



ANALYSIS OF YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL SESSION ON VOLUNTEERING GAMCON YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The goal of the training was to introduce the issue of Volunteering as an important part of the civil society, to gain insight into the field of volunteering and understand how to promote and manage volunteerism in local communities.

At the beginning of the training I introduce myself, my background and my affiliation to volunteerism. Then all participants were asked to introduce themselves through some task and questions. First, they were asked to pick something out of a pocket or purse and share with the group why it's important to him/her. The second question was what kind of experience the person has with volunteering. The third question for everyone was to tell us what she/he has never done yet and desires to try it. At the end of this block I asked all participants to draw a picture of themselves, all pictures were posted on the wall and participants were invited to write messages to individual persons' pictures or some feedback. In the end of this block I spoke about the place where I came from, and I also brought some promotional and informational materials about Banska Bystrica and central Slovakia, in Russian and English.

In the second block we had a common activity called „Myths and trues about volunteerism“. Each participant pulled out two strips of paper with some statement related to volunteerism. Then he/she was asked to decide if it is true or not and provide some arguments for it. It led to a group discussion and showed me what is the level of understanding of the topic in the group. I asked them to apply some of mentioned statements to their current situation and we also discussed how we can transform some negative statements about volunteerism into positive.

In next block after lunch we try to find answers through a group discussion, real stories and examples to questions:

- What is volunteerism
- Why is it important
- What can be volunteers' motivation
- What attracts or discourage me to be a volunteer

After this block we played a game – energizer, which was also supposed to point out how important is to communicate and understand what “my” role in the team is.

In the last block of the day we started introduction of Volunteerism as a professional

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activity and what it requires. Participants were divided into 2 groups, each group got papers with particular steps of volunteers' management and they were asked to put them in the order. Then we discussed what each step means to get common understanding of the whole process, how to manage work with volunteers to get them from the position of "tolerated visitor" through "welcomed guest" to "one of us". In the end of the day we sum up and repeated the main points we have discussed and learnt.

The second day we started with energizing game. Then we continued with some theory about Preparation and planning of volunteering program. Participants were divided into three groups, each participant got a handout and they were asked to fulfill some tasks related to their concrete project or planned activity – to write down all activities which are done by volunteers and then activity which can/should be done by volunteers. Next steps for each group were to pick up one of volunteers' position and to create a volunteer' profile (according information in handouts). Each group then designed a poster inviting new volunteers to the particular project/activity. Then the whole group discussed how they work in smaller groups, what was important for them, how they made decision, what they wanted to underline.

In the next block we had a role play – interview with a person that is interested in a volunteer position in our project. There were three groups/ organizations looking for a volunteer and 3 individuals/volunteers to play the real situation. After roles playing "volunteers" gave us their feedback and we all discussed these three situations.

Then we talked about Volunteers' preparation, theoretically and practically. Participants were divided in pairs, one person had a picture and tried to describe it as detailed as possible in order that the second person can draw it as identical as possible without seeing it. This exercise taught us how important it is to make sure, that the other side, in our case volunteer, understands what is his/her job to be able to fulfill it correctly. We talked about different roles in a team and about responsibilities and rights of volunteers. I described several stories from real projects and NGOs in Slovakia to illustrate it.

We also talked about motivation and reward for volunteers, where and how to promote volunteerism and what can keep volunteers happy and satisfied to continue working with us.

The last block was devoted to practical experiences and various projects from Slovakia, related to volunteerism, working in local communities and involving local people. I

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mentioned our project Give the book, Life Funding event, Youth Bank and special project with Roma women.

Information in hand outs and in my presentation was based on:

My personal knowledge and experience

Manažment dobrovoľníkov a dobrovoľníčok, Alžbeta Brozmanová Gregorová, Alžbeta Mračková, 2014

ProVol - Professional Volunteering, Centrum dobrovoľníctva, Banská Bystrica, 2016

All participants got handouts in Russian language.

Some of materials I used in training I am sending to Ira Selezniova, who is a local trainer and ask for them.

My overall observation from the training:

- most of participants were active and involved and already had an experience from voluntary work
- they were very interested to learn about concrete projects and models
- the only occasional challenge during the training was to bring participants to think “out of the box”, out of already existing structures they are used to and motivate them to think and act as a citizens who can organize themselves and solve issues for themselves

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