



*Agency*

# VOLUNTEER TOOLKIT

PHILABUNDANCE

# INTRODUCTION

## “I VOLUNTEER BECAUSE...”

- *“I WANT TO GIVE BACK TO MY CITY.”*
- *“I NEED EXPERIENCE.”*
- *“I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING WITH MY SCHOOL.”*

Whatever the reason, a person who walks through your door and offers her time and skills can transform your impact on the community. Volunteers bring energy, new ideas, and a desire to strengthen their communities. They can help you see your clients with new eyes, improve your organization’s operations, or provide leadership on your board.



Organizations that employ volunteers have a responsibility to them. Volunteers need to know where their help is needed. They need the right tools to do their work. And like any employee, they need to know their opinions are important and that their contribution is valued. When organizations meet these expectations, they are able to attract and retain people who are committed to the cause.

This toolkit is a resource to support Philabundance agencies in their efforts to fight hunger, but its contents should ring true for any organization that employs volunteers to accomplish its goals. The tools and tips this toolkit provides will help to attract, train, and retain quality volunteers to support their services to communities throughout the Delaware Valley.

## THE VOLUNTEER TOOLKIT IS DIVIDED INTO THREE SECTIONS:

1. **Volunteers 101** – A general overview of volunteer types, tasks, and roles
2. **Recruitment and Interviewing** – How to attract people to your organization and make sure they’re the right fit
3. **Training and Managing Volunteers** – Orientations, job training, and managing problems at your organization

While this toolkit can help steer your organization toward attracting and retaining more volunteers, it is not a substitute for the hard work of developing relationships with the people who drive your organization forward. Whether they’re donors, volunteers, food pantry clients, or neighborhood businesses, the time you spend building trust and respect with your community is the biggest factor in any organization’s success.

## 1. VOLUNTEERS 101

Chances are if you’re running a food pantry, a shelter, or an emergency kitchen, you already have a fair amount of experience dealing with volunteers. This section aims to give your organization a new way to think about the people who are already giving their time to your programs, and to help you identify gaps where you could use some help.

### A. GENERAL VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

These volunteer positions allow people with little or no background in your work to jump in and get the job done. Maybe your pantry needs help unloading delivery trucks, or welcoming people through the doors. These are jobs that anyone with a smile and a strong desire to help their community can do and contribute value to your organization.

#### WHEN BRINGING ON GENERAL VOLUNTEERS, YOUR ORGANIZATION SHOULD:

- Use a simple interview to gauge interest level
- Expect little or no ongoing commitment
- Provide brief on-site training

General volunteer positions often take on a good deal of physical labor, but they can assist your organization in other ways. If you have enough folks to stock your pantry shelves, ask another volunteer to spend some time updating your social media page or posting an announcement about what items you have in stock.

Your general volunteers can grow their value to your organization. Have regular conversations with your volunteers about their interests. Maybe one person works at a company that wants to organize a food drive. Maybe you're looking for a board member, and your volunteer has leadership experience. The time you take to learn more about your volunteers will open opportunities for you and your organization.

## B. SKILLED VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Skilled positions require volunteers who have a specific background or certification necessary to fill your organization's needs. Examples include a volunteer driver with a commercial driver's license, a web designer managing your social media presence, or a data entry specialist who maintains client files for your pantry.

### WITH SKILLED VOLUNTEERS, YOUR ORGANIZATION SHOULD:

- Expect a level of experience or expertise
- Ask specific questions in an interview to assess a candidate's skills
- Recruit skilled volunteers for particular projects
- Ask skilled volunteers to serve your organization outside of their normal work hours
- Provide in-depth and on-going training

## C. OTHER NON-PAID ASSISTANCE

Organizations can also develop relationships with schools or businesses to recruit interns or pro-bono volunteers.

Interns are typically students at the high school or college level who are spending time at your organization to gain valuable skills or complete a project required by their instructors.

### YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN MAKE THE MOST OF INTERNS BY:

- Interviewing candidates to understand what they hope to achieve through working at your organization
- Providing in-depth training and orientation for the intern
- Assigning tasks that align with their studies
- Agreeing to a regular schedule that works for your organization and the intern

Pro-bono volunteers can help your organization with specific projects, and often serve because their employer is donating company time to your organization. They have focused experience that your organization has identified as a need, and require special screenings and interviews to make sure you've got a good fit.



## 2. RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

The first step to building your volunteer base is recruiting people to your organization. Volunteers can also be effective boosters of your organization. Your initial recruitment message will let people know what you're about, and what they're getting themselves into.



### A. CREATING & ADVERTISING THE POSITION

A clear, descriptive picture of your volunteer needs can be your most effective tool to get people involved in volunteering at your organization.

#### A GOOD RECRUITING MESSAGE:

- Describes the problem your organization is trying to solve
- Gives a general view of the volunteer's responsibilities
- Helps the volunteer feel at ease with the job duties
- Shows the benefit to the volunteer

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AS YOU CRAFT A RECRUITING MESSAGE:

- Who does your organization help?
- What will the volunteer's time at your organization look like, and how does that help your community?
- What are some reasons a person might hesitate to volunteer for this position?
- What are some reasons your current volunteers enjoy working at your organization?

#### SAMPLE GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION – DINING ROOM ATTENDANTS

Dining Room Attendants are critical to making our guests feel welcome. As you move around the dining room replenishing beverages and talking with guests, you not only help serve perhaps their only meal of the day, but you also create a homelike experience for these individuals currently without a home.

#### SAMPLE SKILLED JOB DESCRIPTION – CSFP ASSISTANT

Philabundance distributes more than 4,500 food boxes each month to low income seniors through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). CSFP is seeking a volunteer whose attention to detail and patience will help Philabundance manage a data-heavy government program. Your experience with data software like Microsoft CRM and Excel will help us more efficiently get food to those in need through our partner agencies, and you'll join the team behind the scenes at our Kensington location.

**Time Commitment:** 8-10 hours a week, 1 year or ongoing

**Location:** 302 West Berks Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122

**Reports to:** Programs Manager

#### BOARD MEMBERS

We often think of volunteers in terms of our day-to-day operations, but the members of your oversight board are also volunteers who contribute to the overall success and governance of your organization. More importantly, having a board member who understands your operational goals and challenges can be a huge ally as you move your organization forward.

If you notice a committed volunteer who has consistent ideas for improving your organization, who promotes their work and your organization, and who understands organizational oversight, consider inviting them to join your board of directors.

For an example of board member responsibilities, please refer to the Appendix, where you'll find Manna on Main Street's Board Member agreement.

## B. TOOLS FOR CRAFTING STRONG RECRUITMENT MESSAGES

Together with another staff person or with your board, brainstorm possible answers for these questions. This exercise can help you identify the precise needs you have and attract the right person for the role.

Volunteer Position Information	
<b>When is the project start date?</b>	<b>How long do you anticipate this project taking?</b>
	<i>Two weeks, six months, indefinitely, etc.</i>
<b>Where will the volunteer work?</b>	<b>When are volunteers needed?</b>
<i>Which location, is there desk space for them, can they work from home?</i>	
Volunteer Task Information	
<b>What will volunteers be doing?</b>	
<i>Please be as specific as possible</i>	
<b>Where will this volunteer task take place?</b>	
<i>If they will need desk space, please identify a desk they are able to use.</i>	
<b>What are the requirements for this task?</b>	
<i>Minimum age requirement:</i> <i>Skills needed:</i> <i>Lifting requirement:</i> <i>Clothing:</i> <i>Other:</i>	
<b>Will the volunteers need materials to complete this task? *If so, you are responsible for providing.</b>	<b>When are volunteers needed?</b>
<i>Computer, gloves, tools, etc.</i>	<i>Date and time. (Ex. M, W, F noon-3:30)</i>
<b>How will the volunteers contribute to your mission?</b>	
<i>How will their work directly affect the people your organization serves?</i>	
<b>How will your organization say "thank you" for the volunteers' service?</b>	
<i>T-shirts? Pizza Fridays? Skills? Experience for their resume?</i>	

## C. OUTREACH EFFORTS

No matter how great your organization is at training volunteers and welcoming them to the team, you'll often find that you need to recruit new people to your cause.

- **Volunteer Service Organizations** – Jesuits, Rotary, Knights of Columbus, Kiwanis, RSVP
- **Community Groups** – Churches, synagogues, mosques, senior centers
- **Volunteer Referral Organizations** – VolunteerMatch.org, Idealist.org, TeenLife.com
- **Students** – High school and college students, elementary students
- **Local Businesses**



Regardless of where your organization finds volunteers, your efforts will be rewarded if you take time to build strong relationships with your partners. Get to know teachers and coaches at the high school, and spend time going to student group meetings at local colleges and universities. If you have volunteers who are already members of local religious organizations, consider asking them to recruit new volunteers.



TRIUMPHANT FAITH INTERNATIONAL WORSHIP CENTER



URBANPROMISE

## D. VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS AND INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

Using an application can help your organization identify roles for your new volunteers that will keep them engaged and willing to return.

# SAMPLE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

## EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

Education (if applicable):

Current Employer:

Address:

Position/Title:

Phone Number:

Job Responsibilities:

## SKILLS & VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Special Training or Certificates:

Groups, Hobbies, or Organized Memberships:

Availability:

Please describe any previous volunteer experience:

How does your experience prepare you to work as a volunteer?

Why do you want to volunteer here?

## INTERVIEWING VOLUNTEER CANDIDATES

When interviewing volunteers, you want to get a general sense of how they will fit into your organization.

Before you go into the interview, ask yourself the following questions:

- What must you know by the end of the interview?
- What do you want to know by the end of the interview?

## E. CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

In Pennsylvania, people are required to obtain clearances before working or volunteering with children. These clearances are easy to obtain, but potential volunteers do need to complete the clearance process before they can begin work at your organization.

### CLEARANCES REQUIRED FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN INCLUDE:

1. Report of criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP); and
2. Child Abuse History Clearance from the Department of Human Services (Child Abuse).

Additionally, a fingerprint based federal criminal history (FBI) submitted through the Pennsylvania State Police or its authorized agent is required if the volunteer has lived outside the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the last 10 years.

### VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE NOT REQUIRED TO OBTAIN THE FBI CLEARANCE BECAUSE;

1. They are applying for an unpaid position and
2. Have been a continuous resident of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years must swear or affirm in writing that they are not disqualified from service based upon a conviction of an offense under §6344.

The [www.KeepKidsSafe.pa.gov](http://www.KeepKidsSafe.pa.gov) website is a fantastic resource for questions about how to protect children in your community. For more information specifically on clearances, visit: <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/resources/clearances/index.htm>

# 3. TRAINING AND MANAGING VOLUNTEERS

## A. ORIENTATIONS AND TRAININGS

After the interview process, your volunteer orientation is your first opportunity to make a strong impression on your volunteers and welcome them to the organization.

VolunteerHub, a volunteer management service that Philabundance uses, offers these Tips for Creating a Successful Volunteer Training Program

### TIP #1: DEVELOP THE PERFECT VOLUNTEER TRAINING PROGRAM FOR YOUR CAUSE

#### ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What does your organization plan to gain from this program
- What are some of the goals of the program?
- Do you have a budget?
- What do you want to teach your volunteers?
- How will you train your volunteers?
- Which one of your team members will facilitate the program?
- Do you need to create a manual with procedures and guidelines?



## TIP #2: INDUCT NEW VOLUNTEERS

- Offer proper screening
- Volunteer management software
- Organize volunteers into groups

## TIP #3: CREATE A WELCOMING ATMOSPHERE

Make a good first impression. Pick a space in your organization to train your volunteers that will be big enough for everyone, provide snacks or coffee, and make sure you have the right team members to introduce themselves and train the new volunteers.

## TIP #4: PRODUCE A MEMORABLE INTRODUCTION

Establish expectations, guidelines, and procedures. Establishing expectations upfront will help determine if your recruited volunteers are the right match for your cause. This also creates transparency. They will know your goals and where your organization is trying to go.

## TIP #5: EXECUTE YOUR NEW TRAINING PROGRAM

This is where your volunteers will feel the value they can add and the growth opportunities your organization can provide them. Show them how volunteering will be a transformational experience or help them develop their skills.

## TIP #6: CELEBRATE MILESTONES

Give new volunteers a social media shout out, throw a pizza party, or give them a small thank-you gift for their time.

## TIP #7: SUPERVISE, SUPPORT, AND EVALUATE YOUR VOLUNTEERS

This will assure your volunteers that they are just as valued as your employees. They want to know that you don't keep weak links around just to have more volunteers.

## B. TRACKING VOLUNTEER TIME

Whether you're applying for funding or filing forms with the Internal Revenue Service, volunteers are a key piece of your organization's story. Tracking volunteer hours can also help you measure the impact of their efforts, and give funders a more complete picture of the work your organization has accomplished.



Tracking every minute of every day for every volunteer will make you crazy, and it's not a good use of time. Instead, make a good-faith and reasonable estimate of those who did any type and amount of volunteer work at your organization. You'll want that estimate when you complete for Part I of Form 990 for your organization. For more information on Form 990 and counting volunteer time, visit <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/annual-reporting-and-filing>.

It's helpful to also keep track of the volunteer projects at your organization. If a volunteer food drive brings in 10,000 pounds of food, some back-of-the-envelope math can help you figure out how many pounds each volunteer is responsible for raising. Funders love to hear these measurements because they show you know how to quantify your efforts.

## C. COMMUNICATION

Your orientation is a first step in creating strong relationships with your volunteers. Maintaining an open and honest dialogue will keep your volunteers and your organization moving forward together and building trust over time. The more you communicate with your volunteers, the more likely they are to come back again and again.

There are some ideas you can work into your organization's routine to give your attention to the volunteers and their experiences.



### DAILY HUDDLES

- Formal meetings can drag energy down, but quick huddles to reintroduce the team and remind everyone why they're volunteering can motivate people before work begins. Schedule huddles for a specific time each day so they become routine and expected, and set the tone with enthusiasm and a positive attitude.

### ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS

- Especially for stand-out volunteers, make time to have brief chats with them about their experience at your organization, and their lives outside of their volunteerism. Even if you're simply walking with them to their car after volunteering, that's an opportunity to reiterate the volunteer's value and hear from them about their day.

### KEEP YOUR EAR TO THE GROUND

- In any organization, people chat with one another about the work they're doing. Make yourself visible and let your volunteers know you're available ready to hear their concerns about the work, or ideas to do things better.

## D. RESOLVING DIFFERENCES

Sometimes there are volunteers who aren't blending in with the organization. While it can be uncomfortable to address your concerns with volunteers, not doing so can harm your operations and your organization's ability to attract dedicated volunteers.

### EXCERPTS FROM

### *5 HEALTHY WAYS TO HANDLE A DIFFICULT VOLUNTEER* BY CAREY NIEUWHOF

This article can be found on Carey Nieuwhof's Blog at <https://careynieuwhof.com/5-healthy-ways-to-handle-a-difficult-volunteer/#comments>

### WHY YOU CAN'T IGNORE IT

If you want a healthy organization, the best ways to handle conflict and unmet expectations are up front and directly.

Let's face it—churches, non profits and businesses struggle every day because people are unwilling to have difficult conversations up front or take meaningful action.

The consequences are huge and costly:

- Factions
- Lost potential
- Dissent
- Frustration
- Gossip
- Low morale
- Resentment

In addition to all these, unresolved conflict and poor performance will also scare off your most capable, healthy leaders. They'll just step back or go elsewhere.

## 5 WAYS TO HANDLE A DIFFICULT VOLUNTEER

While each situation is different, there are principles that apply in almost every situation.

Here are 5 I've found to work well, whether you're dealing with a difficult person or a difficult situation or fit. When I've followed them, things have gone far better than when I haven't:

### 1. DEFINE THE ISSUE

Before you deal with a situation, you need to understand it accurately. Do this before you meet with the individual involved. If you need to, pull in someone who is also familiar with the situation to get another perspective (don't gossip, but occasionally you might need to confidentially pull in someone with great judgment and wisdom).

#### TAKE SOME TIME TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THE PROBLEM MIGHT BE. IS IT:

- **A character issue**—he or she lacks moral judgment, a strong work ethic or can't be trusted?
- **A competency issue**—he or she lacks the skills set required to do the job?
- **A chemistry issue**—he or she is a good and competent person, but the fit just isn't right?

It's way too easy just to say 'he's the problem' or 'she's the problem' but you never really win. Defining the problem helps you solve the problem.

Also, own everything you can. It's almost never 100% them. Find out what you've done wrong and be right up front about that. Once in a while you'll even realize it's not them. It's you.

### 2. SEPARATE THE PERSON FROM THE PROBLEM

This is just so huge. First, an example. When my kids were small and did something that needed punishment my default position was to say "You've been a bad boy" and then assign the punishment. My much smarter wife Toni always corrected me and said, "No, he's a good boy who did a bad thing." While that might not be fully accurate theology, it's great parenting and it's a great conflict management strategy.

Affirm the person. Deal with the problem. Even if it's a character issue, when you affirm the person and deal with the problem you are in a much stronger position.

### 3. GO DIRECT

Have the conversation face to face. And yes, a conversation. Not an email. Not a policy that says "all people must stop doing X" when everybody knows you're really targeting one person and just don't have the guts to talk to them.

Have the conversation over coffee, or in your office.

So how do you have the conversation? Try an affirmation sandwich. Begin with praise. Deal with the issue (the meat). Then end with affirmation.

#### HERE'S A SHORT EXAMPLE:

**Begin.** John I love how you've grown in your faith. I've seen X Y Z over the last year and it's so encouraging.

**Deal with the Issue.** I need to talk to you today about the way your gruff demeanour is rubbing people the wrong way. You might not even be aware of it so I want to give you a chance to talk about it. But it needs to change and I hope we can get there.

**End.** So let's work on this plan together and I'm sure we can see you continue to make progress. I really hope we can work this through and am confident there's a way if we work hard enough.

## OR, LET'S SAY YOU'RE TERMINATING SOMEONE:

**Begin.** John I love how you've grown in your faith. I've seen X Y Z over the last year and it's so encouraging.

**Deal with the Issue.** I need to talk to you today about the way your gruff demeanor is rubbing people the wrong way. I know this has been an ongoing issue and we've talked about it before. I'm afraid we're going to have to ask you not to serve in X anymore.

**End.** I know this is hard, but I'm going to track with you. We want to see you continue to grow and that can happen whether you're on the team or not. We want to help you win.

### 4. FOLLOW UP

Don't finish the relationship when you finish the conversation. So many leaders make that mistake.

Remember, you separated the person from the problem. So you're dealing with the problem and caring for the person. Book a coffee a month down the road. Send a note. Check in. See how they're doing. Care.

### 5. EVALUATE

As you help them take a break, and in a new place or reform their attitude, evaluate their progress. This is hard, but their long term health and the health of your organization are impacted by honest evaluation.

Don't sacrifice them or your organization because you're trying to be nice. Speak the truth in love. Your commitment to them as a person will pay off in the long run. Even if they never see it, you will have done the best thing you could in the moment and given them a chance to grow.

Philabundance staff echoed Nieuwhof's advice, and offered some tactics to complement the tools mentioned above:

- When providing feedback to volunteers, remind them of the service they provide to the community and the gratitude your clients feel toward them. Their commitment & service make your community thrive!
- Give one-on-one feedback. When you make general announcements about a problem, it allows volunteers to assign blame to another person. Make sure you directly communicate with the person who can change his or her behavior.
- Address specific behavior and instances. This helps the volunteer identify the problem and think of solutions to fix it.
- If you do have to terminate a volunteer, only do so after you have had several one-on-one discussions about the volunteer's problematic behavior.

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Source: *5 Healthy Ways To Handle A Difficult Volunteer* By Carey Nieuwhof

# APPENDIX

## SKILLED VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

### CSFP ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

**Position Title:** CSFP Assistant

**Location:** 302 West Berks Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122

**Hours of Operation:** Mon - Fri: 9:00am-4:00pm

**Time Commitment:** 8-10 hours a week, 1 year +

**Reports to:** Senior Manager

**Status:** Unpaid/Volunteer

#### Position Summary:

Philabundance distributes 9257 food boxes each month through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), a government program, to low income seniors in the Delaware Valley. CSFP is seeking a volunteer to conduct data entry, and confirm eligibility of seniors for the program following the guidelines set up by the government. *This is a heavy data entry position.* Volunteers should expect the majority of their time to be spent at a computer.

#### Qualifications and Experience:

- Attention to detail and patience a must!
- Knowledge of database software required (i.e. Microsoft CRM)

Interesting in volunteering with us? Please contact [volunteer@philabundance.org](mailto:volunteer@philabundance.org) or 215-339-0900 ext. 1302 for more information. Please reference "CSFP Administrative Assistant".

# BOARD MOU

## BOARD MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that as a member of the Board of Directors of Manna on Main Street I have a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure that Manna on Main Street does the best work possible in pursuit of its goals. I believe in the purpose and the mission of Manna on Main Street and I will act responsibly and prudently as its steward.

### As part of my responsibilities as a board member I agree that Board general roles include:

1. Ensuring effective organizational planning by regularly actively participating in an overall planning process and assisting in implementing and monitoring the plan's goals.
2. Selecting, supporting, and evaluating the Executive Director, ensuring that he has the professional support he needs to further the goals of the organization.
3. Providing proper financial oversight by developing and approving the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place (e.g. Conflict of Interest policies, Whistleblower policies, Document Retention and Destruction policies)
4. Providing program oversight
5. Ensuring adequate resources by giving AND getting adequate resources (both people and funds – time, talent, treasure ) for the organization to fulfill its mission.
6. Recruiting, nominating, orienting and mentoring new board members and assessing the board's performance, whereby all members have a responsibility to articulate prerequisites for candidates, orient new members.
7. Periodically and comprehensively evaluating its own performance.
8. Serving as Ambassadors of Manna on Main Street so as to enhance the organization's public standing, and identifying community needs so as to ensure that programs meet those needs.

**MANNA ON MAIN STREET — BOARD MOU**

**As part of my responsibilities as a board member I agree that my specific duties are:**

Attend all board meetings and arrive informed, by asking questions about the organization’s mission, services, policies, and programs and review agendas and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings. <b>6 meetings x 2 hrs</b>	12
Serve on committees and volunteer to take on special assignments; participate in online social networking conversations related to committees and special assignments <b>12 months x 3 hrs</b>	36
Attend at least two Special events <b>2 events x 4 hrs</b>	8
Speak at Events <b>1 per year</b>	1
Volunteer at the organization 1 hr per month <b>12 months x 1 hr</b>	12
To the best of ability, contribute resources by A. Give a personal financial contribution of at least \$25.00 per year and B. Get from others to the organization	8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>77</b>
(Strategic Planning every 3 years adds 16 hours) and Board retreat every year	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Total hourly commitment to MANNA ON MAIN STREET per year</b>	<b>82 hrs per year or 1.5 per week</b>

Signed:

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Member:

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*Board Chair or Board Governance Committee*

**Insert Copy One: Member’s Board Manual**

**Insert Copy Two: Board Chair or Chair of Board Governance Committee**