



# 01 CONCEPT

## a. Articulate your organisation's vision, mission and goals for volunteers

Even with paid staff, VHOs may find it useful to have volunteers eg. to develop and enrich programmes and projects, and act as "consultants" to give their views regarding decisions and issues that affect them and the communities they care for.

Vision, mission and value statements give an organisation something to believe in and work towards. Develop a vision statement and a set of values appropriate to your volunteers. A good statement for volunteer management is short, easy to understand and explains why the organisation needs volunteers.

Writing the statements is the first step. Next, work on organisation-wide buy-in so there is support for your volunteer management system at all levels. Finally, encourage all your colleagues and yourself to positively "walk the talk" to establish credibility with your organisation's volunteers.

Mission and vision statements for volunteer management must be effectively integrated with the corporate culture:

- Involve a group of relevant stakeholders, including staff, in the creation of the vision and mission statements for volunteer management
- Conduct workshops and coaching sessions to clearly communicate the mission and vision statements to all stakeholders
- Display the mission and vision statements in prominent areas of the office
- Give all employees and volunteers a copy each of the mission and vision statement
- Encourage leaders to routinely "walk the talk" in carrying out the mission and vision

***"A good statement for volunteer management is short, easy to understand and explains why the organisation needs volunteers."***

# SAMPLE STEPS TO WRITING YOUR VISION STATEMENT FOR VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

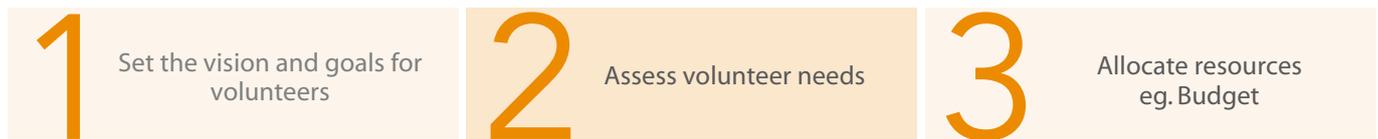
STEPS	PROMPTERS
<b>1</b> Reflect on your organisation's vision, mission and goals. This gives a backdrop to frame your vision statement for volunteer management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is your organisation's vision?</li><li>• What is the basis for all that your organisation does? What are the guiding principles?</li><li>• Where is your organisation now and where is it heading in 5-10 years' time?</li><li>• What are your organisation's goals and the strategic plans to achieve these?</li></ul>
<b>2</b> Understand why your organisation needs volunteers. These answers will form the basis of your volunteer management guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How would it benefit your organisation to involve volunteers?</li><li>• Do you or any staff members have any concerns about volunteers? Any fears or reservations? Any foreseeable problems or conflicts that can arise with volunteer involvement in your organisation?</li></ul>
<b>3</b> Understand what volunteers are looking for in your organisation. These answers will help you attract and retain your volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do your volunteers have prior volunteering experience? Any examples of good and bad experiences?</li><li>• What do your volunteers think of volunteering in your organisation? What are their needs and expectations?</li><li>• How do you want your staff and volunteers to treat each other?</li></ul>
<b>4</b> Draft vision statement on volunteer management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Distil your answers from steps 2 and 3 into keywords</li></ul>
<b>5</b> Gather some staff from all levels of your organisation to brainstorm on draft statement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand or modify keywords for clarity</li><li>• Gather new ideas on how to involve volunteers</li></ul>
<b>6</b> Write volunteer management vision and values statements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Get endorsement from top management and staff members</li><li>• Print and circulate statements</li></ul>

## SAMPLE VISION STATEMENT

Our agency encourages the teamwork of employees and volunteers so that we can offer our consumers the best services possible. Volunteers contribute their unique talents, skills and knowledge of our community to provide personalised attention to our consumers, enable the salaried staff to concentrate on the work for which they were trained and educate the public about our organisation and its cause.

*From The Top Down by Susan Ellis, 1996*

# GETTING THE CONCEPT RIGHT



## b. Assess your volunteer needs

One way to find out where your organisation needs volunteers is through an in-house volunteer-needs survey questionnaire and follow-up interviews to establish where and how to involve volunteers in your organisation.

## SAMPLE COMPONENTS OF A SURVEY ON VOLUNTEER NEEDS

	COMPONENTS	PROMPTERS
<b>1</b>	Your organisation's need for volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the purpose of engaging volunteers in your organisation? To enhance your services? To strengthen your community involvement and reach?</li><li>• What role can volunteers play in your organisation? Where can you place volunteers? What can you delegate to the volunteers? What types of volunteers does your organisation need? What are your expectations of volunteers? What numbers are you looking at? Who will have the responsibility to recruit and manage volunteers?</li><li>• How does your organisation perceive volunteers? As an asset or a liability? A cheap source of labour to help you save costs? A tangible value-added resource?</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	Ability to attract and involve volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What community needs are being fulfilled by your organisation?</li><li>• How does the public perceive your organisation and services?</li><li>• What is the financial status of your organisation? Will it make it easier or harder for you to attract and involve volunteers?</li><li>• What is the morale of your paid staff? Would they feel threatened by volunteers?</li></ul>
<b>3</b>	Ability to keep volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you already have volunteers? Who are your volunteers? What is your source of volunteers? How many do you have? What roles do they play? What contributions have they made?</li><li>• What types of volunteers do you have or want to attract? What are the skills or strengths you need? What assignments do you have for them?</li><li>• What level and length of commitment are your volunteers giving you? What motivates them?</li></ul>
<b>4</b>	Ability to manage volunteer initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How ready is your organisation to involve volunteers? Do you have staff to manage the recruitment and retention of volunteers? Who motivates and recognises volunteers? Do you have a budget for volunteer management? How can you get money for your volunteer management initiatives? Do you have policies and rules in place for everybody to know how to work together? What partnerships can you strike for both volunteers and paid staff?</li><li>• What components of a good volunteer management system do you have?</li></ul>

You may do a survey of volunteer-needs in your organisation using the questionnaire below. If appropriate, you may include additional questions from the above list.

## SAMPLE SURVEY ON VOLUNTEER NEEDS

1. Do you think we are adequately meeting the objectives of our organisation?  
 Yes                       No
2. If no, what areas can we improve?  
(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you think we are adequately meeting the needs of our clients?  
 Yes                       No
4. If no, what areas can we improve?  
(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you have adequate support in your work?  
 Yes                       No
6. If no, in which areas do you most need help?  
(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_
7. What would you like to do or improve if you had more resources?  
(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is your general impression of volunteers?  
 They are a valuable resource and help  
 They can be put to good use if managed properly  
 They do not contribute much to the work of the organisation  
 They add to the workload of staff
9. Do you think volunteers can contribute to meeting the organisation's objectives?  
 Yes                       No
10. Do you think volunteers can provide more support for your work in the organisation?  
 Yes                       No
11. Are you keen to work with volunteers?  
 Yes                       No

Interviews would augment your survey findings. Interviews are an excellent way to involve your organisation and get buy-in for the conception and development of your volunteer management system.

## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STAFF

1. What are we doing now that we would like to do more of?\*
2. What unmet needs do our clients have that we presently can do nothing about?\*
3. What are the other areas that staff can be supported in their work?\*
4. What might we do differently if we had more skills or time available to us?\*
5. Are there areas where you could do with additional help?
6. What are the areas you could improve if you had additional help?
7. What new programmes could you start if you had additional help?
8. What are the skills you think could benefit your work and the organisation but are lacking in the organisation?
9. Do you think diversity would benefit your work and the organisation?
10. Do you think there is enough diversity in the work?
11. What do you think of volunteers?

\* From *The Top Down* by Susan Ellis, 1996

Some common assignments that VHOs can involve volunteers in:

- Board or committee member
- Management/professional consultancy
- Human services such as mentoring, befriending, tutoring
- Publicity and promotion
- Event organisation
- Office administration
- General services such as cooking, driving, cleaning

Before you start looking for volunteers, ensure you have assignments that volunteers can successfully take on, and that you have the ability to manage the volunteers.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO PLAN ASSIGNMENTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

QUESTIONS	REMARKS
<b>1</b> Are the assignments short-term or ongoing?	Most people prefer to volunteer ad hoc rather than commit to regular volunteering weekly or monthly. In view of this trend, consider running more short-term volunteer programmes. Look for parts of your regular volunteering requirements that may be done on ad hoc basis.
<b>2</b> Are the assignments urgent and/or critical?	Urgent and time sensitive assignments tend to put much pressure on volunteers. As volunteers are not paid staff, it would be more difficult to hold them accountable for not completing their assignments on time. Volunteers would be a more viable option for assignments with more flexible deadlines.
<b>3</b> What is the budget for each assignment?	Volunteers are not paid salaries but they certainly do not come free. Work out a budget for volunteer involvement in your organisation.
<b>4</b> Are the assignments limited in scope?	Assignments for volunteers should be broken down into specific and achievable tasks. Successful completion of tasks is a source of motivation for volunteers.

Organisations need to evaluate and match the skills of the volunteers with volunteer job scope during recruitment, supervise and evaluate their volunteers' performance.



## EXAMPLE OF CORPORATE VOLUNTEERISM WITH TOUCH YOUTH LEARNING CENTRE

TOUCH Youth Learning Centre (YLC) helps early school leavers attain the GCE 'O' or 'N' level qualification by providing a secure and affirmative environment for the youths to continue their education.

From the curriculum which encompasses academic, life and work skills, TOUCH YLC mapped out the volunteer needs to include tutors for the youths after school, class facilitators to assist the teachers in class and facilitators to engage youths in outdoor activities on weekends. TOUCH YLC believes that the volunteers in this programme can play an important role in the academic, social and character development of the youths. Above all, TOUCH YLC hopes that the volunteers would be positive adult role models for the youths.

When a department of a public sector organisation approached TOUCH Community Services (TCS) with an interest to work with children or youth, TCS first focused on understanding the interests and strengths of this department. TCS thought that the strengths of the department and what the employees could offer matched the needs of the youths at TOUCH YLC.

However, the employees of the department were only given four half-days to be involved in their volunteer work although the programmes of TOUCH YLC needed more regular and long-term commitment from the volunteers. The employees were also concerned about their ability to connect with the youths and were not confident that they could meet the needs of the youths.

Considering the employees' time constraints, TCS decided to modify the programmes it had planned. Four half-day projects were designed to suit the schedule of the volunteers, instead of regular weekly or monthly commitment, while ensuring that the youths would still benefit from the time spent with the volunteers. To allay the apprehension of the volunteers, TCS gave a comprehensive orientation of the YLC and its activities to the volunteers. To help prepare the volunteers for interaction with the youths, they were also given a briefing on the general background of the youths.

With all the preparation and orientation, the volunteers finally started working with the youths. After going through two sessions, the employees commented that they thoroughly enjoyed the sessions and felt that they were able to contribute positively to the youths.

The whole volunteer experience was so positive that the department planned another three similar projects for the following year. The department also decided to adopt TOUCH YLC on a long-term basis. In addition to time, the employees are also supporting the programme financially with regular donations.

The above example demonstrates that knowing what the volunteer needs is an important first step to starting volunteer programmes, followed by careful planning of the volunteer assignments. A willingness to be open minded and flexible is also key, especially when it comes to successfully matching volunteers to the programmes.

## APPRECIATING VOLUNTEER-INITIATED PROGRAMMES

Knowing the organisational need for volunteers and planning volunteer assignments are key steps to starting volunteer programmes. Sometimes, it is the volunteers who identify other needs and offer suggestions to help meet those needs. Welcome such initiatives from volunteers as this shows that volunteers are actively involved.

Consider involving the volunteers by forming committees or working groups to identify the issues and work out practical solutions. Volunteers would feel empowered and assume ownership of the projects or programmes they have started.

For such volunteer-initiated projects or programmes conceived of and run by volunteers, volunteer managers need to understand that they should still provide support and training. Such committees or working groups may fail if they do not have enough direction and appropriate support from VHOs.

***“Before you start looking for volunteers, ensure you have assignments that volunteers can successfully take on and have the ability to manage the volunteers.”***

## SAMPLE STEPS TO HELP VOLUNTEER-INITIATED PROGRAMMES

1

Provide a guide or outline of steps for each of these committees to begin their volunteer assignments (eg. with proper briefing notes on the issues to be addressed, brainstorming and problem solving methods for use, information on the kind of assistance they can expect from their VHO, etc). Take this as an opportunity to set down expectations and goals for the committees.

2

Appoint a board member or a staff to attend committee meetings. This shows that the organisation values its volunteers and will encourage the committees. Also, this person can be responsible for regularly updating the organisation and making sure that the committee does not act inappropriately.

3

Set aside time and staff for the committees to ask for information or help. Give practical help where possible to these committees to facilitate their work.

4

Have committees evaluate the organisation's efforts to keep them involved, trained and informed. Based on feedback, explore how else to support such self-directed volunteer efforts.

## EXAMPLE OF DEVELOPMENT OF A VOLUNTEER-INITIATED PROGRAMME

### **Community Bicycle Patrol – project of Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF)**

SCDF started the Civil Defence Volunteer scheme in 1982 and to date, more than 5000 interested volunteers have signed up to volunteer with the SCDF. These volunteers are organised into 84 Civil Defence Executive Committees (CDECs) overseen by the SCDF.

The Pasir Ris West CDEC, one of the 84 CDECs that SCDF oversees, saw that there was no available help to users of Pasir Ris Park should they require immediate assistance. Thus the Committee wanted to form a volunteer bicycle patrol team to render emergency assistance to park users. The idea was taken to SCDF, which readily gave its support. SCDF gave training in fire fighting and first aid to the volunteers.

In December 2000, the Community Bicycle Patrol was officially launched and there are plans to extend this programme to other parts of Singapore as well.

Involving volunteers in your programmes requires an understanding of the needs, planning and matching of volunteers to meet those needs. Volunteers who are already involved in the programmes are sometimes in a better position to identify gaps to be filled and can offer valuable suggestions and help. They need to be given enough support and help if they are to take on bigger roles and shoulder greater responsibilities. But whether a programme is planned by the staff of the VHO or the volunteers, a successful and effective programme calls for careful planning and matching of resources and manpower.

## c. Design a budget for your volunteer needs, support facilities

Volunteers, though unpaid, do not come free. A budget for volunteer management can be quantified.

### Pointers

- State your organisation's vision, mission and goals
- State how your volunteer management system can support the achievement of your organisation's vision mission and goals
- State the outcomes to be achieved and the performance standards to measure the outcomes by

## SAMPLE BUDGET TEMPLATE

Expense Items	Amount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salary package (salary, CPF, bonus, other benefits, training, etc) of Volunteer Manager</li> <li>• Salary package of direct support staff</li> <li>• Apportionment of salary package of indirect support staff</li> <li>• Recruitment drives (cost of publicity channels and material, administration–letters, postage, profiling, etc.)</li> <li>• Apportionment of facilities support costs for manager and direct support staff and volunteers (office space, equipment, telephone, stationery, materials, etc)</li> <li>• Volunteer benefits (transport, refreshments, training and development, etc)</li> <li>• Insurance (public liability for volunteers, for organisation, etc)</li> <li>• Special events for recognition</li> <li>• Recognition gifts</li> <li>• Any other expenses</li> </ul>	
<h3>Income Budget Items</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value of volunteer hours (you can peg volunteers to suitable hourly rates derived from your paid staff's salary scale)</li> <li>• Grants</li> <li>• Donations, fundraising</li> <li>• Others</li> </ul>	
<h3>Value Analysis</h3> <p>Income - Expense = Contribution</p>	<p>Value statement to support justification report</p>

Volunteers should fit into your organisation's structure to give them a sense of belonging and also set out lines of reporting, accountability and support. Along with this fit, please provide appropriate support facilities for your volunteers.

## SAMPLE SUPPORT FACILITIES

1

- Working space (room, cubicle, desk and chair, storage cupboard, etc.)

2

- Office equipment (telephone, computer, printer, etc.)

3

- Administrative stuff (identity tag, name cards, email account, stationery, etc.)

Factor these into your budget for your volunteer management system.

## SAMPLE CHECKLIST FOR FACILITIES SUPPORT

### SPACE AND OTHER FACILITIES

1. Easy access from the entrance of the building?
2. Parking arrangements for volunteers who drive?
3. Privacy for interviewing prospective volunteers?
4. Secure storage space for volunteers' personal belongings?
5. Meeting space for group volunteers?
6. Space for orientation sessions and in-service training meetings?
7. Adequate rest room facilities?
8. Space for volunteer communication mechanisms eg. bulletin boards?
9. Lounge area for volunteer rest periods?
10. Others


### FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

1. Computers for volunteers' use if their work requires it?
2. Equipment for orientation and training eg. TV, projector and screens?
3. Telephones for volunteers' use if so required?
4. Stationery for volunteers' use?
5. Others


### MISCELLANEOUS

1. Identity badges for volunteers?
2. On-the-job T-shirts?
3. Insurance?
4. Others


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