



## Volunteer Leadership Development

The third of a 4-series Volunteer Management Network on “**Collaborative Partnership for Common Good**” was held on 15 November 2019. Graced by Dr Ang Hak Seng, Deputy Secretary for Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth (MCCY), the event was attended by close to 100 professionals, including Executive Directors and Volunteer Managers from Social Service Agencies (SSAs) and CSR representatives from the Corporate and Government sectors.

The topic was on Volunteer Leadership Development and covered the following segments:

- Live webcast by Ms Tobi Johnson, founder of VolunteerPro, on **How to Prepare and Promote Effective, Courageous Volunteer Leaders**
- Sharing by one of NVPC’s Company of Good Champions, **VISA**, on their **Corporate Social Responsibility Efforts**
- Sharing by Youth Corps Singapore, on **Development of Youth Volunteer Leaders**



In his closing address, Dr Ang encouraged the sector to adopt a 3P-partnership approach (People, Private and Public) to serve the community. He emphasised the need to continue building the relationship and partnership between SSAs and Corporates, with support from the government.

**“For the community, doing good is no longer episodic, but a daily occurrence. For the SSAs, doing good is not only about individual service delivery, but the continued collaboration with each other, as an ecosystem. For the Corporates, doing good is no longer just part of your CSR, but should be seen as your sustainability strategy.”**

Towards a

In Support of

In the spirit of



Giving Week



## How to Prepare and Promote Effective, Courageous Volunteer Leaders

- by Ms Tobi Johnson, Founder of VolunteerPro



### 1. Choose the right volunteer leadership model for your organisation

Volunteer Leaders can be developed based on their capabilities, as people rise to the occasion

Volunteer Managers should first believe in their volunteers and create opportunities for them to lead

#### 3 main types of volunteer leadership models

- Autocratic - Advisory Teams, Supervised Groups
- Democratic - Boards, Committees, Task Forces
- Self-directed - Autonomous Teams that choose their own projects

Different volunteers should be assigned with different levels of authority in decision making, as this approach allows volunteers the autonomy to get things done

Create a **Culture of Commitment** formula to develop Volunteer Leaders:

- i. Build a purposeful staffing plan
- ii. Onboard & place volunteers
- iii. Delegate & inspire leadership roles
- iv. Use social proof & results for growth

Points to note in **leadership-focused onboarding**:

- i. Focus on prospective leaders in recruitment, showing leadership development as a benefit
- ii. Review volunteer's past formal/informal leadership and current interests in leadership roles
- iii. Conduct behaviour-based interviews with real-life leadership dilemmas
- iv. Present leadership development topics as part of orientation

**“When you create specialised job descriptions for busy volunteers, you are more likely to gain commitment and invest less in training and support.”**

### 2. Design a purposeful volunteer leadership development pathway

Core **skills** for new leaders

- i. Making the shift from peer to leader
- ii. Leading others
- iii. Helping others set goals
- iv. Mastering performance management
- v. Review and follow up

Clearly **define** volunteer **leadership roles** to allow volunteers to take steps towards leadership in their volunteering journey

A leadership pathway should **include the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities** required for each role

#### 8 ways to Prepare Volunteer Leaders:

1. In-service training with staff
2. On-the-job training
3. Documenting best practices
4. Stretch assignments
5. Job shadowing
6. Mentoring
7. Team projects
8. Co-leadership

#### Succession planning of Volunteer Leaders:

1. Use volunteer agreements to plan
2. Rotate volunteer assignments
3. Have volunteers cross-train each other
4. Ask volunteers to guide programme development
5. Create desk manuals
6. Establish a recommended job progression

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### 3. Identify potential individuals for leadership roles

Ways to **prime for leadership**:

- i. Feedback surveys and polls
- ii. Idea mash ups
- iii. Planning sessions
- iv. Rotated meeting roles
- v. Welcome teams
- vi. Training presentations
- vii. Social media sharing
- viii. Programme design feedback

Leadership **best practices**:

- i. Recognise contributions and celebrate values & victories
- ii. Clarify values and set the example
- iii. Envision the future and enlist in a common vision
- iv. Look for opportunities to improve and learn from experience
- v. Foster collaboration, increase self-direction and develop competence

DO	DON'T
Check if volunteer has skills, time, and motivation to lead	Invite by email or "cattle call"
Ask the person, if you can	Expect volunteers to add the new leadership role to current role
Be specific about the role and level of commitment expected	Leave the commitment period open
Ask volunteers about their ideas on leadership roles	Be vague or ask leaders to "make it up" as they go



VISA, recognised as a Champion of Good 2018 by the Company of Good at NVPC, shared their roadmap for CSR and how they empower employees to identify and curate their own volunteering opportunities.

**VISA's 5 core focus for CSR:**

1. Financial literacy
2. Financial inclusion
3. Microenterprises
4. VISA volunteers
5. Disaster relief (in collaboration with Red Cross)

**How VISA encouraged employees to volunteer:**

- Provide **volunteer time-off**
- **Match** USD10 to charity of employee's choice for every **hour** that the employee is volunteering
- Provide **grant** for employees to submit proposals to **identify SSAs** to volunteer in and **lead** the effort
- Employees get to **share their volunteering experience** and post opportunities in weekly bulletins
- Involve **clients** in volunteering initiatives

## Youth Corps Singapore (YCS) believes in developing Youth Volunteer Leaders

YCS' volunteering programmes are aligned to community needs and youths' interest, availability and level of experience. YCS believes in creating a volunteer ecosystem of opportunities to serve, train and support the learning and initiating of ground-up projects by youths.

### Creating a positive volunteering experience through 4 senses

1. **Sense of Purpose** - instilling a strong sense of purpose in the volunteers increases their dedication
2. **Sense of Confidence** - equipping volunteers with skills and knowledge makes them more prepared
3. **Sense of Belonging** - building friendships with volunteers motivates them and leads to sustainable volunteerism efforts
4. **Sense of Ownership** - empowering volunteers to take on leadership roles and creating a development pathway for growth

