

Audio Interview Transcription

Interviewer: If you can take out your member assignment description, let's go through each of the four main tasks, the primary tasks, that this plan calls for and tell me something from either your past experience, your knowledge or your skills, that you think will support your success in completing each of these tasks. The first task is basically to establish a work group that would advise and assist with the assessment of the community services volunteer practices. Just tell me a little bit from your past that supports your ability to convene people, explain and communicate to them what it is you're asking them to do and work together at?

Applicant: Well, I have worked with as I said before groups of mothers and children at the shelter. That was really my first experience in working with groups, and I found it was a little difficult at first and I really needed to (take to?) basically assess what each of those – just get their background kind of before I went ahead and understood how to plan for the group. That was really helpful and I think that correlates to what we're talking about. I've had training and work with different assessment tools so I know how to look at those – I mean, different observation tools, specifically in the classroom environment, and I think I've struggled in some way with group management and I've worked to understand my weaknesses, because I usually do have a really strong focus on individual work. I'm really excited about learning more about group work, and I've gained a lot of experience just this past year within that and reflecting on what I've found to be difficult.

Interviewer: I think that's really important in the experience in your past to be able to say this is more difficult or challenging, and this is what I did to manage it and to be able to successfully work through it. That particular ability is as important as feeling confident or competent in a given area. So I really do appreciate you sharing that with me. The second primary task is that you'd be developing and designing a volunteer system. What from your background, Rachel, would help me understand your ability to do something like that?

Applicant: Like I just said, working in program coordination, and working on recruiting people into the specific group, it's called the National Alliance for Family Friend and Neighbor Child Care. I've basically been very much corresponding throughout the day with many people via e-mail and telephone to try to create a larger group – we're having a meeting in November, and to really gather policy makers, researchers and practitioners in this specific area – family friend and neighbor care. That's been really like a great experience for me just to have – I think of myself as a very – I guess I have a large desire to connect with people and to bring people together, and I've kind of recognized that this year, and so I think that would support me in doing this task, and also I have some good experience in writing right now, 'cause I see here "to develop written volunteer position descriptions", and I've actually been doing that – I've been writing up different committee descriptions for this one program surrounding family friend and neighbor care, so we're creating committees, and we're creating annual meeting, so I've been doing the recruitment for the meeting and for the committees right now, so I'm pretty familiar with that.

Audio Interview Transcription (cont.)

Interviewer: The last two tasks are recruiting and training volunteers and the fourth one training program staff on the volunteer system if you could tell me just a little bit. I see in your resume here that you have been an assistant teacher at the Trevor Day School and tell me what else would support your working as a trainer / teacher in building capacity for the volunteers and the staff at the organization.

Applicant: The training experience I was thinking about also has to do with the program that I'm working in now. It was interesting – I actually had to go away for that training experience and I found out it was a little hard because we had a very small group that we had never worked with before and it was for a limited amount of time, so it was difficult to train the people that we were supposed to be training in this specific assessment tool, because we hadn't worked with them before and we only had three days so we basically had to assess where they were beginning and acknowledge that we weren't going to really complete the task within three days, so that was a real interesting experience for me, so I feel like I have an idea of what training – there has to be a fluid process but there are also some time limitations, so I wonder, in regards to that, is there like supervision experience that I may be able to expect from VISTA that would support that for me?

Interviewer: Yes, I'm glad you asked that question, Rachel. There would be some supervision, the supervision would be primarily at the beginning of the program and we would try to coordinate with other staff here at the organization who have been involved in training programs and also trying to access some time where you can shadow somebody who is doing a training and get a sense of what goes into representing this project and the type of clients that we serve and the type of volunteers that we'll be trying to recruit. So you will have guidance with that, and I will also as your supervisor be available to you, on probably a weekly basis in the beginning and then every other week thereafter, but I will always be available to answer any questions that you might have.

Applicant: That's really great, because as you said before as an assistant teacher it was hard to get that guidance and find that in the school system, and a lot of teachers are just bogged down and the directors are and I think that's really important to feel that support in going into a program.

Interviewer: I do want you to know that I have multiple tasks myself, and about 15-20% of my time has been identified as being dedicated to this project, so while our time may be limited, I want us to get to know each other really well so that I can meet your needs and you can be clear about my expectations so we have a good working relationship, and I have a very open door policy and I appreciate when the VISTAs or anybody that I'm working with asks questions and acknowledges they need assistance or support.