

Identifying Volunteer Roles

If you've taken a long hard look at your program and decided there is more to do than you as a volunteer or salaried staff can do (and who hasn't!) you are ready for the first step in expanding volunteer involvement . . . identification.

This important first step involves identifying your own attitudes about volunteer involvement, the needs of the program, and potential needs-related roles for volunteers.

There are some difficult questions you'll have to answer before you begin and throughout the process. Do you really want volunteers to help in a meaningful way? Do you expect volunteers to do the things that you don't want to do? Would you volunteer to help in this situation? What will a volunteer get from this role?

The identification process requires you to determine the needs of the program: decide roles that need to be done; and select or write position descriptions for those roles.

Identifying Needs Within the Program

"MORE VOLUNTEERS"

When asked what it will take to really make the program what they want it to be, almost everyone will say they need more volunteers. Your answer would likely be the same. But before you think about recruiting more volunteers, ask what, exactly, you need the volunteers to do.

The following worksheet will help you identify specific needs for volunteers within your program. Use photocopies and additional sheets of paper to collect responses from members of your advisory group and other members of your leadership team. Compile and analyze the resulting comments to help focus and add enthusiasm (perhaps even urgency) to your volunteer recruitment efforts, or modify this 4-H example to meet your own program needs.

Current Situation

1. How many young people are now involved in your program? _____
2. How many volunteers do you now have? _____ Activity leaders? _____
Organizational leaders? _____ Key leaders? _____
Project club leaders? _____ Resource leaders? _____
What is the ratio of adult volunteers to youth participants in your program?

3. Which communities have strong programs?

Which ones don't?

4. Which project areas have strong leader support?



Which project areas need leader support?

What are the priority program or project areas needing volunteers?

5. How many volunteers are currently involved in helping determine program priorities and directions? _____

What additional skills are needed among these decision makers?

Which additional segments of the community should be involved?

Is this a truly diverse group, fully representative of the community or county? _____

6. How many volunteers are currently supporting program delivery, for example, as newsletter compilers, publicity coordinators, fund raisers, enrollment processors, etc? _____

List possible support roles for volunteers.

7. How many volunteers are now involved with short-term special interest efforts? _____

List special interest areas for which groups should be formed.

8. How many local groups or clubs are there? _____

Which communities need volunteers to organize local groups or clubs?

How many volunteers currently recruit and support club leaders? _____

Which areas of the community need this assistance?

9. Which activities, events, contests, delegations, or programs are coordinated by volunteers?



Volunteerism for the Next Generation



Which ones aren't?

10. What training is already in place? _____

Emerging Priorities

1. Does your county program have a vision or long-range goals? (If not, describe your own vision for the program)

What new volunteer roles are needed to turn the vision into reality?

2. What new programs, communities, clubs, audiences, delivery modes, collaborations, special interest projects, and program support do you envision?

What volunteer roles are vital to the success of the vision?

3. What political forces favor this vision?

