

Essential Elements of Volunteer Engagement

Workshop Handouts

August 6, 2013

Workshop Presenter: Nikki Russell

Volunteer Initiatives Manager, United Way of King County

nrussell@uwkc.org

Exploring Opportunity:

Think about your current volunteer involvement efforts:

1. How are volunteers involved with your organization (what do they do for your organization)?
2. What is your volunteer involvement ideal?
3. What strategies do you currently use to involve and retain volunteers? What works well?
4. What is challenging about engaging volunteers?

Identifying your challenges/barriers

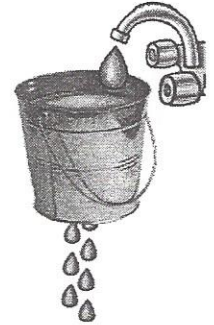
What Gets In the Way?



Key Issues in Volunteer Engagement

The Leaky Bucket Syndrome:

Volunteers are leaving as quickly as they come on board. Many stop volunteering all-together.



Key Issue #1 Resource Management:



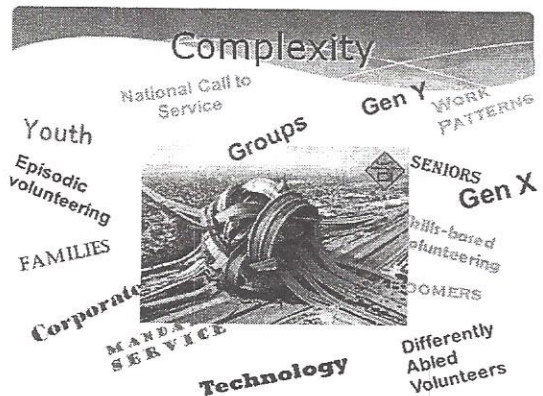
Only 1 in 4 charities effectively manages volunteer resources- Volunteer Management Capacity Study, 2003

Resources

Key Issue #2: Complexity:

Engaging the 21st Century Volunteer

Times have changed. Volunteers have changed. How we engage them needs to change to.



FROM "COLLECTIVE" TO "REFLEXIVE" VOLUNTEERING



Collective Volunteering
Collective action through membership in nonprofits, clubs, churches, etc.



Reflexive Volunteering
Reflexive (self-referential) action, based on individual interests, motivations and needs.

Husflink and Lohmeyster, 2003

Volunteering Then and Now

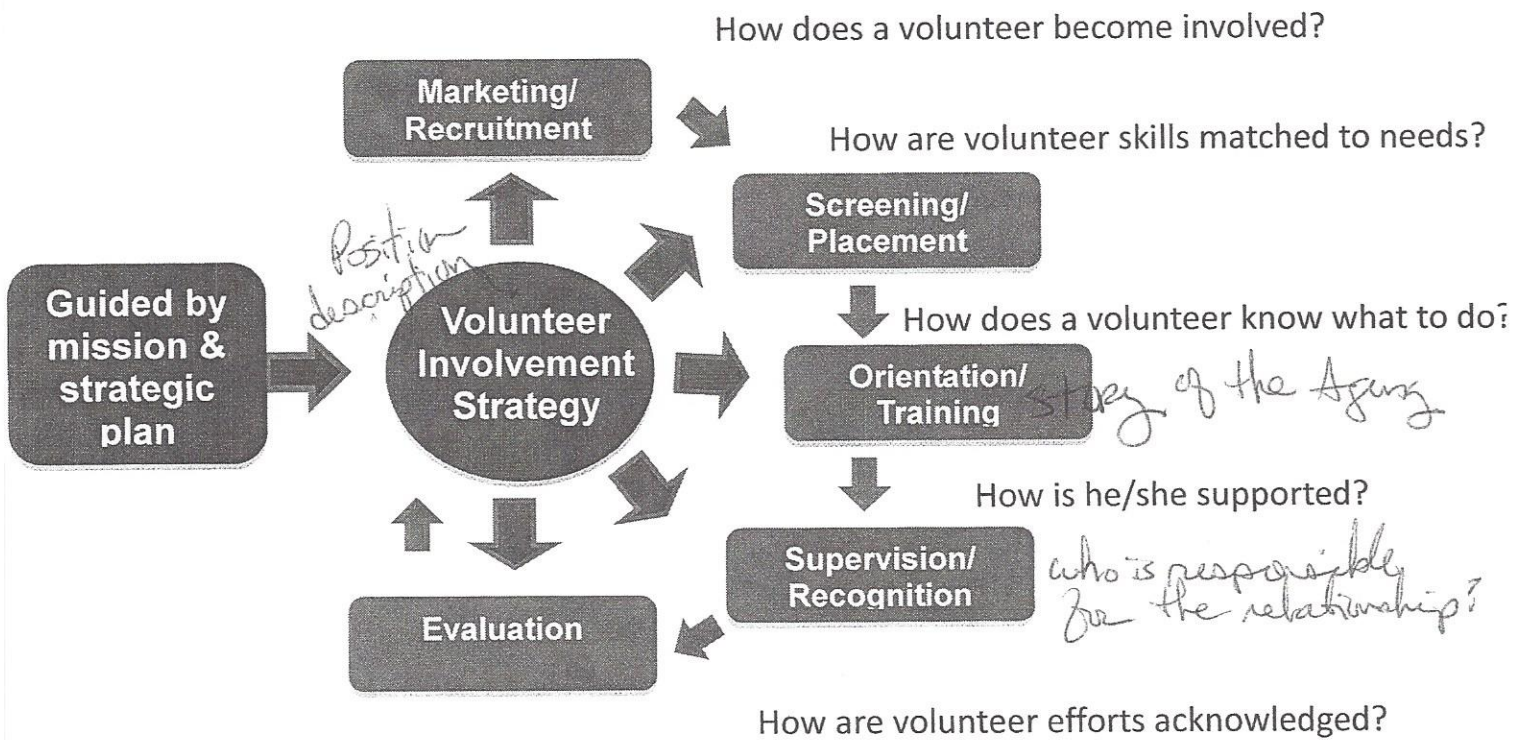
- From limited Roles to a variety of roles
- From simple tasks to more sophisticated tasks
- From a focus on the organization to a focus on individual needs
- From less people volunteering to more people volunteering

- From long-term volunteers to short-term volunteers
- From subordinate to partner

Effective Engagement: Understanding the Cycle of Volunteer Involvement

Volunteer Engagement Cycle:

Take a whole systems approach to volunteer engagement. Often, organizations focus on specific (elements) nuts and bolts and lose sight of the system as a whole. The elements of the engagement cycle are interrelated- you cannot focus on one element (like recruitment) without considering the whole system.



What are some potential challenging areas in your programs?

Enhance Your Volunteer Resource Management

Build and maintain sound systems, processes and procedures that support strategic engagement.

VRM mini-Assessment

The volunteer management assessment is the starting point for reviewing of your existing volunteer engagement efforts. The assessment is:

- Standards based
- Basis for tailored recommendations for enhancing your volunteer program

Abbreviated Assessment: Volunteer Resource Management

Elements of Volunteer Resource Management	Not currently being done	Somewhat in place	Being done to a large degree	Not applicable or relevant
1. Designated leader for overseeing management of volunteer involvement efforts				
2. Staff understand why and how volunteers are involved and are trained to engage volunteers effectively				
3. Periodic assessment to determine how volunteers should be involved with the organization				
4. Written position descriptions				
5. Written policies and procedures for volunteer involvement				
6. Specific strategies for ongoing volunteer recruitment				
7. Screening and matching procedures to determine appropriate placement of volunteers				
8. Consistent orientation for new volunteers				
9. Consistent training provided to volunteers				
10. Designated supervisors for all volunteer roles				
11. Periodic assessments of volunteer performance				
12. Periodic assessments of staff support for volunteers				
13. Consistent activities for recognizing volunteer contributions				
14. Regular collection and analysis of data and information regarding volunteer involvement				

15. Volunteer involvement is linked to organizational goals and or program outcomes

(Excerpted from: *A Guide to Investing in Volunteer Resources Management: Improve Your Philanthropic Portfolio*,)

The Role of the Volunteer Manager (Leader of Volunteer Engagement)

The Leader of Volunteer Engagement builds organizational:

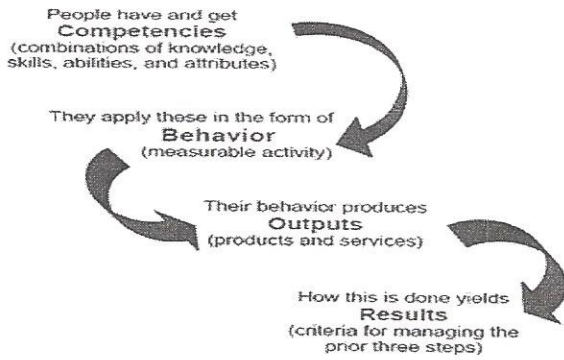
- Commitment
- Capacity
- Competency



Commitment: a commitment to support creative engagement at all levels of the organization.

Capacity: All of the systems, policies, planning, job design, recordkeeping, recruitment, materials development, risk management, budgeting, etc. that give the program a smooth foundation and effective operational procedures.

Competency: Staff and volunteers have a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes which enable them to produce results.



Modified from U.S. Department of Labor
"Competency Continuum"

Your Next Steps

What steps will you take to better leverage your volunteer time and talent?

- 1.

- 2.

- 3.

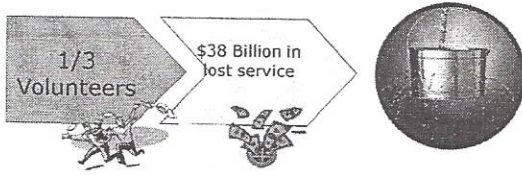
Final Thoughts

Volunteers are not just "nice" but are a necessary part of the solutions to today's most pressing societal challenges...

For nonprofit executives, there is both challenge and opportunity to meet [volunteer] expectations by creating flexible and strategic opportunities for volunteers

Volunteering Reinvented: Human Capital Solutions for the Nonprofit Sector, Corp. for Natl. & Community Service, July 2007

Volunteer Resource Management: A Leaky Bucket



Why Volunteers Leave



Resourcing Volunteer Engagement



Only 1 in 4 Nonprofits effectively manages
volunteer resources

Understanding Complexity

Compared to 30 years ago:

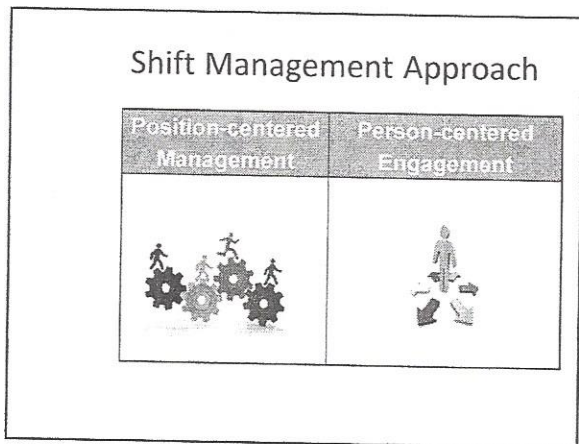
- Is today faster paced or slower?
- More complicated or simpler?
- More change or less?
- More decisions or less?

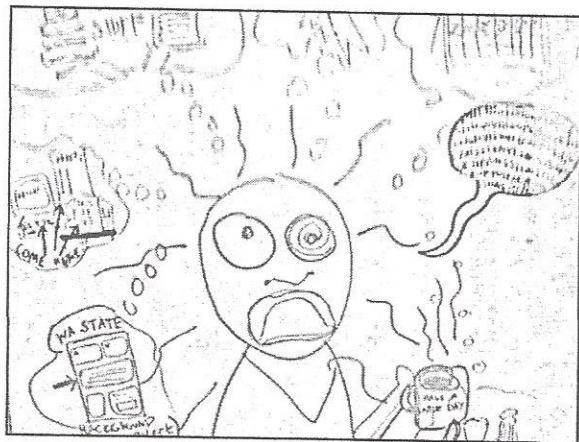
Increasing Complexity

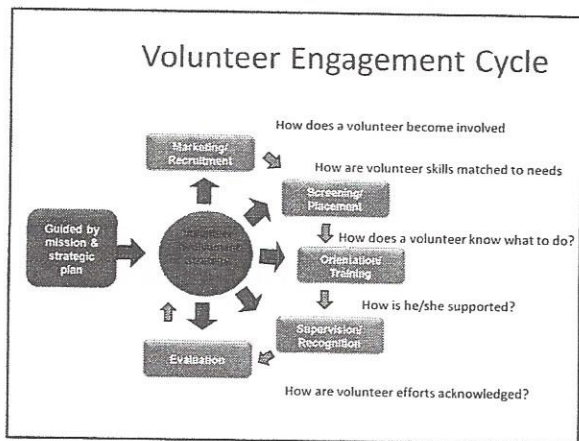
Collective	Reflexive
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fewer Opportunities• Simple opportunities• Less people volunteering more time• Long-term• Subordinate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater variety• Sophisticated opportunities• More people volunteering less time• Short-term• partner

→
Increasing focus on individual goals

YOUTH National Call to Service Gen Y Diversity
Episodic volunteering WORK PATTERNS Skills-based Volunteering
FAMILIES Groups Technology
Corporate Gen X BOOMERS
MANDATED SERVICE







Volunteer Resources Management Systems

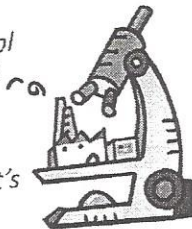
What systems, structures, activities and resources are required to support an effective engagement cycle?

Volunteer Management Assessment

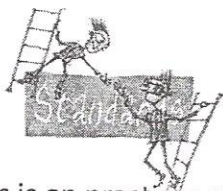


Volunteer Management Assessment

A self-assessment tool to uncover what's right and what's wrong with your volunteer program...and what's next

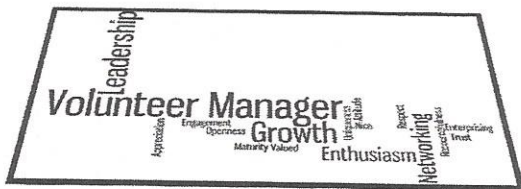


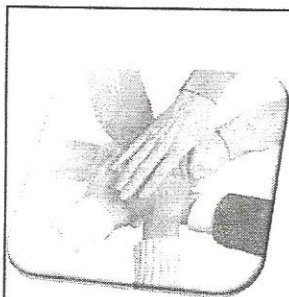
-Susan J Ellis, *The Volunteer Management Audit*



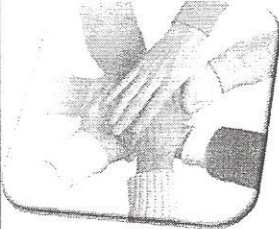
Focus is on practices and processes of
volunteer program design and
management

Leaders of Volunteer Engagement





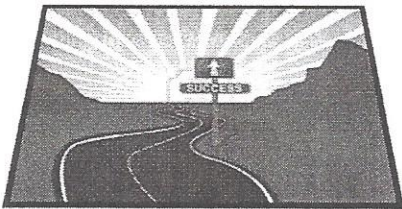
Building
Commitment
Capacity
Competency



Building
Commitment
Capacity
Competency



Building
Commitment
Capacity
Competency



Your Next Steps
