include not feeling welcomed, access and understanding of the opportunities, in addition to our own unconscious bias and the landscape of the sector?

Volunteer Management Progress Report reveals a trend: *respondents continue to be white (84%) women (88%).*

Lack of diversity among those who work in the sector may also result in issues of equity in volunteerism as a whole.

The Denver Foundation's Inclusiveness Project

Through the lens of inclusivity, common barriers to volunteering:

- Fear of being used as a token
- Not feeling connected to the mainstream community
- Cultural emphasis on family involvement over community involvement
- Lack of identification with agencies serving communities of color
- Lack of knowledge about volunteer opportunities
- Belief that input from communities of color is not taken seriously
- Uncertainty about the benefits of involvement
- Economic hardship

<http://www.nonprofitinclusiveness.org>

Volunteer Pro. (2021, January 13).
Volunteer management progress report.

Facts and Trends Volunteer-Involving Organizations

About 8 in 10 Canadians volunteered their time in 2018

In 2018, 79% of Canadians aged 15 years and older reported volunteering, either as part of an organization or on their own without the involvement of a group. Altogether, 24 million people contributed to improving the health, well-being, education and safety of the Canadian population and enhancing Canadian communities.

Statistics Canada. (2018). General social survey on giving, volunteering and participating.

- Volunteer base is younger
- Leadership volunteers are older
- More new Canadians are seeking volunteer opportunities
- Volunteers are looking for shorter-term opportunities (episodic, event or project based)
- People want to volunteer as a group, especially youth and families
- Volunteers want the flexibility to create their own roles

12.7 million Canadians engaged in **formal** volunteering.

41% of Canadians dedicated 1.6 billion hours.

23 million Canadians engaged in **informal** volunteering.

74% of Canadians dedicated 3.4 billion hours

Volunteerism and Tech

Digital age competition: Social Media, Netflix, Online Gaming

Consider: digital presence, online access and ease, virtual cloud-based roles, social media and gamification



Invested Strategic Planning and Outcomes

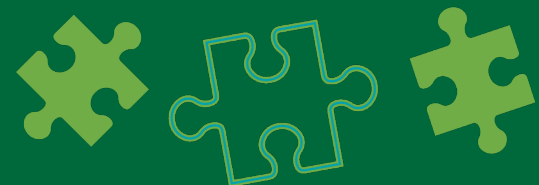
Knowing the volunteer landscape, trends and your own organizational data, the resources present the opportunity to invest in strategic conversations and planning to desirable outcomes

Questions to ask:

- Do we have a solid awareness of our volunteer base?
- Do we invest in regular strategic conversations and planning? 1- 3 - 5-year roadmap?
- Do we assess our volunteer engagement strategy?
- Do we assess the diversity and inclusion of volunteering?
- Do our volunteer roles help move the mission forward?
- Do we offer varied roles that appeal to a wide audience?
- Do these roles include a mix of in-person and virtual?

Areas to consider making an investment to:

- Understanding volunteer resources
- Understanding your unconscious bias
- Undertaking a regular review and gaining volunteer feedback and involvement
- Build meaningful relationships
- Be flexible and accommodating
- Be sensitive to gender, culture, language and age
- Provide online engagement in recruitment
- Developed customized approach to engagement



Motivations of Volunteers Differ by Age

The fundamental reasons why people volunteer (informal & formal) vary between younger and older generations

Matures or Seniors (1918 to 1945) - Baby Boomers (1946 to 1965) - Gen X (1966 – 1980) - Millennials (1981– 1995) - iGens (1996 to 2012)

Formal Volunteering: Motivations

- **Improving job opportunities** was cited as a **top reason for volunteering among iGens**, at 38% although less common among Gen Xs (16%), Baby Boomers (9%), and Matures (1%).
- A lower proportion of iGens (15%) reported skill use as an important reason for volunteering, compared to Millennials (25%), Gen X (23%), and Baby Boomers (29%).
- **Contributing to the well-being of the community** was named as a leading motivation **among about a quarter of volunteers**, with the notable exception of iGen volunteers, where 13% mentioned this as reason for volunteering.
- iGen volunteers were less likely (13%) than other generations (Millennials at 29% and Gen X at 21% and Baby Boomers at 28%) to say that a desire to support a political, environmental or social cause led them to volunteer.
- Roughly **one in three Baby Boomers cited religious or spiritual obligations** as a motivating factor in volunteering.

Statistics Canada. (2018). General social survey on giving, volunteering and participating.

Steps in Developing a Recruitment Strategy

As identified in Module 5, **Understanding the need is the fundamental foundation...**

How many volunteers do you need?

- Where and how can you reach them?
- Who will recruit, what is the message and how will you get it out?
- How will you know if you are successful?

The impact of volunteer support requires leaders of volunteers who have the skills and resources to support successful engagement including a fulsome recruitment strategy.

What do you want volunteers to do?

The Importance of position design

- What do we need volunteers to do?
- What skills/attitudes/knowledge are required to do this job?
- What will be their motivations and potential barriers?
- What does this position contribute to the organization's mission?

What to include in a position description:

- Title of the volunteer position
- Alignment to organization mission; how does this role assist in achieving the mission
- Duties and responsibilities
- Day, time, location
- Tools, software, expected health and safety i.e., flu shot, tuberculosis testing, proof of vaccination
- Skills and Experience
- Orientation, Training and Support
- Benefits
- How to apply and the steps involved

Finding the Volunteers



The number one reason people become involved as volunteers is because they were personally asked.

It is also important to **DIVERSIFY** your volunteer base.

By understanding the landscape, motivations and assessing your current practices and needs, you can diversify by building, expanding and adapting to your community.



Diversify your Volunteer Base: Matures or Seniors (1918 to 1945)

Motivations

- Like positions and tasks with a clearly defined outcome i.e., organizing events, board member, canvassing
- More likely to volunteer to use their skills to support a political or social cause, religious or spiritual beliefs as reasons for formal volunteering
- Not likely to volunteer to improve career opportunities

Barriers

- No extra time
- Already volunteer
- Health Problems
- Transportation

Diversify your Volunteer Base: Baby Boomers (1946 to 1965)

Motivations

- Boomers are clear leaders who have impressive participation rates.
- They want meaningful and flexible opportunities.
- They are loyal but expect efficiency and effectiveness

Barriers

- Organizations struggle to match boomer's skills with tasks
- Perception that organizations are downloading unwanted tasks to volunteers
- Not being recognized for their wide skill set

Diversify your Volunteer Base: Gen X (1966 – 1980)

Motivations

- They seek opportunities to build skills and experience towards career development
- They place value on the impact of their work as well as independence and timely, ongoing feedback about the quality of it
- They are attracted to organizations that offer personalized experiences and allow for effective use of time and flexible schedules

Barriers

- Don't want structured routines, schedules or direct supervision

Diversify your Volunteer Base: Millennials (1981– 1995)

Motivations

- Millennials want to experience the impact of their work and challenge the volunteering status quo.
- They want flexibility and the ability to define and create their own roles.
- They are just as likely to volunteer for an organization as they are to create their informal experience in the community when it is for a cause they are passionate about.
- They have a strong interest in technology and social media and a deep global connection.
- They can be influenced by their peers' indicating there may be opportunities for volunteering in pairs or groups.
- Demonstrate the impact of their contributions and provide engaging experiences they can create their own and flexible routines

Barriers

- Don't want structured schedules or roles

Diversify your Volunteer Base: iGens (1996 to 2012)

Motivations

- The number one reason iGens volunteer is to improve job prospects; they also engage in community involvement hours connected to educational requirements i.e., graduation, co-op
- Most likely to participate in organization and fundraising, the two most common formal volunteer activities by helping to organize, supervise or coordinate the activities/events or raise money

Barriers

- Less likely to be motivated to support a political, environmental or social cause
- More likely to engage in informal volunteering

***Generation Alpha (2013+) Begin building
your family and young person opportunities***

Diversify your Volunteer Base: Families

Motivations

- Families are looking for casual opportunities to develop youth through volunteering i.e., virtual volunteering, one-time volunteer opportunities, opportunities enjoyable for all ages

Barriers

- No extra time
- No appropriate opportunities for children/issue of child supervision
- Unaware of appropriate volunteer opportunities

Engaging as a family can be a bonding experience that instills kindness and human spirit through volunteering. Be creative and explore how your organization can engage families; from families with young children through to teens. Family Day is a great way to introduce and engage Family volunteers through 'Do It Yourself' (DIY) opportunities and organizational events as example.

Families come in all shapes, sizes and dynamics.

Diversify your Volunteer Base: Employer Supported Volunteerism

Motivations

- Participation in volunteer activities is greater when employees receive support from their employer. Develop results-oriented projects, flexible but structured volunteering with meaningful engagement

Barriers

- Perception that ESV is an onerous process
- Don't want extended, open ended tasks/positions
- Employment related restrictions

“ESV has a positive impact on communities, non-profit organizations, workplaces and employees. Workplaces build relationships to make a difference in the local and global communities where they operate.”

Volunteer Canada. (2019). Code for employer supported volunteering.

Diversify your Volunteer Base: Youth

Motivations

- Young people value an opportunity to learn new skills and build their resume i.e., education & research, social services, arts & culture, health and housing

Barriers

- Don't know how to become involved. Were not asked

What are some general interests that young volunteers have today? These can include:

- *Skills development (e.g., web development, critical thinking)*
- *Meeting new people & building relationships*
- *Exploring potential career paths*
- *Contributing to causes they're passionate about*
- *Building a sense of independence*

Pledges for Change and Volunteer Toronto. (2020). Designing virtual volunteering programs for young people – Playbook.

Diversify your Volunteer Base: New Canadians

Motivations

- Because they believe in a cause or to use skills and experience
- Seeking Canadian experience(s)

Barriers

- Don't know how to become involved
- Not a part of their cultural experience
- Were not asked

Why?

It enables Community Benefit Organizations to:

- Better reflect the communities they are a part of
- Builds on the strengths of the community
- It better positions them to develop relationships within the community and be more effective and relevant in the community

Audiences may include, but not limited to:

- Person identifying
- Socio-economic
- Generations
- Culture
- Faith
- Skills Based
- Sub-sectors
- Sports Leagues & Associations
- Festivals & Fairs
- Hospitals, Hospice
- Mentoring

How?

One of the ways is by shifting how we think about our work and the language we use.

By shifting your perception and practice of involving service users as potential volunteers, you can begin to recognize them as valuable contributors to your organization which results in opportunities to strengthen the programs and services you offer as well as improving lives through skill development, health and wellbeing.

- Think about your organization and the work you do.
- Relationships in the community
- How you involve volunteers
- Inclusive language and practice?
- Do we screen in not out?
- Do we ask for feedback?
- What volunteer roles, activities, events would most likely appeal to different audiences?

How?

- Create relationships with diverse age groups
- Once you involve people of diverse age groups in your organization, how can you further strengthen your service and enrich the volunteers experience by creating opportunities for them to work together?
- What activities or events could iGens and Matures work together on to share their strengths, skills and experiences?
- Can multigenerational families volunteer together at a fundraising event? Festival? Sports tournament?

How?

- Do you include the people who use(d) your services as volunteers?
- Are there opportunities for mentoring or peer support roles for participants who are or have transitioned out of service?
- Would a “leaders in training” program provide an opportunity for older youth to hone skills and develop leadership abilities while providing extra help? i.e., camps, sports groups
- Could a person who used your services be coached to assist the leader of a group program or as a “mentor” for a new service user?
- Could a parent of a youth participating in your service take on a small administrative volunteer role?
- Or a family member be engaged as an active volunteer or ambassador because they are passionate about your cause?

How?

- Advocate for leadership (Board of Directors, Leaders/Managers) of your organization to endorse and support a cultural shift involving diverse groups
- Provide education/professional development for all leaders, staff and volunteers to understand the motivations, skills and experiences of diverse groups
- Review policies & procedures to ensure the foundational structure supports the cultural and practical shift
- Evaluate and redesign programs and services to successfully engage volunteers of diverse backgrounds, skills and abilities that incorporate their strengths

Where to Begin?

- What is one practice (action or behavior) you can stop or barrier you could remove that would attract volunteers from a specific group that would really benefit or strengthen a program or service?
- What is one practice (action or behavior) that you could start that would adopt your volunteer practice to be more inclusive of a specific group that would really strengthen a program or service?
- What is one practice (action or behavior) that you could continue that already creates a welcoming, engaging environment for a specific group you would like to maintain?
- What is one relationship (formal or informal) that your organization could develop or strengthen that contributes to community?

Thank you

We all can contribute.

We all want to belong.

Invest in assessing, understanding, building relationships and adapting to your audience.

Reduce barriers, increase equity.

Volunteers have impact.

We are stronger together.



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