

Popular Workshop Topics and Descriptions

Ken Culp, III, Ph.D.
Consultant for Volunteerism
ken.culp@uky.edu
859/257-5961 (w)
859/227-7506 (c)
859/881-9115 (h)

"Understanding Multi-Generational Volunteers:

Differences in Marketing, Recruiting, Engaging, Supervising and Recognizing"

Are you still offering the same volunteer roles to high school students that you've been asking retirees to perform? Do you offer the same volunteer roles that you did 25 years ago? Are you having difficulty identifying, recruiting and retaining volunteers? Is the manner in which you market your organization and its volunteer roles the same for 15, 30, 45, 60 and 75 year olds? While a single approach to volunteer administration may have been effective in the 1980's, today's generational differences require specific, targeted approaches.

This workshop will focus on techniques that staff, officer teams and volunteer coordinators can develop for marketing, recruiting, engaging, supervising and retaining volunteers from multiple generations as well as understanding the differences between these distinctly different groups. Civics, Meditators, Baby Boomers, Gen Xers and Millennials will be identified, defined and compared, within the context of their involvement in your organization. Strategies that can be utilized to reach, recruit, engage and retain these distinctly different populations, as well as the most effective marketing options will all be identified. Additionally, the types of volunteer roles that each generation is most interested in serving will be identified and compared.

"Building Effective Teams:

A Blue Print for Success"

The best and easiest way to build and grow volunteer-led programs is to start at the grassroots level. This workshop will focus on teaching volunteer coordinators and advisory boards how to identify, recruit and retain effective teams and advisory boards. Additionally, participants will be challenge to reconsider and shift the way that they think about and conduct volunteer and member recruitment efforts. Thirdly, an organized, sequential approach to officer recruitment will be presented. Finally, a format will be identified, shared and tailored which executive committees and advisory boards may tailor for use in their own programs.

"Recruiting Male Volunteers: Folks you've got to A-S-K!"

Does your program utilize more female than male volunteers? Does your wish list include additional male volunteers? Perhaps your volunteer programs, recruitment techniques or volunteer roles are not male friendly. Men are, after all, "wired" differently than women.

This session will focus on developing skills in learning how to attract, recruit, engage and retain male volunteers. In order to engage more male volunteers, one must first understand gender and communication differences and learn how these differences affect volunteer marketing, recruitment, engagement and retention. Therefore, differences in the way men and women think, function, react and communicate will all be identified and explored.

"Millennials as Volunteers: You Want to do What, When?"

Millennials: The New Generation of Volunteers (Are You Ready For Them?)

Millennials. Born from 1982 through 9/11, 2001, this unique generation has been intensely overscheduled by their parents. These are kids who grew up with cell phones, satellite TV, home computers, the Internet, blackberries, Ipods, Wal-Mart and a 24/7 accessible society. These are kids who have been conditioned to be busy.

Dance lessons, music lessons, church and school activities, spring, summer, autumn and winter sports practices and games, and, especially, graduation requiring volunteer community service hours. This is a generation that has high expectations and has been conditioned to be catered to. They are passionate about issues relating to the environment, animal welfare and the needs of people (especially children.) This is a generation of activists who hold extremely high expectations.

Millennials. They're different from Gen Xers, Boomers, War Babies and Civics. They are, perhaps, the easiest of all generations to recruit for volunteer service. But watch out! They expect for you to work around their schedule! You'll need to be able to "fit them in" whenever they're available. They'll demand to be able to work on issues which concern them. They're the ultimate episodic volunteers.

Millennials. Are you ready to involve them in your volunteer programs?

Transfusions R Us: Recruiting New Blood onto Boards

Are your volunteers, board and committee members tired, over-worked, run-down? Do your volunteers, board and committee members lack the energy, enthusiasm, vitality, drive and vision that they once garnered? Do you have trouble identifying, attracting, recruiting, engaging or retaining "new blood" onto your volunteer roster, board or committees? This workshop will focus on identifying 10 proven methods for identifying and recruiting new volunteers and board members. Additionally, participants will gain specific information on implementing these 10 tips in their own volunteer programs.

*"Veterans versus Boomers: Redesigning Contemporary Volunteer Roles" or
"Too Much to Do: To Few Volunteers to Do It!"*

Many volunteer programs were built around Veteran- or War Baby-era volunteers. You know who they are. Little blue-haired ladies who would show up regularly, dependably, and cheerfully work on the most mundane tasks (assembling newsletters, for example) just because they wanted to stay busy and be helpful. As their numbers diminish, non-profit organizations are looking to the next generation to press into volunteer service. Not surprisingly, the more highly skilled, more highly educated and well connected Baby Boomers are not very interested in performing the same kinds of tasks as the previous two generations before them.

What's a volunteer administrator to do?

This workshop will focus on redesigning existing volunteer roles and position descriptions, to make them more contemporary and, therefore, more appealing to Baby Boomers, the next generation of volunteers.

"Volunteer Recruitment & Retention: Increasing Volunteer Efforts"

Need more volunteers? By participating in this easy seven-step process, participants will learn to identify readily-available sources of volunteers, identify the most effective recruitment strategies and develop position descriptions outlining their volunteer role in the organization. By outlining the components of their role, potential volunteers can better understand the prospective position, the type of service to be provided, the skills required, the duties, requirements and responsibilities involved and therefore gain a more thorough understanding up-front. Armed with this information, volunteer coordinators are better able to effectively market volunteer roles and recruit prospective volunteers to serve the organization and its clientele.

"Volunteerism Across the Life-Span: Developing Seasons of Service"

Most volunteer organizations do a good job identifying, targeting and recruiting a specific kind or type of volunteer. But most organizations could benefit from the service of volunteers from diverse stages across the life span. Preferred volunteer service roles do not remain constant throughout a person's life. Rather, they evolve as people mature, develop and age. In this workshop, participants will learn to develop and promote volunteer opportunities which appeal to inter-generational volunteers whose interests evolve across the life-span.

"The Care and Nurturing of Volunteers"

As is the case with all volunteer organizations, we're so busy with our mission and accomplishing our objectives that we often tend to neglect our most valuable resourcesour volunteers! Too often, we accomplish our mission and achieve our programmatic objective. But the collateral damage remains: our volunteers are feeling either over worked, under-appreciated, lost or neglected. This workshop focuses on strategies to assist those who work with volunteers (including commanders and supervisors) to understand the importance of nurturing and caring for the volunteer corps and their families.

“Developing Volunteers in Rural Communities”

Identifying, recruiting, engaging and mobilizing volunteers in rural communities in the American heartland offer different challenges and opportunities than doing so in larger, metropolitan areas. Likewise, recruitment activities that are successful in one community will not necessarily be successful in another. People in rural communities often fail to recognize the tremendous resources that are available to them locally. This workshop will guide participants through the processes of exploration, discovery and identification, both of local resources and of potential volunteer audiences. Additionally, methods of recruiting, motivating and mobilizing rural volunteers will be identified and practiced.

“Seven Characteristics of Successful Volunteer Programs:

How does yours measure up?”

Before a volunteer program can become successful and self-sustaining, a definition of that program's success must first be identified. This workshop will focus on identifying seven characteristics which may be utilized as a yard-stick to measure the success level of volunteer programs. The implications that these seven characteristics have upon Farm Bureau programs will be investigated and explored. Finally, participants will identify strategies that may be employed to improve the level of success of their own volunteer programs as well as their own abilities to successfully lead these programs.

“Determining the Value of Volunteer Programs:

Stop Counting Dollars and Start Measuring Impact!”

A major challenge facing volunteer driven organizations is the need to document the impact of volunteer efforts and their accomplishments. This workshop will assist participants in understanding the differences in evaluation, program assessment and impact. Moving beyond counting the number of participants and the number of hours they volunteered is an essential first step in moving toward effective program evaluation.

This workshop will focus on the exploration of levels of program evaluation. Participants will determine the level of evaluation which their organization is currently utilizing, as well as the most appropriate level for the volunteer leadership programs which they are conducting. Additionally, participants will recognize that numbers based evaluations are an outdated and ineffective means of evaluating the impact of volunteer contributions.

*“Societal Trends Impacting Volunteer Involvement:
Positioning Farm Bureau for the Future”*

This workshop focuses upon the 10 most critical societal trends which will influence volunteer programs in the next decade. In order to position volunteer programs in the 21st century, volunteer coordinators and staff must first determine what societal, cultural, environmental and technological influences will be exerted upon American life. The findings shared in this workshop are entirely research based and reflect the most current empirical trends in volunteer administration. The implications from this study will enable volunteer coordinators to anticipate and prepare for influences which will impact their volunteer programs during the next decade. By anticipating and preparing for these influences, Farm Bureau organizations will be in a stronger position to more effectively coordinate volunteer programs by developing the resources necessary to meet programmatic, organizational, clientele and member needs.

*“Members versus Volunteers:
Which do you have? Which do you want?”*

Are you a member-driven organization or a volunteer-driven organization? Do you try to recruit volunteers, or do you try to press members into volunteer service? Are the terms “members” and “volunteers” synonymous and interchangeable? Do they overlap? Are they exclusive?

This workshop will focus on both the differences and similarities between members and volunteers and will lead workshop participants through an exploration of strategies to utilize to increase the numbers and involvement of both groups.

Could your organization benefit by increased levels of volunteer involvement? Could your organization benefit by a larger membership? Does one automatically imply the other? Proven strategies that staff and advisory boards can implement to utilize to recruit both volunteers and members will be explored and shared.

“Involving Baby Boomers: The New Frontier of Volunteer Administration”

Do all volunteers in your program look the same? Is your approach to directing and coordinating volunteers the same for 15, 45 and 75 year olds? It shouldn't be! While a single approach to coordinating volunteers and volunteer programs may have been effective in the 1980's or 90's, today's generational differences require alternative approaches, targeted toward specific generations. This workshop will focus on understanding the differences between Civics, War Babies, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, Millennials and Generation Z, as well as introducing effective marketing techniques, recruitment strategies and developing meaningful roles for volunteers from multiple generations

"Developing an Effective, Contributing Board of Directors"

A functional Board of Directors is a critical key component for a successful organization. Identifying, recruiting, empowering and developing the Board of Directors into an effectively working decision-making group are fundamental steps. The Board of Directors is the rudder of the ship. Without strong leadership and guidance from the Board, the organization will be set adrift without a clear purpose or destination.

Participants will learn how to identify, orient and educate new and current board members to help them understand their duties and the function of the board. Additionally, they will learn how to develop an executive committee, a contributing committee system and an annual program of activities, all of which will strengthen your organization and its programs.

"D2V: Dealing with Difficult Volunteers"

Love 'em or hate 'em, volunteers are **the** essential component in the daily life of field staff and should be considered first when developing new programs and activities. Sometimes we can't work with volunteers, but we certainly could never work without them. As long as we work with people, we're bound to find some who are more difficult to work with than others. This session will focus on identifying strategies to deal with difficult or challenging volunteers, will address alternatives to disengagement and will outline the steps to follow when remediation is necessary or disengagement is the final option.

"Recruiting Youth Volunteers for Community Service"

Youth can be the easiest of all demographic groups to target for engagement in community service activities. However, many volunteer coordinators and staff members, being from a different generation, lack the knowledge, skills, expertise and contemporary communication skills to successfully approach and recruit teens for involvement in service or programmatic activities. This workshop will prepare volunteer coordinators and staff members who are interested in targeting youth for volunteer service to adapt their marketing message to appeal to teens, to tailor service activities to fit the likes and interests of this demographic audience and to promote volunteer service as a component of teen activity.

"Accessing and Mobilizing Volunteers from Faith-Based Communities"

Faith-based communities have always provided the most fertile ground for recruiting volunteers. People attending church already have a sense of belonging, a higher sense of purpose, an ethic of service and a relationship with their community. This workshop will identify methods to access and mobilize volunteers in faith-based communities, and motivate them to become volunteers as they develop a shared vision and serve the community while fulfilling their higher mission.

“Diagnosing Volunteer Burnout: Treatment for a Cure”

Keeping volunteers challenged, motivated, interested, and engaged helps to ensure that the volunteer workforce has a high level of retention. But everyone feels burned out from time to time. Learning about the factors which contribute to burnout is an important first step toward improving volunteer retention rates. But what do you do when faced with volunteers who are feeling overwhelmed, over-worked, unappreciated, or burned out?

This session will assist volunteer coordinators and staff in “diagnosing,” and “treating,” as well as “avoiding exposure” to the “disease” altogether. Preventative “well-volunteer visits” will be shared which will assist volunteer coordinators and staff in avoiding burnout by keeping volunteers focused, motivated, and engaged in rewarding activities. Additionally, volunteer coordinators and staff will learn how to “diagnose” and write “prescriptions” for volunteers who have been “exposed to” or been “infected with” burnout.

“Seven Steps to Exponentially Increase Volunteer Numbers”

Need more volunteers? By participating in this easy seven-step process, participants will learn to identify readily-available sources of volunteers, identify the most effective recruitment strategies for each audience and develop position descriptions outlining the volunteer’s role in and contribution to your organization.

“Planning For a Successful Year”

No program or project can be successful without prior planning. In order to achieve success, volunteer coordinators and staff must plan for it. While no one wants to fail, failing to plan is equivalent to planning to fail! In order to make the most of your volunteer program, some advance preparation is necessary. To reap the full benefits of the volunteer program, neither the volunteer administrator nor the board of directors should be solely responsible for planning, organizing and structuring the program and its activities.

This workshop will focus on developing an effective, working planning committee and an annual program of activities, to ensure that your volunteer program remains focused, on track, accomplishing its goals and fulfilling its mission.

“Engaging Faith-Based Community Volunteers in Program Delivery”

Volunteers are an essential component of delivering programs in communities. Volunteer administrators are often so busy managing programs, events and activities that they lack the necessary time to identify and recruit new volunteer audiences.

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"Orchestrating Volunteer Orientation"

Many people would be happy to volunteer if they knew what needed to be done and how they could help. Orientation provides volunteers an opportunity to become acquainted with their role, the culture and environment of your organization. Additionally, general information, and a "big picture" look at your organization and its volunteer program should be included and introduced.

An effective orientation program introduces the volunteers to the program as a whole and to their specific job responsibilities. Orientation can be beneficial in assuring that volunteers have accurate information regarding the organization's purpose, programs, policies, and expectations. Orientation sessions increase the knowledge and preparedness for volunteer roles.

The O.B.O.E. Model of Volunteer Orientation was developed as a tool to be utilized by Extension professionals, but is easily adapted for use by non-profits. The O.B.O.E. Model can be adapted to fit any volunteer program. Components include an Opening, Background, Organizational safeguards, and Evaluation.

The Scholarship of Volunteerism: Sharing Our Success Throughout our Communities

Traditionally, scholarship in volunteer programs has been defined by the same parameters as those in academia. Primarily, research conducted, journal articles published, presentations at state and national meetings and grant dollars funded. Under these constraints, it is difficult for volunteer administrators to practice and be rewarded for scholarly efforts.

The scholarship of non-profit, volunteer programs has been redefined as "creative intellectual work that is validated by peers and communicated." To effectively integrate scholarship into the life of volunteer administrators, six types of scholarship have been identified. These include: Exploration & Discovery, Sharing Results & Findings, Teaching & Learning, Application & Reflection, Creative Artistry, and Integration. To integrate scholarship into work and programming efforts, time should be set aside during program planning to practice scholarship and share the results and impacts of programs and efforts.

Skills developed during this workshop include identifying measurable objectives, establishing programmatic goals in measurable terms, evaluating programmatic impacts and communicating and marketing the scholarship of volunteer programs. Volunteer Administrators who devote time to scholarship will be amply rewarded with increased grant funding, heightened community involvement, greater community awareness, and an enlightened, committed and engaged volunteer corps.

"Get Your Head in the Game!"

(Are you a starter, substitute, manager, coach, spectator or on the injured reserve list???)

Every board, council, committee and organization includes a variety of people who each serve different roles and have differing participation levels. This presentation examines the different "positions" that different people "play" while serving on these groups. These "positions" include: starter, sub, bench-warmer, red shirt, injured-reserve, spectator, cheerleader, manager and coach. Each "position" will be introduced, along with a discussion regarding that position's role and the challenges facing players in that position. Participants will rank the positions in their order of importance for their organization and its programs. The presentation wraps up with an overview of recruiting techniques versus "walk-ons," with the final activity focusing on determining what kind of a "sport" your organization strives to be; spectator, team or individual.

"Follow the Playbook! Executing a Successful Annual Meeting"

Most organizations hold an annual meeting. Often times, however, these events become routine, mundane and may lack purpose and originality. This workshop centers around "following the playbook" to designing and executing a successful annual meeting. Factors to consider include: Pre-Season planning, pre-game activities, in the huddle, the kick-off, half-time activities, moving the ball down the field, post-game, the coach's role and the quarterback's role. This workshop will help meeting planners focus on the steps and factors necessary to ensuring a successful and meaningful annual meeting.

"Effective Farm Bureau Boards: Interpreting the Score Board"

This workshop focuses on identifying the purposes and function of an effective board of directors. Staff expectations and volunteer and member expectations will be probed and shared. The structure of an effective board, including membership, terms and term limits are presented, as well as proven methods for identifying potential board members and 10 tips for recruiting new members. The roles of board members are shared, along with an examination of officers and their duties. Finally, a 10-item "score-card" is presented, and participants will determine how their board measures up on the game's scoreboard.