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Recruitment Process

An organisation that is able to provide its volunteers with satisfying work and quality-based management is likely to be successful in recruiting volunteers and retaining them for longer periods.

The following steps are guidelines to assist in establishing an effective and proactive Volunteer Program.

Step 1: Establish Position Description

Identify what roles volunteers are going to undertake within the organisation, once recognised a Position Description needs to be established to clearly define volunteer activities. This can be set out in a similar format to paid workers Position Description, however needs to be kept simple, precise and non-threatening. The idea is to attract volunteers not overwhelm them, always include the benefits that volunteers will gain from working in the organisation.

The organisation needs to review their policies for the inclusion of volunteer workers, organisations do not have to reinvent the wheel. Policies such as Workplace Health & Safety covers paid and unpaid workers, whereas, other policies will need clearly stated inclusions of volunteers' involvement. It is advisable to ensure prior to employing volunteers that the organisation has volunteer insurance coverage.

Step 2: Selecting Volunteers

An effective interview process can identify the suitability of a volunteer to a position, by creating an interview form that reflects the organisation's philosophy, policies, practices and expected role of the volunteer. The person will also learn the benefits they will gain in volunteering, the skills, experiences and quality based training that will be available to them.

Areas to look at when establishing an interview form

Type of Questions	Purpose for Question
reason for volunteering	This gives you an idea if the person is volunteering by choice or obligation.
State the minimum time in volunteering, e.g 3 months, how many hours per week is the person prepared to work. Ask the question are they prepared to commit to a volunteer position	This addresses longevity, reliability and commitment.
Is the person contracted with a job network agency or Centrelink requirements	This will also assist in addressing, longevity, reliability and commitment. However you may also need to know this as there may be paperwork involved and contracted fortnightly hours of work.
Understanding of elderly people and people with a disability	It is good to know what experience or knowledge the person has.
The persons last paid position	If the person has recently had a paid job, than there is a high chance that volunteering is temporary. This will also assist in identifying some of the person's work skills and experiences.
Strengths, skills, talents and life experiences	This will ensure that you place a person in a suitable position. Giving the person every opportunity to use the skills and strengths they have, and the organisation gains valuable support.
Qualification	This may assist in deciding the best duties to give the person, ensuring that the person's skills are not being undervalued.
Is there any skills or qualifications that the person would like to gain from volunteering	In modern volunteering, volunteers may be interested in gaining extra skills and qualifications, how can the organisation support the volunteer.
How does the organisation benefit	Volunteers are employed to support the organisation and its staff and consumers.
How does the volunteer benefit	Volunteers give their time freely and need to know what they are going to gain from volunteering.

Are there any health concerns and could this interfere with their work performance	Under the workplace health & safety act it is vital that people are not put at any risk with another person or themselves.
Is the person prepared to undertake orientation, meetings and training expected by the organisation	If it is a requirement of the organisation to attend certain activities, then this needs to be clear in the interview.
Are they willing to have a police check conducted	Police checks are mandatory within HACC funded programs.
Provide a general overview of the organisation and any associated branches, flow charts are good.	This will inform the volunteer of the organisation they will be working for, once explained, you will generally know if this organisation is a place where they would like to work.

Step 3: Determine Volunteer Forms

Organisations are accountable to guidelines outside of their organisations, such as government legislations, funding bodies and civic legalities. Once a volunteer commences working they are a member of the staffing team and follow the same guidelines as staff and management. For this reason particular forms need to be implemented in the interview process, once a person has been suitably matched to a position. While the forms need to reflect the word volunteer, again the wheel does not have to be reinvented; some of the employee forms can be duplicated and adjusted to allow for volunteers, such as the confidentiality form and code of conduct. Other forms to be considered, volunteer application form, emergency form, agreement form.

Step 4: Orientation and Induction

An orientation and induction needs to be conducted in order for the volunteer to have a comprehensive understanding of the organisation they are working for, need to know policies and their roles and responsibilities. It is recognised that the words orientation and induction can assume different meanings depending on a person's perspective. For the purpose of these guidelines the meanings are define below.

Orientation familiarize volunteers with the environment they will be working in, introduction to staff and management and if permits consumers. The orientation also provides knowledge of facilities used by staff, equipment and safety equipment, such as fire hydrant, first aid kits. It is recommended to have an Orientation Checklist for volunteer and co-ordinator/manager to sign once completed.

Inductions assist with volunteers gaining a better perspective of organisational policies and daily operational procedures. This process is more detailed than the orientation process, providing far more information and may entail training that is relevant to the organisation's program. Volunteers also need to be aware of the organisation's responsibility to them as well as their rights as volunteers (Volunteering Qld does have guidelines established which can be located on their website www.volqld.org.au).

It is recommended that a standard Induction Manual be provided to each volunteer and the training is based on the content of the manual. The ideology is that volunteer will be well informed decreasing any risks of misunderstandings and providing a good foundation for building communications. Keeping in mind that training variations may occur due to the specific roles and duties that the volunteer will be undertaking.