Best Practices for Volunteer Management

Having a strategy to manage and retain volunteer labor is the best way to effectively use volunteers in your program. There are several ways in which a program can organize how volunteers are recruited, trained, used, and recognized within a program. Taking the time to develop policies and procedures ahead of using volunteers is the best strategy to ensure success.

- A volunteer manager is recruited and hired.
- Staff create policies and procedures for volunteer management, including how to disengage with a volunteer, are created before recruiting volunteer staff.
- An agency decides what work is needed and what positions are available for volunteers before accepting offers of volunteer labor.
- Volunteer skills and interests are matched with the tasks needed by the agency.
- A variety of volunteers are recruited, including: retirees, immigrants, and students.
- All volunteers are required to sign a confidentiality agreement before starting at the agency.
- A time commitment is required from volunteers.
- Volunteers receive agency orientation and program and task-specific training.
- Volunteers are evaluated and their performance is reviewed.
- Volunteers are encouraged to take additional training.
- Volunteers are encouraged, when appropriate, to develop areas of expertise and to pursue increasing levels of responsibility within an agency.
- Volunteers are asked for feedback regarding their experiences with the agency.
- Volunteer labor is recorded and calculated with a dollar value as in-kind support and is used to leverage grant funding.
- Volunteers are recognized and shown appreciation.