



VolunteerMatch

VolunteerMatch Learning Center
Advanced Practices

Creating a Culture of Volunteer Engagement

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Agenda

- What is organizational culture and what does it mean for volunteer engagement?
- Defining the goals, values, and beliefs of volunteer engagement
- Creating and nurturing a new culture of volunteer engagement
- Putting the pieces in place and evaluating them

What is organizational culture?

What does a culture of volunteer engagement mean?

- A shared set of goals, values, and beliefs:
- How does volunteer engagement fit into your organization's
- goals, values, and beliefs?
- What goals, values, and beliefs does your organization have
- around volunteer engagement?
- Why does it matter, and what can you do to change it?

What is a culture of volunteer engagement?

Goals:

- Engage volunteers in meaningful work
- Deploy volunteers in mission critical work
- Understand and share the impacts and outcomes of volunteers (not just #s and hours)
- Why does it matter, and what can you do to change it?

What is a culture of volunteer engagement?

Values:

- Find the right role for each volunteer
- Create open and transparent communication between volunteers, paid staff, and clients
- Create opportunities for volunteers to contribute and learn

What is a culture of volunteer engagement?

Beliefs:

- Volunteers are critical to the success of the organization (not just nice to have)
- Volunteers are capable of creating real impact in our organization
- Engaging volunteers is how we connect our mission and the needs of our clients to the community

What are your organizations goals, values, and beliefs?

Zappos: 10 Zappos Family Core Values

- <http://www.zappos.com/core-values>
- They include: Deliver WOW Through Service, Embrace and Drive Change, Create Fun and a Little Weirdness
- Empower their customer service members to be creative to make customers happy. They are authorized to make decisions and don't have to ask permission for refunds, discounts, etc.

What are your organizations goals, values, and beliefs?

How can you shape or form your organization's volunteer engagement culture?

- You rarely have the luxury of starting from scratch.
- It may take “generations” of volunteers and paid staff to create the culture you want.
- A small group of people with dedication and consistency can create a new culture.

Talk About It

What are the goals, values, and beliefs that frame up your current culture?

- How is that holding back your organization's engagement of volunteers?
- What could your organization accomplish if you changed what it means to be a volunteer?
- What happens if you do nothing?

Write It Down

Outline the new goals, values, and beliefs

- There has to be buy-in and acknowledgement of a culture of volunteer engagement
- Everyone can hear what they want – Putting it in writing makes it clearer
- Talk about what they mean to volunteers, paid staff, leadership
- Get rid of the unwritten rules and the things that people “just know” – Be clear, open, and honest

Train on the New Culture

Give your organization the tools to implement a new way of thinking about volunteers.

- Help existing volunteers, paid staff understand how this culture empowers them, engages them, depends on them.
- Outline and share how work, roles, impacts change.
- Provide support and guidance as relationships, roles change.
- Tell Stories! Help everyone learn what to expect and how you've overcome challenging situations.

Do as I Do

Change happens over time

- It can't be just talk, culture changes as you live it, model it.
- You have complete control over how you talk about volunteers and volunteer engagement.
- How well do your (your organization's) actions match your goals, values, beliefs?
- Base recognition in the culture – how can they inform recognition activities/events?
- Be transparent about challenges, mistakes, failures.

Is it Working?

Evaluating cultural change

- How can you measure the change of the goals, values, beliefs
- around volunteer engagement?
- Volunteers in meaningful or impact driven work – ask them
- Culture of inclusion – do clients, paid staff, other
- volunteers understand the work and why it's important?
- What surveys, conversations, measurement can give you
- feedback on the changes in culture?

Follow Through

Both good and bad behaviors/actions need to be recognized.

- Tell the stories of success, but tell the stories with “morals” too.
- If you said there would be consequences, then there have to be consequences.
- Accept your realities – you can’t change it if you don’t face it.
- Acknowledge sub-cultures – as long as they’re aligned with your core goals, values, beliefs

Things to Think About

Focus on where you can go and what you can do together.

- Try not to continue to focus on the problems or how things used to be.

Work to create a new volunteer engagement vocabulary.

- Our volunteers, impact, collaboration, etc.

Lead the way – model the goals, values, and beliefs

- Volunteers, paid staff, clients or members

Things to Think About

Keep your eye on the results – are you accomplishing what you want to?

- Are you living your culture or is it just lip service?

Tell Stories! Inform the next generation of paid staff and volunteers

Ask why not?

- What's the problem or concern?
- What if we shared this with volunteers?
- What would happen?
- What would the harm be?

Thank you!

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