



VolunteerMatch

VolunteerMatch Learning Center
Advanced Practices

Measuring Success: How to Strategically Assess Your Volunteer Strategy

Jennifer Bennett, CVA
Director, Education & Training

Agenda

- What kind of information is out there?
- What are you measuring now?
- What could you measure?
- Why does it matter to your program
Organization? Volunteers?
- How can you find this information?
- What do your volunteers say?
- Now that you have this – Share It!

What kind of information is out there?

- Quantitative – can be measured or counted with numbers
 - Hours given, trees planted, meals served
- Qualitative – descriptive, can be observed but not counted or measured
 - Compassionate, friendly, outgoing, skilled
- Both can be used to describe volunteers and the work they do, and the impact on your community

What are you measuring now?

The Usual Stuff

- Number of volunteers
- Hours given per volunteer and an estimated dollar value
- Amount of trees, meals, etc.
- Money donated
- Cost per volunteer to run your program - not always a good measure of how successful your program is or how engaged your volunteers are

What could you measure?

It starts to get a little tricky...

- The Scarce Resources Model – ROI for Volunteers
 - Tony Goodrow, Better Impact
<http://www.betterimpact.com/ROI/>
- The actual value of the work
 - Move beyond an average \$ amount
- The impact on the community
 - What difference does that tree, sandwich, etc. make?
- The impact on your volunteers
 - Increased health, sense of contributing, place in the community

Why does it matter?

What questions do you want to answer?

- What kind of information is persuasive?
- Who wants or needs this information?
 - You, organization leaders? Funders? The community? Volunteers?
- What story do you want to tell?
- What do you want others to know about the work volunteers do in your organization?

How can you find this information?

Quantitative Information

- What are you tracking now?
 - Where is it, and is it easy to get it out? Reports, queries, etc.
- Can you answer the questions you need to answer?
 - If not, why are you tracking that information?
- What other questions do you need/want to answer?
 - Where is that information? If you're not tracking it now, can you? And can you report on it effectively?

How can you find this information?

Qualitative Information

- Surveys
 - Clients, visitors, members. Volunteers – past and present.
 - Paid staff – program managers, those that do/don't work with volunteers
- Interviews
 - As a volunteer what kind of change do you see in your clients after they are comfortable reading?
- Evaluating impact from a different perspective
 - Not just numbers. Volunteers planted 250 trees – Why does that matter? What does that change?

How do you find this information?

Work with volunteers!

- Track the quantitative information effectively. Database volunteer, best practices for data entry.
- Reports that work! SQL volunteers, database administrator, applications engineer
- Ask the right questions. Surveys written and conducted by volunteers, evaluated by volunteers.
- Ask your volunteers – Qualitative information about their experience, the differences they observe in clients, visitors, the community.

What do your volunteers say?

It can be scary to ask, but what are you afraid of? If you don't ask, you won't know, and you can't change the problems.

- Evaluate the satisfaction level of volunteers
- How long do volunteers stay? Why and when do they leave?
- How would volunteers rate their effectiveness in the organization? The community?
- What would they change?
- What do they wish you would/wouldn't do?

Now that you have the information

Share this!

- Remember the questions and remember who wants the information.
 - Annual reports, funders, organizational leaders, volunteers, paid staff
- Think outside the usual channels
 - Blog or newsletter articles, town hall meetings – the state of volunteering, promote to your constituents, use social media.
- Solicit feedback
 - What else could you do? What other questions can or should be answered? Follow up – year over year

Remember:

Figure out what you want to answer and then find that information.

- Remember the questions and remember who wants the information.
 - Annual reports, funders, organizational leaders, volunteers, paid staff
- Think outside the usual channels
 - Blog or newsletter articles, town hall meetings – the state of volunteering, promote to your constituents, use social media.
- Solicit feedback
 - What else could you do? What other questions can or should be answered? Follow up – year over year

Thank you!

Join us online:

Like us on Facebook: www.Facebook.com/VolunteerMatch

Follow us on Twitter: [@VolunteerMatch](https://twitter.com/VolunteerMatch)

For any questions contact:

Jennifer Bennett

[@JenBennettCVA](https://twitter.com/JenBennettCVA)

jbennett@volunteermatch.org