

Tips for planning a volunteer workforce

August 2017

Evidence shows that the key to successful volunteer programs are good leadership, management and planning. However it is hard to know where and how to get started. This Tip Sheet is designed to give you some tips and ideas to help you through this process.

Why plan your volunteer workforce?

Making sure you have the right people to deliver services or programs to the community can be challenging. If you want to bring new skills, energy and talent into your organisation you need a plan. Often organisations plan their paid workforce, but we also know that finding and keeping the right volunteers is just as important.

How do I start to plan for my volunteer workforce?

Workforce planning is an ongoing process. Here are some suggestions for activities that may help to support you in your planning:

Scan your environment

Think about scanning your organisation's services and how they fit into the wider environment you operate in. Consider:

- a) The vision or mission of your organisation
- b) Priorities for services
- c) Current budget
- d) Current volunteers and skill sets

Do a SWOT analysis

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis is commonly used in workforce planning.

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A SWOT analysis will help you:

- a) Look at your strengths and what is unique about your organisation
- b) Consider where you can improve
- c) Think about opportunities or trends in the community you can draw on
- d) Analyse external threats – political changes, new qualifications, regulations etc.

A SWOT analysis gives you a good starting point to analyse your current volunteer workforce and work out where you can make improvements or changes.

Prioritise your needs

When you conduct a SWOT analysis you will often find lots of new areas to improve or change. It is unlikely you will be able to change everything at once. You will need to prioritise the most important issue/s or opportunities. Look at the most important thing first and gradually work through the rest.

Respond to what is happening around you

The best approach to volunteer management is one that is strategic, but also flexible enough to respond to changes. Remember to be prepared to respond to any new opportunities, challenges and ideas.

Where can I get more help?

Volunteering Tasmania

Volunteering Tasmania Members have access to a range of templates, policies and procedures through our [Members Only page](#). You can also visit our [Publications page](#) for free Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets.

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TasCOSS

TasCOSS has a range of 'How to' documents that can help you with lots of workforce planning issues – from conducting a SWOT analysis, to reporting, to project planning, and more. Visit <http://www.tascossilibrary.org.au/> for more information.

Not for Profit Law

If you need legal advice about any planned changes, Not for Profit law has information on volunteering and the law. <https://www.nfplaw.org.au/>

NCVO Knowhow Not for Profit

NCVO is a great UK based platform which contains some free resources and information for voluntary organisations.