Writing Fabulous VADs
Webinar Chat Brainstorm
2/16/2016

What do you find most challenging when creating a VAD?

I find the restriction on VADs to former VISTA assignments gets in the way of responding to changing immediate local needs.

Critical wording and sequence needed by CNCS

Because I work with 25 Vista's and several sites knowing what sites need is very challenging.

The ever evolving needs of our agency made it difficult to articulate the specifics

Knowing what is required in a VAD (for state office approval) vs. what is just recommended.

I require each site to submit a concept paper to me each year. In that paper they must describe their need. They we have a phone call if I need further explanation

Awesome, I am a fairly new leader here, that is a great suggestion

Creating a timeline of tasks for the entire year

do you think a time line makes it more clear than the dates on the VAD

Making sure that there is an appropriate amount of tasks/responsibilities for the year so the member is kept occupied, and making sure those tasks are compliant with CNCS/the program measures/etc.

aligning the needs of various stakeholders

The timeline breaks down the dates on the VAD. Our VADs are just the months within which to complete the task. For a new VISTA it is helpful if they have it broken down in a timeline. That is something they work through with their site supervisor

What would we see happening if a project was sustainable beyond the VISTAs being there?

funding and volunteer management in place

There's no hole in Human Resources after the VISTA ends term of service.

The project can continue on after the end of a VISTAs term

permanent resources including funding and volunteers to run it

The work continues after the VISTA assignment ends.

Sponsoring agency is able to sustain with internal resources.

development of processes & procedures for volunteers and staff

Continuity of the project established by the VISTAs.

volunteers and staff are trained to take over a program

I see this as a lasting legacy

written policies, procedures, manuals, etc. that can be used by organization staff into the future

The project would continue because there is a procedure for running the program and recruiting and managing volunteers

The project can carry on under its own strength after the VISTAs service period ends

The work continues after the VISTA

The project is well documented and could be sustained with limited downtime.

Sustainability is continuing the work with other resources

Agency employees are able to build on the foundation the VISTA creates

A continuing flow of highly ambitious and organized volunteers.

the work will grow and be fluid after the vista has left

The VISTA has engaged community members to take on the work.

creation of annual events, paid positions, and policies and procedures in place

We are the Center for Civic Engagement so sustainability to us means finding and empowering students to take over programs, events, etc.

The program is able to continue with easy to follow SOP.

The project is designed to be maintained along three years with Vista members and then transition into continuing without them

Volunteers or staff can implement the program after the VISTA staff have completed the project

strong relationships for funding & volunteer recruitment; infrastructure for volunteer training

I find it challenging/impossible to recapture the momentum of a year one and two when I have a magnificent VISTA who only serves for two years because the stipend is not feasible for living. Is there a way this group or any group could lobby for 3 Ed Awards for our magnificent VISTAS?

What are some member activities a VISTA could do for this objective?

Objective: Assess the current state of WCS' efforts in reaching, selecting, and supporting volunteer mentors and create or revise policies, procedures, and documents to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the mentor recruitment and matching system by January 2016.

Observe current member

surveying current mentors, stakeholders

Read through and assess gaps in sustainability binder.

Interview previous mentors to get their feedback

Create focus group to poll

Gather data on numbers of volunteers and the kinds of activities they have been involved in

Review current policies/documents

Recruitment?

Implement questions/ surveys to current participants

Assess the ways our organization engages with stakeholders in the community.

research best practices for volunteer mentor recruitment

research best practices in policies and procedures for mentor recruitment and work with site supervisor to implement them

design communication templates

develop and implement an assessment tool, potentially with input from stakeholders

survey mentors for what works

Utilize a database to monitor activities and build a policy and procedure manual

Research best media channels to reach target audience

look at alignment with MENTOR's Elements of Effective Practice

meet with staff and other people to get an understanding of their involvement and the program strength and weaknesses

create a training and certification program for volunteers

speak to the departments involved to get their input

Gather data and increase awareness

Meet with current partners that support recruitment.

Summarize her/his own experience and talk to supervisor to kick off the process
create a calendar of events to engage stakeholders
research what others are doing and "borrow" from their successes
Reach out to potential organizations to network
identify stakeholders
get mentor feedback on improving program
survey mentees to determine success of mentors
Interact with community organizations to expand our resources
create a way to evaluate the impact of the program
Create plan to engage community and stakeholders.
Network of community stakeholders
translate statistics into stories
learn about how agencies that coordinate volunteers do the same thing
Would an initial implementation of a developed process be part of the assessment role?

What activities could you include in a VAD to ensure the sustainability of your program?

legacy binder
introduction to "key players"
Training staff prior to completion of term
This has always been referenced, but creating processes!
Development of SOP
train designated staff member (possibly supervisor) how to use materials that the VISTA developed
Develop resource base for the future.
introductions of new project director to partner collaborators
put together portfolio of business cards
create a database of local employers to invite to the job fair
Detailed policies to maintain/update website and other communication channels
Using the binder and arranging couple of sessions between new and experienced members
participate in staff meeting
develop ongoing partnerships, sponsorships, multi-year pledges from individual donors
create a program manual
Create an advisory committee
Backing up all materials used
Sustainability binder should include detailed notes on volunteer's profile.
relationship building with other service organizations
Database or a 'Brain Binder'
Evaluation of member's year and action plan to continue tasks
lists of resource people with whom VISTA has had contact
Produce training manual or templates.
who will absorb parts of the roles that the VISTA provided into organization
Creating training sessions for staff and volunteers on how to use the materials they have developed
Advisory Committee or board
training manual, introduction/leadership of volunteers by staff

attend staff meetings

Have departing VISTA put together a pass on binder with statuses of program names contacts etc.

host quarterly volunteer leadership meetings to make sure relationship with organization, members, and other staff is strengthen for long-term sustainability

Move everything into sharable formats- Google Docs or Drop Box

Organize materials, programs, resources in an easy to use and understand manner.

provide training to existing staff regarding classroom presentations

ensure saved materials on shared drive

create a class via black board

Create an interview form

establish web presence to reach potential volunteers

research best practices

create a webpage for volunteer recruitment

Create a volunteer description

research outreach websites

Publish the position in community forums

write job description

create tracking system, interview process/form, timeline

talk to staff currently in charge of recruitment to find out strengths and weaknesses of existing processes

develop flyers

develop elevator pitch

Create templates for recruitment outreach

Volunteer training session

create communication plan and templates

develop background check forms

get a list of previously utilized resources

mentor application

Give Gab training. Volunteer packet

online process for volunteers to sign up

Create a call plan to follow for consistent calls and asks

A natural go getter

Meet with community service groups,

include volunteer retention plan

Request presentation time at service clubs to recruit.

Recruit placement sites.

Identify volunteer descriptions

create a volunteer schedule

create list of sources for volunteers - college campuses, etc.

develop orientation for volunteers

(from our actual VAD) Develop a one-page informational sheet in order to market volunteer opportunities to potential partners.

Tracking and recognition system

identify target group

Give Gab is a great management tool! Training needed and monitoring of events needed.

Create a rating system after outreach that shows interest in participating in program.

develop a sustainable way to acknowledge contributions by volunteers

Develop Volunteer enrollment process based on volunteer interest

debrief form

Notify local community organizations of need for volunteers

Provide overall communication among prospective and current volunteers

Reach out to previous volunteers and partner organizations.

identify different types of tasks, short term vs ongoing

Notify local community organizations of need for volunteers and develop list of such organizations from whom you intend to solicit volunteers