

# Volunteers and Paid Staff

Improving Relationships



Government of South Australia  
Office for Volunteers

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TIME: Start on time Allow NO MORE than 10 minutes

Introduce yourself ( your name should already be on the Board) – very brief!! Set the example!!

Welcome INCLUDING brief Traditional welcome.

Housekeeping Toilets, Coffee, Break time - 15 mins at half time.

Note taking - Handouts will include all reference such as website/texts etc.

Time Management “for the benefit of the whole group”

Introductions and Ice Breaker

Say who you are, your organisation, what you want from today

Trainer Boards these for later reference

## Objectives

- Identify the roles and responsibilities of volunteers
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of paid staff to volunteers
- Have a communication plan between volunteers and paid staff
- Support collaborative relationships between paid and volunteer staff
- Identify challenges in managing the relationship between paid and volunteer staff

Check that this is what people expect

## **Useful resource**

Volunteers & paid workers

A collaborative approach

by Joy Noble

People can order these

## The staff/volunteer interface

### Brainstorm

- What's the difference between paid and voluntary staff?
- Why do people undertake paid work?
- Why do people volunteer?
- What do paid workers expect from a job?
- What do volunteers expect from volunteering?

Brainstorm exercise on whiteboard. Aim is to emphasise more similarities than differences. Important to show that volunteers have rights too.

Allow around 10 minutes.

## Definition of volunteering

- Provision of a service to the community
- Done of one's own free will
- Done without monetary reward



Ask participants for their opinions

## Definition of paid work

- Performed for a wage or salary
- Conditions set through awards or agreements
- Legal rights and responsibilities

See what participants' definition is before revealing this slide

## Activity



### Try on someone else's shoes



Try to assign participants to a group they do not belong to in their volunteering role. This activity works best when the group is mixed because then the discussion can focus on the accuracy of the other people's perceptions. It's still a good exercise even if all members are volunteers because it highlights that different members of the organisation have different priorities and concerns.

Break into small groups

Each group will represent one of the following: management committee/ board; paid staff; volunteer manager; clients; volunteers; politicians; the wider community

On butcher's paper answer from the perspective of your group:

What are your expectations of volunteers?

What do you think volunteers want?

What do you think volunteers don't like? What might they worry about?



## Activity



### Try on someone else's shoes (cont.)

Repeat for paid staff members

- What are your expectations of paid staff?
- What do you think paid staff want when working with volunteers?
- What do you think paid staff don't like about working with volunteers? What are the concerns or worries?



Allow 30 minutes - 10 minutes for trying each shoes and 10 minutes for discussion.

Understand each other and value each other.

Pin the sheets around the room as these will be used for later exercises.

## Rights and responsibilities

Many people are eager to demand their rights but can forget that this has to be balanced with taking responsibility.



## Rights of volunteers

What are your rights in the workplace as a volunteer?

Participants to write their ideas in workbook – see how they fared in comparison with the following list:

to work in a healthy and safe environment (refer to Occupational Health and Safety Act[s]);

to be employed in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation;

to be adequately covered by insurance;

to be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which you are working;

to be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the organisation ;

to have a copy of the organisation's volunteer policy and any other policy that affects your work;

not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker;

not to do the work of paid staff during industrial disputes;

to have a job description and agreed working hours;

to have access to a grievance procedure;

to be provided with orientation to the organisation;

to have your confidential and personal information protected under the Privacy Act 1988: and

## Responsibilities of volunteers



What are your responsibilities as a volunteer in the workplace?

Ask participants to answer this question first then compare with the list:

- To accept the agencies aims and roles
- To be punctual and conscientious
- To do what was agreed in the duty statement
- To be reliable
- To notify their supervisor if they can't work
- To maintain confidentiality
- To support other volunteers and paid workers
- To be a team member
- To know their limitations
- To be familiar with policies and procedures which affect their work
- To adhere to OHS procedures
- To maintain boundaries
- To undertake training
- To participate in the organisation
- To agree to police or other mandated checks
- To accept supervision, support and feedback

## **Paid Staff have Rights too!**

In your opinion what are the rights of paid staff when working alongside volunteers?

Ask the opinion of people at the workshop:

That volunteers will share the aims and goals of the organisation

To be able to rely on volunteers' attendance in order to plan service provision

That volunteers will adhere to duties agreed to in their duty statement

That volunteers will attend meetings, training and developmental activities wherever possible

That volunteers will not overstep boundaries

That volunteers will not bring the organisation into disrepute

To be able to undertake their duties without undue interruption

To be confident legislative requirements are understood and met

To be sure confidentiality and privacy of information will be protected

To have volunteers work as part of a team

Not to be pressured to reimburse expenses not agreed to

Not to have to work of paid staff assigned to volunteers

## **Paid Staff also have responsibilities**

Do paid staff have responsibilities towards volunteers in the workplace?

Ask participants to make a list first:

- To recruit fairly and honestly
- To provide accurate duty statements
- To provide orientation and training
- To ensure work given to volunteers is rewarding and meets their needs
- To ensure volunteers are not placed in positions previously held by paid staff
- To ensure policies and procedures are clearly written and easily available
- To listen to concerns and suggestions of volunteers
- To include volunteers in the organisation's planning and operations
- To ensure adherence to legislative requirements
- To provide adequate insurance coverage
- To reimburse out-of-pocket expenses as agreed in policy
- To provide constructive feedback on performance on a regular basis
- To ensure procedures are in place to reward and recognise volunteers

## Relationship impact

- The changing nature of work
- Motivations, characteristics and expectations of paid and voluntary staff
- Appropriateness of work for a volunteer
- Relationships between staff, volunteers and clients
- Structures and strategies to maximise outcomes

What impact does this difference in roles have on the relationship between paid staff and volunteers?

# The importance of policies, procedures and guidelines

## Brainstorm

Why are policies, procedures and guidelines important?

Brainstorm – allow 5 minutes to do and discuss

Ensuring the goals and objectives of the organisation are met

Identifying different roles and responsibilities

Ensuring work is carried out within defined job roles and responsibilities

Ensuring consistency in tasks

Ensuring clients are treated equally

Making decision making easier and consistent

Maintaining an open organisation

To be pro-active and creative

## Establishing Guidelines

Remember the shoes?

General guidelines for generic situations

Specific guidelines for specific situations

If the participants belong to an organisation which already has good guidelines, get them to help others.

Allow about 15minutes

Activity:

Giving consideration to the issues we identified earlier when trying on each others' shoes and the rights and responsibilities of staff and volunteers, work out guidelines for volunteers in your organisation. Work in small groups with people from similar organisations.

Consider general and specific issues

## Guidelines

**The National Standards are a  
good place to start**

**Job satisfaction for everyone –  
is good practice**

Ask what specific issues relate to their organisations?

Organisational goals

Defining roles and responsibilities

Orientation, duty statements, conditions, training, communication, support and supervision

Legislative requirements

Entitlements

Communication systems

Building trust, recognition and support within the organisation

Allocation of tasks

Job satisfaction

Volunteer manager's role

Resources

Access to debriefing/ counselling

Grievance procedures

Industrial disputes

Review of guidelines

## Planning for good relationships

*'Failing to plan is planning to fail'*

Good relationships in the workplace rarely just happen.

We need to plan to succeed.

Aim: to get them to see organisations need a communication plan, training plan, rewards and recognition plan, recruitment plan, team building plan etc.

**What kind of plans do we need to succeed?**

**Spend 5 minutes with the person next to you thinking about this.**

## Improving relationships through planning

- Recruitment
- Training
- Communication
- Team building
- Rewards and recognition

How will relationships be improved if these plans are in place and actively followed?

## Communication



- Nobody told me
- Decisions are made when I'm not here
- It's a two-way thing

Round robin allow 5-10 minutes to do this with discussion.

Many volunteers complain they don't know what's going on, don't hear about meetings or that things change without them being consulted or told etc.

Many staff members complain volunteers don't know what's going on, don't come to meetings, don't tell them when there's a problem etc.

How does your organisation currently communicate between paid staff and volunteers?

Is it successful (from both perspectives)?

## Key Messages

- Relevant
- About the job and the workplace
- Open to suggestions
- Procedures and policies

Information relevant to work is shared between paid staff and volunteers

Communicating with others about work matters

Opinions and suggestions are listened to appropriately

Assistance and direction is actively sought and given as required

Workplace procedures are used to address concerns

# Communication options

What options are there?

What works when?

Whiteboard Answers to first question, then consider the second question which is about effectiveness and appropriateness

Meetings (whole staff, AGMs, volunteers, organisational areas ...)

One on one conversations

Training sessions

Notice boards

Volunteer books

Newsletters

Suggestion boxes

Performance reviews

Telephone

Letters

Email

Intranet

Organisation's website

Chat rooms

SMS (text messages)

Social events

Any more?

# Equity

Is it fair ?

Is it impartial?

Why do we need it?

Meaning of equity. Talk about equality, respect etc

**What does equity mean? Ask participants to make some notes of their own ideas.**

The quality of being fair or impartial

Why do we need it?

Communication and other plans must always be equitable to all staff and volunteers.

When making plans ensure that you consider the rights of workers and volunteers.

All work areas are subject to the same standards and requirements

Workplace relationships respect the individual differences of workers

Work practices are culturally appropriate

The work environment is a safe place for all workers and volunteers

Communication methods are culturally appropriate

Communication methods are accessible to all

Plans and procedures aim to eliminate bias and discrimination

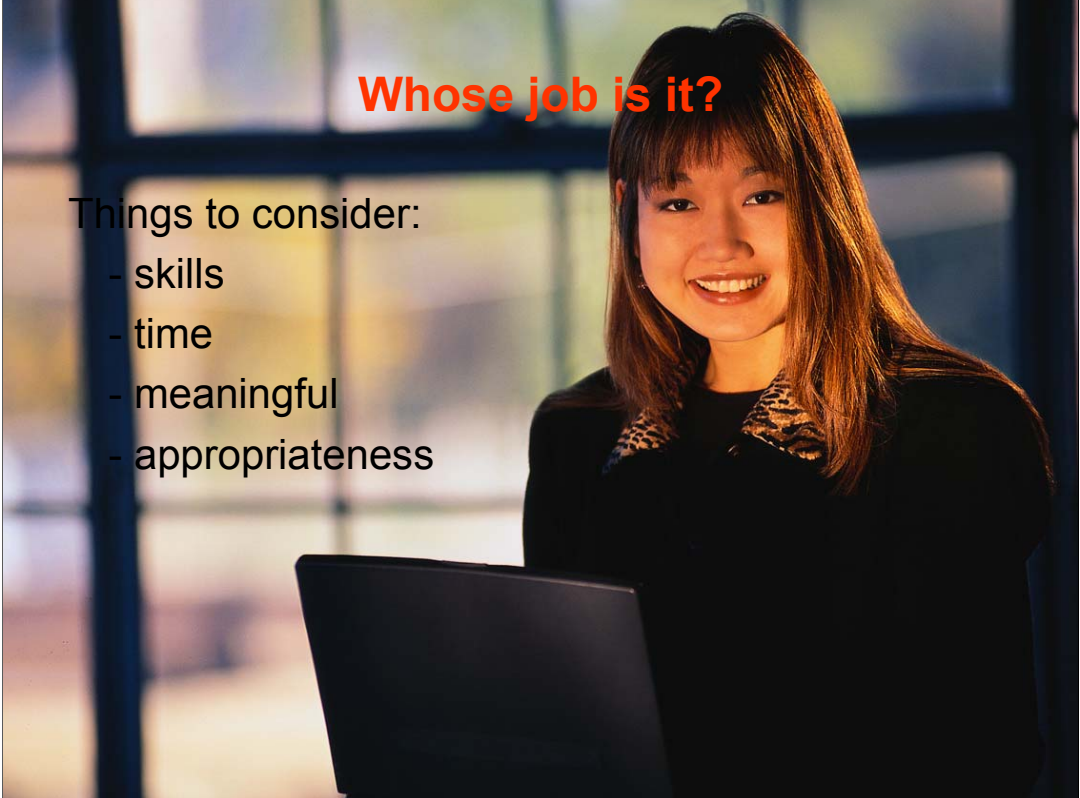
Special needs or people with disabilities are catered to

Efforts are made to overcome language or literacy barriers

## Whose job is it?

Things to consider:

- skills
- time
- meaningful
- appropriateness



**Whether a task should be the province of a paid or voluntary worker will often depend on:**

The skills/ qualifications, and the responsibilities involved.

The time required, which can relate to total hours or the need for continuity.

The need to demand conformity whether the worker is willing or not.

The history and structure of the organisation, particularly in relation to including volunteers.

The appropriateness of the job for a volunteer.

# Demarcation

- Not for profit sector
- Government departments
- For profit organisations

## **The issue of demarcation does not apply:**

Across all areas and industries - eg. Manufacturing, power supply and banking. Volunteers generally only work in industries which are directly involved with people - eg. Sport, arts, health, or in promoting a sustainable environment.

Within some small organisations where no paid workers are employed and where participants self-fund any expenses.

Within many associations or clubs - eg. the Lions Club or the local basketball club, both of which are administered through the voluntary efforts of their own members.

## **Three areas where demarcation may be an issue:**

Community organisations which involve both paid and voluntary workers.

Government departments involved in providing human services or environmental concerns.

For-profit enterprises, which with the encouragement of government, are providing human services

## Case Studies



- *What are the common themes or trends you are noticing?*
- *What are the main messages you are taking away from this exercise?*

**NOTE:** Case studies are geared to different sectors. Select ones relevant to your group.

**Alternatively,** make up situations which may be more relevant or ask participants for real life issues to discuss. *Read through the case study on your card.*

*Identify the issues in your case study you think would need to be considered using the guidelines you worked on in the last activity.*

*There are 16 case studies in the set of cards. Shuffle the cards and place participants in pairs or 3s depending on the size of the group. Give 2 per group or 3 per group depending on the size of the group and time allocation.*

*Ask each group to come up with the issues in their case studies they think would need to be considered using the guidelines they worked on in the last activity.*

*Allow 15 minutes for this discussion and do a round robin at the end: What are the common themes or trends you are noticing? What are the main messages you are taking away from this exercise?*

# Team Building

What is a team?

What makes an effective team?

Why do teams need building?

What is a team? Brainstorm and discussion 5 minutes - a checklist to add to whatever participants say.

A team is a number of people:

- with commitment to a common purpose

- with commitment to common performance goals

- with commitment to a common approach

- with complementary skills

- who hold themselves mutually accountable

- who agree to work together to plan, identify problems or issues

- who work together to decide what should be done

- who work together to take the actions necessary to achieve their agreed goals.

What makes an effective team? Brainstorm and discussion 5 minutes a checklist to add to whatever participants say.

- a designated leader who encourages participation by all members of team, maintaining a sense of direction and distributing/delegating tasks and roles appropriately

- agreed goals and objectives which give the team direction and determine tasks or actions

- shared decision making structures which encourage consultation and

## Including volunteers in the team



Round robin – allow only a short discussion as it feeds into the next activity.

Taking time to say 'hello' or 'thank you'

Inclusion in team meetings

ID badges or uniforms

Asking them for their opinion

Inclusion in training or social events

Ensuring rewards are shared around

Giving them a share in the interesting tasks

Treating them like other staff members

Giving them a secure place to put their belongings while working

There are many other ways. How does your organisation help volunteers to feel valued team members?



## Building a better team

**Content on P51 of “ Essential Guide”.** The aim is to get people to suggest ways to build the team – social activities etc. Be specific and relevant to their own organisations.

Present to the group, sticking the post-its on the whiteboard. Allow 5 minutes for ideas and 5minutes for presentation of ideas.

*Activity – What are you going to do to ensure that team work and positive relations continue between paid and voluntary workers in your organisation?*

*Divide into pairs finding someone you haven't been working with during the session and come up with ideas that will generate or enhance a collaborative and effective relationship between volunteers and paid workers. Write your ideas on post-its. Money is no object !*

## Evaluation

**Please complete an evaluation form and leave  
it with the trainer before you leave  
😊 THANK YOU 😊**

ACTIVITY: Evaluation Sheet

Contacts for the future include organisations that have engaged well with young people. Networking can begin. Look to orgs like the Red Cross, or local councils.

On a more formal level enrol in more training.

www.ofv.sa.gov.au .

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