

Volunteer Mobilization

VOL.MOB 201

Course Overview

Volunteer Mobilization is a 10-week online course which orients VISTAs to the field of volunteerism and volunteer program planning. In this introductory course, VISTAs will learn about planning and implementing recruiting, screening and training strategies that can be applied to their VISTA site. As students participate in the course, completing assignments and quizzes along the way, they will build knowledge and skills in volunteer mobilization.

Prerequisite

Students must be officially sworn-in as VISTA members.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course you will be able to:

- Identify and describe the current landscape of volunteerism
- Align volunteer mobilization strategies with organizational needs
- Develop tools to recruit, match & train volunteers

Course Features

Course modules: The course has 4 modules, a course introduction and a course conclusion. Each module includes various activities, including:

- **Quizzes:** These open-book quizzes will assess your comprehension of the course readings and materials.
- **Worksheet Assignments:** These assignments allow you to apply the course materials to plan and strategize a specific volunteer mobilization task.
- **Work Product Assignments:** These assignments allow you to create and develop original materials and products for mobilizing volunteers at your site.
- **Introduction and Concluding Assignments:** These assignments allow you to explore volunteer mobilization and capacity building as you enter and exit the course.

Course-at-a-Glance

Course INTRODUCTION TO VOLUNTEER MOBILIZATION

Week 1: Who Volunteers and Why?

Readings:

- Course Syllabus
- An Introduction to Volunteer Involvement (McCurley, S. & Lynch, R.)
- Volunteering in America website

Optional Readings:

- Successful Volunteer Program Framework (Education Northwest)

Activities:

- Create your Profile and Introduce Yourself
- Introduction to Volunteer Mobilization Webinar

MODULE 1: ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS AND VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Week 2: Determine What Your Organization Needs

Reading:

- Creating Motivating Volunteer Positions (McCurley, S. & Lynch, R.)
- Types of Volunteer Positions (Education Northwest)

Optional Readings:

- Developing Good Staff-Volunteer Relationships (McFarland, B.)
- Crafting a Vision for Your Volunteer Program (Barnhart, Erin L.)
- Creating Volunteer Positions that Appeal and Engage (CNCS, VISTA)

Activity:

- Plan for Your Position Worksheet

Week 3: Create a Volunteer Position Description

Optional Reading:

- Sample Volunteer Position Description (Barnhart, Erin L.)

Activities:

- Work Product: Volunteer Position Description
- Module 1 Feedback Questionnaire

MODULE 2: VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Week 4: Recruitment Strategies

Reading:

- Recruiting the Right Volunteers (McCurley, S. & Lynch, R.)
- Special Topics in Volunteer Management (McCurley, S. & Lynch, R.)
- Active vs. Passive Recruitment (Barnhart, Erin L.)
- Translating Your Message (Barnhart, Erin L.)
- Engaging Clients in Service (Barnhart, Erin L.)

Optional Readings:

- Writing Persuasive Volunteer Recruitment Appeals (McCurley, S.)
- But everyone knows...the case for prospective volunteers (Ellis, Susan J.)
- The Seven Deadly Sins of Recruiting Volunteers (McKee, T. W.)
- Innovative Volunteer Recruitment (CNCS, VISTA)
- Engage, Inform, Recruit: How Nonprofits Can Use Social Media to Recruit Donors and Volunteers (Stern, A.)
- Using Social Media to Recruit Donors and Volunteers (CNCS, VISTA)

Activities:

- Quiz: Aligning Organizational Needs with Recruitment Types and Methods
- Recruitment & Communication Strategies Worksheet

Week 5: Develop & Deliver Your Recruitment Message

Activities:

- Work Product: Recruitment Plan & Message
- Module 2 Feedback Questionnaire

MODULE 3: SCREENING & MATCHING

Week 6: Designing an Effective Screening & Matching System

Readings:

- Matching Volunteers to Work (McCurley, S. & Lynch, R.)
- Risk Management (McCurley, S. & Lynch, R.)
- Volunteer Screening: Components of Effective Volunteer Screening (Nonprofit Risk Management Center)

Optional Readings:

- Volunteer Risk Management Tutorial (Nonprofit Risk Management Center)
- Sample Volunteer Application (McCurley, S. & Lynch, R.)
- Sample Volunteer Application (Nonprofit Risk Management Center)
- Sample Volunteer Application (Bowen, J., Better Impact)

Activities:

- Quiz: Volunteer Screening & Matching Strategies
- Screening & Interviewing Worksheet

Week 7: Develop Protocols

Activities:

- Work Product: Interview Protocol
- Module 3 Feedback Questionnaire

MODULE 4: SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS: ORIENTATION, TRAINING & COACHING

Week 8: Elements of a Support System

Readings:

- Preparing Volunteers for Success (McCurley, S. & Lynch, R.)

Optional Readings:

- Developing Volunteer Orientations (University of Kansas, Community Toolbox)
- Stop Volunteers from Being Their Own Worst Enemies (Ellis, Susan J.)

Activities:

- Quiz: Elements of a Volunteer Support System
- Orientation & Training Worksheet

Week 9: Begin to Develop a Support System

Activities:

- Work Product: Orientation Outline & Training Plan
- Module 4 Feedback Questionnaire

COURSE CONCLUSION

Week 10: Course Reflection

Activities:

- Concluding Assignment: Final Reflection

- Course Evaluation

NOTE: Weekly activities are due on Sunday at 11:00 p.m. (PST).

Course Completion and Grading Criteria

This course is offered on a pass/fail basis. Successful participation and completion of this course will be assessed in the following ways:

- Webinar Attendance – 2.5 % of total grade
- Quizzes (3 total) – 13.5% of total grade
- Worksheet Assignments (4 total) – 30% of total grade
- Work Products (4 total) – 50% of total grade
- Course Reflection – 4% of total grade

A total of 200 points are available in this course. To pass this course, you must earn a minimum of 140 points, or 70%. The *Course Activity Checklist* details the individual point values and due dates for all activities. In addition, you will receive detailed criteria outlining how the written assignments will be assessed.

To pass the course, you must complete:

- 3 Work Products
- Final Reflection

Course Expectations

As a participant, you are expected to:

- Read all required articles and other materials. Optional readings are not required
- Complete and submit all activities by the due dates
- Contact the facilitator if you have questions about the materials or assignments that keep you from completing them

You can expect the course facilitator to:

- Read all your assignments and questions carefully and thoughtfully and respond as promptly as possible
- Answer any specific questions within 48 hours

Communication

There are two ways to interact with your facilitator:

1. Via the forums
2. Via the messaging system

Please use the messaging system to contact your facilitator, instead of personal email, Facebook, or other forms of messaging.

Course Rules & Guidelines

Academic honesty and integrity: All work submitted in this course must be your own. All sources used in your work must be properly acknowledged and documented. Violations of academic honesty will be taken seriously and may result in a failing grade in the course.

Course conduct: In the interest of promoting a positive learning environment, students are expected to observe the following guidelines for personal conduct:

- Share only items and comments that are pertinent to the discussion topic
- Be respectful of diverse opinions and experiences; disagree respectfully
- Use discretion when sharing experiences and names of individuals directly from your VISTA assignment

Participation: Students enrolled in VISTA Blend courses are expected to participate actively; VISTA does not offer “auditor” privileges. Consequently, students who fail to meet expectations will not pass the course. Unless students communicate extenuating circumstances with their course facilitator, they may be dropped for either of the following reasons:

- Failure to log into the course within the first 7 days of course launch;
- Failure to log into the course within 72 hours of being moved from the waitlist to a course
- Failure to log into the course for 21 consecutive days

Please notify your facilitator if you expect to be out of town for an extended period of time (7 days or more).

Assignment due dates: Weekly activities are due on Sunday at 11:00 p.m. (PST.) See the Course Activity Checklist under Courses Resources on the home page for a list of assignments and corresponding due dates.

Policy for late work: Students are responsible for locating and completing all the activities in the course. Active participation is also expected on a weekly basis. See the *Course Activity Checklist* for activity due dates. Activities will be due every Sunday night. You must give prior notice and receive permission from the facilitator in order to turn in work past the due date, up to 10 days. Every day an activity is late, without prior notice and permission, will result in the loss of 1 point (for example, if your activity is 3 days late, you will lose 3 points). After 10 days, you will automatically receive a score of 0.

Minimum Technical Requirements

The VISTA Blend Online Learning Center is viewed best at 1024 x 768 pixels or higher resolution on your monitor, a DSL Internet connection or faster, and using one of the following web browsers:

- Mozilla Firefox ([Get the latest Firefox](#))
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 7 or above ([Get the latest Internet Explorer](#))
- Safari ([Get the latest Safari](#))

The VISTA Blend Online Learning Center uses the following media players:

- PDF reader: [Get the latest Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)
- Flash player: [Get the latest Flash Player](#)

Course Readings

- Barnhart, E. L. (2016). *Active vs. passive recruitment*. Unpublished manuscript, Education Northwest, Portland, OR.
- Barnhart, E. L. (2016). *Crafting a vision for your volunteer program*. Unpublished manuscript, Education Northwest, Portland, OR.
- Barnhart, E. L. (2016). *Engaging clients in service*. Unpublished manuscript, Education Northwest, Portland, OR.
- Barnhart, E. L. (2016). *Sample volunteer position description*. Unpublished manuscript, Education Northwest, Portland, OR.
- Barnhart, E. L. (2016). *Translating your message*. Unpublished manuscript, Education Northwest, Portland, OR.
- Barnhart, E. L. (2016). *Types of volunteer positions to consider*. Unpublished manuscript, Education Northwest, Portland, OR.
- Bowen, J. (2015). *Volunteer application example*. Retrieved from Better Impact website: <http://www.betterimpact.com/community/resource/volunteer-application-example/>
- Corporation for National & Community Service, VISTA. (2014, June). *Using social media to recruit donors and volunteers* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <http://www.vistacampus.gov/resources/using-social-media-recruit-donors-and-volunteers>
- Corporation for National & Community Service, VISTA. (2014, August). *Creating volunteer positions that appeal and engage* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <http://www.vistacampus.gov/resources/creating-volunteer-positions-appeal-and-engage>
- Corporation for National & Community Service, VISTA. (2015, July). *Innovative volunteer recruitment* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <http://www.vistacampus.gov/resources/innovative-volunteer-recruitment>
- Education Northwest. (2016). *Successful volunteer program components*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Ellis, S. J. (n.d.). But everyone knows ... The case for prospective volunteers. *NonProfit Times*. Retrieved from Energize website: <https://www.energizeinc.com/art/everyone-knows-case-prospective-volunteers>
- Ellis, S. J. (2013). *Stop volunteers from being their own worst enemies*. Retrieved from Energize website: <https://www.energizeinc.com/hot-topics/2013/june>

- McCurley, S. (2003, July/August). Writing persuasive volunteer recruitment appeals. *Grapevine*. Retrieved from Energize website: <https://www.energizeinc.com/art/writing-persuasive-volunteer-recruitment-appeals>
- McCurley, S., & Lynch, R. (2011). *Volunteer management: Mobilizing all the resources of the community* (3rd ed.). Plattsburgh, NY: InterPub Group.
- McFarland, B. (2004, May/June). Developing good staff-volunteer relationships. *Animal Sheltering*, pp. 31–34. Retrieved from Humane Society of the United States website: http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/may_jun_2004/developing_good_staff_volunteer_relationships.html
- McKee, T. W. (n.d.). The seven deadly sins of recruiting volunteers. *Volunteer Power Newsletter*. Retrieved from <http://www.volunteerpowers.com/articles/7Sins.asp>
- Nonprofit Risk Management Center. (1999). *Volunteer screening: Components of effective volunteer screening*. Retrieved from Better Impact website: <http://www.betterimpact.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Volunteer-Screening.pdf>
- Nonprofit Risk Management Center. (n.d.). *No surprises volunteer risk management tutorial*. Retrieved from <http://www.nonprofitrisk.org/tools/volunteer/volunteer.shtml>
- Nonprofit Risk Management Center. (n.d.). Volunteer application. In *Accident preparation and response tutorial*. Retrieved from http://www.nonprofitrisk.org/tools/volunteer/review/vol_application.htm
- Stern, A. (2013, December). Engage, inform, recruit: How nonprofits can use social media to recruit donors and volunteers. *Connect Monthly*. Retrieved from Nonprofit Technology Network website: <https://www.nten.org/article/engage-inform-recruit-how-nonprofits-can-use-social-media-to-recruit-donors-and-volunteers-0/>
- University of Kansas, Work Group for Community Health and Development. (2015). *Chapter 11, Section 3: Developing volunteer orientation programs*. Retrieved from Community Tool Box website: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/volunteers/orientation-programs/main>