VolunteerMatch Learning Center
Introductory Approaches

Engaging Pro Bono and Skills-Based Volunteers

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Agenda

- The Pro Bono Landscape
- Integrating Pro Bono Volunteers
- Communication and Involvement
- Designing Good Projects
- Building on a Strong Foundation
- Supporting the Relationship
- Putting Together a Plan

Nonprofits Have the Need

FIELD	PRO BONO USE	ADDITIONAL NEED
Marketing	41%	52%
Human resources	30%	35%
Financial and administrative support	29%	28%
Financial advisory or consulting	27%	43%
Information technology	27%	37%
Organizational design or coaching	26%	45%
Board member or executive search	20%	46%

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Volunteers Have the Skills

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	Among my career skills	Have done as volunteer	Gap
Computers/hardware/software	49%	28%	-21
Operations/project management	36%	18%	-18
HR/recruitment and training	33%	16%	-17
Strategic planning	30%	16%	-14
Marketing/communications	35%	22%	-13
Information technology	24%	12%	-12
Program development	29%	18%	-11
Fundraising/development	28%	32%	+4

Source: Hart Consulting and VolunteerMatch Survey - 2010

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Impactful...

Pro Bono volunteers can

- Bring specific skills and expertise
- Provide singular focus on projects
- Expand the capacity of paid staff

But not easy…

There can be pitfalls

- Wrong volunteer for the role/organization
- Unreasonable scope
- Volunteers improperly screened – paid staff improperly prepared
- Previous bad experiences can influence staff attitudes and enthusiasm

Integrating Pro Bono Volunteers

Keys for building buy-in

- Communicate to others – paid and volunteer staff
- Agree on skills and expertise, and screening criteria
- Manage scope with position descriptions and deliverables
- Clear reporting structure and decision-making responsibilities

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Communicate to Build Buy-In

Identify Stakeholders

- Board, Exec. Management, Program Managers, Paid Staff, Volunteer Staff
- Assess where each stakeholder is on the engagement continuum
- Work with Champions - Share persuasive information with Information Seekers, Opponents

Involve Others in the Process

Engage supervisors or program managers in the process to build buy-in

- What does a volunteer need to know, do or be to be the right volunteer?

Clear and comprehensive position descriptions

- Responsibilities, decision making continuum

Interviews and screening process

- Screen for culture and fit not just for skills and traits (and not just "people like me")

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Design Successful Projects

Successful projects include:

- Measurable deliverables or outcomes
- Accountabilities and responsibilities
- Timeline with evaluation

Manage scope to create more successful skills-based opportunities for Pro Bono volunteers

Resources for Designing Projects

Taproot Foundation Resources

https://taprootfoundation.org/resources/common-pro-bono-projects-catalog/

Common Impact Skills-Based Volunteering Tool Kit

https://www.capacitycommons.org/

Engaging Pro Bono and Skills-Based Volunteers
Pro Bono and Skills-Based Volunteer Worksheet

Pro Bono Project	Specific Goals or Deliverables	Skills and Experience Needed	Internal Stakeholders	Timeline and Evaluation
Market Research User's Survey Design a short pop-up survey to be shown to volunteer users Determine if the results shown are as expected Gauge experience v. expectations	Research features and price of possible tools Create questions Design survey including A/B testing strategy, timing, etc. Review survey results and create a report including recommendations	Familiar with online survey tools Experience writing and analyzing surveys Nice to have: Familiar with VolunteerMatch	Product Manager, Front-end Engineers	6-8 weeks including report delivery Begin late January/early February Volunteer will check in with Product Manager weekly

Pro Bono and Skills-Based Volunteer Worksheet   Engaging Pro Bono and Skills-Based Volunteers

Key Program Foundations & Documents

Ensure everyone is on the same page!

- Position description
- Agreement letter that includes a timeline
- NDA or confidentiality agreement
- Policies and procedures manual – as appropriate
- Intellectual property, conflict resolution, termination, etc.

Finding the Right Volunteer

- Recruit through appropriate channels - VolunteerMatch, corporate partners, professional associations
- Explore existing volunteer's skills
- Tap into your network – donors, members, supporters
- Screen for skills, experience, and cultural fit
- Orient to work and organization

Support the Volunteer/Paid Staff Relationship

Supervisors may not have much management experience

- Start with the volunteer management basics
- Share resources – blogs, webinars, etc.

Facilitate the relationship

- Let go without checking out
- Assist in managing expectations
- Remove barriers, help solve challenges
- Design meaningful recognition

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Evaluating Pro Bono Volunteer Engagement

There will be challenges

- Implement regular check-ins, build on them
- Share challenges and solutions across supervisors and projects
- Solicit feedback from supervisors and volunteers
- Share with your Information Seekers – great information for your communication channels!

Putting a Plan in Place

- Identify stakeholders and strategic needs
- Invest in foundation documents and processes
- Create clear and manageable scope
- Conduct appropriate screening and orientation
- Develop and build-on evaluation points
- Share impact and create meaningful recognition

Thank you!

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