



Volunteer Kentucky!

Lesson Plan

Session #5: Sustain

Generating, Educating, Mobilizing, and Sustaining

Learning Objectives:

The participants will:

- *identify* strategies that the organization could utilize to evaluate volunteers and their contributions to the organization and its programs
- *determine* how to recognize volunteers in a manner that is meaningful and rewarding to them
- *consider* alternatives when sustaining volunteers in organizations including: retaining, redirecting or disengaging

Resources:

- GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/CLD2/CLD23/CLD23.pdf>
- KELD Publication Series <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/kccl/keld.php>
- VRKC Taxonomy <http://nextgeneration.4-h.org/volunteerism/vrkc/>
- National Framework for 4-H Volunteerism <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/ncrvd/ref/NLPVolunteerism.cfm>
- Volunteerism for the Next Generation <http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/professional-development-learning/4-h-volunteer-development/>

Session Goal:

To improve organizational viability by sustaining members, volunteers and leaders.

Pre-Program Preparation/Materials:

- Secure laptop computer, projector and wireless access capacity.
- Read *Sustaining Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations* fact sheet (CLD2-9).
- Duplicate *Sustaining Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations Questionnaire*. Make one copy per participant.
- Duplicate *Recognizing Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations Formal or Informal*. Make one copy per participant.
- Download PowerPoint Presentation "*Volunteer Kentucky! Sustaining Members, Volunteers and Leaders.*"
- Purchase enough 25-piece jigsaw puzzles for each small group of three to four people. Switch a few pieces of each puzzle with another one. Remove a few puzzle pieces completely from one or two puzzles and set them aside.
- Duplicate *Sustain Term and Definition Cards* for the evaluation process.



Session Goal:

To improve organizational viability by sustaining members, volunteers and leaders.

Review from Previous Session:

- Ask Encourage participants to share the results from the previous session's homework assignment. (This will become a component of their culminating project.)
- Develop an inventory (on a spread sheet) of the volunteers engaged in your programs or activities. Assess the motivations of at least 15 of the most active volunteers in the program and identify their primary category of motivation. Based upon their primary category of motivation, determine the most effective means of supervision for each volunteer.

Background:

Share Read the following excerpt:

*"Sustaining, the fourth and final category of the GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration, consists of five steps: **evaluate, recognize, retain, redirect** and **disengage**. Sustaining members, volunteers and leaders is imperative to the continued health and well-being of any community organization. Sustaining adds stability, credibility and continuity to organizations."*

Introductory Activity 1:

Ask Pose the following question for group response:
"Can anyone complete this famous quote from Henry Ford: 'If you always do what you've always done....' (you'll always get what you've always got)."

Ask Facilitate discussion with participants to the questions below:
"Compared to five years ago has your volunteer base expanded, stabilized or shrunk?"

Share Discuss as an entire group, *"How does your organization determine if your volunteer base has expanded, stabilized or shrunk?"* While answering this questions, encourage participants to *identify* the reasons why this has occurred.

Introductory Activity 2:

Distribute Pass out one puzzle to each group of three or four people and instruct the groups to assemble their puzzles. Group members may communicate amongst themselves, but may not confer outside of their group.

Ask Facilitate discussion with the groups at their tables:
"Were you able to assemble your puzzle? If not, why?"

Share Ask tables to share their results and responses.

Respond Reply by reading the following:

Sustaining, the fourth and final category of the GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration, consists of five steps: evaluate, recognize, retain, redirect and disengage.



"We all like to connect with others. Every puzzle piece is meaningful and useful and is necessary in order to complete the puzzle. Community organizations are the same as puzzles. Volunteers and leaders are similar to individual puzzle pieces. If one piece is missing, the entire program is incomplete."

Ask

Encourage participants to answer the following questions as a group:

"Did you find pieces that did not fit into the puzzle?"

"It may be time to discard some of the traditions, programs, activities or items that are no longer needed or necessary in your organization or its programs."

Objective 1: Identify strategies that the organization could utilize to evaluate volunteers and their contributions to the organization and its programs.

Share

Read the following excerpt:

"Evaluation is an opportunity to examine a program, event or activity and determine ways to strengthen, improve, expand or refocus it. An evaluation can be a positive learning experience, asking the question: 'How can we improve to be better?'"

Learning Activity 1.1:

Distribute

Hand out the *Sustaining Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations Questionnaire* to members. Explain that these questionnaires will be collected. Ask members to write their name on the questionnaire. Instruct members to complete Part A individually, in writing. Poll the group to determine how they responded to the questions in Part A. Ask members to answer Part B questions verbally as a group and discuss their responses.

Objective 2: Determine how to recognize volunteers in a manner that is meaningful and rewarding to them.

Share

Read the following excerpt:

"Members, volunteers and leaders should be recognized for their positive contributions to the organization and its members. The manner in which achievements and accomplishments are recognized is an important component of an organization's traditions. Whether formal or informal, recognition helps volunteers feel they are making a meaningful contribution."

Learning Activity 2.1:

Distribute:

Hand out the *Recognizing Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations Formal versus Informal* handout. Either individually or as a group, ask the participants to determine if the type of recognition is "formal" or "informal."



Sustaining members, volunteers and leaders is imperative to the continued health and well-being of any community organization.

Answer Key:

Formal Recognition = 2; 4; 6; 8; 10 (all even numbers)

Informal Recognition = 1; 3; 5; 7; 9 (all odd numbers)

Learning Activity 2.2:

Ask

Encourage participants to answer the following questions of the group and take notes on the group answers and suggestions:

- What are some different ways that people like to be recognized?
- How do you like to be recognized?
- Is it possible that some people do not want to be recognized?
- Should all members be recognized in the same way?
- How would you handle a situation if someone deserving of recognition was accidentally overlooked?

Objective 3: Consider alternatives when sustaining volunteers and leaders in organizations including retaining, redirecting or disengaging.

Share:

Read the following excerpt:

“Sustaining volunteers offers one of three options: retaining, redirecting or disengaging. Never assume that a volunteer will continue serving in the same role in subsequent years. A volunteer may be retained in the same capacity or be redirected to another role in the organization. Redirection allows for variety and promotion. Volunteer administrators should plan for membership turnover, volunteer disengagement and leadership succession. An individual may choose to leave an organization for any of a multitude of reasons, many of which are positive and are a natural evolution of human development. Disengagement is a natural component of all organizational relationships; volunteer administrators should plan to make this phase as positive and smooth as possible.”

Learning Activity 3.1:

Share:

Read the following scenario aloud:

Scenario:

“Susan and Kerry are active members of the library board. The board decided to hold a book fundraiser. Five members served on the planning committee including Susan and Kerry. Susan was the chairperson of the planning committee.”

“During the planning of the event, Susan made decisions without consulting other members of the planning committee. Kerry did not agree with some of the decisions but since the rest of the planning committee went along with Susan, Kerry did, too. At the conclusion of the fundraiser, Susan decided which books to purchase without consulting the committee.”

“After the event was over, Kerry mentioned some of the decisions to Susan and told her that he did not agree with the decision-making

A sustained membership, volunteer force and leadership base enables the volunteer administrator to focus efforts on programs and clientele, rather than devoting a considerable amount of time to recreating infrastructure.

process. Susan told Kerry that the event was successful and raised money for a good cause."

As a group, determine whether retaining, redirecting or disengaging the volunteers will improve the success of the project next time.

Ask

Pose the following questions to the group:

"How would you evaluate the outcomes of this project, regarding financial success as well as the process used by the committee?"

"In order to improve the success of the project, how should the volunteer administrator determine whether committee members are retained, redirected or disengaged?"

Discuss

Facilitate discussion concerning the positives as well as the negatives of this scenario.

Summary:

Share

Read the following excerpt:

"A sustained membership, volunteer force and leadership base enables the volunteer administrator to focus efforts on programs and clientele, rather than devoting a considerable amount of time to recreating infrastructure. This approach leads to a stronger, more viable organization that is better able to accomplish its vision and mission and achieve its goals, objectives and action steps."

Session Evaluation:

People matching. Give each participant a card with either a term (evaluate, recognize, retain, redirect, disengage) or definition on it. People walk around and find the word or definition that completes their pair. As a large group check the pairs.

For next session:

- *Choose one of the following options as your project to complete before the next session. (This will become a component of the culminating project.)*
 - Develop a *Volunteer Self-Evaluation* that can be utilized by each volunteer to determine how effectively they served the organization, its program and clientele as well as determining their level of satisfaction with the volunteer experience.
 - Develop a *Volunteer Recognition Strategy* that will accomplish the following goals:
 - Recognize each volunteer at least once each year
 - Celebrate the contributions made by volunteers to the organization, program, clientele or other volunteers or staff.
 - Recognize volunteers that are motivated by affiliation, achievement and power/control.
 - Send a letter of appreciation to each individual that served during the previous year. Determine which volunteers will be asked to continue their service to the organization and its programs.
- Bring your Passport to each meeting in order to have credit given by the instructor.



Whether formal or informal, recognition helps volunteers feel they are making a meaningful contribution."

- Stamp the passport of each attendee to signify completion of this session.
- Continue working on your culminating project.

References:

Culp, III, K. (2013). Strengthening Organizational Leadership with the GEMS model of Volunteer Involvement.

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Developed by: Culp, III, K., Averbek, M.S., Doyle, J., Kelley, D. & Stewart, L. (2015) as a class projected of the Advanced Volunteer Administration Academy, University of Kentucky Extension.

*A program
focused
administrative
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