Office of Volunteer Programs

Orientation Program

Orientation: an introduction, as to guide one in adjusting to new surroundings, employment, activity, or the like. (dictionary.com)

What is an Orientation Program?

- Begins with your very first contact, whether it is by phone, email, letter, or in person.
- Welcomes new volunteers into the organization
- May be a formal event, like a luncheon
- May be held as 1:1 conversations for smaller groups
- Ongoing process
- NOT training

Why have an Orientation Program

- Share knowledge about the organization/program
  o Mission
  o Goals
  o Policy and procedures
- Shorten the learning curve of new members
- Avoid future problems by setting expectations from the start
- Increase enthusiasm and motivation for your program

What Information should you cover during an Orientation Session?

- The structure of your organization, including an introduction to key staff members and an explanation of their roles.
- What is expected of the volunteers, including a general overview of the tasks they will be asked to complete
- A brief history of your organization. Help them understand your organization's mission, policies and main goals, as well as how the volunteer can contribute.
- University priorities
- The volunteer training schedule, if one exists.
- The volunteer evaluation and performance review system.
- Written materials can be anything from a few handouts, to a written manual
- Written materials should supplement a face-to-face orientation, not replace it.

Timeline

Immediately upon acceptance	Mentor calls new member to welcome them. Provide the mentor with a script.
1 ½ months prior to first meeting	Mail manual or information about your organization to your new members.
1 month prior to first meeting	Orientation Webinar
Immediately following webinar	Evaluation sent
2 weeks prior to first meeting	Mentor calls again to ask if they have any more questions. Provide mentor with a script.
Meeting date	Consider having a meet and mingle reception for new members.