



Florence May is President of TRS – The Registration System. TRS provides expert consultation and technological support for volunteer managers. TRS clients include the 2011 North Texas Super Bowl LOC, Kentucky Derby Festival, Indy 500 Festival, Ottawa Bluesfest, 2010 NCAA Men’s Final Four, SeaFair, 2010 World Equestrian Games, Calgary Habitat for Humanity and Shambhala.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

Please take a few minutes to consider the foundational elements of your volunteer program using the following informal ratings.

- ✓ Check the items that are running smoothly. These should be no-to-low risk items.
- ? Put a question mark beside the items that need some improvement and may have moderate risk.
- X Put X next to the items that need immediate attention due to cost or risk.
- !! Two exclamation marks by the items that have extremely high risk.

Volunteer Training

- Does your organization supply a volunteer handbook with standard operating procedures, event policies, dress code, site map and emergency protocols?
- Does your volunteer training program set the stage for a positive and engaging volunteer experience?
- Do your event managers, team leaders or committee chairs review job responsibilities with volunteers prior to the event?
- Does your organization have a vetting process to ensure each volunteer is capable of executing their job requirements?
- Prior to the event, do your volunteers receive a site walk through to become familiar with their work environment?
- Do your volunteers receive a complete event overview? All activities? Sponsor awareness? Venue familiarity?
- During training does your event leadership, preferably the Board President or Executive Director, communicate how important volunteers are to the success of the event?

Job Descriptions

- Do you have well defined volunteer job descriptions based on actual event needs?
- Do you provide job descriptions to volunteers in advance of registration?
- Do your job descriptions include shift times and specific locations?
- Do you specify any financial cost to the volunteer? Parking? Food?
- Do you provide realistic expectations? High traffic zone? Nonstop busy? Slow periods? Solitary? Lift 15 lbs? Sitting the entire time? Exposed to sun, rain, snow? Stressful environment?
- Does the job require a skill? A security or background check? A valid driver's license? A beverage server's certification? Computer experience?
- Does the volunteer opportunity have restrictions? A minimum age? Experience? Must be selected? Approved by a team leader?
- If you allow youth volunteers, do you clearly establish adult oversight requirements?

Risk Controls

- Do your volunteer's job descriptions clearly identify requirements and risk? During volunteer training do you identify facility related risks?
- Do your volunteer waivers specify the volunteer's responsibilities? Has your attorney reviewed your waiver within the past two years?
- Does your event insurance provide financial protection for the event management organization if a worst case volunteer liability scenario occurs despite precautionary measures?
- Do your volunteer waivers encourage volunteers to take responsibility for their actions? Does the waiver discourage volunteers from taking risks that put the volunteer, or the organization, in a dangerous or irresponsible position? Does the waiver protect the event rights owner, the event management team, sponsors and any affiliated organizations?
- Is the physical signing of a waiver mandatory before volunteers work a single event activity? What is the process for physical retention of these documents? How are they accessed by management if there is an incident?
- If you use an online waiver as part of your volunteer registration process, will the online waiver acceptance hold up in your state court?
- If volunteers drive event or personal vehicles as part of their event duties, do you verify driver's licenses and personal auto insurance? Does your event insurance cover volunteer drivers?

- Has your insurance company reviewed your volunteer policies, handbook and waiver to ensure that requirements are met?
- Do you require security and background screening for volunteers who are supervising children, have access to VIPs, contact with personal data or work in sensitive locations?

Communications & Technology

- Does your organization have updated volunteer databases and automated communications tools that allow for alternate staff to step in if your volunteer manager would become unavailable or incapacitated?
- Does your registration process allow volunteers to select their own jobs and specific shift times?
- Does your volunteer manager have the capability to instantly e-mail all event volunteers with routine changes or crisis messages?
- Does your volunteer manager have the capability to build reports that inform decisions (e.g. specific shift or job shortages) and support logistical needs (e.g. shirt orders, food needs)?
- Does your volunteer manager have the capability to electronically track attendance? Do you know who attended training? Who completed all of their volunteer shifts? Who collected a t-shirt and event ticket but did not work their shifts?
- Do you electronically blacklist volunteers who are disruptive, dangerous or do not complete their commitments?

Evaluation

- Do you allow for anonymous feedback with specific questions and open comments? Do you ask volunteers for recommendations to improve your operations?
- Do you conduct a wrap up session with your volunteer team leaders or committee chairs within a short time following the event to evaluate what went well and what did not go well?
- Do you evaluate the actual number of volunteers that are required for each job and shift? Do you challenge team leaders to look for efficiencies that make best use of volunteer time and energies? Do you have too many or too few volunteers?
- Do you evaluate the most common volunteer management problem areas? Communications? Registration process? Onsite coordination? Training? Job descriptions?