

# BEST PRACTICES

## FOR VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT, RETENTION & RECOGNITION

Presented by:



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# VOLUNTEERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

- A clearly defined job description
- An overview of your mission and how their work will impact it
- An orientation
- A supervisor
- Access to the tools and resources they will need
- Personal fulfillment (building new skills, networking, or simply knowing they made a difference)
- BEING THANKED...and then being thanked again!



# PITTSBURGH CARES + HANDSON NETWORK

## MODEL

RECRUITMENT +  
MANAGEMENT +  
RECOGNITION



# RETENTION

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# RETENTION

## DEFINITION

*“Retention is keeping volunteers for the amount of time for which they committed at the start of their service.”*

*Too many agencies do not ask volunteers **“how long do you expect to be with us?”**”*

*- Susan Ellis*

# RETENTION

## DEFINITION

1. To keep a volunteer engaged for their original commitment and/or completion of the task
2. To keep a volunteer engaged longer than their original commitment
3. To keep a volunteer engaged from one year to the next

\*Choose definition based on your goals and what you want to measure.



# RETENTION

## WHY RETAIN?

Experienced (retained)  
volunteers:

- Improve service delivery & program impact
- Become volunteer leaders
- Expand your total volunteer pool
- Save you time & money!



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**RECRUITMENT +**  
**MANAGEMENT +**  
**RECOGNITION**  
**=RETENTION**





# RECRUIT

## PLANNING YOUR OPPORTUNITY

### DO:

- Have a solid plan before outreach
- Know what you want
  - What's your minimum, what are your wildest dreams?
  - Job description
- Consider the Project Puzzle
- Overplan
- Post on [pittsburghcares.org](http://pittsburghcares.org)!

### DON'T

- Assume everyone knows who & what your organization is & does
- Limit yourself
- Don't over recruit beyond your management capabilities
- Use jargon, complex vocabulary



# RECRUIT

## PLANNING YOUR OUTREACH

- Decide on the characteristics and skills you want your volunteers to have
- Develop a checklist of the most important requirements
- Identify the barriers that may deter people from volunteering
  - Scheduling restrictions, physical limitations, preconceived notions about your population, safety concerns, etc.
- Think about the motivations of the potential volunteers
- Develop the message that sells your program/ opportunity
  - Put a personal face on the opportunities (photos, language, etc.)

# RECRUIT

## PLANNING YOUR OUTREACH

- Look at demographics of existing volunteers
  - Outreach to groups that mirror demographics of your most successful volunteers
  - Consider individuals who have benefited from your programs
  - Use those volunteers as ambassadors
- Harness the power of social media
- Diversify your volunteer sources
  - Affinity Organizations
  - Consider utilizing Pittsburgh Cares
    - Business Cares, RSVP, Youth Groups, website, etc.

# RECRUIT

## TOOLS AVAILABLE AT PITTSBURGHCARES.ORG

- Website is a tool, use it!
- Post for specific needs.
- Use Pittsburgh Cares Staff
  - Priority Partnership
  - Samira!
- Don't set it and forget it.
- The exciting world of reports.
  - Use for follow up
  - Reports = narrative. Narrative = funding.



RECRUITMENT +  
**MANAGEMENT** +  
RECOGNITION  
=RETENTION



# MANAGEMENT

- **Pre-Planning**

- Logistics & directions communicated ahead of time
  - What to wear, parking instructions, etc.
- Supplies, Check-in sheets, waivers, staff assignments
- Trainings, background checks

- **Onsite and on going Management**

- Be available (float)
- Schedule regular check-ins with long term volunteers
- Engage with volunteers, capture photos, testimonials, THANK volunteers



# MANAGEMENT

- **Post-Project**
  - Summarize impact
  - Send surveys, thank-yous
  - Exit interviews
  - Alert to upcoming opportunities



RECRUITMENT +  
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=RETENTION





# RECOGNIZE

## TRADITIONAL METHODS OF RECOGNITION

- Event Based
  - Banquets
  - Invitations to fundraisers
- Focus on the Individual
  - Birthday email/ letter
  - Volunteer of the month/ year
  - Awards
  - Thank you letter/ card

# RECOGNIZE

## RE-EXAMINING RECOGNITION

- Rewarding with responsibility
  - Offer professional development and/or trainings
  - Are there higher-level roles they can take on?
- Individualized recognition
  - Commend specific actions
- Decentralize
  - Smaller, regularly occurring recognition events

# RECOGNIZE

## UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA

- **Does your organization have a social media presence?**
  - Who is the audience?
  - What platforms are you using?
- **Talk about the work that your volunteers do here!**
  - Tag volunteers who have accounts
  - Create hashtags to increase viewership
  - Ask board members to share, etc.



RECRUITMENT +  
MANAGEMENT +  
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= RETENTION



# WHAT'S NEXT?

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING

- Assess your organization's volunteer process
- Set goals
- Communicate clearly
- Set expectations on both ends
- Don't reinvent the wheel
- Have fun!



# THANK YOU

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