

A PRAGMATIC REVIEW TO STUDY THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS IN A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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Abstract: The presence of volunteers in a non-profit organization is considered extremely important. It significantly helps in building the organizational strength of the establishment. Enhanced numbers of volunteers in an organization significantly enhances its reach towards the communities. The review study elaborates the protocols implemented during the phase of advertisements, recruitment and allotment of tasks etc. It also enlightens upon the effective strategies and maneuvers that could be implemented for viable management of the volunteers. The committees are bodies appointed within an organization so as to focus upon different sectors i.e. recruitment, human resource, administration, public relation etc. The responsibilities and duties of the committees and the administrative chair in an organization are also described briefly. The main aim of the review study is to effectively elaborate the role, functioning and importance of a volunteer in a non-profit organization, effectively define its benefits and impact upon the society.

Keywords: Administration, Committee, Non-profit organization, Recruitment, Training, Volunteer.

1. INTRODUCTION

Volunteers play a significant role in the efficient functioning of a non-profit organization. It is an individual choice and not an occupation. Incorporating volunteers helps to develop the organizational strength of a non-profit establishment [1-2]. The volunteers retain credibility and a sense of social satisfaction from their work that a paid staff or consultant might not effectively retain. The development and efficiency of an organization is not enhanced by measures implemented in the prospects of rising membership or program rates but solely from the belief and faith of volunteers and staff in an establishment. An organization that incorporates an effective use of volunteers reaps numerous benefits for instance, extended resources, valuable input, and extra pair of hands that boost the capabilities of an establishment beyond their scope [3].

2. RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

The recruitment of volunteers is a crucial phase for any organization, as it requires ample time and effort, though it is imperative to act in an optimal and efficient manner so as to reap maximum volunteers, they are mentioned as follows:

- **Advertising and Publicity:** The volunteering opportunities should be advertised in an efficient manner, by using various pathways for instance; internet, hoardings, websites etc. Indulging the reviews of active volunteers is also effective. The information regarding how to apply must be easily understood [1, 3-5].
- **Contacting Individuals:** Contacts could be made directly by an establishment's representative to prospective recruits by the means of e-mail or telephonic conversations and can effectively resolve their queries.
- **Talent Emissaries:** Organizations also empower current volunteers to recruit their colleagues. It could be a part of the task allotted to identify at least one potential volunteer and recruit him/her [2, 6].

- **Volunteer Recruitment Fairs:** A volunteer recruitment fair organization at various places i.e. educational institutions, public places, conferences can be beneficial. A representative could be appointed who may elaborate the prospects of recruitment and answer their queries face to face [7].

3. STRATEGIES FOR FUNCTIONING WITH VOLUNTEERS

- **Evaluation and allotment of tasks:** A proper evaluation of tasks must be carried out to determine the candidature and its compatibility with the tasks available. The tasks allotted must be according to the capabilities of the candidate and should be of his/her interest, taking the volunteer's consent prior to the allotment of task is considered as a good tactic, as the volunteer then might lay his maximum effort to procure the task [8-12].
- **Define the prospects of tasks:** One of the most important protocols and involves clearly stating the intent of the task to the volunteer, so that no confusions arise later, i.e. detailed task description must be provided to each and every volunteer. The description must spell out exact duties and responsibilities, timeframe, trainings that the volunteer might require, the supervisor allotted etc. In addition to that the addition of purpose, intent and outcome of the tasks should also be elaborated.
- **Proper training and information:** Providing proper and adequate training to a volunteer before assigning him/her to a specific task is a must. A recent research concluded that several volunteer's fail to perform their allotted tasks due to poor or no training. It is also essential so as to boost the morale and the confidence of the volunteer and hence boosting hi/her capabilities [7].
- **Appropriate follow up:** This is a very important guideline to be implemented upon. The use of deadlines to keep up to tasks is a very efficient method. Also regular update by the volunteer's by the procedure of progress reports and to maintain their records timely is useful.
- **Motivation of volunteer's:** Recognizing the feats performed by the volunteer's and acknowledging timely and accordingly is a very important maneuver to keep the volunteers motivated. Appreciation before colleagues and peers can be a powerful tool not only for providing a satisfying experience for current volunteers but for recruiting new ones who want to bask in the limelight as well [9, 11, 13].

4. PREREQUISITES FOR EFFECTIVE VOLUNTEER GROUP FUNCTIONING

A large number of factors are involved in the effective functioning of a volunteer group. The major factors are listed as follows:

- The indulgence of a volunteer in a specific field of study, association.
- Expressed commitment towards a task.
- Ability to serve i.e. time, company support etc.
- Contribution of knowledge and additional skills.
- Professional repute of the volunteer must be ethical and cooperative.
- The volunteer must be reliable and should undertake and perform the tasks with due responsibility.
- The volunteer must also possess good leadership and communication skills [7].

5. VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: SPECIFICATIONS

1. It is the duty of the non-profit organization to explain the definite purpose and duties of the volunteers within the organization.
2. Task descriptions must be provided to all the volunteers within the organization.
3. The organization should possess a distinct and communicated volunteer management plan that indulges a specific recruitment protocol, description of all volunteer tasks allotted, and stipend reimbursement policies, supervisory responsibilities allocated and at last related volunteer personnel policy information.

4. The recruitment protocol of the organization must encourage the diversity of the community participation and at no cost discriminate amongst individuals [10-16].
5. The non-profit organization must provide suitable training and placement to support the volunteer in the performance of his /her volunteer accomplishments.
6. The non-profit organization must respect and acknowledge the volunteer's abilities and should timely motivate them.
7. The organization must provide evaluations periodically and should timely consult the volunteers upon their performances or where specifically additional attention is needed.
8. The organization does some type of volunteer recognition periodically and staff continuously demonstrates their appreciation towards the volunteers and their efforts [17].
9. The non-profit organization employs several procedures for reviewing and responding to ideas, suggestions, comments and perceptions from different volunteers.

6. BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

There are numerous benefits that one may reap by volunteering in a non-profit organization, such as the following:

- A sense of social satisfaction i.e. one feels actively contributing hi/her bit for the development of the society.
- A volunteer can express his/her values in activities that are eloquent [18].
- A volunteer will enhance his/her knowledge and learn new skills by communicating with other knowledgeable volunteering peers [11-14].
- A volunteer will gain the knowledge about the functioning of an organization, and he/she may effectively convey their experiences and knowledge to new volunteers or different organizations.
- Volunteering is considered by many institutions as an effective mean of social service and is proclaimed to enhance ones candidature [14].
- A volunteer communicates with the community at the grass root level and one can effectively understand the real problems of the people and provide their valuable inputs for administrative decisions at their institutions, so as to enhance the efficacy of policies implemented by the administrative bodies of a non-profit organization [19-22].

7. COMMITTEES

Membership involvement in a non-profit organization plays a significant role in its functioning. It extensively depends upon the coordinate efforts employed by various member of an organization to effectively develop a program and reap benefits from it [23]. An eloquent and active committee structure provides a mechanism for members to actively get involved. Several committees are formulated in organizations that tackle different issues for instance finances, management of goals, resources, recruitment etc. [5, 9, 21-23].

8. PREREQUISITES FOR COMMITTEES

- A certain time limit must be framed for the members of each and every committee.
- Reviewing the goals of each and every committee annually is extremely beneficial. The goals formulated would effectively reflect the long term plans [24].
- Committees must organize regular meeting to efficiently work together as a team for better results, and also should dedicate ample time for the volunteers.
- New recruitments should be addressed as soon as vacancies are developed within the committees.
- A committee should submit their reports on a yearly or half yearly basis to the board and should discuss upon the matter of new policies indulgences in their framework and about the functioning of the institution [15, 25-27].

9. COMMITTEE MEMBER'S FUNCTIONING

Understanding the functioning and roles of each and every member of a committee is very important. The functioning procedures should be duly explained to each and every member of the committee. The functioning and the efficacy of the committee are significantly enhanced in the condition when each and every committee member understands their roles and duties [3, 15, 19, 26].

10. COMMITTEE CHAIR DUTIES

Commitment to an organization by its members is extremely important alongside formulation of specific goals by the committee chair. The ability of the administration of a committee to lead is directly proportional to its achievements and proper management [27]. The administration of the committee must allow free flow of thoughts and ideas within the committee, i.e. it should be open to all suggestions provided by any member irrespective of his/her position. It also plays a significant role in regularly encouraging and motivating its staff and members, so as to further boost up their morale to achieve further [6, 18, 28].

The administration of a committee plays numerous roles for the development and enhancement of a committee, but the four main factors that are termed most significant are mentioned as follows:

- **Planning:** The administration of a committee consults with the committee members regarding their planning and formulation of the committee agenda. Before allocating different tasks to individuals the responsibilities, duties and the performance of different members must be thoroughly reviewed.
- **Arranging Meetings:** The administration of a committee consults with its staff member's to develop an agenda and directs its work. These meetings also play an important role in maintaining the group's focus towards their respective goals arouses group thinking, encourages channels discussions and free flow of ideas i.e. discussion of prospective suggestions and ideas, recapitulates constructive suggestions and presents with conclusions.
- **Maintenance of Records:** It is essential to maintain good and fair records of the committee work and assignments. The administration should be frequently consulted regarding the progress of allotted assignments to the committee members [5].
- **Motivating team Members:** The administration of a committee should encourage and motivate its members toward active participation. The administration must channel the interests and talents of individual committee members into productive efforts.

11. RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COMMITTEE MEMBER

Committee members play a significant role in the functioning of an organization. The achievements of a committee depend upon the contributions made by each of its members [29]. The general duties and responsibilities of a committee member are outlined as follows:

- The members should attend all the meetings.
- Reviewing the agenda and seeking clarification of any issue that is not understandable [29].
- The members must pertain the exact purpose of the meeting is and decide in advance how and what to contribute.
- The committee members should not hesitate to comment or criticize constructively or disagree [17-19].
- The committee members should effectively consult with their team and effectively decide upon certain matters.

12. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The committee also plays a significant role in the efficient functioning of a non-profit organization [11]. The main function of the committee is to ensure that the channels of communication are kept open amongst all committee members and that there is no discrepancy or partiality maintained in this fact [30-32]. Some distinctive roles of the committee are mentioned as follows:

- The committee should effectively coordinate meeting amongst the administration and the committee members.

- The committee should ensure the effective functioning of the organizational programs and whether the financial needs are timely met to attain necessary feats [21-23].
- The committee serves as an informational passage in between the members of the establishment and the administration and conveys the decisions and the directives issued by the administration to the members and the associated problems, ideas and suggestions by the members of the committee to the administration [24-29, 31].

13. CONCLUSION

Volunteers serve as an integral part of a non-profit organization. Initiating from the procedure of advertisement, recruitment and till the allotment of tasks the administration of an organization should efficiently manage these protocols. Prior to the allotment of tasks to the volunteers, they should be duly provided proper description of the task, it is also imperative to allot the tasks by first carefully reviewing the candidature of the volunteer and taking his/her consent. The administrative tasks are performed by committees allocated to perform in certain fields. Active participation of administrators alongside the volunteers is essential for efficient functioning of an organization.

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