

Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers and Donors

Presented by Sara Platnick, CHR Board Member

Goals for today's webinar

- How to identify & find your target audiences
- Understanding the motivation of your different audiences
- How to vary your messaging for recruitment and retention

About Me

- Coalition for Home Repair Board Member
- 7x Sierra Service Project volunteer; 2x staffer
- Professional background in PR & strategic communications



Three questions for effective communications*

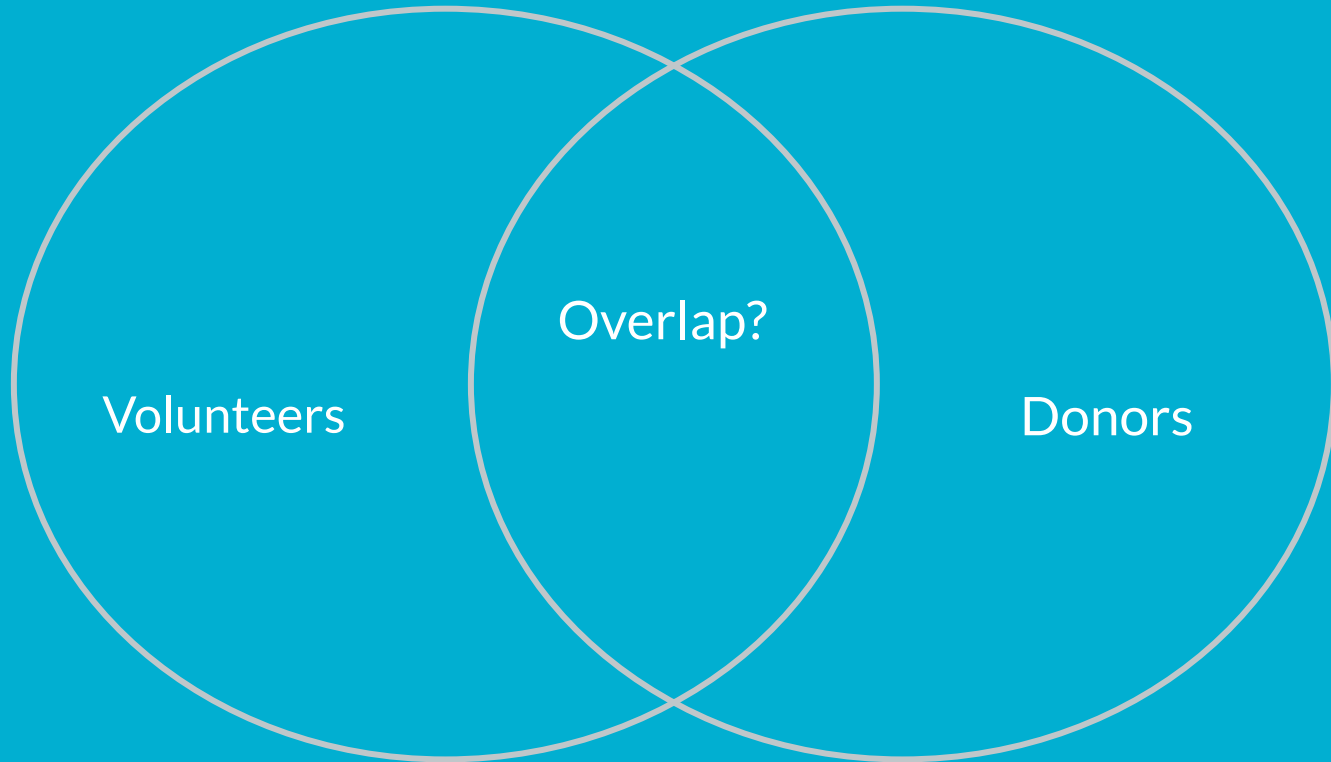
Who is your audience?

What do they want?

How do you best reach them?

**That is going to look different depending on your organization and how donors and volunteers engage with you.*

Identifying your target audiences



Building your personas (ideally: 1-3)

- Age groups
- Profession/salary
- Interests & hobbies
- Values/beliefs

Sample persona

Stephanie is a 23-year old recent college graduate who works for the local municipality. Throughout high school and college, she was very active in her local youth group and likes to volunteer. She mostly helps out at soup kitchens, but is a big fan of HGTV and would be open to home repair volunteering.

Translating personas into motivations

- Becoming a personality detective
- What clues are people giving about themselves?
- Do they have a desire to give back, or do they have to fulfill an obligation?
- Do they want to be publicly acknowledged for their donations?
- What do they want in return for their time and resources?
- Why are they interested in home repair?

You know your target audiences; now what?

- Take inventory of your different means of communications
 - social media, email newsletters, in person events & marketing, word of mouth, SEO
- Before you start outreach, you should have a clear sense of:
 - Your target audiences
 - Priority personas
 - Their motivations
 - The tools in your arsenal to engage with them

Let's communicate!

- Hone in on your elevator pitch
- Speak to motivations first
- Be very clear about the ask
- Don't forget about concerns
- Keep it brief & to-the-point
- You don't have to say everything at once – prioritize

Volunteer vs. donor communications

Volunteers:

- Err towards over communicating (especially if they're a first-time volunteer)
- Send confirmations, reminders, and thank-you notes

Donors

- Be diligent about your cadence
- Don't spam
- Prioritize informing over constantly asking for donations

The donor / volunteer lifecycle

- It's not just about the initial point of discovery. You are striving for repeat engagements (whether that's volunteering or donations)
- Make sure you remove all barriers to entry
- Keep a consistent, but thoughtful, cadence of updates
- For each point of engagement, think about your objective
 - Some examples: inform, reassure, encourage a call to action

Sample Scenario #1

You host regular community “volunteer days” but your donors are separate. You want to convert volunteers into donors.

Breaking Down Scenario #1

Who is my audience/persona?

- Community members with an interest in public service

What motivates my audience?

- Fellowship & impact

How do you best reach them?

- Social media; word of mouth; impact report

Sample Scenario #2

You run a camp model geared towards high school and college-aged students and looking to recruit more volunteers.

Breaking Down Scenario #2

Who is my audience?

- Youth groups & schools

What motivates my audience?

- Fellowship; fulfilling an obligation; giving parents a positive activity for their kid

How do you best reach them?

- Word of mouth; targeted in-person outreach; SEO

**Volunteers are one
of your best
marketing assets**

Thank you!