

Volunteer Retirement

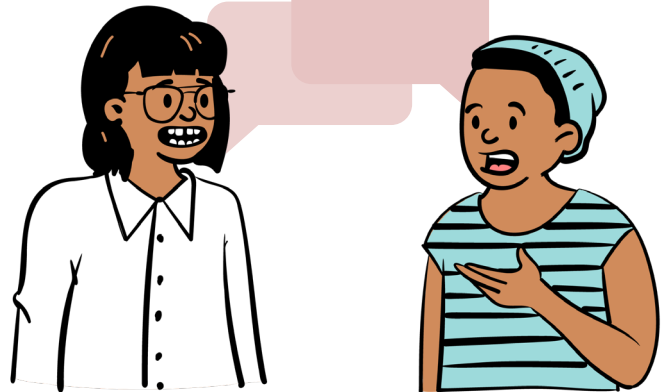


What is it?

There are many reasons why volunteers “retire” and leave their role, and not all of them have to do with the organization. A volunteer might be moving to a new city. The expectations from their school program or job may have increased. They could have health issues. Sometimes when volunteers leave it is because of something the organization, or its leaders, did or didn’t do

Why is a Volunteer Retirement process important?

A well-defined process that gives volunteers the opportunity to close out their role and communicate their feedback provides valuable data for your community sport organization. In addition, the development of a succession plan as part of your retirement process allows your trusted volunteers to step back from positions when they no longer wish to participate.



What steps should you take when your volunteers decide to move on?

1 Exit Interview

The exit interview gives you the opportunity to walk in your volunteers’ shoes and see your organization and the volunteer program from their point of view.

2 Succession Plan

Succession planning involves identifying and developing potential volunteers who can step into roles when current volunteers retire. The goal of succession planning is to minimize the impact of turnover by providing a process for identifying, recruiting, and training new volunteers.



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Exit Interview

The exit interview gives you the opportunity to walk in your volunteers' shoes and see your organization and the volunteer program from their point of view. What components are key for an effective exit interview

1. Provide a welcoming environment to chat

Explain the purpose of the interview to understand their experience, both positive and negative and to learn what works, and does not, in your volunteer program.

2. Say thanks!

Take time to express your gratitude to your volunteer for the commitment and energy that they have given to your organization.

3. Ask for Feedback.

Ask about the learning experience and how you might be able to better equip the person who steps in next. Listen and accept feedback openly. **Some questions to consider:**

- i. What is prompting your departure?
- ii. What support and/or resources we can provide for the next volunteer to set them up for success?

- iii. Are there improvements that can be made to our onboarding, training or appreciation program?
- iv. Could the organization have utilized your skills or abilities better?
- v. Was there anything about your experience that made you feel uncomfortable or unwelcome?
- vi. Do you have other suggestions to help us improve?

4. Any recommendations?

Ask the departing volunteer if there's anyone they would recommend for their role – be it an existing volunteer or a new one.

5. Act on the data

Once the interview is over, take a hard look at the answers. Use the insights to learn how to improve your volunteer management plan: from recruitment through to appreciation, which in turn will help you to improve volunteer retention.

6. What is your plan?

Create a plan for filling the gap.
can another team member pitch in?
Can you bring in a volunteer from another area?

7. Communicate the departure to the team

When someone leaves, communicate clearly to the remaining team members. Ensure to include the plan for next steps.

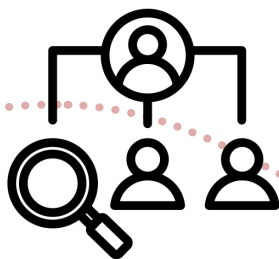
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Succession Plan

The effects of volunteer retirement can be minimized with a volunteer succession plan. Succession planning involves identifying and developing potential volunteers who can step into roles when current volunteers retire. The goal of succession planning is to minimize the impact of turnover by providing a process for identifying, recruiting, and training new volunteers. Key factors to consider include:

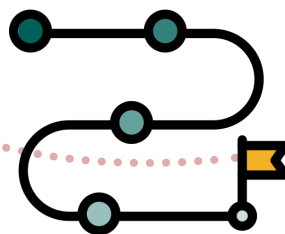
Definition of key roles:

Identify critical volunteer positions which require succession planning. These may include coaches, officials, board members, committee and event volunteers. Gain an understanding of the skills, knowledge, and experience required to allow you to make your recruitment process more effective.



Development of the plan:

Develop a plan including the recruitment process, the training and development activities for successors, and the transition process from existing to new volunteers.



Knowledge Mobilization and Transfer:

Establish a process for outgoing volunteers to share their knowledge, experiences, and contacts with their successors to ensure a seamless transition.

