

Managing Disaster Volunteers

Kevin Smith

National Disaster Specialist

America's Second Harvest

ksmith@secondharvest.org

Types of Volunteers

Spontaneous Volunteers

Trained Volunteers

Professional Volunteers

Commitment

You must believe:

- ◆ That having volunteers involved in day-to-day operations is good;
- ◆ That volunteers can make significant contributions at all levels of your organization,
- ◆ That volunteers can assume important responsibilities and be accountable; and
- ◆ That the potential benefits outweigh the costs.

Planning

- ◆ Set Goals and Objectives;
- ◆ Prepare Staff;
- ◆ Write Job Descriptions;
- ◆ Develop a Recruitment Plan; and
- ◆ Prepare for Volunteer Orientation.

Volunteer Recruitment

Why Do People
Volunteer?

Recruiting Volunteers: Understanding Motivation

- ◆ The need for achievement
- ◆ The need for power
- ◆ The need for affiliation
- ◆ **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Volunteers want ...

- ◆ To do real work that is meaningful.
- ◆ To be identified with jobs and in an organization that is held in high esteem;
- ◆ To be part of an organization that is well organized, well managed, and where their contributions are recognized.

Discussion: Media Benefits and Consequences

- ◆ What type of volunteer does the media glorify?
- ◆ How does that hinder volunteer management?
- ◆ What kind of statement can benefit?
- ◆ Who is responsible to communicate that message?

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Necessities of a Successful Volunteer Program

The Recruiter

- ◆ Select a person who knows the organization, its services, and the jobs available for volunteers,
- ◆ Who can make the idea of helping attractive,
- ◆ Who clearly understands the mission and purpose, and
- ◆ When recruiting from a group, provides the opportunity to “sign-up” on the spot.

One of the most important and effective recruiters is a happy, satisfied volunteer who already knows the benefits of the job.

Direct Recruitment

- ◆ Civic and Social Organizations
- ◆ Corporations
- ◆ Student Groups
- ◆ Churches
- ◆ Disaster Expos
- ◆ County Fairs and Other Events

Key Messages (for volunteers)

Identify organization's mission and how it is represented through the service it provides.

Provide brief understanding of the organization's history and experiences that have reinforced the mission to date.

Discuss services and future volunteer opportunities.

Key Messages (for volunteers)

The best way to volunteer is to affiliate yourself with a recognized volunteer organization.

The best time to train to be a disaster volunteer is before the disaster strikes.

“Showing up” at disaster sites is generally not helpful.

Key Messages (for Volunteers)

Specifically discuss how much time is involved in volunteering for disaster services and when.

Indirect Recruitment


- ◆ Posters and Billboards
- ◆ Newsletters and Newspapers
- ◆ TV and Radio PSAs
- ◆ Websites



Tornado Information Center

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Interfaith Committee Formed - The Valentine's Tornado Interfaith Relief Network (VTIRN) is an Interfaith community-wide group that has drawn together for long term recovery. All local churches will be pooling their resources to assist in reaching those survivors with unmet needs. Please support the VTIRN!

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Camilla, Georgia

Internet

Volunteer Retention

Excerpt from Volunteer Survey by the UPS Foundation:

"The primary reasons for no longer volunteering— **demands on time and no longer involved** —are beyond the control of most volunteer groups.

What concerned us, however, was the number of people leaving because of poor management practices: two out of five volunteers stopped volunteering for one or more of these reasons(i.e. not good use of time; poor use of talents; tasks not clearly defined; not thanked).

The best way to build the number of volunteers and their hours is to be careful managers of the time already being volunteered."

Retention

- ◆ Interview
- ◆ Placement
- ◆ Orientation
- ◆ Training
- ◆ Evaluation
- ◆ Recognition

Post 9-11 Security Enhancements

- ◆ Developed standardized forms for:
 - Volunteer Registration,
 - Code of Conduct, and
 - Waiver of Liability forms.
- ◆ Software to track all disaster workers.
- ◆ Standard disaster identification badge.

Legal Principles

- ◆ The law generally requires that we act with the level of care that a reasonable person would exercise to prevent harm.
- ◆ Volunteers for government agencies may be subject to the Federal Tort Claims Act. A tort is an act that harms another person, whether intentional (e.g., assault) or unintentional (e.g., negligence).
- ◆ Employers are responsible for the actions of their paid and unpaid staff.
- ◆ Laws limiting the liability of volunteers vary by state.

Volunteer Protection Act

The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 provides legal immunity for volunteers who are:

- Working in disaster-related functions.
- Working within the scope of their assigned responsibilities.
- Acting in good faith.
- Not guilty of gross negligence.

The Volunteer Protection Act overrides State laws, such as the Good Samaritan laws, to provide volunteer disaster workers, and their agencies, protection against liability for frivolous claims. More information on the Volunteer Protection Act can be found at:

<http://www.eriskcenter.org/assets/pdfs/StateLiabilityLaws2001.pdf>

Three Keys to Reducing Liability

Registration & Training

- First, screen all volunteers and register them to protect them from liability under the relevant provisions of the Volunteer Protection Act.
- Follow legislation that mandates the amount of training that must be given to perform certain tasks (e.g., CPR, fork-lift operation) and the frequency with which refresher training must be given.
- Match volunteers to tasks according to their skills and interests.

Three Keys to Reducing Liability

Supervising.

- Every volunteer should have a designated supervisor.
- Volunteers should know the limits of their authority (i.e., what they can and cannot do without specific authorization). These limits should be written in the job description and stated clearly on-site.
- Volunteers should know the locally applicable standards of performance that they must follow.
- Supervisors should ensure that volunteers have the proper equipment and resources to do their jobs.

Three Keys to Reducing Liability

Documenting.

- Establish volunteer records, including:
- Training received, including number of hours, results of tests, and refresher course dates.
- Exercise participation.
- Evidence of any necessary certification.
- Duties and times when the volunteer was officially working.
- Records should be maintained and updated regularly.

Thank you!!

Contact information:

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