

Best Practices in Recruitment, Retention & Recognition

DEFINITION - A "best practice" are those practices that have worked well in similar or dissimilar situations. They are proven and have produced successful results. The nature of a best practice is that it be shared among internal groups as well as having external exposure.

RECRUITMENT

- Provide clear, updated opportunity description for volunteers. Volunteers have changed and so has the work they are willing and not willing to do. Share the description with them and be flexible to adapt or change it according to the volunteer's comments.
- Know what you want (skills & experience) and who (type or person or name) you want before attempting to recruit.
- Direct 'targeted' recruitment method is the most successful – take role and target specific individuals you know who could do this. Ask to meet with them over coffee and talk about why your organization needs them and what you can give them in return.
- If you are having trouble recruiting: look first to what you are asking people to do. Can it be done differently? Is it work/tasks that volunteers no longer want to do or are interested in doing?
- Recruitment: Balance between meeting the needs of the organization and the needs of the volunteer.

RETENTION

- Make sure there is a fit between the work and the volunteer. Doing what someone wants to do and is qualified to do increases retention.
- Retention is short term and long term. Doing a better job in the short term might increase stay in the long term.
- Build a relationship with volunteers – connect them to the cause and show them the outcomes they helped to achieve.
- Provide something more than they expect to get; give more than they give.
- R.O.I. – Invest in volunteers early in the first three months...show that you can support them. Ask what they need to do a good job ...and provide what they need.

RECOGNITION

- Provide meaningful, specific recognition/acknowledgement applicable to each volunteer.
- Provide recognition appropriate to the length of time and work and person. But saying thanks often and immediately after good works done goes a long way ...
- Make it a priority and assign someone to set standards, monitor and ensure the organization has and can keep its recognition strategy.

Questions to guide our discussion

RECRUITMENT

1. What are the most difficult or challenging positions to recruit?
2. How do these positions/work relate to what we know about the changing motivations/interests of volunteers?
3. What recruitment strategies do you use?
4. Do you have a written recruitment plan?
5. Do you use past volunteers to help with recruitment?
6. Who does the recruitment? Whose role is it?

RETENTION

1. What does retention mean in today's world?
2. Are you still looking for long term volunteers?
3. What do you do between events for example to keep volunteers engaged?
4. How do you demonstrate to volunteers the outcomes they are helping you achieve (this is also a recognition component).
5. How are you supporting or providing support to volunteers?

RECOGNITION

1. What recognition strategies do you currently use?
2. Is someone assigned to develop a recognition strategy and process and chart information?
3. What strategies seem to work today ...
4. Do you interview volunteers to ask both about interest/motivation and how they might like to be acknowledged?

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The RETHINK Group

"Helping you attract, support and expand your volunteer resources."

