

SPORT VOLUNTEER PROJECT

Volunteer Recognition

Produced by Parks and Recreation Ontario and the Sport Alliance of Ontario with support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Length of Workshop:	3 hours (including 15-minute break)
Registration Package (sent in advance):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time and Location of Training• Name of Trainer• Goals of Workshop and Agenda• Information about parking, reimbursement of expenses, child care arrangements, accessibility to those with disabilities• Resource Links Page (for those who want to review in advance)
Room Set-Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Table groups with 5 to 7 places at each• Resource table• Presenter's table• Flipcharts and stands (2 if possible)• Sample resources on resource table• Hand Outs on Tables
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refreshments (as desired)• Name tags• Pens and lined paper for each table• Flipchart paper, enough for every table• Masking tape for posting pages on wall• Markers, enough for every table
Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognizing Volunteers – Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association• Volunteer Management Kit for Recreation Leaders (NWT Sport and Recreation) p. 22-24• Have We Thanked the Volunteers – Ontario Volunteer Centre Network• Resource Links Sheet• Evaluation Form• Participant List (if desired, or if group is large) <i>Because of privacy concerns, don't share more than names and organizations without express permission from participants to do so.</i>
Before workshop	Prepare and post on flipcharts:
Note re: Size of Group	<u>Agenda</u>
<i>The style of facilitation and kind of exercises you choose from the options below will depend on how many people attend the workshop.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Introductions2. What is Good Volunteer Recognition3. How Recognition Can Help Your Organization4. Planning for Recognition5. Wrap-Up and Evaluation
<i>The goal is to ensure that all participants can contribute equally within the time available.</i>	<u>Goals of the Workshop</u> – At the end of this workshop you will be able to:
<i>A small group equals two to ten people.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Understand what volunteer recognition is and how it can help your organization2. Assess what different kinds of recognition your volunteers would appreciate3. Make a plan to ensure your volunteers are thanked and recognized appropriately

Guidelines for Working Together (examples)

- Equal Chance to Participate
- Respect and Listening
- Finish on Time
- Look after your own needs (breaks, refreshments, ask if you don't understand)

You may also want to flipchart the Introduction guidelines and the main points that are in plain text below for easy reference during the workshop.

1 Introductions — 15 minutes

Facilitator introduces her/himself, and does 'housekeeping' items, e.g. location of washrooms, refreshments, who to ask about expense questions, etc.

Then review the goals of the workshop and agenda and answer any questions.

Facilitator asks each participant to briefly introduce themselves according to the guidelines for introductions, e.g.

Give your name, group, and one hope/ or expectation for this workshop, and one way you have been thanked or recognized for volunteer work in the past that you really appreciated.

*Flipchart the two lists, e.g. the hopes/expectations and the ways people were recognized **or ask a participant to scribe for you.** If you fill more than one page, post the pages on the wall.*

If your group is larger than 15 people, do this process in groups of 4 to 8 by giving tables 5-10 minutes to introduce themselves to each other, and share their hopes/expectations and how they have been thanked. Then ask each table in turn to name just one hope/expectation and one "thank you" method that was shared and flipchart the responses. Go around the tables again until you cover most of the ideas raised by the tables.

When everyone is finished, review the hopes/expectations list. If some of the hopes/expectations won't be covered by the day's agenda, suggest where people might get the info, i.e. in another workshop or where else they could look. You may want to add some hope/expectations that were mentioned (e.g. have fun!) to the guidelines for working together.

Segue to the next section by reviewing the agenda, pointing out what parts of the agenda will meet the other hopes and expectations.

2 What is Good Volunteer Recognition? — 30 minutes

With the help of the group and the flipcharts you created from the introduction round, name and flipchart different categories for ways that participants have been recognized in the past for their own volunteer work. Some categories might include letters, gifts or tokens of appreciation (e.g. certificates, plaques, t-shirts, etc.), invitations to events, public recognition (e.g. mention in media stories or letters to the editor, photos submitted to media or posted in public places), access to knowledge or privileges (e.g. training, special treatment, etc.) and others.

Then ask if some participants have received recognition that they didn't feel was necessary or appropriate, or that they just didn't enjoy as much. Discuss why they felt that way. Ask if anyone has asked their volunteers what recognition or appreciation they would like to receive? What were the answers?

Ask participants to think about if there are any patterns about what people appreciate and don't appreciate. (It's likely that different individuals will like different kinds of recognition – the patterns are likely to be that the recognition is personalized, timely and appropriate to the level of contribution.)

Hand out “Recognizing Volunteers” and ask how their experience compares to the tips (six bullet points at the top) on the handout.

3 How Recognition Can Help Your Organization — 15 minutes

Brainstorm with participants why an organization might want to recognize their volunteers and flipchart the answers. If necessary, prompt the group to consider benefits beyond keeping volunteers, e.g.

- Improve public awareness and good will towards the organization
- More media coverage
- Recruit new volunteers, both through the good reports of current volunteers, and through the additional public coverage
- Recruit business or individual sponsors or donors who want to be associated with or support the organization
- Public and parent confidence in the organization

BREAK

4 Planning for Recognition: Small Groups – 30 minutes

Ask groups to discuss the four main kinds of motivators outlined on the handout “Recognizing Volunteers,” i.e.

- Praise
- Affiliation
- Accomplishments
- Power and Influence

Discuss:

- i. In what category would participants place themselves?
- ii. What other kinds of recognition or “perks” would respond to each of these “motivators?”
- iii. How could your recognition practices reflect that?

In plenary, ask each table group to share one comment or observation from their discussion. Allow about 10 minutes for discussion and 5 minutes for the plenary.

Hand out the 2 worksheets and “A to Z” list of recognition ideas from the NWT volunteer kit, as well as the handout “Have We Thanked the Volunteers.”

Ask each participant to complete the top part of “How We Recognize Volunteers” by listing what they currently do to recognize their volunteers. Allow no more than 10 minutes for this part.

If most participants hold an annual banquet or event they might also complete the bottom part – the purpose of the workshop is to help people think beyond banquets, but one result of completing the worksheet might be that they realize that the money and effort used to organize a banquet could be used to recognize volunteers in other, more personal timely and appropriate ways.

Ask table groups to work together to complete the worksheet “Volunteer Recognition in 19__” (of course it will now be 20__!), i.e.

Instructions for Groups

- a. Name the volunteers (either individual names or categories like coaches, registration volunteers, etc.) who are active in their organization.
- b. Discuss what recognition those volunteers would most appreciate (e.g. to which “motivator” group they likely belong).

- c. Complete the worksheet for their organization, indicating what recognition is planned for each individual or group and when.
- d. As time permits, go farther and plan the details of each component – e.g. draft the request letters to sponsors you would like to provide perks or passes for volunteers, plan the agenda for an event, start to draft thank you notes, etc.

In plenary, ask each table group to share one new idea they came up with, or one thing they have committed to do differently in the future.

5

Wrap-Up and Evaluation – 15 minutes

As a way of summarizing, refer participants to the Volunteer Development Cycle on page two of “Have we Thanked the Volunteers” ..., pointing out that recognition is only one part of a successful volunteer program. You might also provide the quote from Susan Ellis that is provided at the end of this guide, and discuss it.

Ask them if the discussion of recognition has made them think about other parts of the volunteer cycle in their organization. Point out that there is much more information available on each stage of the process at the links on the resource sheet and on the Sports Volunteer web page.

Evaluation

Encourage participants to complete and hand in the evaluation forms, and/or do an evaluation round. *For example, a ‘weather report’ where everyone says how they are feeling in the form of a weather report, or ask for their responses - Positives, Negatives and Would change” (e.g. +, – and ~) and note them in 3 columns on a flipchart.*

Facilitator thanks those who contributed (organizers, caterers, etc.) and participants, and adjourns.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ONLINE RESOURCE LINKS

<http://www.sportalliance.com/Content/Volunteer%20Resources.asp>

Sports Alliance of Ontario Volunteer Resource Page

<http://www.spra.sk.ca/knowledge/QuickTips/volrecqt.pdf>

Recognizing Volunteers – Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association

<http://www.lin.ca/resource-details/3517>

Volunteer Management Kit for Recreation Leaders – NWT Sport and Recreation, catalogued at Leisure Information Network site

<http://www.volunteer.ca/volunteer/pdf/VOICE13.pdf>

Have We Thanked the Volunteers - #13 of series Involving Volunteers Effectively – Ontario Volunteer Centre Network

<http://www.nald.ca/literacybasics/volunt/recognit/01.htm>

Community Literacy of Ontario’s self-paced course on volunteer management. The recognition section includes lists of ideas of how to recognize volunteers, plus questions for reflection.

<http://www.envision.ca/templates/resources.asp?ID=2831>

Envision – Recognition Tips - A good checklist for planning

<http://www.energizeinc.com/ideas.html>

Energize, a website devoted to volunteer management, shares readers' tips for volunteer recognition on this page.

<http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/honours/>

The Ontario government organizes various awards, including recognition events, for voluntary service. Be sure to fill the forms to nominate your volunteers:

Youth nominees: Must be under 24 years old and have volunteered with one group for at least 2 consecutive years.

Adult nominees: Must have volunteered with one group for at least 5 consecutive years – 9 levels are awarded – at 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30+, 40+, 50+ and 60+ years of continuous service.

<http://www.volunteer.ca/en/volcan/vol-management/hints>

Volunteer Canada's page on recognition: includes helpful hints re why to recognize, as well as extensive lists of ideas, cute slogans, and "at a glance" ideas about how to recognize daily, weekly, annually, etc.

A POINT TO PONDER

"We sometimes confuse "recognition" with "appreciation." These are not the same things and do not always go together. Their common denominator is "acknowledgment." In my opinion, the sincerest form of recognition is to see one's ideas put to use. For volunteers, recognition means feeling that their efforts make a real contribution. You can say thank you a million times, but if people sense that their efforts are wasted, they will never feel good about their volunteer work."

— Susan Ellis

From Susan Ellis's website *Energize* : <http://energizeinc.com/art/nprec.html>

Originally published as the bi-monthly column "On Volunteers" in *The NonProfit Times*, © 1994.

Found in the *Energize* website library at: <http://www.energizeinc.com/art.html>