Identifying Volunteer Roles

If you've taken a long hard look at your program and decided there is more to do than you as a volunteer or salaried staff can do (and who hasn't!) you are ready for the first step in expanding volunteer involvement . . . identification.

That important first step involves identifying your own attitudes about volunteer involvement, the needs of the program, and potential needs-related jobs or roles for volunteers.

There are some difficult questions you'll have to answer before you begin and throughout the process. Do you really want volunteers to help in a meaningful way? Do you expect volunteers to do the things that you don't want to do? Would you volunteer to help in this situation? What will a volunteer get from this job?

The identification process requires you to determine the needs of the program; decide jobs which need to be done; and select or write position descriptions for those jobs.

The YELLOW TAXI can help you re-evaluate the boundaries of your program. In fact, don't even think about using this RED TAXI until you've used the YELLOW TAXI to envision a system without boundaries!

Identifying Needs Within the Program

"MORE VOLUNTEERS"

When asked what it will take to really make the program what they want it to be, almost everyone will say they need more volunteers. Your answer would likely be the same. But before you think about recruiting more volunteers, ask what, exactly, you need volunteers to do.

The following worksheet will help you identify specific needs for volunteers within your program. Use photocopies and additional sheets of paper to collect responses from members of your advisory group and other members of your leadership team. Compile and analyze the resulting comments to help focus and add enthusiasm (perhaps even urgency) to your volunteer recruitment efforts, or modify this 4-H example to meet your own program needs.

Current Situation

1. How many young people are now involved in your program? _____

2. How many volunteers do you now have? _____ Activities leaders? _____

   Organizational leaders? _____ Key leaders? _____

   Project club leaders? _____ Resource leaders? _____

   What is the ratio of adult volunteers to youth participants in your program?

   _____

3. Which communities have strong programs?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

   Which ones don't?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Which project areas have strong leader support?   _____

   _____

   Which project areas need leader support?   _____

   _____

What are the priority program or project areas
needing volunteers?

_____

_____

5. How many volunteers are currently involved in helping determine program priorities and directions?

_____

What additional skills are needed among these decision-makers?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Which additional segments of the community should be involved?

_____

_____

Is this a truly diverse group, fully representative of the community or county? _____

6. How many volunteers are currently supporting program delivery, for example, as newsletter compilers, publicity
coordinators, fund raisers, enrollment processors, etc.? _____
List possible support roles for volunteers.

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. How many volunteers are now involved with short-term special interest efforts? _____
List special interest areas for which groups should be formed.

_____

_____

_____

8. How many local groups or clubs are there? _____ Which communities need volunteers to organize local groups
or clubs?

_____

_____

How many volunteers currently recruit and support club leaders? _____

Which areas of the community need this assistance?

_____

_____

9. Which activities, events, contests, delegations, or programs are coordinated by volunteers?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Which ones aren't? _____

_____

10. What training is already in place? _____

_____

Emerging Priorities

1. Does your county program have a vision or long-range goals? (If not, describe your own vision for the program?

_____

_____

What new volunteer roles are needed, to turn the vision into reality?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What new programs, communities, clubs, audiences, delivery modes, collaborations, special interest projects, and program support do you envision?

_____

_____

What volunteer roles are vital to the success of the vision?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What political forces favor this vision?

_____

_____

_____

_____