

Re-Imagining Volunteer Engagement in a Changing World

1

Check In!

In the chat:
Share the picture number that best represents how you are feeling today.

2

WWW.ADISAGROUP.COM

WWW.ENERGIZEVOLUNTEERS.COM

3

What We'll Cover Today

- How Volunteer Engagement is Changing
- What it Means to Engage Volunteers Strategically
- 4 Strategic Steps to Align Volunteer Efforts to Meet Your Mission

4

Requests of the Group

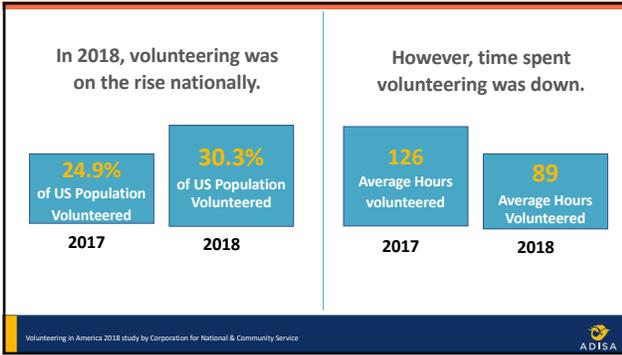
- Videos on, please! (Particularly during breakouts)
- Be present and minimize distractions
- Participate fully – this is for YOU!
- Share airtime

Thank you!

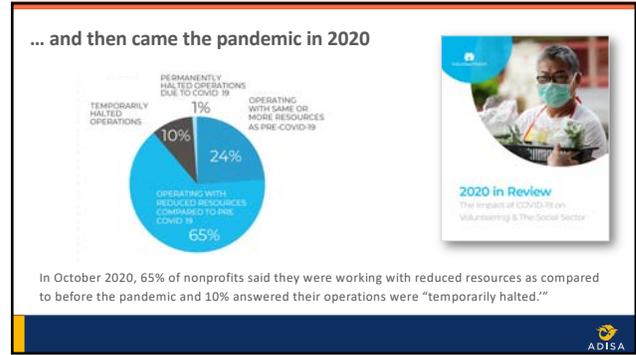
5

How Volunteer Engagement is Changing

6



7



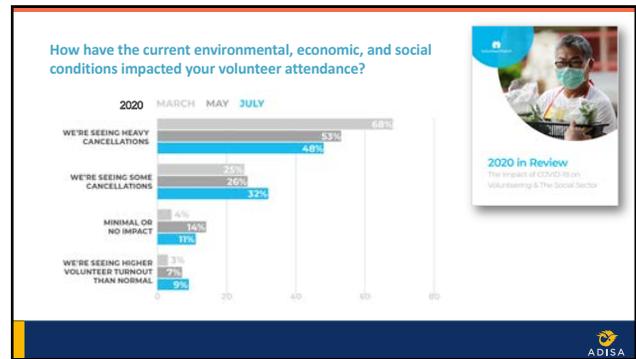
8

Volunteer Involvement Hit Hard by the Pandemic

- Most organizations (regardless of cause) struggled to keep volunteers engaged.
- Leaders of volunteers furloughed or reassigned early on.
- Many operational changes, volunteers asked to stay home and may not return.

ADISA

9



10

The Desire to Volunteer Remains Strong

“85% of nonprofits report volunteer requests increasing by at least double that of requests prior to the pandemic.”

“A convincing 95% of individuals believe they will be at least as involved or do more to support their community once the pandemic passes.”

Source: Points of Light study (Aug 2020) and Sterling Volunteers (Mar 2021)

ADISA

11

Volunteers are seeking...

- The chance to apply their talents and education to social concerns.
- To participate in designing their own volunteer work and projects – Serve as partners and not simply “fill slots” as unpaid staff.
- Flexibility in when and how they give their time. They can afford to be choosy!
- Options to get started quickly and “test” the organization before committing to long-term assignments.

ADISA

12

- Millions of people are eager to donate their time and support to causes they care about.
- We have an **opportunity** to think differently and involve volunteers in different ways to meet these needs and support our evolving missions.
- We need to be **STRATEGIC** as we plan for the future...



13



What Does it Mean to **Strategically** Engage Volunteers?

14

Strategic Volunteer Engagement leverages the power of volunteers to expand impact and maximize mission accomplishment.



15

Meaning...

- **Volunteers play important roles across the organization.** Not just busy work or doing things others don't want to do.
- Volunteers are welcome and integrated as valuable members of the team.
- Volunteers reflect the community the organization serves.
- Volunteers are empowered, supported and appreciated.



16

From the research, we know that when organizations strategically engage volunteers, they...

 <p>accomplish their missions are significantly more adaptable, sustainable, and capable of going to scale.</p>	 <p>are equally as successful in accomplishing their mission as their peers without volunteers, but at almost half the median budget.</p>
 <p>enjoy potentially more donor support. High net worth donors who volunteer give up to ten times more money than those who don't volunteer.</p>	 <p>reap up to a \$6 return on every dollar invested when considering the financial value of volunteer involvement.</p>

17

Strategically Involving Volunteers Clearly Offers Many Benefits

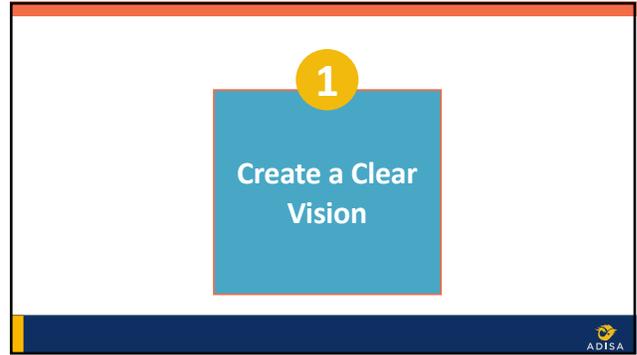
- Allows organizations to extend their budget using resources wisely *and then do even more*
- Deliver programs and services that wouldn't otherwise be possible – expand their reach
- More effectively meet the mission!



18



19



20

BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND

What are we ultimately seeking to accomplish by involving volunteers in our organizations?

21

Create a Vision for Volunteer Engagement

- Articulate the organization’s belief in the value and role that volunteers play in carrying out its mission
- Helps determine whether prospective staff and volunteers are a good fit for the organization
- Helps volunteers understand their value to the organization

22

Step 1. With key staff, board members and other volunteers, discuss:

Why do we want to involve volunteers in the first place?

Imagine you had an unlimited budget, would you still involve volunteers in some way and, if so, why?

23

<p>Volunteer activity should complement the work of paid staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide special expertise missing from paid staff • Expand the hours of paid staff • Assist paid staff in delivering services that do not require professional level expertise • Extend work that would not be done if volunteers were not there to do it 	<p>“True” volunteers are those who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. work toward public service, religious, or humanitarian objectives 2. do not expect or receive compensation for services 3. do not displace any genuine employees.
--	---

24

Step 2. Revisit the mission of your organization.



- The mission is the purpose for which the agency exists. It is not a list of what you do but is rather a declaration of what you want to accomplish (e.g., eradicate hunger in our community, end violence among our youth).
- Being clear about the organization’s mission is critical to deciding how volunteers will be involved to support that mission.

Source: From the Top Down, Susan J. Ellis 2010



25

Step 3. Identify how you involve volunteers today in carrying out your mission.



- Who is defined as a volunteer?
- What do they do?
 - Do they have a wide range of roles?
 - Do they work throughout the organization, in all departments and units?
- Are volunteers considered partners in our work or assistants and helpers?
- How do staff view the involvement of volunteers?

Source: From the Top Down, Susan J. Ellis 2010



26

Step 4. Create a vision of potentially great volunteer engagement.

- Have executives, staff, board and volunteers give input envisioning their hopes and wishes for how your organization might more successfully involve volunteers in the future.
- Discuss the impact this could have on your mission.
- Don't be concerned about why you don't currently have volunteer involvement at this level....

★ Visualize an expanded corps of volunteers serving the organization, effectively and creatively, in myriad ways.



Source: From the Top Down, Susan J. Ellis 2010



27

Step 5. Identify your key stakeholders (internal and external) who do or could benefit and/or contribute to successful volunteer engagement.

- Include their input into the discussion of the organization’s philosophy or value



Source: From the Top Down, Susan J. Ellis 2010



28

Step 6. Develop a draft of a statement of philosophy on volunteer engagement for review and discussion by all stakeholders.

Rewrite the draft until the statement accurately reflects your collective values.

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

Source: From the Top Down, Susan J. Ellis 2010



29

Literacy Minnesota

Sample Philosophy Statement on Volunteer Engagement

Literacy Minnesota believes volunteers are vital to the success of students and literacy programs. We believe volunteers bring optimism and enthusiasm, create positive energy, and share diverse perspectives that lead to enhanced learning outcomes for students. We strive to create learning environments where volunteers:

- » Contribute in meaningful ways to student success.
- » Reflect the diverse communities they serve.
- » Are valued for their unique abilities.
- » Are trained, mentored and supported in their work.
- » Have the opportunity to develop their skills as literacy practitioners.
- » Are empowered to advocate for literacy in their communities.

Source: From the Top Down, Susan J. Ellis 2010



30

Implement it, share it, live it!

- Ask the board of directors to formally approve the statement of philosophy to make it official.
- Disseminate widely to make certain that it becomes a living philosophy guiding the organization's engagement of volunteers.
 - On your website
 - In staff and volunteer orientations
 - When reporting volunteer impact



Source: From the Top Down, Susan J. Ellis 2010

ADISA

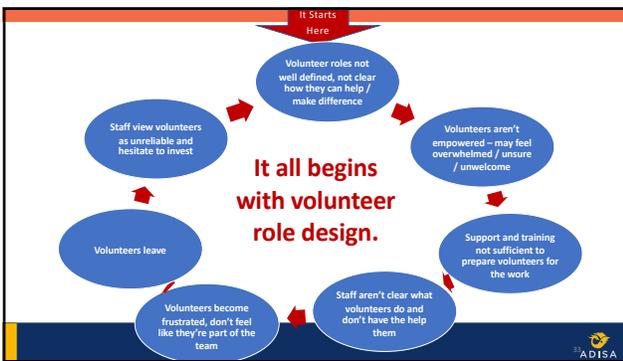
31

2

**Design
Volunteer Roles
for Impact**

ADISA

32



33



Inventory and Review Current Volunteer Roles

- What volunteer roles/opportunities are currently in place?
- In what units or departments are volunteers actively serving?
- How well are current volunteer roles meeting the needs of the organization?
- Where aren't volunteers involved? Why?

ADISA

34



What will get you where you want to go for the future?

- Some volunteer positions may need to be discontinued – **that's ok!**
- Some roles may need to change or be done in new ways – **that's ok!**
- Some new roles may need to be created – **that's ok!**

Photo credit: The Anti-Cruelty Society

ADISA

35



What can we give volunteers to do?

ADISA ENERGIZE

36



**Think Beyond
Helpers—Think of
them as
PROFESSIONAL
PARTNERS**

ADISA ENERGIZE

37



**Focus on Your
Mission and Goals**

- What is your organization aiming to achieve—what are your goals for the next few years?
- What needs to happen in order to get you there? What are the most critical activities needed to meet the mission?
- Then consider how volunteers can support your efforts.

ADISA ENERGIZE

38



Ask these questions to help identify **mission-critical** volunteer roles

1. Where do we have the greatest difficulty in delivering effective services or programs?
2. What are the biggest unmet needs of our clients, patients, community, etc.?
3. Where would we like to expand our programs? What new populations do we want to reach?
4. How could we benefit from new skills and expertise?

ADISA ENERGIZE

39

Start with the End Goal in Mind

<p>GOAL: Reduce the number of animals entering the shelter</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Provide guidance and resources to pet owners struggling with pet behavior and care</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Design a volunteer-led pet support center</p>	<p>GOAL: Increase the number of lost pets returned to their families by 40%</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Empower community to help return lost pets to families and avoid a trip to the shelter</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Design a volunteer-led lost pet initiative in community</p>
--	---

ADISA ENERGIZE

40

Build Support from Staff by Asking:

1. What do our clients, patients or community need that is not in employee job descriptions?
2. On what tasks do you currently spend your time? Which of these tasks are best suited to your interest and skills? Which are not?
3. What have you always wanted to do but don't have enough time? What's been on the back burner or on a wish list for ages?



ADISA ENERGIZE

41

Revisit what may be "Off Limits" to Volunteers

- "Volunteers are not allowed to _____."
- "Volunteers are here just to assist staff."
- "Volunteers may not be given access to confidential information."



ADISA ENERGIZE

42



Seek Input from ALL Team Members

- Conduct interviews, surveys and focus groups with staff and volunteers.
- Be transparent in sharing organizational challenges with volunteers.
- Be willing to try new things – pilot test ideas.

ADISA

43

Your Goal: Bridge the Gap



Nonprofits struggling with fewer resources, staffing shortages, etc.



Volunteers desiring to make a difference in their own way, on their own schedules

Expand organizational capacity and reach while also offering variety and flexibility for today's volunteers

ADISA

44

One size does not fit all.

Offer as much diversity in roles as possible – in combination to meet needs



Sustained Engagement

Pro-Bono

Periodic Events

Defined Project

Community Service & Service Learning

ADISA

45

Get Creative!

- Explore options for accommodating more virtual opportunities
- Flexible timing where volunteers can work when it best suits their schedules
- Role sharing where volunteers co-lead projects



ADISA

46

Put Volunteer Roles in Writing to Help Think Through Details

Position Title	Provide a title for the volunteer position that is specific to role they will play. Try to ensure it is an attractive title—for example, rather than "Exhibit Assistant" consider "Mission Ambassador"
Overview - Purpose	Overview of the impact and difference this position will make – on the program, the organization, the community, and/or the volunteer themselves.
Duties and responsibilities	Be specific and detail what a volunteer will be doing.
Skills and Qualifications	What skill sets do volunteers need to possess in order to perform this position effectively? Include any physical requirements (e.g., ability to stand for long periods of time, etc.)

ADISA

47

Training Requirements	What training is required or will be provided for this position?
Time commitment required	Provide an estimation of what is expected for the role length or time-wise. How many hours per week or month are you asking a volunteer to commit to?
Location of the Position	Will this position be performed in the organization's office, from home, at off-site event location, etc.?
Dress code required	Indicate any dress code requirements (i.e., branded t-shirt, closed-toed shoes for safety)
Benefits to the volunteer	What's in it for the volunteer? (i.e., developing new skills, meeting new people, etc.)
Supervisor	Who will this volunteer be reporting to?
Expectations of Volunteers	What does the organization expect of volunteers overall?
What Volunteers Can Expect from the Organization	What commitment is the organization making to support volunteers?

ADISA

48

From Cherie Towers, Redlands Community Hospital:

Our Mission: to assist the hospital's mission of providing quality care and service to patients. Accomplished by developing and maintaining an efficient and humanistic volunteer staff, which offers an extra dimension of care and service to patients, empathy for families and visitors, supportive services for the staff and financial support for special projects and new services.

Gaby Hernandez-Gonzalez:

Our Mission: to assist the hospital's mission of providing quality care and service to patients. Accomplished by developing and maintaining an efficient and humanistic volunteer staff, which offers an extra dimension of care and service to patients, empathy for families and visitors, supportive services for the staff and financial support for special projects and new services.



49

In your breakout group...

- Briefly introduce yourselves and then explore:
 - What roles do volunteers currently play in your organization and how well are they meeting the organization's goals?
 - Where are the gaps? What additional support may be needed for the organization, staff, patients, community, etc.?
 - Given the needs, where might volunteers provide support in the organization as you look to the future.
- Come back prepared to share!




50

3

Develop Plans & Process



51

Effective integration of volunteers in mission-driven roles requires intentional, dedicated support.

The 8 Best Practices for Successful Volunteer Engagement




52

GOAL: Reduce the number of animals entering the shelter

Provide guidance and resources to pet owners struggling with pet behavior and care

Design a volunteer-led pet support center

- How will someone apply?
 - Do we need to update the online application?
 - What questions should we ask?
- How will volunteers be selected?
 - Do we have volunteers already on board who could do this?
 - Who will review applications and interview applicants?
 - What criteria will we use to determine if someone is right for the role?
- How will we onboard the volunteers?
 - Who will supervise and support this volunteer?
 - What training will be needed? Shadowing?
 - What reference materials will they need?
- What tools do volunteers need?
 - Do we need a special phone tree? Email addresses?
 - Do they need funds to purchase supplies?
 - Do they need uniforms?
- How will we evaluate success?
 - What are the expected outcomes for the role?
 - What information needs to be tracked and reported?



53

Review and Update Policies

- Have volunteers and staff sign off on having read the policies.
- Save policies in accessible place for volunteers and staff where updated versions can be shared over time.

Policies to consider:

- Attendance, Timekeeping, Absences
- Confidentiality
- Conflict of interest policy
- Anti-Discrimination
- Dress code
- Expense reimbursement
- Safety Procedures/Rules
- Grievances and complaints
- Substance Abuse
- Social media / PR representation
- Liability and Insurance
- Emergency Procedures and Reporting
- Security
- Discipline and Termination




54

Review and Update Onboarding & Training

Orientation to Organization Overall

Training on Their Specific Role




55

Level of Training Depends on Role to be Performed

One-Time Event Volunteer	Volunteer Tutor
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-event video orientation • On-site briefing • Written tip sheet 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 hour required training session • Required pre-reading • Shadowing of experienced tutor • Assessment of tutoring skills



56

Consider Buddies for New Volunteers



- Pair up new volunteers with a staffer or experienced volunteer
- Or, have one seasoned volunteer available to a team of new volunteers
- Increases chances new volunteers will stick around and expedites teamwork
- Have someone available to answer questions and check in after first few shifts



57

Ensure Volunteers are Properly Equipped





58

Ensure Productive and Timely Communication

- Encourage sharing via groups (Facebook group, Slack)
- Host meetings as needed (full-org town halls, all volunteers, teams)
- Provide resource center (shared google drive, etc.)
- Implement shift/daily huddles




59

4

Target Recruitment



60

The Key is to **MATCH** the **RIGHT** Volunteer with the **RIGHT** Role!

(Then empower and support them)



ADISA

61

From the volunteer perspective, a worthwhile experience:

- **Is discoverable.** Can be easily found online
- **Is local.** Addresses an issue important to my community
- **Is credible.** Delivered by an organization with local/issue expertise
- **Is social.** Allows me to invite my friends and family
- **Is authentic.** Explains why my actions will matter, upfront
- **Is personal.** Allows me to engage with beneficiaries
- **Is impactful.** Shows me the outcomes of my actions
- **Is repeatable.** Provides an avenue for me to reengage

87%

Will make time for a worthwhile volunteer opportunity

Points of Light: Engaging Americans in Civic Life (May 2020)

"Civic Life Today: A Look at American Civic Engagement Amid a Global Pandemic," Points of Light 2020. <https://pointsoflight.org/resources/civic-life-today-civic-engagement-research/>

POINTS OF LIGHT

ADISA

62

How do we find these amazing volunteers to meet our needs?

VOLUNTEERS are **FABULOUS** and magical like **UNICORNS** only better!



ADISA

63

First, look within!

- Do you know the special skills and talents of your current volunteers? Talk with them and find out!
- Conduct a skills survey – ask for the skills you need, and you just might find them.
- Identify your volunteer leaders and consider expanded roles to tap their leadership abilities.



Photo credit: The Anti-Cruelty Society

ADISA

64

Top Barriers To Volunteering
Top 2 Box (Major/Moderate Barrier)
Among Those Interested in Volunteering Who Have Not Done So

Unsure how to get involved or where to find opportunities 44%	Cannot find opportunities near me 44%	Not sure what I can do that would be helpful 43%
Busy, don't have time to volunteer 42%	Haven't found a group of volunteers with whom I fit 41%	Haven't found opportunities matching my skills, abilities 41%
Rather do other things when I have free time 34%	Uncomfortable volunteering with people I don't know 33%	Don't believe my efforts will make a difference 26%

Points of Light: Engaging Americans in Civic Life (May 2020)

"Civic Life Today: A Look at American Civic Engagement Amid a Global Pandemic," Points of Light 2020. <https://pointsoflight.org/resources/civic-life-today-civic-engagement-research/>

POINTS OF LIGHT

ADISA

65

Recruit Externally for **SPECIFIC** Skills Needed

Ask this:

Where can we find the people who have what **this** volunteer role requires?

Not this:

Where can we find people, in general?

ADISA

66

Consider the Skills Desired for the Role

- What skill or qualifications do volunteers need to possess in order to perform this position effectively?
- When do you need this volunteer? During workdays? Weekdays only?
- Where can they do this work? Does it have to be at your office/facility?
- Which areas of the community aren't represented in your volunteer team? How might you involve them?




67

Imagine the Characteristics of the Ideal Volunteer for this Position

Demographics	Who are they? How old are they and where are they in their life?
Employment	What do they do for a living? Are they a student?
Interests and Hobbies	What do they enjoy? What do they do in their spare time?
Beliefs and Values	What is important to them? What are their values and beliefs? What words/phrases might appeal to them?
Motivations and Desires	What might motivate them to volunteer?
Potential Barriers	What might keep them from volunteering? What might make it difficult for them?
Availability	When might they be available for volunteering? Weekends only? Certain times of year?



68

Brainstorm where you are most likely to find the person/people with the skills and characteristics you most want.

- Where might you find someone with the skills/characteristics you need?
- Where does this person like to go?
- Where does this person get their information?




69

Craft the "Ask".

For each volunteer position, include:

- A catchy title
- Why the assignment matters
- What the work is
- How much time is required
- How the application process works




70

Example Volunteer Opportunities at the Dog Adoption Center



Dog Walkers Needed!
Love Dogs? The Dog Adoption Center needs experienced dog walkers to join our volunteer team. Volunteers walk and socialize the dogs to keep them happy during their stay and teach them manners to prepare them for their new homes. Volunteers must be able to manage dogs up to 120 pounds and must be willing to work with dogs with minor behavior issues such as pulling on the leash, jumping and barking or lunging at other dogs while being walked. Safety training is provided.

Requirements: Must be at least 18 years old, have active health insurance, comfortable working around all types of dogs and in good physical condition. Must also be able to work independently with limited supervision, follow verbal and written instructions, and communicate effectively with staff, other volunteers and the public.

Commitment: 2 hours per week on a set schedule for at least 6 months

Open Shifts:
Mondays 3:00 - 5:00 PM
Tuesdays 9:30 - 11:30 AM
Wednesdays 3:00 - 5:00 PM
Thursdays 9:30 - 11:30 AM

[Apply Now!](#)



71

Promote the opportunity

- Make a list of all the places (physical locations, online options, etc.) you can think of where you might promote this opportunity to attract your ideal volunteer(s).
- Begin building relationships with groups or communities you'd like to involve.
 - Recognize you will truly need to build trust and this takes time, but very worthwhile!
 - Seek out community leaders, ask other nonprofits working in the area




72

Be Aware of Potential Barriers to Diversity!

- Underserved communities – and many communities of color – are often in survival mode.
- Sometimes reciprocity (I help you, you help me) can help increase participation.
 - What can you do to help make volunteering for you more accessible? i.e. offer child care, transportation stipends, food, etc.
- Many in underserved communities may be juggling many responsibilities, rely on public transportation, etc.
 - Provide as much flexibility in scheduling as possible.




73

Processes May Impede Diversity

- Can volunteer applications be easily done on a cell phone? Many people don't have computers and printers.
- Can applications and other paperwork be offered in multiple languages?
- Reserve background checks only the positions that truly require them. Consider undocumented people, etc. who may be fearful of having a background check, but still have much to contribute.
- Additionally, not all background check infractions are equal. Carefully consider what will preclude a volunteer from participating and why.




74

Offer a "Test Drive"

- Invite prospective volunteers to check out the organization
- Invite to a one-time opportunity or event
- Offer an information session to learn more about volunteering and allow them to ask questions – include current volunteers as speakers




75

Be ready when someone says "yes"

- Monitor email, phones and social media
- Respond quickly to inquiries
- Alert staff to be on the lookout
- Have applications ready
- Be ready to schedule interviews or orientation




76

Maximize Your Own Website & Social Media

- Are volunteers visible and findable?
- Are volunteer opportunities explained?
- Are current vacancies shown – and updated?
- Is there an e-mail contact address?
- Can someone easily apply online?




77

In your breakout group...discuss

1. Where might more support be needed for volunteer engagement in your organization? What plans/processes do you need to create/revise as you consider current and new volunteer roles?
2. What new recruitment techniques might you try to find the right volunteers to fill the needs/roles identified.

Come back prepared to share!




78

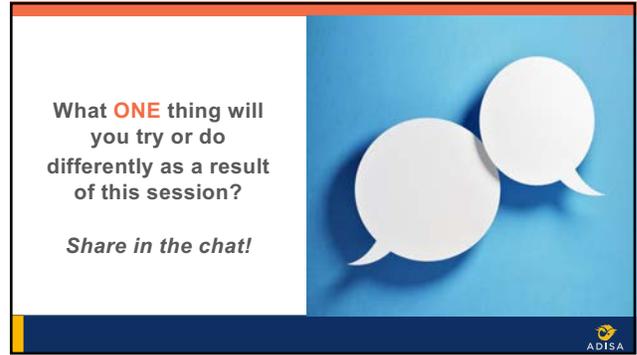


4 Strategic Steps to Align Volunteer Efforts to Meet Your Mission

- 1 Create a Clear Vision
- 2 Design Volunteer Roles for Impact
- 3 Develop Plans and Process
- 4 Target Recruitment

ADISA

79



What **ONE** thing will you try or do differently as a result of this session?

Share in the chat!

ADISA

80



Thank you!

CONTACT US

- WWW.ADISAGROUP.COM
- WWW.ENERGIZEVOLUNTEERS.COM
- BETSY@ADISAGROUP.COM

ADISA
ENERGIZE
Leveraging the Power of Volunteers

81