London Environmental Network

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

PART IV: EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION
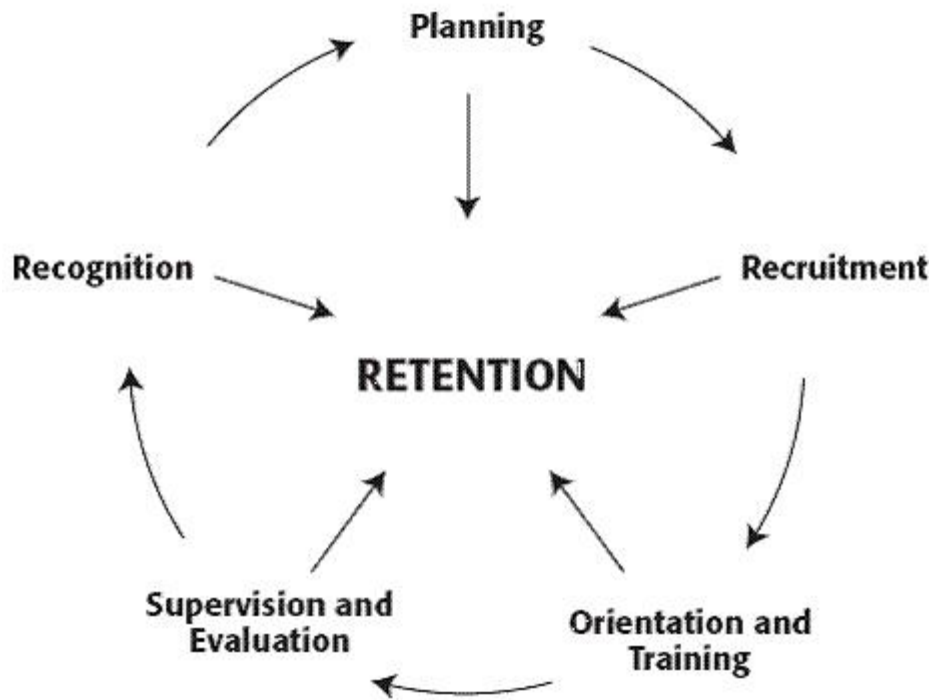
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Table of Contents

Volunteer Evaluation

In order to ensure that your volunteers are meeting your group's expectations, it is important to conduct both formal and informal evaluations of your volunteers regularly throughout their involvement.

From Community Literacy of Ontario

During a formal evaluation, your group's volunteer manager and/or the volunteer's on-the-job supervisor should provide a written evaluation of a volunteer's performance based on set questions that are used for all volunteers across the group.

Upon completing an evaluation of a volunteer, it may be appropriate to meet with the results and inform them of the results. This is a great opportunity to provide positive reinforcement, as well as constructive feedback that may make the volunteer more effective during the remainder of their involvement with your group. An in-person meeting also allows the volunteer the opportunity to address negative feedback and provide an explanation where necessary.

Template (Word Document) – Volunteer Performance Evaluation

This template can be adapted based on the responsibilities and required skills within a specific volunteer position.

Volunteer Program Evaluation

Within the evaluation process, it is important to create opportunities for volunteers to provide feedback about their experience with your organization. Volunteers often have a unique, on-the-ground perspective of the work done by your group that may differ from the perspective of your staff and leadership team. In addition to helping to improve your volunteer program, soliciting feedback from volunteers also shows them that they are a valued member of your team. See below for a template for your volunteer program feedback survey.

Template (Word Document) – Volunteer Feedback Form

This template provides a basic outline of the types of questions that you could ask your volunteers when evaluating your volunteer program. Questioned could be tailored as needed to fit the context of your group.

Volunteer Recognition

If you want a volunteer to feel appreciated and motivated to continue their hard work, it is important to recognize their contributions over the entire course of their involvement with your group. This should be done in a variety of ways, from brief in-person or written "thank you's" to after a particularly successful shift or project, to more formal volunteer recognition events.

Some common volunteer recognition tactics include:

"Volunteer of the Month"

- Recognize a special volunteer each month (or even week!)
- Can be awarded through an email message to your listserv, or a shoutout on your website or social media

Birthday cards for each volunteer signed by the rest of the team

- This allows volunteers to receive some recognition from team members they may not always interact with

Social events for volunteers and other team members throughout the year

- Examples: Potlucks, bowling nights, "working lunches"

Reference/Recommendation Letters

- Offering reference letters to departing volunteers may help them to achieve their own personal and professional goals (see template below)

When you are recognizing your volunteers, it is important to understand what kind of recognition might be most meaningful to them. An introverted or private volunteer may not appreciate a public shout out. A volunteer who engages with your organization remotely may not be able to make it to an in-person recognition event, and may feel excluded. Getting to know your volunteers on a personal level will help you recognize them in a more meaningful and personal way!

In 2013, Volunteer Canada conducted a study about how Canadian volunteers like to be recognized. Read it here!

Template (Word Document) – Volunteer Recommendation Letter