

More Hands More Hearts Mobilize Service Summit

Blueprint For Strategic Service



CO-SPONSORS:



UJA Federation



Anything to add? Tweet @MannyCantorNYC | #MobilizeService

Blueprint for Strategic Service

At a time when interest in volunteerism is surging, it is important for nonprofits to strategically leverage the power of our 8.5 million New Yorkers! This is only the start of the conversation. If you'd like to add anything, tweet us [@MannyCantorNYC](https://twitter.com/MannyCantorNYC) or contact Deb Scher | 646.395.4184 | dscher@mannycantor.org

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

BUILDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR VOLUNTEERS:

In order to retain your volunteers and have them become an integral part of your organization, build a sound volunteer management system and create clear and concise volunteer position descriptions.

ENGAGEMENT:

An organization is successful in their mission and outreach if it meaningfully engages the people it serves. Often times, the people in need of the organization's services are the most passionate individuals to speak up for the organization's mission.

ONBOARDING:

Establish clear expectation and goals for volunteers. Establish an onboarding process that includes volunteers meeting and interviewing with the staff they will be working with, as well as a volunteer orientation to officially welcome them on board.

While it is very important to recruit volunteers who identify and agree with your organization's mission and vision, it is equally important to take into account a volunteer's skills when assigning him/her to a volunteer position.

TRAINING FOR STAFF:

It is imperative for staff to receive training in volunteer management so they know how to strategically engage and retain volunteers in their organizations.

OPEN SPACE TAKEAWAYS:

MOTIVATING VOLUNTEERS:

WHEN THE WORK IS UNGLAMOROUS BUT SORELY NEEDED

- Utilize seasoned volunteers to motivate new volunteers
 - Create a buddy or mentor system to pair people up
- Be sure to contextualize the work that's being done and share impact
 - You're not just stuffing envelopes; explain what's in the envelopes, where they go and how it impacts the organization and its work
- Develop a motivational strategy based on the demographic of the volunteer
 - It doesn't need to be one size fits all, what motivates a teenager will be different than what motivates an older adult
- Relationships are key
 - Volunteers will feel motivated if they establish a deep connection with the professionals they work with
 - Professionals need to invest in these relationships
 - Having the opportunity to form relationships with other volunteers can be important too
- Have a trajectory for volunteer leadership opportunities
 - Incentivize volunteers to invest in the sometimes unglamorous work they are doing

FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNERS:

WHEN TO SAY YES, WHEN TO SAY NO

- We don't want to say "yes" or "no" too much – you need balance
 - When possible, start by saying "yes" and narrow down decisions by saying "no" later
- Advantages to saying "yes" or "no"
 - Yes = indicates curiosity, can lead to more connections/relationships and introduce you to more people/ideas
 - No = forces you to concentrate and spend more time with specific partnerships, which can result in a higher quality products (with more opportunities for reciprocity)
- Potential partnerships: between organizations, schools, private sector corporations, nonprofits
 - Why partner? Organizations need recurring volunteer resources who can fill needs
 - Ideal is symbiotic/mutually beneficial relationships
 - Navigate between rejecting volunteer partners who lack awareness or have rigid time/activity preferences, or accommodating and taking advantage of their excitement

HOW TO BE A MATCHMAKER: PLACING VOLUNTEERS IN THE RIGHT ROLES

- Organizations need lifelong volunteers, not just volunteers for a day
 - Open and consistent communication with volunteers is essential to knowing if a role is the right match
 - Volunteers should be well-informed about their roles, the organization, etc.
- How do you get the right match?
 - Prospective volunteer should attend an information/orientation session
 - Communicate with volunteers and ensure that they are comfortable and want to stay
 - Invest time in the process – don't just fill the role; make the right match

FACING FRICTION: MEDIATING CONFLICTS BETWEEN VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

- Challenges in volunteer experiences:
 - Different perspectives or clashing personalities of staff vs. volunteers
 - Volunteer feels qualified; staff disagrees
 - Volunteers worried about relevant legal policies at organization
 - Volunteers in leadership roles overstep boundaries; take too much control over other volunteers
 - Staff eliminate/change volunteer activity without careful consideration
 - Volunteer unhappy with assigned tasks
- When resolving conflicts consider:
 - How open is staff to volunteers in the first place
 - Hear all sides of conflict in order to compromise
 - Allow volunteers to suggest alternative projects that they would like to work on
 - Listen closely to conflict to find miscommunications and similar breakdowns
 - Train staff to interact with volunteers
 - Follow conflict resolution process that treats volunteers like staff:
 - Meet and discuss situation
 - Develop action plan of corrective steps with timeline
 - Revisit periodically
 - Re-assign or terminate volunteer if needed

TURNING VOLUNTEERS INTO AGENCY AMBASSADORS

- Create opportunities for volunteers to grow and take on more responsibilities
- Help volunteers feel connected to the organization; create opportunities to bond with other volunteers
- Consider offering leadership or formal ambassador role to longtime volunteers
 - Create job descriptions for leadership roles
 - Survey volunteers to find their skills/interests and ask if they are interested in leadership
 - Leadership councils, if applicable, should meet regularly and have specific tasks
- Share volunteer's impact on clients and agency/staff
 - Track volunteer hours so you can determine and convey value of volunteer time
- Recognize longtime volunteers for their commitment

USING VOLUNTEERS GROUPS EFFECTIVELY

- Volunteer groups should come in with purpose and intent
 - Be clear about needs and expectation; avoid creating needs to make them happy
 - Consider asking the group to contribute to cost of activities
- Challenge: how to position groups to meet existing needs instead of creating false needs (usually for corporate groups)
 - Sometimes the answer is to say “no” to a prospective group, but without turning them off
- Recognize value of both community and corporate groups, and educate senior management on best uses for groups

MAKING SPACE FOR VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP ROLES

- Reasons to give leadership roles to volunteers:
 - Creates buy-in
 - Brings in outside perspectives to leadership
 - Improves volunteer recruitment and retention
 - Furthers organization’s reach
- Why are we hesitant to assign leadership roles?
 - Potential liability
 - Resistance from other volunteers
 - Extra work for staff
 - Lack of buy-in from organization
 - Potential tension between volunteer leader and staff
- Before making leadership roles for volunteers, consider:
 - Does this fit with your organization’s culture
 - How serious is your process for screening and training candidates
 - Can you on-board volunteers like staff
 - Are volunteer roles specific and limited, leaving room for full-time staff to do their jobs
 - Use job titles and job descriptions for volunteers

FIGHTING ATTRITION AND RETAINING VOLUNTEERS

- Create and send a monthly volunteer newsletter
- Have volunteers sign contracts of commitment
- Communicate the importance and impact of the volunteer role
- Ensure that volunteers know and are connected to community/clients being served
- Discuss retention openly with volunteers: ask “what would make you come back?”
- Offer skills-based volunteering and allow volunteers more control over their experience

PARTNER RESOURCES:

GREAT VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (GVMS)

Volunteer management takes an investment of time and energy and requires systems and processes to ensure volunteers are well supervised and used strategically. To continue supporting your current frameworks for volunteer management, NYC Service and New York Cares have teamed up to present you with best practices and tips on essential volunteer management.

o Access: <http://ow.ly/3XpJ308JPv>

o In Person and Webinar Trainings: <https://www.newyorkcares.org/trainings-we-offer>

2017 STRATEGIC PRO BONO/SKILLS-BASED VOLUNTEERING INITIATIVE

NYC Service offers the opportunity for nonprofits to propose a pro bono project and be matched with a pro bono volunteer from American Express, Capital One, Citi, Con Edison, Deutsche Bank, Harvard Business School Community Partners, IBM and Taproot+. Nonprofits will leverage the time and talents of an eager group of professionals to improve their organizational efficiency.

o Access: <http://ow.ly/fvCF308JKEH>

POSTING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT NYC.GOV/SERVICE

Using the NYC Service website, nonprofits are invited to post volunteer opportunities available at their organizations. The volunteer opportunity will be posted within 2-3 weeks on our website and available to the public at large as part of a coordinated strategy dedicated to helping our city's volunteers give back.

o Access: <http://ow.ly/kQRn308JKNg>

TIME FOR GOOD

Time For Good is UJA-Federation of New York's online portal for volunteering opportunities in the Jewish community. Users can search for opportunities based on area of interest, time, and location. Nonprofits can create profiles, list opportunities, and track signups.

o Access: <http://timeforgood.org/>

NYAVA

The New York Association for Volunteer Administration is a great network of volunteer management professionals. Offering workshops and trainings, as well as networking opportunities and other great benefits.

o Access: www.nyava.org

SPECIAL THANKS



More Hands, More Hearts is made possible by a generous grant from the UJA-Federation of NY.

Through More Hands, More Hearts, Educational Alliance's Manny Cantor Center is Certified as a Service Enterprise by Points of Light. To learn more, visit: mannycantor.org/volunteer

Thank you to our co-sponsors:



Thank you to all speakers, panelists, and summit participants for contributing to this **blueprint for strategic service**

Continue to mobilize service conversations with us!
Contact Deb Scher at 646.395.4184 or dscher@mannycantor.org

Anything to add? Tweet @MannyCantorNYC | #MobilizeService