



JBZ's
Volunteer Training
Design
&
Strategies

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Volunteer Training Basics

- “Volunteer Training” includes...
 - Training Classes
 - Follow-up assignments & activities
 - Mentor guidance
 - Observations
 - Practicum experience
 - Certification

Who is the Volunteer Trainee?

Motivations

Ages

Prior
Knowledge

Learning
Styles



Experiences

**Every Volunteer Trainee
is different**

The Training “Package”

There are 4 main Components
to Volunteer Training

- Training Classes
- Observational Experiences
- Practicum Experiences
- Certification/Evaluation/Confirmation

These Components will and should overlap...

- Trainees are encouraged to begin their observations while in the early stages of the class schedule
- Once Observations are completed, trainees may begin their Practicum for those activities (with the exclusion of AH which requires the completion of the appropriate class prior to the handling of those particular animals)
- Trainees may become certified in one volunteer activity while still in the early stages of learning another activity (i.e. trained as a tour guide, but still taking classes for animal handling)

Training classes provide...

- An opportunity to work as a group
- Equal opportunity for all types of learners, & at all levels of learning
- Basic educational concepts and information
- A link to staff (education, animal management, keepers, etc)
- Handouts, homework, research opportunities
- A chance to relate observations in programming to class concepts

Why is this important?

- Builds “community”, teamwork
- Meets the needs of more trainees
- To establish a solid base of knowledge which encourages further learning/research and aids in the successful implementation of educational concepts into activities
- Builds a wider community, more teamwork; meets needs of more learners/trainees; provides resources for further learning
- Encourages further learning beyond the classroom situation
- Unites elements of the “job” to the classroom

Observations provide...

- Direct exposure to a variety of volunteer activities
- An introduction to the logistics and procedures of volunteer activities
- A reinforcement of class information and educational concepts
- A link to the “greater community”; a wider circle of volunteers

Why is this important?

- Diminishes confusion or fears about what’s expected as a zoo volunteer; informs the volunteer about the variety of opportunities open to them
- The first step to learning what’s expected or required as they begin their “on-the-job training”
- Gives them a chance to see educational concepts “in action” and bring any related questions back to the class for clarification
- Sense of belonging/teamwork; develops a broader resource base

Practicum provides...

- A reinforcement of educational concepts and information
- On-the-job training for each specific volunteer activity
- A supervised transition for becoming a fully-trained volunteer
- Training and reinforcement of logistics and procedures for volunteer activities
- A chance for the trainee to participate in volunteer activities at their own pace
- A link to a wider circle of experienced volunteers

Why is this important?

- Repetition and application are sound educational practices for better learning and retention
- The best way to learn the specifics of each activity; realism
- Sense of comfort for the trainee; safety and security for all; encourages that proper procedure and protocol is observed; provides an additional resource for trainee
- For the safety and security of everyone! Covers logistics not suited for classroom study.
- The trainee gets a sense of comfort and control of their preparation and training; allows gradual transition from “trainee” to “trained”
- Important resources for support, information, etc.

Certification/Evaluation provides...

- Additional contact for education department
- Chance to review trainee skill development
- Opportunity for the trainee to ask for input or ask questions of the education staff
- AH inventory (ASI) can be taken
- Establishes and acknowledges the end of an “official” training period

Why is this important?

- Allows us to evaluate the trainees experience with the trainee program
- Helps evaluate the training program and allows us to make any necessary adjustments for ensuring a skilled volunteer
- Reinforces and clarifies points of training, reinforces idea of ed staff as resources,
- Ensures the safety and comfort of the animals and the trainee, and thus the public
- Gives trainee a goal; a sense of accomplishment and “closure” at the completion of training