

VOLUNTEERS

GOTTA LUV 'EM!

with
Sandra Thomson, Development Consultant

BURNING ISSUES

- What are the problems you are currently facing with volunteers?

Sandra Thomson Development Consultant

What is a Volunteer?

Volunteerism has been defined as a fundamental act of citizenship that fosters responsibility, participation and interaction.

Sandra Thomson Development Consultant

What is a Volunteer?

People working together to improve the lives of others and in return, enhance their own lives.
Volunteering creates community.
It is a free offering of time, energy and skills.
It is caring enough to contribute to change by becoming personally involved.
Volunteers are essentially unpaid staff

Sandra Thomson Development Consultant

Defining Volunteers

- A contribution of time and energy
- Doing the impossible for the ungrateful
- To add value to someone's life
- Free work
- Actively supporting a cause
- Fresh eyes
- Worth every dollar they're paid
- A great resource
- Community builders
- Civic duty

Sandra Thomson Development Consultant

Some Interesting Stats

47% of Canadians volunteered for community organizations in 2010 up 12.5% over 2004

Sandra Thomson Development Consultant

Some Interesting Stats

43% of Canadians volunteered with family, friends, neighbours or co-workers

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Some Interesting Stats

83% of Canadians reported that they extend unpaid care and assistance to family, friends and neighbours in 2010, an increase from 73% in 1997.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Some Interesting Stats

67% of volunteers are also donors

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Where Do We Find Them?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

First

Let us consider **their** motivations

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Why Do People Volunteer?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Motivations might be....

- Affiliation
- Achievement
- Status
- Experience
- Networking

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

What can you offer volunteers?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Our Needs

- Project management
- Grant writing
- Social media expertise
- Public relations and marketing
- Tour guide
- Financial management
- Cleaners
- Information tables
- Lifting Things
- Security
- Event planners
- Serving alcohol
- Setting up and taking down
- Ticket taking
- Ushering
- Decorating
- Board Member

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Write a Clear Job Description

- What types of skills, experience and availability are you looking for?
- How much time does this position require? Two hours a week, 12 hours a day for three days in a row, 10 two hour meetings a year?
- Where might you find people with those particular skills and experience?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Where to Find Them?

- Your audience, attendees and members
- Busy people, community leaders
- Who else loves your art form?
- Current volunteers are a good source of future volunteers
- Employee loan programs

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Recruitment

- Match your organization's needs to the volunteer's interests, characteristics and skills.
- Your organization's needs should link back to your mission so that the volunteer can clearly understand how their work supports the mission

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Recruitment

- Not just any warm body will do. You want the best person possible for the job.
- Is your ticket taker friendly and welcoming with smiles and direct greetings for all who enter?
- Is your board president a community leader with good listening skills?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Recruitment

- During the interview, find out what the volunteer's skills and interests are before assigning the position.
- Sometimes people with specific experience and skills don't want to use them when they volunteer because "it's too much like work". Help them use new skills and have new experiences.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Recruitment

- Are you willing to modify a job description in order to make a better fit with a particular volunteer?
- Young people could be seeking experiences that can be used on their resumes
- Immigrants are looking for opportunities to fit in and to use new language skills

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Recruitment

Recruitment tactics for youth would be different from those of the retired generations.....the tone or messaging would also be different.

Let's explore.
Please refer to the handout
"Generational Matrix"

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

On-Line recruiting

volweb.ca
govolunteer.ca
yourtown.craigslist.org/vol/

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Screening

At minimum all volunteers should complete an application form and attend an interview.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Screening

- All volunteer assignments should be assessed for level of risk. The higher risk the position, the more in-depth the screening procedures required.
- Any screening process must be consistently applied – this can include reference checks, criminal record checks and medical checks.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

(adapted from The 10 Steps of Screening from the Volunteer Canada website)

Determine the risk. Organizations can control the risk in their programs. Examining the potential for danger in programs and services may lead to preventing or eliminating the risk altogether.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

Write a clear job description.

Carefully developed job descriptions send the message that an organization is serious about screening.

Responsibilities and expectations can be clearly set out, right down to the job's dos and don'ts.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

Establish a formal recruitment process.

Whether you post notices in your programs for volunteer positions or search through other people, indicate that screening will be part of the application process.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

Use an application form.

- provides needed contact information and allows the volunteer to state their skills & preferences.
- if other screening measures are required (medical exam, driver's record, police records check), the application form will ask for permission

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

Conduct interviews.

- talk about their background, skills, interests, and availability
- explore any doubts about the suitability of the candidate.
- the interview will help determine the "right fit".

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

Contact references.

- identify the level of trust required in the position and ask specific questions
- people often do not expect that their references will be checked. Do not assume that applicants only supply the names of people who will speak well of them.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

Request a Police Records Check.

A Police Records Check (PRC) is just one step that may be required for specific volunteer roles. PRCs signal — in a very public way — that the organization is concerned about the safety of its participants.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

Conduct orientation and training sessions.

- Orientation and training sessions offer an opportunity to observe volunteers in a different setting.
- These sessions inform volunteers about policies and procedures.
- A probation period gives both the organization and the volunteer time to learn more about each other.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

Supervise and evaluate. The identified level of risk associated with a volunteer position will determine the necessary degree of supervision and evaluation. If the risk is great, it follows that the volunteer will be under close supervision. Frequent feedback in the first year is particularly important. Evaluations must be based on position descriptions.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Legal Aspects

There is no single source of law in Canada that governs screening. Criminal, civil, constitutional and administrative statutes are all relevant to those organizations and individuals who carry out screening. As well, the common law has clearly established that organizations providing programs and services to people in the community have a legal duty to ensure the safety and well-being of those persons whom they serve. This duty to provide a safe environment is critical to screening, and is largely what motivates the efforts of community organizations to screen volunteers and employees who seek to occupy positions of trust with respect to children, youth, the elderly and other vulnerable persons.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

The Screening Process

Firing a volunteer

- 1) verbal correction
- 2) written warning
- 3) dismissal

Or reassign to something more suitable where there is constant supervision.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

What might you include
in your volunteer policy?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

A Volunteer Policy

- Reimbursement of volunteers
- Recognition of volunteers
- Screening
- Insurance
- Firing

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Training and Orientation

- Orientation is usually a group session that introduces volunteers to your organization – your mission, vision and values, your structure and people, your general procedures, relevant policies and history
- Training is specific to the task at hand and is usually a separate one on one session that focuses on the work to be done

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Training

- training is often most extensive if the job involves dealing with the public
- be sure to update long term volunteers on policies and procedures as they change

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Training

- builds confidence and ensures that the job gets done the way it needs to be done
- be sure to designate a contact person to whom they report or from whom they seek guidance. This person will also be involved in their evaluation.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Retention

- One out of every three volunteers in any given year do not volunteer again the next year. Don't expect everyone to stay on.
- Retention increases with age – the older your volunteer, the more likely they are to return
- Level of education is also a factor in retention

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Retention

- Those who engage in professional or management volunteer activities are more likely to continue to volunteer
- The longer the volunteer works with you, the more likely they are to stay. Most folks who drop out of your volunteer program do so early

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Retention

- What are the expectations (theirs and ours) and how can we meet them?
- What kind of climate or setting can we create that would prove enjoyable for a volunteer?
- What kind of people do they get to work with and are those people interesting and enjoyable? Do we promote opportunities for interaction with others?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Retention

- Do we have our own systems or do we expect the volunteers to come up with their own?
- Do we provide the volunteers with the resources they need to do the job?
- Keep a file on every volunteer. The filing system should be confidential and secure. Get their birth date when you sign them up and send a card each year on their birthday.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Retention

- Invite key volunteers to serve on committees or participate in brain storming sessions or visioning, planning and policy discussions. The volunteer perspective is an important one.
- Listen to their ideas about how something can be done differently. Even if you are not prepared to make the changes as suggested, hear them out.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Retention

Remember that everything you do as a volunteer manager is either an invitation for the volunteer to stay or an invitation to go

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

A FEW RULES

From your experience, if we were writing a rule book, what would be in it?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

A FEW RULES

- Don't waste a volunteer's time. Having too many volunteers for one event or project leads to feelings of inadequacy and boredom. Volunteers with nothing to do go looking for something to do and often invent their own tasks which may be counterproductive to your objectives.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

A FEW RULES

- Let them do what they want to do – don't force them to do something they dislike or find distasteful. Be prepared to pull a volunteer from one job and reassign them on the spot if they are not happy.
- Schedule time to listen to volunteers – they appreciate the social aspect of volunteering

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

A FEW RULES

- Reassure them and give regular feedback during the course of their duties
- Give them plenty of notice of changes – staffing, venues, procedures etc.
- Ensure that they have adequate resources to do the job
- Thank them now and thank them again later

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Volunteers Cost Money

- Some organizations cover transportation costs such as mileage or parking reimbursements.
- Some organizations provide free t-shirts or scarves or hats to help identify volunteers in a crowd. Some charge volunteers for them.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Volunteers Cost Money

- Some organizations budget for an annual volunteer party where food and refreshment are the main costs.
- Sometimes board members host and feed the other volunteers as a symbolic gesture of appreciation.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Volunteers Cost Money

Track the hours volunteered for each person. Include your board member and committee member hours . A database can manage this for you because at the end of your year, you will be asked to report these figures to your funders. Track the hours by month. Include totals in your annual report.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

How Do You Show Your Appreciation?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Appreciating

- The annual general meeting is a great place for formal recognition. Dream up awards and special recognition for long service.
- Certificates or cards of appreciation are wonderful ways of acknowledging volunteer work. They don't cost much and can be highly valued.
- A photograph of the volunteer on the job is a nice way of recognizing them.
- Younger volunteers like to receive things.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Appreciating

Just like donors, some volunteers like recognition but some do not like being singled out. Tread carefully.

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Takeways

- Match well
- Contact Info
- Be welcoming
- Lead by example
- Clear time commitments
- Feedback
- Clear expectations
- Training
- Appreciate
- Check in regularly
- Trust them to do the job

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

A Few Online Resources

- Volunteer Canada
- E-volunteerism
- Charity Village
- Vantage Point
- Statistics Canada

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

BCTC WEBSITE

- This power point presentation
- Generational Matrix
- Volunteer job description
- Volunteer reference check form
- Volunteer interest form
- Commitment and Confidentiality form
- Volunteer exit interview form

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Your One Thing

- One thing that is your takeaway
- When will you do it?
- Who will tell about it when you do it?

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant

Sandra Thomson
Development Consultant
www.sandrathomson.ca

Sandra Thomson Development
Consultant