



**Special Olympics**  
Volunteer Management Series

# SPECIAL OLYMPICS VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT SERIES

# RECOGNITION



# Volunteer Recognition Learning Objectives:

- Understand the impact of recognition in your own life
- Identify organizational barriers to giving recognition and propose solutions
- Explore ways of offering formal and informal recognition in your Special Olympics Program
  - Discuss creative, low-cost recognition ideas
- Review essential guidelines of effective recognition



# Personal Recognition Experiences

Think about volunteer recognition in your own life:

- What kind of recognition have you received?
- Was it meaningful?
- Why?



## Key Concepts of Recognition:

1. Recognition is an ongoing, integral part of the management process.
2. Recognition can be formal or informal and can be given on many occasions during a volunteer's involvement with Special Olympics
3. Recognition should be meaningful to the recipient and should be given in a timely manner.
4. Recognition can be creative and fun to give and receive and is best when associated with the Program's culture and the volunteer's type of service.



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# Key Concept #1

Recognition is an ongoing, integral part of the volunteer management process



# Barriers to Recognition

Can you identify any organizational barriers to giving positive feedback and recognition to your volunteers?

- If so, what are the barriers?
- How can you overcome them?



## Key Concept #2

Recognition can be formal or informal and can be given on many occasions during a volunteer's involvement with Special Olympics



# Formal Recognition

## *Major benefits of formal recognition:*

1. Building community spirit among volunteers
2. Publicly recognizing volunteers – attracts others to join
3. Boosts volunteer motivation
4. Volunteers see that their service is valued





# Cautions in Formal Recognition

1. Presuming they replace daily “thank yous”
2. Lack of personal presentations
3. More costly – some people believe that money should be spent solely on the athletes and the Program
4. Poor attendance at formal recognition ceremonies; lack of promotion; time constraints
5. Others



# My Program Recognizes Volunteers...

- How and when does your Program currently recognize volunteers?
- How could you improve on this?



# Times for Recognition

- Daily/weekly basis
- Monthly/yearly basis
- Special Occasions (birthday, anniversary date with Special Olympics, holidays, etc.)
- At the end of a large project
- When a volunteer leaves Special Olympics
- Before or after a Special Olympics competition



## Key Concept #3

Recognition should be meaningful to the recipient and should be given in a timely manner



# The Appropriate Recognition for the Individual

- What kind of recognition do people motivated by accomplishment like?
- What kind of recognition do people motivated by social interaction enjoy
- What kind of recognition do people motivated by power like?



## Key Concept #4

Recognition can be creative and fun to give and receive. It is best when associated with the Program's culture and the volunteer's type of service



# Innovative Ways to Recognize Volunteers

*Describe several ways a Program could recognize the following volunteers:*

- Day-of event volunteers
- Office volunteers
- Year-round volunteers
- Committee members
- Games and Area Management Team Members



# Essential Guidelines of Effective Volunteer Recognition

- The key to volunteer recognition is placement in the job most suitable to his/her motivations and talents.
- Recognition must be meaningful to recipients, not to the person giving the recognition.
- Many acts of recognition can be spontaneous and personal and are often not costly
- Short term volunteers are best recognized at the work-unit level in the group with which they interact
- Long term volunteers generally like recognition within the larger group setting