



Volunteer Management
PROFESSIONALS OF CANADA
PROFESSIONNELS EN
gestion de bénévoles
DU CANADA

Interview Guide

for hiring a Volunteer management professional

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Interview Guide for Hiring a Volunteer Management Professional

Section 1: Promoting Volunteer Services

Question 1	How do you think volunteers can enhance an organization?		
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a diverse voice from the community into the organization • Enhancing client services • Strengthening the overall team • Enhancing skills, ideas, energy, perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings a fresh vision and enthusiasm. • Has had experience with strategic planning and building innovative volunteer roles to support agency • Has a personal philosophy of volunteerism • Is committed to professional standards and can articulate what they are • Auditing volunteer programs to ensure relevance to mission delivery of organization • Creation of tools or processes to streamline volunteer engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A program that the agency currently doesn't have • How volunteers have added value in another organization • Resolving conflict between staff and volunteers or creating stronger relationships between staff and volunteers
Notes			
Question 2	How have you incorporated volunteering into your life? How has your volunteerism benefited you?		
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has had a variety of experiences as a volunteer • Can explain personal benefits of volunteering • Can articulate a personal philosophy of volunteerism • Can explain how volunteering has benefited the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses an understanding of volunteering in its many forms both formal and informal • Encourages those in their sphere of influence to incorporate volunteering in their lives • Believes that being involved in volunteering from a young age facilitates lifelong volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteered to develop/enhance a specific skill • Volunteered as a result of commitment to a cause • Volunteered to obtain experience to increase job prospects • Volunteered to obtain experience related to educational goals
Notes			

Question 3 Please provide an example of a situation in which you utilized standards to improve your volunteer program.			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses appropriate standards: VMPC Standards of Practice, the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement, National Screening Standards • Can explain the standard and how they applied it to their program • Can reference standards; knows they exist and strives towards implementing them in their organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has used standards as an audit tool for their program • Can give an example of program improvements brought about through application of standards • Can give an example of how standards have been used to secure senior leadership support • Has shared learnings with professional colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to their board on the Code/Standards • A change in program administration to conform with a specific standard • Strengthening relationships between volunteers and staff or other stakeholders
Notes			
Question 4 What strategies have you successfully utilized to ensure support from senior management and staff? Please give a specific example of a situation in which you were able to obtain the support of individuals who were initially reluctant to support your program or project. If unsuccessful, what did you learn or what would you do differently next time?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes initiative • Demonstrates team building skills by involving volunteers and staff from all levels in the strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has developed senior level advocates • Has a strong involvement in board development • Knows how to mobilize community support for the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A specific strategy that worked well • How the person has overcome staff resistance to engaging volunteers • Specific experience developing good working relations with a union and within a union environment
Notes			

Section 2: Program Administration

Question 5 What would you see as the most important policies and procedures to have in place for the volunteer? How would you go about introducing a new policy?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can describe written policies covering the Volunteer Management process including volunteer recruitment, screening, placement, orientation, training, evaluation, and recognition Indicates that the policy must be endorsed by senior leadership and the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involved staff and volunteers in the policy development process Provided opportunities for creating awareness of best practices and buy-in through the policy development process Used expert resources and national standards in the development of the policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy and Procedure manual Volunteer Handbook Volunteer Orientation material
Notes			
Question 6 How have you utilized computer technology to enhance a volunteer program?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has used dbase for volunteer record keeping Has a basic knowledge of word processing, spreadsheet and database applications Can conceptualize virtual volunteering roles in the organization Familiarity with social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has advanced knowledge of programs such as Word, Excel, Publisher, and Power Point Has experience with multiple volunteer database applications Has a successful track record with virtual volunteer roles Is able to assess effectiveness of social media applications in volunteer programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-line volunteer application Use of various volunteer databases On-line/email communication with volunteers On-line newsletters On-line volunteer recruitment opportunities Interactive training tools Virtual volunteer assignments Use of social media in volunteer programs, if appropriate and effective
Notes			

Section 3: Volunteer Position Development

Question 7 Volunteer position design is critical to the success of a volunteer program. Can you give us an example of a volunteer role that you developed in response to a current trend? How did the volunteer role address the client and/or organizational needs?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for...	Exceptional Abilities – Look for...	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the client's need Describes the key elements of a particular volunteer position (skills, knowledge, and experience, qualifications) to respond to the client's need Explains how the volunteer assignment met the client's need as well as the volunteer's expectation Recognizes the need to adjust, review, evaluate throughout the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relates current trends to new volunteer position descriptions (enhance flexibility, short term roles, meaningful work, skills based volunteering) Provides career paths for volunteers seeking personal growth and development Relates volunteer roles to other jobs and organization mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An example of a volunteer position for episodic or short term volunteers Adapting to mandated credit hour placements A role that appealed to a group of baby boomers An assignment that appealed to youth An opportunity created specifically in response to the skills/qualifications of a volunteer, such as project based opportunity with strong background in HR or Finance
Notes			

Question 8 What are some examples of the strategies you can incorporate in a volunteer role to minimize risk?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the risks in the creation of the Volunteer Position Description Writes clear Volunteer Position Descriptions outlining the volunteer role Bases screening processes on position risk Provides orientation and training to minimize risk (staff and volunteer department) Uses volunteer buddy system with vulnerable clients Maintains open communication lines between placement supervisor, Volunteer Management Professionals, and volunteers Secures strong staff input from front line staff regarding risk management References Volunteer Canada's 10 Steps of Screening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes specific types of risks (property, goodwill, client and volunteer harm) Uses appropriate risk management strategies in relation to the risks Has had previous experience with risk assessments of volunteer programs Understands benefits and limits of Criminal Record Checks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buddy system Volunteer Training Waivers Volunteer position descriptions that incorporate the specific risks and controls for volunteer sign-off Increased screening of volunteers and clients
Notes			
Question 9 What elements would you build into volunteer roles to encourage volunteers to remain engaged with the organization?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaningful volunteer roles; opportunities to really make a difference Opportunities for ongoing feedback and recognition Communication and teamwork between staff and volunteers Opportunities that address the volunteer's motivation Flexibility to accommodate volunteer's personal schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A proven track record of building volunteer loyalty to the program/organization Has provided a variety of opportunities to meet the variety of volunteer motivations, skills and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Volunteering for credit"- volunteers remaining involved at the completion of their credit requirements Volunteer training providing the impetus for ongoing volunteer involvement Volunteers referring potential volunteers or clients Volunteers becoming donors, attending events, or getting hired as employees
Notes			

Section 4: Volunteer Recruitment

Question 10 What would an effective recruitment plan include?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment of organizational needs • Identification of volunteer opportunities to meet needs • An estimate of the number of volunteers required to fulfill needs • An analysis of the demographics of volunteers most likely to fulfill roles • An analysis of how to best reach these volunteers • Specific recruitment strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encouraging diversity ○ Includes flexibility for time/place of volunteering ○ Is based upon targeted recruitment strategies ○ Someone that has a proven track record recruiting for a variety of volunteer roles ○ Someone who utilizes research and volunteer input to create Volunteer Position Description and recruitment campaigns ○ Someone who assesses the effectiveness of recruitment campaigns ○ A recruitment plan based on specific roles, in consultation with program leads from the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A specific example of a targeted recruitment strategy that worked well • Ideas for how to turn a “less than desirable” role” into a desirable position
Notes			
Question 11 Tell us about your experience involving community organizations and groups to partner with your organization to meet your organizational and/or volunteer needs. What were some of the challenges, and how did you overcome them?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has experience establishing partnerships • Ensures that there is a match between the organization and the partnering organization • Creates partnerships that are beneficial to both parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has experience with a variety of different types of partnership arrangements • Has negotiated formal partnership agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-profit organizations • Schools • Training programs • Government –sponsored programs • Corporations • Service clubs • Religious organizations
Notes			

Section 5: Screening and Risk Management

Question 12 Give me an example of something that would be cause for concern when reviewing a Volunteer Application, and tell us how you would address it.			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can identify these topics for concern: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of experience ○ Large employment gap ○ No volunteer experience ○ Refusal to allow record check or cannot provide one ○ Lack of references, family references only ○ Referred to the organization by justice /mental health system ○ Unrealistic time commitment ○ Vague reason for volunteering ○ Motivation for volunteering is not in line with organizational mission/goals ○ Lack of social contacts/activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware and identifies most of the basic requirements • Has experience in screening for vulnerable clients • Can identify patterns of behavior and “red flags” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has very limited time or an excess of time • Vague personal agenda; unable to articulate why are they applying here and why now • Pattern of seeking involvement only with vulnerable clients • Absence of typical social activities or interests • Reluctance to provide references or criminal record check
Notes			
Question 13 What key legislation impacts the selection process?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the requirements of the legislation that impacts volunteer resources management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can explain how a piece of legislation has affected how they do business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How human rights legislation affects volunteer applications and screening procedures • The responsibilities of volunteers to report suspected cases of abuse as per legislation • How the Freedom of Information and Privacy legislation affects volunteer record keeping • How health information privacy legislation affects what volunteers can say about their volunteering in a healthcare capacity
Notes			

Section 6: Placement and Training

Question 14	Tell us about an orientation program that you have developed. What would a basic orientation program cover? What would you see as the most effective approach to orientation?		
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
<p>Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to the organization • Vision/Mission of the organization • organizational chart • Role of board, committees, management, staff, and volunteers • Policies of the organization • Programs and services • Clients of the organization • Fire, safety, and emergency procedures • Accountability of volunteers: probationary period, performance management, discipline • Expectations regarding conduct and responsibility • Policies of the volunteer program • Volunteer benefits • Facility tour • Signing in/out procedures • Uniform (if applicable)/dress code • Parking and transportation • Telephone numbers of contact staff • Volunteer Position Description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has experience with a variety of methods for orientating volunteers • Engages trained volunteers to assist with orientation of volunteers • Geared to age, demographics and experiences of volunteers • Variety of teaching methods used to appeal to learning styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer handbook • Individual one-on-one orientations • Group orientation • Videos, online orientation • Competency-based learning • Individual/group based learning methods used
<p>Notes</p>			

Question 15 How would you handle a situation in which a prospective volunteer had skills to offer that didn't match any existing volunteer assignment?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creatively explores their ideas as to how they might contribute to the organization • Considers the possibility of a new volunteer assignment that can utilize the volunteer's skills • Can identify other organizations that would be more appropriate, if necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A successful track record of creatively engaging volunteers with a variety of skills for the benefit of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A volunteer looking to share their skills in a healing touch program such as Reiki and basically starting the program • An advertising or marketing executive designing a volunteer recruitment campaign
Notes			

Section 7: Supervision & Performance Monitoring

Question 16 How would you prepare staff who will be working with volunteers for the first time?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the importance of volunteers to the organization • Explain their role with the volunteer as well as staff member's role • Correct common misconceptions about supervising volunteers • Review Volunteer Position Descriptions • Discuss how the volunteer will receive training and guidance • Reinforce the importance of ongoing recognition • Reinforce importance of volunteer receiving welcome, basic guidance and support, being included as part of the team and ensuring there is meaningful work for the volunteer • Tell them what to do if they have concerns about the volunteer's performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has developed a staff/volunteer relationship training program • Has developed training tools to help staff with their supervisory responsibilities • Provides recognition of staff who are excellent working with volunteers • Has changed staff attitudes towards working with volunteers • Has succeeded in having supervision of volunteers included in staff performance appraisals • Process maps created outlining intake/placement for volunteers including who is responsible for which components 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Start Checklist for volunteers • Workshop on staff/volunteer relations • Recognition of staff as well as volunteers
Notes			

Question 17 Volunteer Management Professionals are often called upon to deal with volunteers' performance problems. What is the most difficult volunteer performance issue you have handled? How did you handle it?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly defined Volunteer Position Descriptions and performance expectations so that the performance problems are easily defined Understanding of progressive discipline Respectful and sensitive approach to performance management Strong ethical basis for decision-making Reference to policy regarding volunteer performance issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing evaluation process for all volunteers Ability to analyze the problem and find an appropriate solution Uses appropriate solutions to a variety of performance management problems Creation of tools that specify expectations for volunteers or clarify boundaries (inclusion in volunteer handbook) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers overstepping roles: clarify role Inappropriate behavior: explain consequence and document Volunteer misconduct: termination when appropriate
Notes			

Section 8: Evaluation

Question 18 What forms of evaluation have you built into your volunteer program? Tell me how you have used information obtained through your evaluation process to improve your program?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	Someone who includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts informal and formal volunteer evaluations Uses recognized national standards to assess program quality Works with staff and volunteers to continuously improve programs Documents the outputs of the volunteer program 	Someone who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has developed a consistent formal evaluation process for all volunteers Utilizes a variety of evaluation strategies to measure outcomes and impact of the program Involves staff and volunteers appropriately in the evaluation process Identifies trends and appropriate modifications to the volunteer program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational accreditation process Assessing volunteer program against VMPC Standards of Practice Assessing organizational readiness against the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement Assessing the effectiveness of a particular recruitment campaign in attracting volunteers from a target group
Notes			

Section 9: Recognition

Question 19	Tell me about some of the different ways you recognize individual volunteers.		
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A philosophy that recognition should be as individualized as possible • A belief that recognition is day to day and not only once a year • An awareness of a variety of recognition methods so that there is something for everyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to assess volunteers' motivation and develop an individualized recognition plan • Creative use of the organization's resources, such as staff education workshops, as a form of volunteer recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific thank-you notes • Including a volunteer in the staff meeting • Arranging for a volunteer to attend a course • Providing a reference for the volunteer • Asking a volunteer to take on additional responsibilities
Notes			
Question 20	If you were planning a formal recognition event, what would be the key considerations?		
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer appeal • Budget • Ability to secure resources and possible support from the community • Image and perception of the organization and its stakeholders • Staff involvement and participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience with organizing and managing different types of events to meet varying volunteer needs • Proven track record of mobilizing community resources in support of the volunteer program • Experience securing sponsorship or working with fund development team internally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors events -coffee parties to meet social needs • Career workshops to assist youth utilize volunteer service to explore career choices • Teen events – barbecues, bowling parties, roller skating
Notes			

Section 10: Volunteer/Staff Relations

Question 21 Please give me an example of a strategy you have used to overcome staff resistance to volunteer involvement?			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops relationships of trust with staff Develops a basic understanding of union negotiations/agreements Uses/develops HR/volunteer policies. Addresses staff fears/concerns and obtains buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a proven track record of securing staff support in order to expand the volunteer program Has developed and or managed a successful volunteer program within a unionized environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizing staff for their support of volunteers Workshops/ training for staff Development of relevant HR/volunteer policy and procedure manuals Building on past successes
Notes			
Question 22 Please give me an example of an approach that you have used to strengthen a team (management, staff, union, if applicable, and volunteer).			
	Basic Requirements – Look for....	Exceptional Abilities – Look for....	Examples for illustration
Score: 1 Low 2 Med 3 High 4 Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing trust and mutual support Providing consultation Clearly articulating roles Understanding and meeting needs Establishing trustworthiness by having high ethical standards for decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers and volunteer resources viewed as an integral part of the team Proven track record in securing the respect and support of the various members of the team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulting other members of the team when decisions affect them Providing opportunities to interact on a social basis Addressing the team's needs through the volunteer program Respecting each other's roles and responsibilities Utilizing volunteers appropriately in relation to staff
Notes			

Section 11: Educational Qualifications and Skills

Question 23	What are your educational qualifications and professional credentials related to volunteer management?		
Score: 1 pt for each matching answer in each column	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolled in post-secondary certificate program (30+ hours of course work leading to certificate) in volunteer management Completed Introduction to Volunteer Management program through volunteer centre Online webinars related to volunteer management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of post-secondary certificate program (30+ hours of course work) in volunteer management Certification in volunteer management Has taught post-secondary certificate programs related to volunteer management Has facilitated workshops on topics related to volunteer management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CVA Certification or equivalent Post-secondary certificate program in Volunteer Management
Notes			
Question 24	The management of volunteer resources requires individuals who possess certain qualities that enhance the credibility and success of the volunteer program. What behaviours, attitudes and personal characteristics are essential in a Volunteer Management Professional?		
Score: 1 pt for each matching answer in each column	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People oriented Warm, friendly personality Enthusiastic, positive attitude Inclusive Team player 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influential and inspirational Passionate Visionary Confident, positive leadership skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empathy Compassionate Patient
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good communication skills Articulate Tact & Diplomacy Quick thinker/problem solver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail-oriented Organized Multi-tasker Well organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to manage stress Flexible Adaptive to ongoing change/growth
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong personal values aligning with organizational mission Respectful Professional Ethical Integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loyalty Commitment to organization Dedicated Motivated Able to work independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer service-oriented Needs-focused Mission-driven Goal-oriented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to civic engagement Personal commitment to volunteerism Committed to professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative Problem solver initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Big picture" thinker Analytical

Question 25	What personal qualities would create difficulty in this position?		
Score: 1 pt for each matching answer in each column	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro-manager • Inability to multi-task • Lack of trust in others • Lack of initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigid, inflexible approach • Not willing to keep current and adapt to change • Ineffective time manager • Poor communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untrustworthy • Lack of sincerity • Lack of commitment to cause or organization
Notes			

Total Score: