

Building a Sustainable Volunteer Organization

Recruitment • Retention • Burnout Prevention



Recruitment



Retention



Burnout Prevention



Session Objectives



Strengthen recruitment pipelines



Improve retention systems



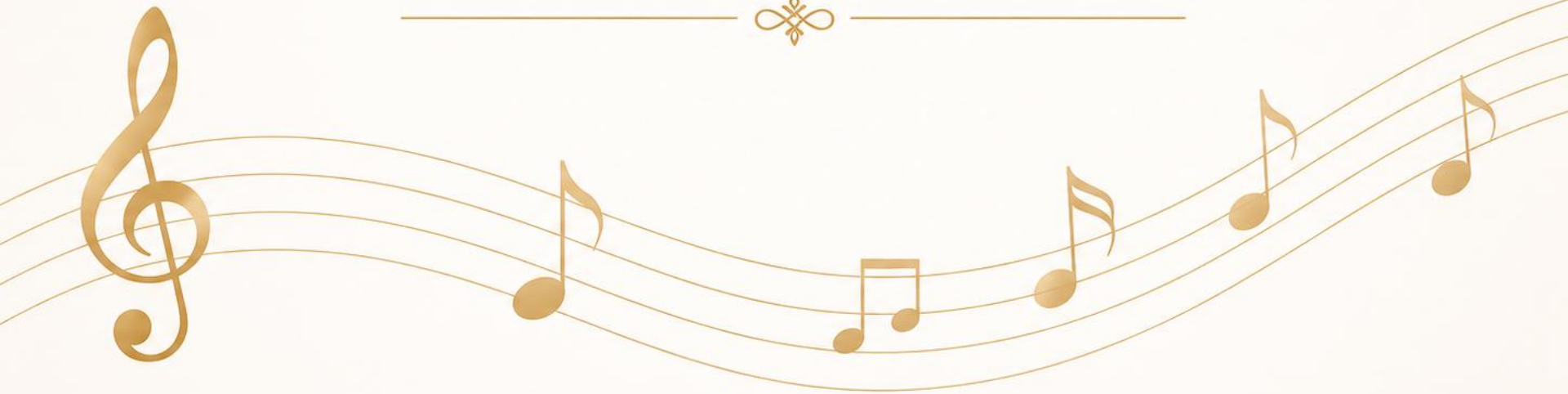
Understand and prevent burnout



Develop one actionable change

Recruitment

Getting Volunteers in the Door



Recruitment Reality



1

Many organizations recruit reactively



2

Roles are often unclear or too broad



3

Limited pipeline depth



4

Mismatch between roles and motivations

Recruitment Principles



**Recruit for capacity,
not crisis (be proactive)**



**Define clear
time expectations**



**Align roles with
motivations**



**Build depth across
volunteer base**



Breakout 1: Recruitment Strategy



1 Identify a hard-to-fill or a demanding role



2 Clarify responsibilities and realistic time expectations



3 Draft a 3-sentence recruitment pitch



What the
role is



What the time
commitment is



Why someone
would want to do it



4 Be ready to present your results

RETENTION



VOLUNTEERS RARELY LEAVE
BECAUSE THEY DON'T CARE.



THEY LEAVE BECAUSE
THE EXPERIENCE ISN'T WORKING.

VOLUNTEERS RARELY LEAVE BECAUSE THEY DON'T CARE.

THEY LEAVE BECAUSE THE EXPERIENCE ISN'T WORKING.

IT'S NOT ABOUT LACK OF CARE.

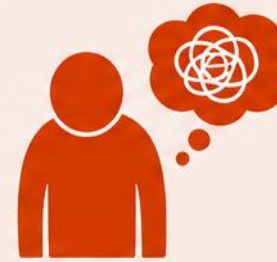


- ✓ They show up.
- ✓ They want to help.
- ✓ They believe in the mission.
- ✓ They care deeply.

CARE IS USUALLY NOT THE REASON.

≠

IT'S ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE.



- ✗ Unclear expectations.
- ✗ Poor communication.
- ✗ Lack of support.
- ✗ Not feeling valued.
- ✗ No growth or feedback.
- ✗ A mismatch of skills or interest.

A POOR EXPERIENCE IS THE REASON.



Better experiences. Stronger teams. More impact.



Retention Challenges



Inconsistent engagement

Volunteers participate sporadically, making it hard to build momentum.



Lack of structure and communication

Unclear roles, expectations and communication lead to confusion.



Limited leadership pathways

Few opportunities to grow and advance within the organization.



Volunteers unsure of impact

Without clear impact, volunteers don't feel connected or motivated to stay.

Sustainable Retention



Provide clear
roles and expectations



Offer leadership and
growth pathways



Maintain regular
communication



Build community and
connection



“

*If volunteers don't feel connected and valued,
they won't stay.*

”

Breakout 2: Retention



Discuss

- Where does our organization lose volunteers?
- What part of the experience is unclear or inconsistent?



List some ways

List some ways to abate these issues in your organization.



Be prepared to share

Prepare to share your key takeaways and ideas with the group.

Mentoring in Harmony

GROWING VOLUNTEERS. STRENGTHENING OUR SYMPHONY.



HELPS NEW VOLUNTEERS
GROW & STAY



BUILD CONFIDENCE

Guidance and support help new volunteers feel welcome and capable.



LEARN & DEVELOP

Hands-on learning helps them grow their skills and knowledge.



STAY CONNECTED

Meaningful relationships increase engagement and long-term commitment.



Mentoring
creates a
stronger
volunteer
organization.



KEEPS VETERAN VOLUNTEERS
ENGAGED & INSPIRED



SHARE & LEAD

Mentoring lets them share their experience and make a lasting impact.



BRING FRESH PERSPECTIVE

New ideas and energy from mentees keep things interesting and forward-looking.



RENEW PURPOSE

Helping others is rewarding—and keeps veterans feeling valued and connected.

STRONGER RETENTION.
POWERFUL COMMUNITY.



WHEN WE MENTOR,
EVERYONE THRIVES.

Mentoring today creates the *symphony* of tomorrow.

THANK YOU TO OUR MENTORS AND VOLUNTEERS!

 SYMPHONY
VOLUNTEERS

Together, we make music possible.



Stronger Structure *Stronger Volunteers.*



RECRUITMENT
is proactive,



ensures clarity



and creates depth



RETENTION
keeps the momentum growing,



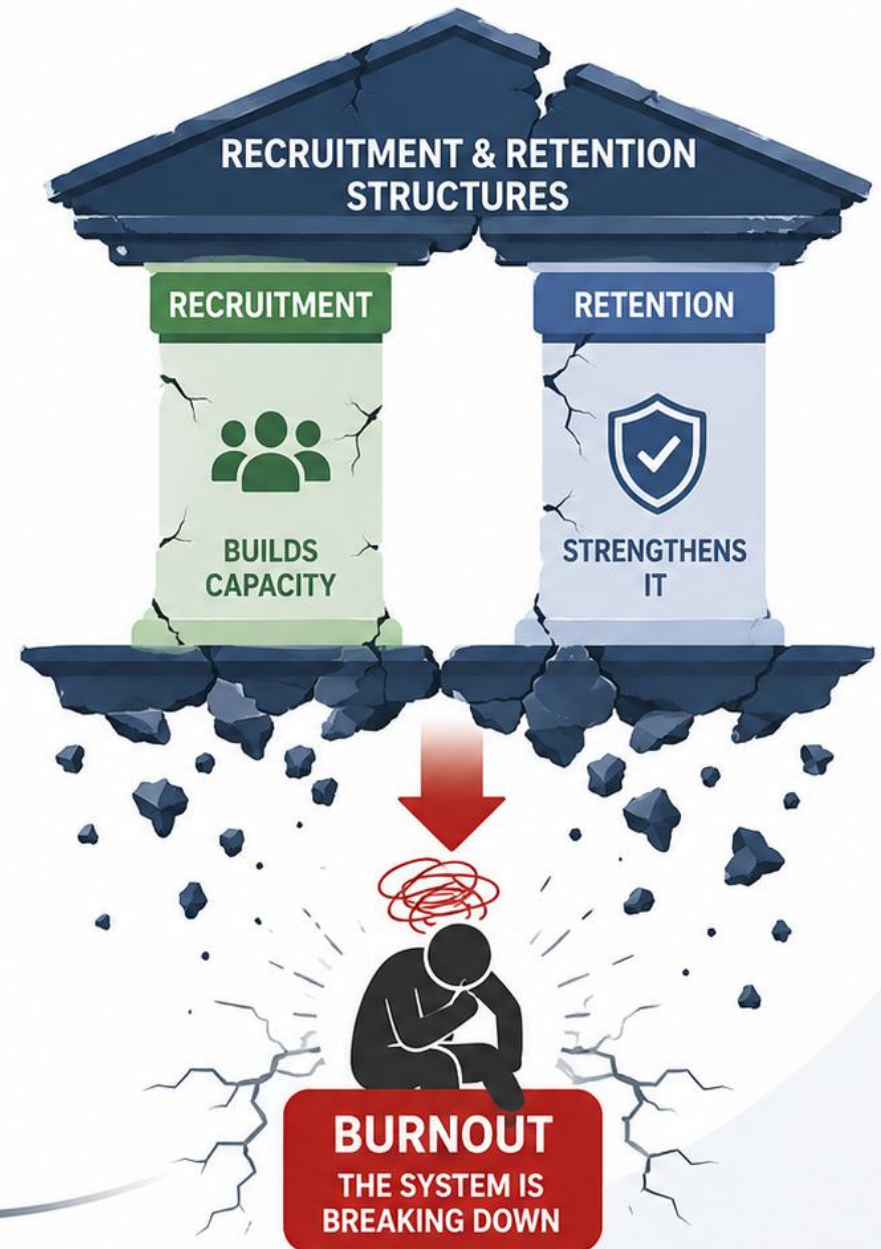
expands knowledge



and innovative growth.

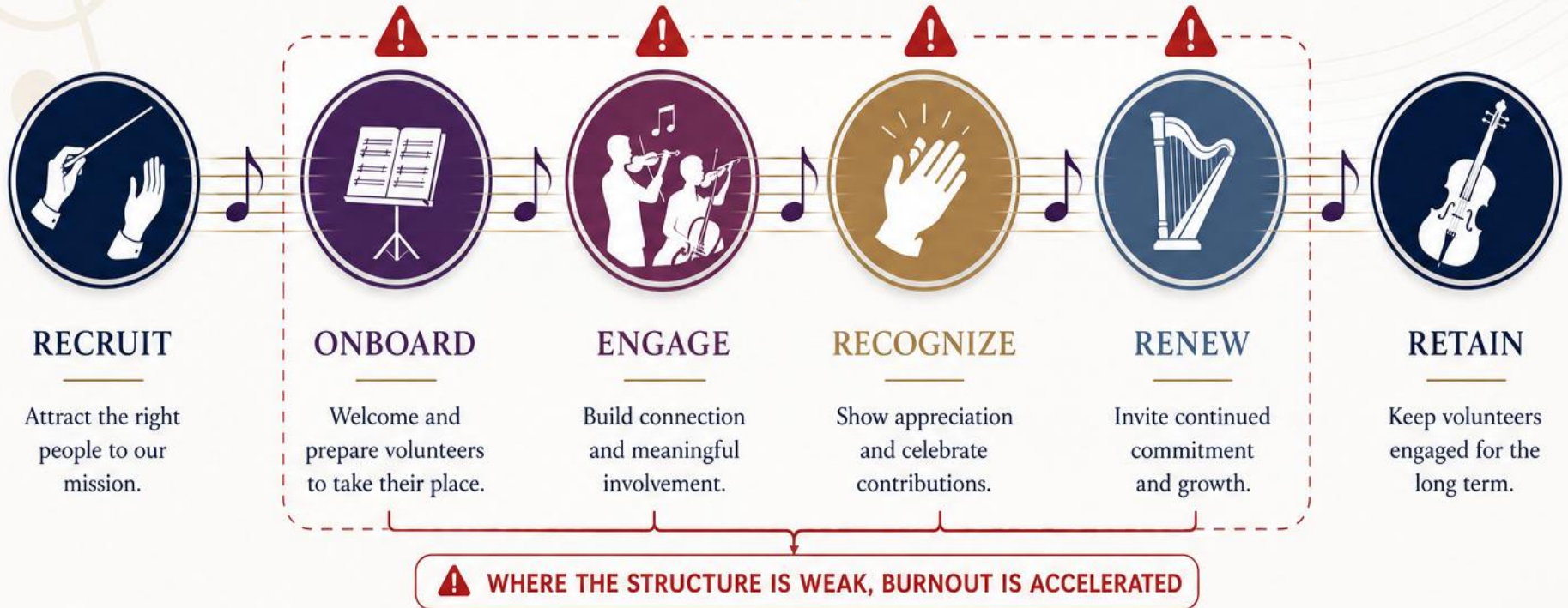
Mitigating Burnout

“If recruitment builds capacity and retention strengthens it, burnout tells us where the system is breaking down.”



VOLUNTEER LIFECYCLE

Every Note. Every Role. Every Time.



**WHERE THE STRUCTURE IS WEAK,
BURNOUT IS ACCELERATED**



Burnout Reality



- **Over-reliance on a few individuals**
10% of volunteers doing 90% of the work



- **Scope creep and unclear boundaries**
“Hero culture” rewarding overwork



- **Limited succession planning**
Leadership roles without term limits

Burnout Insight



Burnout is **not** a motivation problem



Burnout is a symptom of **structural failure**



Structural stability in recruitment and retention determines **sustainability.**



Mitigating Burnout

Strong volunteers. Lasting impact.



Set role boundaries
and time limits



Rotate leadership
roles



Distribute
workload



Normalize
stepping back




Managing risk effectively and structurally =
Mitigates Burnout


Healthy volunteers. Meaningful service. Lasting impact.


Breakout 3: Burnout Risk Mapping



 At your table, identify:

 Where are people in your organization overextended?

 Where is there no backup?

 Which people have held the same job for too long a period of time?



Then choose **ONE** role and define a structural fix.



Key Takeaways



**Recruit proactively
and for depth**



**Retention through
engagement and impact**



**Mitigate Burnout
with a sound structure**



30-Day Commitment



Write down one thing you will take back to your organization and implement within the next 30 days.



“Stable organizations are **not** built on heroic volunteers.

They are built on sustainable systems.”



RECRUITMENT

Attract the right people.



RETENTION

Keep volunteers engaged and connected.



MITIGATING BURNOUT

Support well-being to sustain impact.



SUSTAINABILITY

Build systems that last.



GROWTH

Strengthen and expand our mission.

Symphony VOLUNTEERS



For further information
or help contact
Paula McReynolds at
stocksail@yahoo.com



Music Matters

