

Building Homeland Security Programs For Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

Breakout Session Handouts



**CNCS Homeland Security Grantee Meeting
Washington, DC
March 2005**

Handout 1

“FISH”: The Principles of Volunteer Recruiting

- FOCUS:** Know what kind of jobs you want done and what kinds of people you want.
- INITIATIVE:** Find out where these kinds of people are likely to be and go after them. Don't wait passively for just anyone to walk in.
- SHAPE:** Tailor the job to the person whenever possible, rather than vice versa. When you do this, more of the people you initially attract will complete the process and become actual volunteers.
- HAVE:** A volunteer program that includes training, recognition, good staff relations, etc. People will hear about it and your recruiting job will be that much easier.

Handout 2

TEN QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE RECRUITING NEW VOLUNTEERS

| |
|---|
| <p>1. Why do we need volunteers? <i>What would happen if we had none at all?</i></p> |
| <p>2. What role will our volunteer program play in Homeland Security activities? <i>Asking this question forces you and your staff to clarify your goals and explain the big picture – the goal of all Homeland Security programs is to build safe communities and to provide the means to deal with crime, terrorism, and natural disasters.</i></p> |
| <p>3. Does our staff understand the pivotal role that volunteers play in our Homeland Security efforts? <i>This question helps your paid staff appreciate the role that volunteers will play in achieving your goals.</i></p> |
| <p>4. What are the benefits to the individual who volunteers in our organization? <i>The answer to this question gives you an immediate recruiting and retention tool.</i></p> |
| <p>5. Are the placement opportunities for volunteers clearly defined? Do we have clear position descriptions? Are they flexible? <i>You wouldn't want to show up for a volunteer position and not know what you will be expected to do. Attached is a sample job description forms to use as a guideline.</i></p> |
| <p>6. <u>Whom</u> do we want as a volunteer? <u>When</u> do we want them? <u>What</u> recruitment method would be best? <i>The answers to these 3 "W's" provides the outline for your recruitment strategy.</i></p> |
| <p>7. Who will do the recruiting? Are there skilled volunteers who can act as recruiters? Are we utilizing them? <i>The answer to this question gives you the ability to put your plan into action.</i></p> |
| <p>8. Are we prepared to handle the response? Do we know who will interview, screen, place , train, supervise and evaluate our new volunteers? Do we include critical training about a volunteer's safety? <i>These are the Million Dollar questions for Homeland Security grantees. Your game plan must be in place to welcome, utilize, and keep volunteer capital safe and viable.</i></p> |
| <p>9. What would we do if we had an unlimited supply of skilled volunteers? Would we be ready to take advantage of their special talents? Do we understand how to gather credentialing information about volunteers? <i>Think about these questions; be ready with your wish list of tasks that need to be covered in all phases of emergency management. You may not be able to have a job description for everyone who shows up in a crisis, but to the extent possible, you should try to be prepared with job descriptions for every skilled volunteer who shows up.</i></p> |
| <p>10. Do we need more advice? Should we form an advisory board of experts to advise us about our recruitment program? <i>Have you contacted the local community colleges and universities, other non profit organizations in your community to see if there are experts on volunteer management who can assist you?</i></p> |

Handout 3 Targeted Marketing

Here is a chart that will help you develop a mutually satisfying exchange between two parties: the Agency/Organization and the Volunteer. We have filled in just a few sections in the columns on the items to give you samples of how to use this chart- you can then print out a blank chart for your own use. You may also customize the items in the left hand column to fit your own agency.

| Item in Marketing | Ideas in each category | Ideas in each category | Ideas in each category | Ideas in each category | Ideas in each category |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| General Target <i>(kinds of volunteers)</i> | Long term | Short Term | Episodic | Specific skills | Emergencies |
| Specific Target <i>(who we're really looking for)</i> | Volunteers to be trained in supporting families for 3-6 months | Volunteers to help out at one monthly immunization Site. | Volunteers for December Holiday events | Volunteers who understand chemical check lists | Volunteers who will be ready to respond to crisis |
| Specific Program or project with Volunteer needs | Medical Emergency Team | | | | |
| Product <i>(What we have to give volunteers)</i> | Training in Homeland Security tools. | Training in Personal Safety | | | |
| Competition <i>(who also wants this kind of volunteer)</i> | Any other grass roots organization or agency that responds to emergencies. | Can we share volunteers? | Do we have complementary opportunities? | | |
| Research <i>(What are these persons like and where to locate)</i> | Most likely same person who volunteers to help at Church Food Bank- or brainstorm ideas | | | | |
| Benefits <i>(Refinement of product: what do we have to exchange? To empathize?)</i> | Group support, knowledge that community is safer, healthier place. | | | | |
| Costs <i>(What it will require to volunteer)</i> | Volunteer will need own transportation | | | | |
| Distribution <i>(Area were our target can be contacted)</i> | Best place to find is in religious institutions. | | | | |
| Promotion <i>(How to get our message to this analyzed market)</i> | Speak at religious services, send flyers to religious entities, etc. | | | | |

Handout 4

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Please note: This is not an all inclusive application. You should have a computerized data bank that gathers the pertinent information that you need in order to document your adherence to your Homeland Security grant guidelines. We are including this application here for you to use to check on the questions you are asking and the data that you are gathering about your volunteers. For example, some grantees may need to gather ethnicity data or more information about a volunteer's credentials. We expect you to customize an application to meet the needs of your agency. Most important is the fact that an application will give you the basic information you need to get a volunteer started in a systematic fashion.

Date: _____

First Name: _____ Middle _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Business: _____ Cell: _____

E-mail: _____

Occupation: _____

Education: High School College Major: _____

Other schooling or special training:

Interests or hobbies:

Have you ever done volunteer work before? Yes No

If yes, please describe:

What type of volunteer work would you like to do? (Please check below)

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| ___ With adults | ___ Special projects | ___ Outdoor activities |
| ___ With children | ___ Office services | ___ Teaching |
| ___ Administrative | ___ Transportation | ___ Counseling |
| ___ Public speaking | ___ General | ___ Fundraising |

Other: _____

Program you wish to volunteer in now (for example: CERT, Neighborhood Watch, Medical Reserve Corps, etc.) _____

What is your availability? Please check times when you ARE available:

| Days | Morning | Afternoon | Evening |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Sunday | | | |
| Monday | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Thursday | | | |
| Friday | | | |
| Saturday | | | |

I am available (circle one):

Weekly Twice Monthly Monthly On-call As needed? Other

Name of organization through which you are volunteering: _____

Who or what prompted you to volunteer: _____

Personal References: Please give full name, addresses, and phone numbers.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Background check report: Yes No

Handout 5

GUIDELINES FOR A VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT FORM

This is a sample form to remind you that there should be some computerized or written documentation of an official assignment to a volunteer task. Customize the following form to your own agency's needs and tasks.

Date: _____

Name of Volunteer: _____ Staff Supervisor: _____

Volunteer Assignment: _____

Name of Program/project: _____

Number of volunteers needed: _____

Dates needed: _____ Length of need: _____

Time of Day: _____ Transportation arrangements: _____

Meals provided?

Specific duties:

Qualifications needed/ Credentials:

Background check(s) needed:

Training/Benefits:

Who has the authority to deploy?

Other volunteers assigned?

Assigned by: _____ Date: _____

Copies sent to: _____ (do a check list for your agency)

Handout 6

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Position descriptions are the foundation of a volunteer management program. A position description should not only detail the functions of the volunteer, but it should also outline the responsibilities of the agency. The position title should define and identify the role of the volunteers. Duties and functions must be clear, concise, and easily understood. The position description should honestly state the actual time commitment required. It should also detail the kind of training required for each position and detail who will supervise the volunteer. The position descriptions should also state exactly what qualifications would be needed. The volunteer position description should be used in the same manner as a job description for a paid employee.

The volunteer position description should be used as one of the very first training devices in the agency's volunteer training program. It also serves as a clear statement of the volunteer's duties. The position description is also useful for volunteer evaluation sessions.

Here is an outline of the items in a sample position description:

POSITION TITLE:

GOAL:

DUTIES:

QUALIFICATIONS:

TIME COMMITMENT:

FLEXIBILITY IN EMERGENCIES:

TRAINING/BENEFITS:

SPECIFIC TRAINING IN SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:

SUPERVISOR:

WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY TO DEPLOY THIS VOLUNTEER?

OTHER PROGRAM SPECIFIC DUTIES:

Handout 7

GUIDELINES FOR A VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

The Agency Agrees: (Insert the name of your agency)

1. To comply with the terms of the Homeland Security grant relating to all volunteer activities.
2. To provide a volunteer coordinator or agency staff person responsible for the hiring and supervision of volunteers.
3. To offer an orientation course as well as on-the-job training.
4. To provide training that will emphasize the importance of personal safety in all phases of volunteer activities.
5. To provide the same space, equipment, working conditions, and privileges as given to paid staff doing similar work. (Don't make any promises in this item that you cannot keep)
6. To review volunteer performance on a regular basis (annually, semi-annually, quarterly, at the end of a project?); to keep an account of volunteer hours; and provide a letter of recommendation when requested.
7. To give volunteers an opportunity to meet regularly with agency administrators.

The Volunteer Agrees:

1. To accept the guidance and decisions of the Volunteer Coordinator or staff assigned.
2. To adhere to all the policies and procedures relating to keeping safe and not getting hurt while performing volunteer duties.
3. To carry out duties promptly and reliably.
4. To use space and equipment only for work assigned and only at authorized times.
5. To maintain the dignity and integrity of the agency with the public and honor confidential information.
6. To accept evaluation and notify the agency in writing (with appropriate notice) of extended leave or resignation).
7. To understand the function of the paid staff, maintain a smooth working relationship with them, and stay within the bounds of volunteer responsibility.
8. To participate in meetings with the agency.

Signature of Volunteer: _____ Printed Name: _____

Signature of Agency Staff: _____ Printed Name: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Handout 8

TIPS FOR CARING FOR YOUR VOLUNTEERS

1. Call, e-mail, or write a message that makes volunteers feel welcome as soon as they volunteer.
2. Make your sign –in sheet, book, computer access, or clipboard as attractive and user friendly as possible.
3. Have postcards ready to give your volunteers friendly updates of your projects.
4. Invite volunteers to work with a friend or family member, if that is feasible. This makes volunteers feel more comfortable and adds to your volunteer pool.
5. Make sure each volunteer has a position description.
6. Try to make the volunteering “fun”, even if the tasks are important but monotonous.
7. Reinforce your safety training, so that volunteers understand your concern for their well-being.
8. As your volunteers become more skilled and experienced, use their ideas and talents to help new volunteers.

Handout 9

RATE YOURSELF AS A VOLUNTEER MOTIVATOR

Instructions: Answer each of the following questions. Then rate your performance in each area on a 1-10 scale (10=best). Then mark the five areas you work to improve during the next month. You may add questions that pertain to your tasks and agency or delete questions that aren't relevant to your volunteer program.

| Question | | Answer | Rating |
|----------|---|--------|--------|
| 1. | When was the last time you thanked a volunteer personally? | | |
| 2. | When was the last time you took a volunteer out for coffee or a soda? | | |
| 3. | When was the last time you made a conscious effort to recognize your volunteer by <u>name</u> ? | | |
| 4. | When did you last get together with your volunteer to talk informally (over lunch, for example?) | | |
| 5. | When did you last ask about a volunteer's health or how he/she was enjoying his/her work? | | |
| 6. | When did you last update your volunteers on current developments in your agency? | | |
| 7. | When did you last have a party to honor your volunteers (or hold a special event in their honor)? | | |
| 8. | When was the last time you had your Executive Director/Board Chair talk to your volunteers? | | |
| 9. | When was the last time you mentioned a volunteer in your newsletter? | | |
| 10. | When was the last time you said, "We missed you" to a volunteer who had been out sick? | | |
| 11. | When was the last time you gave a volunteer a <u>special</u> thank you such as: a phone call, flowers, a personal letter? | | |
| 12. | Add your own questions. | | |

Handout 10

GUIDELINES FOR RULES AND ETHICS FOR VOLUNTEERS

GENERAL RULES

- ***** is appreciative of the volunteer help which supplements the work of the paid staff and enables *****to meet and expand its services to the community.
- All prospective volunteers for the *****will be interviewed by our Volunteer Coordinator or by another experienced staff person.
- ***** affairs are strictly confidential and should be so regarded by our volunteers.
- Volunteers will meet as needed with their staff liaison regarding performance evaluation and ongoing development.
- Any accident, injury, or unusual occurrence which affects a Volunteer, or which the Volunteer observes while on duty must be reported immediately to the *****staff.
- Volunteers will take every precaution to ensure their own safety by adhering to all the rules and procedures included in Homeland Security safety and liability training.
- Every Volunteer will be assigned a staff person who will be his/her official contact.

ATTENDANCE

- ***** will rely on the attendance of the Volunteer at the agreed upon times and will expect notification of absence.
- Volunteers will be expected to be on time and to complete the assignment.
- ***** will expect formal notification of a Volunteer's resignation.

RECORD KEEPING

- Volunteers will be expected to fill in time sheets and assist the agency in gathering data necessary (1) to comply with reporting requirements of the Homeland Security grant and (2) to receive proper recognition for the hours served and the tasks achieved.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that a Volunteer has an enjoyable, productive experience at *****.
- In the event that staff sees the need for either a reassignment/dismissal of a Volunteer, there will be adequate communication between the staff and Volunteer to discuss the situation.
- Use of the office equipment and vehicles will be restricted for official business. *(Your agency may have special policies concerning electronic equipment that would be inserted in this space.)*

DRESS CODE

- The Volunteer is expected to adhere to the personnel dress code of *****. *(Insert quote from your Personnel Handbook if relevant. Many of the Homeland Security volunteers will be responding to emergency situations, so dress codes will vary for each agency and program.)*

Handout 11

CHECKLIST FOR VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

Use this checklist to ensure that you have given your new volunteers basic information about your agency or organization and how they can survive in their volunteer positions.

| DONE | ITEM |
|------|--|
| | 1. The client benefits of your organization (as appropriate) |
| | 2. The goal / mission (purpose) of your organization |
| | 3. How and why your Homeland Security program is unique |
| | 4. How you relate to other organizations in the community and the Homeland Security network |
| | 5. The role of volunteers in your agency |
| | 6. Your organizational structure |
| | 7. Your funding base |
| | 8. The basic budget of your organization |
| | 9. The history of your organization |
| | 10. Your Board of Directors list |
| | 11. Your Executive Director |
| | 12. `Your Key staff |
| | 13. Activities and programs of your agency |
| | 14. How clients come to your agency (if relevant). |
| | 15. What a typical client is like. (if relevant) |
| | 16. Basic agency staff relations' policies (whom to call if sick, dress code, etc) |
| | 17. How a volunteer "survives" in your agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking • Coat racks • Coffee • Check-in procedures • Mail boxes • Secure place for personal belongings • Working space, etc. |
| | 18. How this particular volunteer position helps the organization reach its Homeland Security goal(s) |
| | 19. Emergency procedures and telephone numbers |
| | 20. Confidentiality procedures. |