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Generating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations [2014]

Ken Culp III

University of Kentucky, ken.culp@uky.edu

Christy Eastwood

University of Kentucky, ceastwoo@uky.edu

Janet H. Johnson

University of Kentucky, jjohnson@uky.edu

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Facilitator's Guide

Generating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations

Rationale:

Successful organizations consist of members, volunteers and leaders who engage creative talents and interests to serve the community more effectively. To effectively address community issues, the organization must assess its participant needs with specific roles and responsibilities necessary to take action.

Program Goal:

To examine organizational processes leading to successful participant recruitment and the fulfillment of mutually satisfying community service goals.

The extensive content of this topic may require multiple one-hour sessions.

Session One

Program Objectives:

- Define the differences between members and participants in 4-H programs
- Define the differences between volunteers and leaders in 4-H programs
- Examine the needs assessment process that directs successful recruitment of members, volunteers or leaders necessary for achieving the organization's mission
- Develop needs-based roles and responsibility position descriptions to successfully recruit and fill member, volunteer or leader organizational roles

Session Two

Program Objectives:

- Employ an effective member, volunteer and leader recruitment plan necessary for achieving organizational goals and objectives
- Examine and follow volunteer selection and screening practices when filling organizational roles

Pre-Program Preparation/Materials:

- Secure laptop computer, projector and wireless access capacity.
- Download PowerPoint Presentation: KELD Leadership Curriculum *Generating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations: Grow Your Group by Building Its Membership*.
- Review *GEMS Administrative Model Overview* (CLD2-3) to understand content sequence in overall organizational leadership development process.
- Prepare copies of the fact sheet *Generating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations: Grow Your Group by Building Its Membership* (CLD2-4) for participants.
- Prepare copies of participant activity handouts and activity cards:
 - » *Jasper County Organizational Needs Assessment Discussion Guide* example handout for Learning Activity 2
 - » *Volunteer Position Description* component cards, *Volunteer Position Description Template* handout, and *Jasper County 4-H Council President's Roles and Responsibilities* handout for Learning Activity 3
 - » *Volunteer Recruitment Plan Discussion Questions* handout for Learning Activity 4
 - » *Jasper County 4-H Council Member Interest Survey* example handout for Learning Activity 5

Introduction:

Successful organizations consist of people who serve the community by engaging their creative talents and interests to serve the organization as well

This leadership curriculum was developed by 4-H Youth Development agents with University of Kentucky specialists. Examples in the guide are geared toward an 4-H audience. This guide may be reproduced or modified for educational or training purposes and used with other audiences.

as the community. Effective organizations are composed of a variety of members, volunteers and leaders. The collective interests, skills and abilities of these individuals can be called to action to fulfill identified community needs and assist or serve specific clientele, audiences or populations. But what type of participant does your organization really need?

Introductory Activity:

Pose the following group question for discussion:

“Can a person be a participant or a member of an organization and not be a volunteer or a leader?”

Ask individuals to respond with different ideas to introduce the concept of differences in roles.

Respond: “Many organizations talk about recruiting new members or holding a membership campaign without considering what the organization can provide to members and participants or what it needs and can provide to volunteers and leaders. Understanding the differences between members, participants, volunteers or leaders and what type of individual is needed to accomplish the goals of the organization is the first step for successful recruitment.”

Objective 1: To define the differences between members and participants in 4-H programs

Ask the following discussion question:

“What is the difference between youth who are 4-H participants and those who are 4-H members?”

Ask members to respond with different ideas to introduce the concept of differences in current and future participant roles.

Not all program participants are actually 4-H members. For example, a youth who participates in Reality Store or is in a classroom in which the 4-H agent conducts a school enrichment program are 4-H participants. However, only those individuals who have completed a 4-H enrollment form are members of an organized 4-H club.

Objective 2: To define the differences between volunteers and leaders in 4-H programs

Share the excerpt below to help define the role differences in an organization leader and a volunteer.

“Not all parents and council members actually become 4-H volunteers. Volunteering requires active participation and involvement. It is possible to be a member of an organization without ever voluntarily

contributing time, talents or service to it. Likewise, not all volunteers become leaders. A leader is an individual who shares leadership skills with a group. An important component of leadership is a group of followers. For example, individuals who are actively involved in the church but do not assume a leadership position contribute as volunteers.

All four groups—members, participants, volunteers and leaders—have important roles in the organization and are dependent upon each other to complete their roles. However, organizations may have different needs. Organizations wanting to expand their outreach in the community need program participants. For those organizations that simply need to build support or funding capacity, recruiting dues-paying members may be the priority. For member-rich organizations, or those whose goals, programs, projects or activities require additional input or service, volunteer recruitment should be the focus. An established organization may find that building its leadership base is the most important need. This is especially critical for identifying future goals or building relationships with community stakeholders and elected officials.”

What type of participant should your recruitment activities target? Understanding the difference between members, leaders and volunteers is the first step.

Learning Activity 1:

Pose this question to the entire group:

“What roles do the following participants serve in their extension 4-H organization – leader, member, participant or volunteer?”

Share and describe the examples listed individually. After each one, ask the audience to guess which role they serve. The correct answers are listed below in bold. At the end of this exercise, make sure the group understands the difference between each of the different roles presented.

- **Emilio:** Attends monthly 4-H club meetings and participates in club activities (**member**)
- **Chastity:** Attends monthly 4-H teen club meetings, serves on the fund-raising committee, registers exhibits at the county fair (**volunteer and member**)
- **Tommy:** Attends monthly 4-H club meetings, serves as volunteer club leader (**leader**)
- **Felicia:** A fifth-grade student who participates in 4-H School Enrichment activities (**participant**)
- **Stan:** Represents Shooting Sports on the 4-H Council, serves as chair of the Client Protection Committee and as 4-H Camp Counselor (**member, volunteer, leader**)

Objective 3: To examine the needs assessment process that directs successful recruitment of members, volunteers or leaders necessary for achieving the organization's mission

A needs assessment provides a big picture look at the organization and its programs. Assessing needs determines what tasks need to be performed to accomplish the goals of the organization. The vague idea of “we need more volunteers to get things done” must be defined. A needs assessment is conducted by assembling a group of individuals representing different groups and segments of the community and soliciting their input and advice about a specific problem, issue, need or concern. Once identified, these problems, issues, needs or concerns become a basis for programming, based upon the mission of the community organization. In other words, after having identified these problems, issues, needs and concerns, the group then determines “How will our organization respond?” and “What do we hope to accomplish through the efforts of members, volunteers and leaders?” Which type of individuals do we need to accomplish the goals of the organization?”

Learning Activity 2:

Distribute the *Organizational Needs Assessment Discussion Guide* sample to the group. Read the scenario to group:

Jasper County Extension 4-Hs discuss community issues in preparing for their plan of work. They collectively agree on one specific issue that is important to the community.

Discuss the following questions:

- What was the community issue?
- What did they re-state as their mission?
- Is their organization's mission relevant to this community issue?
- How did they choose to respond to this issue?
- What were their participant recruitment needs – members, leaders or volunteers?
- What roles did they need to define for members, leaders, or volunteers for accomplishing this goal?

Objective 4: To develop needs-based roles and responsibility position descriptions to successfully recruit and fill member, volunteer or leader organizational roles

Share: *The very essence of leadership is its purpose. And the purpose of leadership is to accomplish a task. That is what leadership does—and what it does is more important than what it is or how it works. –Colonel Dandridge M. Malone*

A good leader understands what is expected in order to accomplish purpose!

To recruit volunteers and leaders to accomplish organizational goals and to recruit the best person for the role, the duties, role and responsibilities of each leadership position should be articulated in a written volunteer position description. Volunteer position descriptions include a written explanation of the position and role and constitute an agreement between the individual and the staff member or other organizational leader. Position descriptions help everyone, including both potential and current volunteers as well as the volunteer administrator, to understand their duties, responsibilities, and the expectations of the position. People who don't understand what's expected either won't volunteer, won't experience success, or won't have a positive experience.

Learning Activity 3:

Distribute *Volunteer Position Description* component cards to participants randomly. Distribute the *Volunteer Description* template and *Roles and Responsibilities for Jasper County Extension 4-H President* example to the group. Ask participants to shout out components by number order. After each component, ask group to look at *Roles and Responsibilities for Jasper County Extension 4-H President* and provide the required information from the example for each component.

Examples:

Facilitator: “What's the first component of a volunteer position description?” Participant with number 1 shouts “Position Title!”

Facilitator: “What is this on our example?”

Answer: County 4-H president

Ask the group:

- Where would you find the information to include under the specific position components (council constitution, standing rules, etc.)?
- How do listings of specific roles and responsibilities help with recruiting new volunteers or leaders to the organization?
- How will using this tool better enable the organization to accomplish its goals?

End of Session 1. Begin Session 2

Objective 5: To employ an effective participant recruitment plan necessary for achieving organizational goals and objectives

So now that you know what type of participant you need to accomplish your goals, how do you develop a recruitment plan based on the member, type of volunteer or leadership your organization needs?

Review the *Eleven Tips as a Foundation for a Successful Recruitment Plan* (using PowerPoint slides):

- **Conduct an organizational needs assessment.** Identify the specific tasks that need to be done to fulfill the needs of the group or organization.
- **Define the task** (through a needs assessment) and role (defined in a position description).
- **Market your organization** and its volunteer opportunities throughout the community, using a variety of marketing strategies.
- **Look around and ask: “Who’s not here?”** then recruit someone from an unrepresented group. (Increases your leader pool.)
- **Recruit for skills**, interests, or specific abilities rather than recruiting specific individuals.
- **Begin with short-term, episodic** (a single episode) **involvement.** (Do not overwhelm new volunteers!)
- **Appeal to the individual’s own interests** and motivation. (Based on member interest surveys)
- **Use a “wide angle lens”** for volunteerism. (Begin with the general purpose of the organization, then narrow the search as you learn more about the individual’s own interests.)
- **Send a member to recruit a member.** Ask a volunteer to recruit a volunteer.
- **Make good use of people’s time** by asking them to serve the organization in meaningful ways.
- **Offer perks, incentives and rewards** as recognition for outstanding efforts.

Learning Activity 4:

Review the *Jasper County 4-H Council Needs Assessment Discussion Guide* results. If the Jasper County 4-H Council wants to hold a community cooking show to encourage families to include more fruits and vegetables in meals, how would they develop a volunteer recruitment plan? Discuss the following questions on the PowerPoint; allow time for group responses.

- What tasks need to be performed for this event? What roles will be needed? (**Examples:** a committee chairman, volunteers for the event planning committee, event marketing chair, registration volunteers, etc.)

- How do they market these roles to find people who might be interested in accepting these event roles? (**Examples:** advance news photo promoting planning committee and project, newsletter article outlining volunteer needs, website or Facebook posts to market and recruit people.)
- What tools can be used to recruit for skills, interests or and abilities in individuals, rather than just shift the responsibilities to a position? (**Examples:** an interest survey, sign-up sheet, etc.)
- Who should recruit for volunteer roles? (The Extension agent or 4-H Council members?)
- How do we make sure the volunteer’s or leader’s time is well spent? (Clear responsibilities outlined, clear meeting time/location schedules, clear project timeline.)

Objective 6: To examine individual selection and screening placement processes for best fulfilling organizational roles

Share: “Common screening processes for volunteer organizations that involve a specific screening protocol include completing an application, undergoing a criminal record check, sex-offender registry check, an interview and checking references. Generally, organizations whose clientele include children or at-risk audiences require the highest levels of screening. If projects or activities are a focus of your organization, it is helpful for the organization to ask each member to complete an interest inventory. The interest inventory is used to determine what people enjoy doing, what they’re good at doing, what projects or activities they are interested in, as well as the skills, interests and abilities that each person can share.”

Share: “Members can be recruited with a membership campaign promoting the organization’s mission, goals and appeal to personal interests.” Current members can become volunteers through the use of a Member Interest Inventory, with these goals in mind:

- Identify the specific skills and interests that could be utilized in new volunteer role opportunities.
- Match special interests skills and abilities to specific volunteer roles available in the organization.

An interest inventory for 4-H should be provided to new members and volunteers when they join and should include sections for listing personal interests as well as potential volunteer opportunities from the organization’s annual plan of work or county action plan. An interest survey should be updated each year for current project volunteer needs and could be used to match interested new members for project committees and potential leader roles.

Learning Activity 5:

Ask council members and volunteers to complete an annual interest survey. (Answers would include the individual's name, contact information, hobbies, work/career information, skills, talents and interests, specific checklist events, other volunteer interests, etc.)

Ask group members to participate in this scenario exercise:

You are the chair of the Jasper County Fair Teen Club Concession Stand committee. A successful event requires many skills and talents as well as the participation of many individuals. You are handed Jennifer Flower's *Jasper County 4-H Interest Inventory*.

How can you use Jennifer's information to help with volunteer needs? Should Jennifer be referred to other project activities other than the concession stand?

(Examine Jennifer's interest inventory; ask members to generate ideas on projects and roles she could be asked to participate in based on her personal interest, skillset and talent information.)

Ask: "Now that you have examined an interest survey, what types of items would you include on your organization's interest inventory?"

Whose responsibility would it be to develop, distribute and utilize the information?

Summary:

Share: "Generating participants, members, volunteers and leaders is an important component of all community organizations. Without new participants, members, volunteers and leaders, all organizations

will eventually wither and die. The first step in generating members, volunteers and leaders is to conduct a needs assessment. The information gathered in the needs assessment is utilized to develop position descriptions for volunteers and leaders. Position descriptions articulate the general purpose of the role, as well as the specific responsibilities. Identifying and following a recruitment plan and selection process will ensure that your organization and its membership will remain strong, viable, healthy and active!"

References:

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Adapted by: Ken Culp, III, Principal Specialist for Volunteerism, Department of 4-H Youth Development and Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Family Sciences; Christy Eastwood, Boone County Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development; and Susan Turner, Monroe County Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development, from original materials developed by: Ken Culp, III, Principal Specialist for Volunteerism, Department of 4-H Youth Development and Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Family Sciences; and Janet H. Johnson, Allen County Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Sciences
