Training and orienting volunteers for success

Volunteers success depends in large part how prepared volunteers are for their roles and how much they feel valued and appreciated by the organization.

Orientation is defined as the introduction to the organization, where rules, roles and expectations are explained. Orientation is also a key time to have volunteers understand their stakeholder position, and how they are integral to the organization and its mission.

Learning is the key component of training. Training can help volunteers learn the information they need to develop the necessary capabilities to function as an essential player in the overall success of the organization or program. If your organization or program has very specific procedures you want volunteers to know, it is your responsibility to create an educational training program that teaches those skills. Similarly if you want a volunteer to know and be able to explain policies and procedures, it is your responsibility to create the training that will teach these and the reasoning behind them.

Orientation:

- Supervisor responsibility ... takes place early in the volunteer’s involvement
- Can determine what kind of training volunteers need in the future

- Sets the tone for how the volunteer is viewed by the organization
- Explains expectations, roles and responsibilities for volunteers and organization

Training

- Addresses skills and knowledge necessary in order to do job position effectively and positively
- Developed around how adults learn
- Is respectful of the unique needs of the individual volunteers
- There are many “right ways” to do training, on-line, one-to-one, led by other volunteers, etc.

Alaska Concerns

- Getting volunteers to attend a training is a challenge — ideas for new options
- Arranging training for people off the road system is difficult — on-line training, audio, and video training options
- Create the training so that it touches on the unique positions each volunteer will do and how Alaskans in other parts of the state do the same job

Learn more about these topics at Everyone Ready

**VNG-Volunteerism for the Next Generation:**
- Education of Volunteers “Orienting Volunteers”, “Training Other Volunteers”, “Adults as Learners”

**Everyone Ready:**
- First Days Count: Orienting and Welcoming Volunteers for Success