



September 2009

## Dear Jennifer,

Welcome to **eVOLve: technical assistance for leveraging volunteers**. In this electronic technical assistance (eTA) brief, you will find tips and tools to help you leverage volunteers in your community. It is sponsored by HandsOn Network, a training and technical assistance provider for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

## This Month's Quote

True genius resides in the capacity for evaluation of uncertain, hazardous, and conflicting information.  
Winston Churchill

## Quick Links

- The Resource Center
- CNCS
- HandsOn Network
- Points of Light Institute

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

## Ask Us

Do you have a question about working with volunteers or a suggestion for a future issue of eVOLve? Send it to HandsOn Network:

[training@handsonnetwork.org](mailto:training@handsonnetwork.org)

## Dear HandsOn,

What are key elements to consider when evaluating my program?

## The Answer Corner

Have you ever served with a program in which you immediately recognized inefficiencies in program operation, client services, community partnerships and/or funding? Chances are that organization has not conducted a program evaluation or has not used the results of past evaluations effectively. Evaluating your program gives the organization insight on how well the project is operating, how many beneficiaries are actually receiving services, and what changes organization can make to meet or exceed goals.

A powerful way to tell our stories is through strong evaluation practices to help us tell about all the wonderful work we do in our communities. Volunteers generate needed statistics for evaluating and reporting the success of projects. This information helps us tell our stories to stakeholders, board members, and funders.

Here are five key elements to consider when evaluating your program:

1. Define the purpose for your evaluation. Determine why you are conducting an evaluation and what decisions you want to make upon completion.
  
2. Determine your audiences for the data you need from your evaluation:  
(Remember client confidentiality and seek permission before obtaining any client information.)
  - Clients
  - Staff
  - Management
  - Funders
  - Community partners
  
3. Consider the types of information you need to make the decisions and/or share with your targeted audiences:
  - Process of the program (its inputs, activities and outputs)
  - Customers or clients who experience the program
  - Strengths and weaknesses of the program
  - Benefits to customers or clients (outcomes)
  - Aspects of the program need changing and why
  
4. Decide how you will collect the information from your targeted audience to assess program effectiveness:
  - questionnaires
  - interviews
  - examining documentation
  - observing customers or employees
  - conducting focus groups among customers or employees
  - A solid needs assessment includes the following elements: population, data collection, data analysis, and results.
  
5. Make a timeline to determine when you need to collect the information and what organizational resources you have to collect the information.

Remember, conducting strong evaluations not only helps your organization share its story, but also helps provide program sustainability. When you provide outreach to the community, you will have solid facts and statistics to provide stakeholders that may ultimately add funding and resources to your organization.

## Resources

The Resource Center offers tools and resources such as the resources listed below. Go directly to the [Resource Center](#), click on the search icon, and enter program evaluation in the search box. You will find information such as types of program evaluations, how to utilize evaluations, and best practices.

[Key Elements of Evaluation](#)

[Evaluation Resources](#)

[Needs Assessment Strategies for Community Groups and Organizations](#)

[Types of Program Evaluations](#)

[Basic Guide to Program Evaluation](#)

Visit the the Resource Center to review [archive eVOLve briefs](#).

## HandsOn Network Training Opportunities

Please join us for our **two part webinar series on Evaluating Your Volunteer Programs** facilitated by Syreeta Skelton, Associate Director, Evaluation & Performance Measurement with the Points of Light Institute. **HON will conduct webinar session part one on Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. Eastern and part two on Tuesday October 27, 2009 at 3:00 p.m.** During Part I, participants will learn the basics of program evaluation and how to select an evaluation that fits their organization. Part I is appropriate for beginners in evaluation. During Part II, participants will learn about the core metrics and ways of collecting and managing evaluation data. This session is appropriate for both newcomers to evaluation and those with and intermediate level of knowledge and evaluation experience.

Click [here](#) to register for this free webinar. You will enter the Points of Light Web Ex website. Click on the upcoming tab. Then, click on the session title to register for the webinar session. You do not need a password to register. After registering, you will receive an e-mail with log-in information for the session. Registration is required for both sessions.

If you have any questions, please [contact us](#).



[Forward email](#)

✉ [SafeUnsubscribe®](#)

This email was sent to [jgeckler@handsonnetwork.org](mailto:jgeckler@handsonnetwork.org) by [jbelle@handsonnetwork.org](mailto:jbelle@handsonnetwork.org).  
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Points Of Light & Hands On Network | 600 Means St., Suite 210 | Atlanta | GA | 30318