Volunteer and Staff Management

10

Section 1: Overview:

Electoral and advocacy campaigns, as well as voter engagement, depend on human capital, access to individuals who are willing to work or volunteer their time in order to support the political effort. This chapter breaks down various categories of staff and volunteer positions in political settings. The typical duties and time commitment of each are discussed, including tasks accomplished by electoral campaign workers, interns, nonprofit board members, and more. Strategies and processes for interviewing potential volunteers and staff members, assigning tasks, managing, and helping volunteers and staff advance in their careers are discussed in the pages that follow.

Developing Social Work Competency
The Council on Social Work Education establishes educational standards for all social work programs in the USA. Content in this chapter supports building competency in the following areas that are considered core to the practice of social work:
COMPETENCY 5: Engage in policy practice
COMPETENCY 6: Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
COMPETENCY 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Domains of Political Social Work	
1. Engaging individuals and communities in political processes	◄
2. Influencing policy agendas and decision-making	◄
3. Holding professional and political positions	◄
4. Engaging with electoral campaigns	◄
5. Seeking and holding elected office	◄

Section 2: Management in Political Settings

Managers in many social work settings face a challenging environment that increasingly expects more results with fewer resources (Hopkins et al. 2014; McBeath 2016). To function successfully in this environment, good management of staff and volunteers is necessary. However, good management is time intensive and can be particularly challenging in environments that are marked by intense activity, high turnover, and stressful deadlines. Developing and practicing management competencies are therefore crucial for political social workers who hire and supervise interns and staff. Among the areas to consider are the need for understanding general hiring practices and laws, best practices to promote empowerment, and staff development.

General Hiring Practices

Before you begin recruiting or hiring for a position, be thoughtful about both what you need and expect from your staff or volunteers. The nonprofit management literature suggests a **job analysis** (Kettner 2013), which asks questions like:

- What does the person in the job need to do?
- How will they do those tasks?
- What are the expected results if the job is done correctly?
- What are the essential functions of the job?
- What characteristics will a successful person have?
- What is the context of the work (based on an assessment of the organization/setting)?
- What education and experience are required?
- What knowledge and skills are required?

To thoroughly answer these questions, Kettner (2013) advises an organization take a series of internal steps. We encourage you to refer to this resource for more detailed guidance on analyzing the context of a potential position.

While you may not be able to conduct a full job analysis when faced with limited time constraints, it is critical, even in fast-paced political settings, for your organization to take time to consider your requirements and expectations. Are the expectations realistic given the skills, education, and experience of the available staff/volunteers/interns? It can be tempting in political settings, particularly with limited budgets, to rely heavily on volunteers and interns to avoid the costs of hiring staff. This is frequently seen in legislative settings, particularly during state legislative sessions or the summer months of Congress. However, while unpaid assistance may reduce some costs—and, in fact, may be essential in political settings—volunteers and interns who are untrained or unsupervised have limited effectiveness. Political social workers must consider whether necessary tasks can be sufficiently completed by people without specialized training, or by people who might only show up once or twice. Any tasks for which the answer to this question is "no" should be completed only by paid staff or long-term volunteers.

Plan accordingly for the time needed to recruit, hire, and supervise staff, interns, or volunteers. Before you start your recruitment process, assess what resources are available in your agency. Many, but not all, campaigns and nonprofits have staff members who dedicate all or a significant portion of their time to volunteer management or staff recruitment. The title of this position depends on the context, e.g., volunteer coordinator, office manager, and field organizer. Some agencies have dedicated human resources staff or centralized internship programs, particularly public agencies or larger nonprofits. Smaller nonprofit organizations, campaigns, or offices of state or local elected officials will likely not have these resources.

There also may be specific laws that impact hiring practices in your setting. To find out about these laws, we recommend that you connect with a national or state-wide assistance organization that focuses on your setting, such as the National Council of Nonprofits or the National Conference of State Legislatures.

FURTHER REFLECTION: Your Work Experiences

Think about an agency or campaign where you have volunteered, interned, or worked (this does not have to be a political organization). What resources were available in the organization for finding and hiring volunteers, interns, or staff members? Which volunteer or staff hiring systems did you think were helpful to the organization or worked well? What did you like about those systems?

Empowerment and Diversity

Social work literature consistently argues that organizations that foster the voices of those who work for them are more likely to also create empowering situations for clients and communities. In contrast, organizations that disempower staff may not support the development of voice and power among the clients or communities with whom they work. This is an important reminder that how political social workers interact with our staff matters for multiple reasons. The social work value of dignity and worth of the person calls on us to respect our colleagues and coworkers; by doing so, we also create an environment that fosters respect for the dignity and worth of those on whose behalf we work.

Hardina's (2005) conceptualization of "empowerment-oriented organizations" offers a model for management in political social work settings. Empowerment-oriented organizations are those that promote broad participation in organizational decision-making, leading to positive outcomes for individuals, the organization, communities, and social change. Hardina (2005) identifies a series of strategies for creating organizations that value empowerment of staff, clients, and communities. While these strategies were based on service-delivery organizations, they are applicable to creating campaigns, offices, and organizations that reflect diverse viewpoints, empower employees, volunteers, and communities, and are able to responsively recognize and address bias.

Adapting Hardina's framework, we outline below several management approaches for political social workers who hire and supervise interns, volunteers, and staff to consider. Please see the Resource section for information about Hardina's article, if you are interested in a more expansive discussion of what these approaches might look like in practice.

1. Intentionally create office structures that support *meaningful* participation by diverse stakeholders. These structures should include a variety of perspectives among those who volunteer and work for the organization.
2. Develop organizational policies and procedures that can be used to bridge cultural, ethnic, gender, and other demographic barriers between individuals and groups. Include policies that promote hiring of people from diverse groups *and* ensure these hires are active participants in decision-making.

3. Develop organizational decision-making practices that minimize power differentials among staff members, but also between staff and community stakeholders.
4. Promote team building and collaboration among staff and with community members and stakeholders.
5. Implement strategies that consciously seek to increase the psychological empowerment of staff as well as community members and stakeholders.
6. Intentionally seek to increase job satisfaction among both employees and volunteers.
7. Encourage staff to advocate for improvements to organizational policies and procedures, and provide space for them to do so.
8. Seek to increase your organization's political power, as well as to increase the political influence of community members and stakeholders. This one might be comparatively easy in political settings, as this is often reflected in these organizations' goals.
9. Hire leaders who are fully committed to empowering staff *and* who are committed to empowering community members and stakeholders.
10. Engage directly and create *true* partnerships with the communities and constituencies who are the desired beneficiaries of the organization's actions. As a common statement in the disability rights activism says, "Nothing about us, without us" (Charlton 2000).

Staff Development

Staff development is a process by which employers intentionally create learning experiences that are designed to enhance employee's long-term personal and professional growth. These experiences are separate from **employee training**, which helps individuals develop the skills or knowledge needed specifically for the job at hand. Through staff development, employees prepare for future opportunities either within the organization or in their future careers (Kettner 2013). We recommend Kettner's *Excellence in human service organization management* for more detail on this topic. While prioritizing the growth of staff is an important management goal, it is especially challenging in intensive political settings like campaigns or in small, resource-limited nonprofit environments. In Section 4 we discuss ways political social workers might approach fostering professional growth among volunteers.

POLITICAL SOCIAL WORKER PROFILE: Joanne Cannon, MSW
Deputy State Director, Office of U.S. Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT).

Joanne developed an interest in politics from watching her father serve on the Board of Education, but spent the first half of her professional career in the world of finance. Once at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work, Joanne enrolled in a course on political social work and found her new passion.

Joanne began her journey working with then—State Senator Chris Murphy as a social work intern on his underdog Congressional campaign. She "worked

(continued)

several hours there more than required because I liked it so much" and was happy to be asked to stay with the campaign once her internship came to a close. Joanne remained on staff with now-Senator Murphy through his 6 years as a U.S. Representative and election to the U.S. Senate.

As deputy state director, Joanne is second in command for managing the office. Her main responsibility is managing office personnel (including three other social workers), using a lot of her social work skills. It requires "listening to what people want," but also "helping people grow, learn, and be challenged every day." Joanne prioritizes making sure that everyone in the office feels that they are on a team together. As she says, "everyone has a very important role" in the office, and it is important for the staff and interns to feel that they are contributing. Of course, Joanne also has to make sure that the actual work of the Senator's office is getting done.

In this work, Joanne has also "held on to what my passion is, which is case-work." She manages all of the office's "casework," or constituent service, operations. She and her colleagues act as a "conduit between the constituent and the federal agency to try to get assistance for these folks." Joanne practices her active listening skills that she learned as a social work student when working with these constituents. "Listening is probably the most crucial skill in political social work. People want to be heard, and to be heard, someone has to be listening." She leads the office in "actively, constantly, analytically thinking of how to solve this person's problem" because not every issue can be solved with a simple phone call.

Joanne's advice to social workers entering a political staff management position is to remember to be understanding. "Everybody has demands on their life outside of the office, and sometimes those demands creep into office life," she says. Even though the office still needs to accomplish its work, there are things in the personal lives of staff members that are bigger, and it is important to be understanding of how those issues affect them. "It can be a balance and a juggling act," Joanne says, but it is important to remember and be understanding of the issues we all have outside of work that demand our time.

Section 3: Types of Volunteers

Very few political social work tasks can be done without the help of volunteers. From campaign volunteers who hold signs at the polling place on Election Day to the board members of nonprofit organizations who invest time and energy in an organization for years and are legally responsible for its workings, volunteers come in all types and are frequently the lifeblood of political social workers' efforts. Volunteering is a huge asset to political work, and also brings significant, nonmonetary rewards to those who volunteer (Kenny et al. 2008). Individuals can volunteer in countless ways. In this section, we break down the types of volunteers most common in political social work contexts. These include interns from within and outside of social work, advocacy and electoral campaign volunteers, and three types of political volunteers with significant responsibility: members of a "kitchen cabinet," campaign treasurers, and nonprofit board members.

Interns—Nonsocial Work

Internships are very common in political settings. Interns regularly come to campaigns or political offices from fields or programs both inside and outside of social work, including, but not limited to, political science, public policy, public administration, and law. Depending on the program or the context of the internship (e.g., some students are interning for the experience, not for course credit in a program), the requirements, hours, and flexibility may differ substantially. Here, we show a flyer seeking interns to support a campaign for a state legislature seat. This listing is somewhat unusual, in that it specifically reaches out to social work majors. We cannot be any clearer about this—whether or not an announcement for a volunteer or internship opportunity with a campaign or in a legislative office lists social work, *consider yourself qualified to apply*. At the end of this book, we offer tips on highlighting your social work background as an asset to political employers who may not be familiar with the assets we bring.

Sample Campaign Internship Opportunity

This competitive race for State Representative seeks students from a variety of backgrounds to get involved in our campaign. No political experience is necessary! We are looking for hard workers who are dedicated to the community and looking to learn.

Internship responsibilities may include:
   • Contacting voters
   • Coordinating events with volunteers, media, and other organizations
   • Volunteer recruitment, training, and management

Internships may be offered for course credit or community service hours. All majors are welcome, including English or communications, psychology or social work, political science, business, and law.

For More Information, Contact Our Field Organizer Today!

campaign@campaign.org; ###-###-####

As a political social worker working with interns, here are some important factors to consider:

1. What work does the campaign or office need to have done? Is the work appropriate for the educational level, experience, and academic field of the student? Competencies and learning needs may be different for interns at different educational levels and coming from different fields.
2. What are the requirements of the intern's educational program? Fields and programs each have their own requirements for supervision, tasks, and evaluation. Before an intern and campaign have committed to each other, be sure that the requirements can be met in the particular setting.
3. In general, interns who are working for credit have a set number of hours they should be fulfilling in their internship. Does the campaign or office have enough hours for them to work? If there is more work needed than the set hour requirement, what are the expectations of the campaign or office and the student? If the student is enrolled in coursework during the internship, are expectations clear

about how the student is prioritizing attending classes and completing work? These expectations should be clear and communicated in advance by both parties. It is very easy to end up in a situation where the campaign or office has needs that extend beyond the student's committed time. Tension or conflict can ensue without clear communication.

4. Is the internship paid or unpaid? Whether interns can or should be paid depends on a number of variables. The U.S. Department of Labor (2010) outlines standards to determine whether interns are entitled to payment of at least minimum wage. Considerations include whether the internship is similar to educational training, whether it benefits the intern, whether regular employees are displaced, whether the employer benefits from the interns or occasionally finds activities impeded, whether a job is automatically offered the intern at the end, and whether both parties understand that the intern is not working for wages. It is very important to understand how these rules apply in your setting to be sure you are in compliance with applicable regulations (Minton and Young Entrepreneur Council 2013; National Council of Nonprofits n.d.). In general, these rules allow for educational internships in political settings to be unpaid, but expert advice is recommended in setting up these internships to be sure you are in line with these standards.

Interns—Social Work

Social work students bring specific requirements for supervision, tasks, and evaluation to their internships in political settings. Typically, social work interns must complete a specific clock-hour requirement and must receive direct supervision. Qualified supervisors are generally expected to have 2 years of practice experience after their social work degree *or* a program may identify an alternative way of ensuring that students receive a social work perspective on their fieldwork (Council on Social Work Education 2015). States may impose their own additional requirements; for example, New York requires supervisors of MSW interns to hold an LMSW license (NASW New York City Chapter 2013). Social work interns also must engage in tasks that support a specified set of educational competencies, and their learning must be evaluated.

Despite these common requirements, it is important to recognize that social work internships in electoral and advocacy campaigns or in the offices of elected officials may differ significantly from "typical" social work internships. An internship in a political setting—whether with an advocacy or electoral campaign or in the office of an elected official—offers students a tremendous opportunity to apply social work skills in a macro setting, to network with decision-makers and potential employers, and to develop practical skills to influence policy. Research finds that students interning in legislative settings may gain a wide range of practical knowledge and skills—each of which are critical for effectively influencing policy throughout a political social work career. These include real-life knowledge of how policy-making works from the inside, strategic knowledge of what works to

influence policy, and stronger personal (self-awareness, confidence, resilience) and interpersonal (networking) skills (Pritzker and Barros Lane in press).

Despite the learning benefits that accrue from these placements, political internships are an underutilized aspect of social work education. In a survey of field directors across the country, 59% of BSW programs place some students in field placements where they interact with professional policy advocates, and 54% of programs have at least some students who are exposed to advocacy or lobbying, but just 15% of BSW programs place students with elected officials and only 9% provide any students access to electoral politics (Pritzker and Lane 2014). At the MSW level, generalist students have similar opportunities to work with professional advocates (59%) and advocacy/lobbying (56%), while fewer than one-fourth of programs place students with elected officials (22%) or expose them to electoral politics (12%). At these generalist program levels, many field directors express concerns that they cannot locate internships that include both political and direct practice content. Specifically, they fear that political content comes at the expense of other needed content, particularly clinical content. As you move forward in your professional career, *you* can contribute to the education of further social work students by volunteering to supervise social work interns. Consider creating and emphasizing the availability of internship opportunities that expose students both to policy work *and* to working in a direct and interpersonal manner with clients, constituents, or community members. While people unfamiliar with internships in political settings may consider these to be solely macro settings where interns deal only with policy, we hope that this book illustrates how central micro social work skills are to political settings.

Policy or political responsibilities in field are most prevalent at the specialized MSW level (Pritzker and Lane 2014). In 62% of MSW programs, some specialized students interact with professional policy advocates, and 64% offer some placements with advocacy/lobbying content. Among specialized programs, 28% offer some opportunities to work with elected officials, and 20% offer some opportunities related to electoral politics. Yet, these placements too face barriers. These include finding adequate supervision, what field directors perceive as a lack of interest or preparation by students for policy placements, and distance from places where directors think of policy being made, such as Washington, DC, or the state capitol.

FURTHER REFLECTION: Advice to a Social Work Supervisor in a Political Setting
Picture yourself 5–10 years from now as a supervisor of social work interns in a political setting. The setting could be an advocacy or electoral campaign, the office of an elected official, or some other political context. Based on your recent experiences as a social work student and intern, write a brief letter to this "future you." What advice do you have for "future you" in supervising social work interns in a political setting?

Advocacy and Electoral Campaign Volunteers

Volunteer tasks for advocacy and electoral campaign volunteers range widely: from a volunteer who shows up to one or two events to hold a sign or knock on a few doors, to someone who helps create relationships with their elected officials to promote advocacy work, to someone who works many hours per week for the duration of a campaign. In a small campaign, all roles, from campaign manager down, are likely filled by volunteers. In a larger campaign, significant roles are filled by paid staff, and, particularly at the federal level, even some canvassers who knock on doors may be paid. Often, volunteers begin by making phone calls to voters or elected officials, attending rallies, or knocking on doors, and then gradually take on more responsibility in a campaign. The "ladder" by which someone moves from a casual volunteer to a volunteer with more responsibility is discussed below.

Electoral campaigns in the USA spend a huge portion of their time, energy, and resources deploying volunteers to call and knock on the doors of potential voters. In just one illustration of this, the two major party's presidential candidates in 2012 reported millions of volunteers contacting potential voters (Enos and Hersh 2015). The Obama campaign recruited 2.3 million volunteers, and on Election Day alone (November 6, 2012), reported that 100,000 volunteers and paid campaign staffers knocked on 7 million doors around the country. The Romney campaign reported 225 million voter contacts by volunteers and paid staff throughout the election (Enos and Hersh 2015). These numbers only include the presidential race—volunteers also performed voter contact in Congressional, state, and local elections throughout the country.

This **direct voter contact**, often called "canvassing," "ground game," or "field work," leans heavily on volunteers for its success. This outreach is used to reach voters individually, and ideally, to contact them through members of their own community who support the candidate. Increasingly, this work may be done remotely, with volunteers making phone calls from their homes, sometimes through internet apps. These remote efforts have the potential to engage more volunteers, but come with their own specific challenges (Moon and Sproull 2008). Volunteers who operate away from paid staff may not be as well-trained as those who work in person. Accordingly, this increases the risk that their contact with potential voters includes inaccurate information or does more harm than good.

"Kitchen Cabinet"

The phrase **kitchen cabinet** was coined during Andrew Jackson's presidency by his opponents to describe a group of informal advisors who served him. He instituted this after his dysfunctional official cabinet stopped meeting (Blair House 2014). In modern times, this phrase is used in political circles to describe the volunteer advisors who surround a candidate or officeholder and provide informal advice and counsel. These are the advisors you (or your candidate) trust the most. As a group, they may be more influential than those who hold formal leadership positions. The

kitchen cabinet might include the candidate's family members, close friends, and political mentors. Picture candidate Donald Trump being advised closely by a kitchen cabinet including Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump, who remained close advisors as he moved into his presidency. In a higher-profile race, the kitchen cabinet also might include representatives of a variety of interest and/or identity groups.

Campaign Treasurer

The **treasurer** is a key position on an electoral campaign. Because in many states, the campaign treasurer's name appears on all campaign materials, the reputation of the campaign's treasurer in your local geographic area is key. This is a critical early selection in a campaign, and needs to be someone the candidate fully trusts. A good treasurer is very detail oriented, honest, dependable, well known in the area, fully committed to the campaign, with good people skills (Shaw 2014). In smaller campaigns, treasurers are generally volunteers. They may be paid in larger elections.

Depending on their areas of expertise, the treasurer may take on a number of responsibilities during the campaign. These range from filling out reporting paperwork to depositing checks, developing a budget, and communicating with fundraising staff. The candidate, the campaign manager, and the treasurer all should know the campaign finance rules of your state. Training classes are often available both in-person and online through the state office which enforces campaign finance rules (see example in Resources).

Most importantly, the campaign treasurer is legally responsible for ensuring that the campaign honors legal and financial rules. For this reason, many campaigns use a financial professional, campaign professional, or accountant to support the treasurer's work and ensure that all relevant rules, filing deadlines, and paperwork are completed (Shaw 2014). This individual is often a volunteer. While this professional works closely with the treasurer to ensure the campaign is completely operating within relevant rules, the buck stops at the treasurer or the candidate. The old phrase "there is no such thing as bad publicity" (sometimes credited to showman and nineteenth century Connecticut state legislator PT Barnum) was not referring to publicity around campaign finance violations!

Nonprofit Board Members

Nonprofit board members, like campaign treasurers, have more responsibilities and legal liabilities than other kinds of volunteers. In any nonprofit, the range of board member responsibilities may include determining an organization's mission; choosing, hiring, and supervising the nonprofit's chief executive; strategic planning; and/or fiscal oversight and management. In a nonprofit conducting political work, board members may be responsible for participating in the advocacy work and leveraging their own connections with policy-makers to create opportunities for the organization's advocacy to be successful.

While there are many excellent resources for board members or those consider-ing board membership, the legal duties of a board of directors are particularly criti-cal for political social workers to understand. Board members' legal duties can be divided into three categories (BoardSource 2011).

1. **Duty of care**: the responsibility to participate actively in the work of the board and use their expertise to benefit the organization. In a nonprofit organization, this carries significant weight within the organization's operations (Takagi 2006).
2. **Duty of loyalty**: the responsibility to put the needs of the organization above the board member's own personal or professional interests.
3. **Duty of obedience**: the responsibility to ensure that the board is working in accordance with its mission and in compliance with all relevant state and federal laws, such as tax laws.

Because of the significance of the board member role in terms of time, responsi-bility, and legal duties, board recruitment should be conducted in a thoughtful, thor-ough manner. For a nonprofit conducting political work, it is important to make sure that potential board members understand what political involvement is expected of them. Board members should be clearly informed of their responsibilities in advance of their acceptance of the role and should serve limited terms that are renewed thoughtfully and carefully.

Section 4: Hiring and Managing Volunteers

The processes of finding, hiring, and maintaining volunteers vary depending on the position, setting, and length of any relationships between the campaign or office and the volunteer. It can include a formal process of recruiting, hiring, and supervision or may be done much more informally through networking or word of mouth.

Recruiting and Finding Volunteers

Put yourself in the shoes of a political candidate, campaign manager, advocacy cam-paign coordinator, or chief of staff. Where do you find volunteers? Some ideas are below. These are often the same groups of people who might donate money to a campaign.

1. You! As the candidate, elected official or a campaign staffer, others will not be willing to give of their time unless they see that you are committed to it as well. If a campaign wants people to volunteer their time to help a cause, those volun-teers will be more likely to come back if they see the candidate or advocacy leadership also working long hours and doing the grunt work. One author interned for a U.S. Senator who seemed to never sleep. He came into work every morning with a stack of new ideas for work he could do to help his constituents.

That kind of dedication is not a great example of work-life balance, but feels inspiring to those asked to give of their time.

2. People who love you. Family and close friends of the candidate and staff are a great place to start. Ask them to give of their time in support of you. As a bonus, you know them well, so you know their strengths and skills. Stuffing envelopes for a Congressional campaign letter late at night, alongside the candidate's partner and family, encourages volunteers to feel they are part of the family.

3. Allies. This group includes people who believe in similar things to you. Giving of their time is another good way for them to advance that cause. Keep track of others who are in coalitions with you or working toward similar goals. Expect to donate time to their efforts, and ask them to support yours.

4. People seeking power. These are people who might not believe in the same things as you, but they benefit from you winning. Ask them to give their time to support you. In a recent campaign at the local level, an author met a number of people who are planning to run for governor in 2 years. These people want to support local candidates in order to inspire local activists to support them in the future.

5. Enemy of your enemy. These people really don't care about you but they *really* don't like your opponent or those who are working on the other side. Ask them to commit time in order to keep the other side from winning.

Students, particularly those interested in possibly getting into political work professionally themselves one day, are excellent potential political volunteers. They may be interested in interning or volunteering for the office of an elected official to get their foot in the door and build skills and contacts, or they may be interested in volunteering for an electoral campaign to build skills while supporting a candidate or issue they care about. While some of the other groups mentioned in this section include individuals with a great deal of political volunteer experience, students may be new to political volunteering. Some may be interested in volunteering for your office or campaign, but may not reach out because they do not know where to start. Reaching out to like-minded high school or college student organizations could be a good place to start in recruiting student volunteers.

Seeking groups of volunteers (within the restrictions in your area about coordinating with outside groups) may be most efficient. Sources of potential volunteers include groups that already have members organized. For example, many state chapters of the National Association of Social Workers organize social workers to volunteer for candidates who have been endorsed by PACE (Political Action for Candidate Election). This is also true of other groups, such as labor unions, interest groups, service groups, religious groups, school associations, and groups who have worked on other campaigns (Shaw 2014). You also might recruit volunteers through groups motivated by specific issues aligned with your electoral or advocacy campaign, such as veterans, those who identify as pro-life or pro-choice, environmentalists, hunters, seniors, or union members (Shaw 2014). Asking groups of allies to dedicate their time together makes it more likely that they will show up,

because it is more comfortable to do new things with other people you know. It also allows the members of that group to share a common goal and bond with each other.

Electoral and advocacy campaigns should look for volunteers wherever they go. Campaign staffers and volunteers should take volunteer sign-up sheets with them to meetings, community events, fundraisers, etc. (Shaw 2014). Websites of campaign and advocacy organizations should include a bright button that says "get involved," "volunteer," or "join the movement" and connects people directly with the volunteer coordinator or other appropriate members of the team. If you include this button, make sure that your campaign follows up with people who sign up to volunteer. Students have repeatedly shared with one of the book's authors their frustrations when, for the first time in their life, they sign up on a candidate's website to volunteer, and then the campaign never reaches out to them.

Publicizing marches, rallies, fundraisers, and other one-time events where people can come and show support for a candidate or cause creates situations where attendees might then be interested in getting more involved. Political social workers should keep an eye on people we meet who might be interested in increasing involvement. One way to highlight the social work value of empowerment and increase representation of community voices is to specifically reach out for volunteers in communities that are directly affected by the candidate election or issues involved in the advocacy campaign.

As political social workers collect the names of potential volunteers, it is important to gather contact information, connect with them about their availability, track their skills and experience, know who has volunteered, thank them, and ask them to volunteer again.

Interviewing and Hiring

The processes of interviewing and hiring for formal staff positions are covered at length in other resources, particularly Kettner (2013) and the Community Tool Box, and are discussed briefly in Section 5. These processes may differ significantly for volunteers, especially in campaigns moving at a very fast pace. If you have prepared a job analysis prior to the busy times of the advocacy or electoral campaigns, legislative session, etc., you will have a good sense of the requirements that must be accomplished by volunteers and the skills for which you are looking.

While the "hiring" process for volunteers doesn't always resemble a formal hiring process, it should involve some sort of initial discussion and assessment, even if done very informally. Skipping this step can have negative consequences. An electoral campaign volunteer who is knocking on doors may be the only person from the campaign that the voter ever meets. In general, since volunteers identify themselves as such, voters will not expect them to be experts. At the same time, if they make a strong negative impression, it could certainly be held against the candidate. In an advocacy campaign, a volunteer who alienates a crucial member of the legislature can set back the whole campaign. In an elected official's office, interns are often

viewed as a direct extension of the elected official, with negative behavior tending to reflect poorly on the official.

This initial discussion and assessment can be formal, including written or verbal questions as with a traditional interview, or it can be done casually through a getting-to-know-you conversation. Some things to consider in this discussion are:

- Has the person ever volunteered in a political setting before? If not, can they be assigned a task with a partner or mentor, or one that does not require full autonomy, while they get to know the work and the setting?
- What is the volunteer's knowledge of the issues and/or candidate? If limited, are you able to provide them with resources to help them learn essential points?
- Is the volunteer from the community in which they will be working? If not, is the volunteer likely to be able to connect with community members? Research suggests that those who volunteer for campaigns may be more ideologically extreme than voters, and may not be from the geographic area in which they are volunteering (Enos and Hersh 2015). While the common wisdom is that you do not ever want to turn volunteers away, think about whether constituents are going to welcome an "outsider" coming in to tell them how to vote. Similarly, callers to an elected official's office may be frustrated if the person they talk with does not know basic geography or context of the district or mispronounces the name of key cities. Consider whether there are ways to utilize the volunteer that will not create a potential problem for the campaign or office.
- What particular skills does the volunteer bring to the table? See the examples of possible volunteer skills listed here. How can these skills be utilized to best support the strategic needs of the campaign or office?
- Does the volunteer have connections that may be beneficial to the campaign? For example, does the volunteer have:
  - Connections to other groups or individuals that might also volunteer,
  - Connections with people or companies who could be potential donors,
  - Connections with decision-makers or others with power, or
  - Connections with the media?

Samples of Useful Political Volunteer Skills
• Computer expertise
• Social media
• Graphic design
• Fundraising
• Written communication
• Oral communication
• Attention to detail
• Language proficiency (for example, if Spanish is spoken as the primary language by a significant number of voters or constituents in your district, volunteers who speak Spanish are crucial to success.)

Assigning Volunteer Tasks

Task assignments should be based on the skills identified during an interview or an initial **on-boarding**. On-boarding refers to the process of bringing a new volunteer or employee into your organization and training them on any systems or processes that they will need for their work.

Volunteers can be assigned to a variety of tasks to support the work of your campaign or office. Each of these requires varying amounts of time—therefore, a volunteer's time availability is an important consideration in assigning volunteer tasks. Table 10.1 provides some examples from Shaw (2014) of types of volunteer tasks and the amount of work that volunteers can be expected to complete for each task. Her estimates were for electoral campaigns; however, below we also included comparisons with advocacy campaigns and offices of elected officials. Note that these time estimates do not include the time involved with preparation work, such as preparing scripts and lists, training, or gathering materials for volunteers.

With first-time volunteers, begin by giving them discrete task(s). It is preferable to start with one task in order to allow the volunteer to focus and be successful in one area. A good discrete task is one with a short time-frame and a clear definition of what "successful" completion means. For example, electoral campaign volunteers often start out phone banking or door knocking, and advocacy campaign volunteers often start by making phone calls or sending emails. These tasks are straightforward and enable volunteers to be paired with a more experienced person on their first try.

Train volunteers for the tasks they will be completing. For example, for phone banking or door knocking, volunteers should be given a script and an opportunity to practice. They should know that saying, "I don't know but I'll find out," is an acceptable answer—and that it is much better for a volunteer to plead ignorance and have a staffer or someone with more experience get back to the voter than to give out incorrect information. While this is an important skill for volunteers, staff, and supervisors alike to learn, it is particularly important for campaign volunteers. There are rarely opportunities for campaigns to know that incorrect information was given or to correct the misinformation.

One useful volunteer task that does not need to be centralized in a campaign office is writing a letter to the editor. This is a valuable way for community members to communicate with their neighbors and highlight their commitment to your candidate or support for your issue. Volunteers can write letters to the editor in a relatively short amount of time, from their homes. This makes them an attractive task for busy volunteers, especially if the volunteer is provided support. A campaign may want to show sample letters to the editor to volunteers and provide a list of topics (connected with your campaign calendar "theme" of the week, perhaps) to highlight in the letters. See our suggestions for some keys to a good letter to the editor. Note that a volunteer who has successfully written letters to the editor also may be a good person to ask to reach out to their networks to recruit other volunteers.

Table 10.1 Volunteer tasks

Phone banking	Making phone calls at a set time with a group of other people: 20–30 calls per hour in an electoral campaign.
	More calls may be able to be completed, depending on the amount of time needed for each call and the time of day at which the calls are being made. Automated software like predictive dialers that automatically make the calls and only connect the volunteer when there is a voter on the line can *significantly* increase this number. In advocacy campaigns, the number of calls that can be completed depends on the type of phone call. Calls to turn out volunteers at rallies, events, etc. may be as fast as electoral phone calls. Phone calls to policy-makers are generally more involved and take more time, depending on how complicated the script is and what you are asking of the policy-maker. In elected officials' offices, you may be tasked with calling around to other offices to get commitments on a bill, or to key stakeholders to ask them to lend support on an issue. These calls are more involved, and you should expect them to take longer. Cold calls to potential voters or grassroots activists are challenging, given that many people are hesitant to pick up a call from a strange number.
Door knocking	Knocking on the doors of potential voters, also referred to as **canvassing**: 10–15 doors per hour in both electoral and advocacy campaigns, however, there is a lot of variation.
	If your volunteers are knocking on doors in an urban area with many apartments (presuming they can get into the apartment buildings) or houses located close together, they can knock on doors more quickly. In a rural area where volunteers must drive from house to house, or in an area that requires walking up/down hills, speeds are slower. If your volunteers are only leaving information (a "literature drop" or "**lit drop**") and not seeking to talk to people, they will get to more houses. This is generally not a requirement of political social work jobs in elected officials' offices.
Mailings	Sending out mail as needed by the campaign or elected official: A group of volunteers can send out approximately 500 pieces of mail in 1 hour, including stuffing, stamping, sealing, and addressing envelopes.
	This should be similar for each political setting. In many campaigns, mailings are handled by consultants or outside firms rather than by volunteers, but in small advocacy and electoral campaigns, mailings may be a responsibility for volunteers. Mail that needs to be individualized, such as thank you letters, responses to requests for substantive information, etc. is much more time consuming and may be more appropriately done by long-term volunteers or staff.
Lawn signs	Setting up signs posted in yards or in certain public locations that express support for a candidate or issue: A two-person team can put out roughly 12 lawn signs an hour for an advocacy or electoral campaign.
	Rules as to where and for how long lawn signs may be legally posted typically differ by localities and can be a factor in the amount of time needed to complete this task. There may even be lawn sign rules associated with specific apartment complexes or neighborhood associations. For example, in an author's neighborhood in Texas, the local homeowners' association restricts each home to only one political lawn sign at a time. Depending on local rules, you also may need volunteers to take the lawn signs away within a certain amount of time after the election. For example, in Knox County, Tennessee, signs must be removed within 3 weeks of the election (Knox County Tennessee n.d.), while in Arizona, signs should be removed within 7 days (Hiland 2014). Those working for elected officials should not expect to manage lawn signs, as it is generally not allowed.

Writing a Letter to the Editor
Source: (Zero to Three 2017)

• Review the newspaper's guidelines. In general, letters to the editor are 250 words or less, and are more likely to be printed if they are from someone in the community.
• Connect to something relevant in the community the newspaper serves. The newspaper is unlikely to print a letter about a candidate on the other side of the state. The audience is unlikely to be interested in that as well.
• Make the point of your letter to the editor clear. If writing to support a candidate, the first sentence should reference the candidate and why you support them.
• As with other methods of communication, tone is important. If you make people angry, they might associate those negative emotions with your candidate, so choose your words and your strategy wisely.
• Generally, newspapers will require you to include your name, address, and phone number so that they can confirm you wrote it.

APPLY YOUR SKILLS: Write a Letter to the Editor
Choose a local newspaper, and research the guidelines for submitting a letter to the editor. What are the methods for submission, length restrictions, and any other requirements? Draft a letter in support of a candidate currently running for office in your area, or in relation to the advocacy issue you have been working on throughout the book. We encourage you to submit the letter!

Managing Volunteers

Managing volunteers in political settings can be difficult. Campaigns—and even the day-to-day work in offices of elected officials—often can be fast-paced environments, with little time available to conduct thorough assessments of volunteers' strengths and needs or to provide in-depth training or supervision. For example, some social work students interning in an intensive state legislative environment with tight deadlines and high stress report facing a lack of clear expectations for their work, a lack of clear accountability structures, and minimal constructive feedback on their work (Pritzker and Barros Lane in press). (To be clear, they found the work fulfilling, but had to adapt to receiving less supervision and mentorship than they were used to in other settings.)

Management of volunteers in electoral and advocacy campaigns is particularly challenging because volunteers tend to cycle through campaigns, meaning that a volunteer may come just once or sporadically. Because of their irregularity, these volunteers need to be trained again every time they come. Furthermore, volunteers are often members of the community, meaning that they may be voters, constituents, or other stakeholders of the work of the campaign. "Firing" a voter or stakeholder who is working for free can be problematic.

Recently, some national campaigns have shifted to "**neighbor to neighbor**" campaigning, popularized by the Obama campaign. Its key feature is asking voters to reach out directly to other voters without much supervision from the campaign.

For example, the Obama campaign used this technique to recruit volunteers to canvass their own neighborhoods and host neighborhood house parties in support of the candidate, so that voter outreach was conducted by friends and neighbors, rather than by staff or volunteers with limited personal connections to the community. While this technique allows for an increase in the number of people who can be contacted, it, or similar approaches, can make managing volunteers particularly challenging. In particular, it significantly decreases opportunities for the campaign to supervise and control what is happening during volunteer outreach, necessitating more attention to providing initial support and training to volunteers. Currently, this is a not a significant feature of most local campaigns, but this dynamic may shift in the future.

Given these challenges, but also the critical nature of volunteers to work in political settings, making sure that volunteers are effectively supervised is key. A voter or decision-maker will not make a distinction between a volunteer and a paid campaign staffer. As we discussed previously in this chapter, a negative impression of a volunteer may easily be generalized to the candidate or campaign in general. A particularly egregious example that illustrates this point—and one the campaign could not be expected to have been able to control—took place in the summer of 2017. An individual showed up at a baseball practice for members of Congress and staffers, and shot several people, including a Republican member of Congress. It turned out that this shooter had volunteered for the campaign of Bernie Sanders, a candidate in the 2016 Democratic presidential primary. News sources across the USA broadcast the shooter's links with Sanders' campaign and Sanders spoke on the floor of the Senate announcing that he "was sickened by this despicable act" (Watkins et al. 2017). Meanwhile, some critics took the opportunity to link the shooting directly to Sanders, suggesting that Sanders himself had encouraged violence (Shalby 2017).

Supervising volunteers includes matching volunteers to appropriate tasks, giving them the resources and training to do the task well, checking in with volunteers to be sure they are doing tasks correctly, and providing them with supportive assistance if they are not. It also involves **debriefing** with volunteers after they have completed the discrete task they are assigned; that is, provide a brief opportunity for the volunteer to report what happened, what went well, any problems, and anything that the person delegating to them needs to know about how the task went. On your end, this involves developing rapport with volunteers, and engaging active listening techniques to fully hear what your volunteers are telling you. This might only take a few minutes. This is especially important when individuals volunteer for the first time. During this debrief, make sure to thank volunteers for their work, ask how their experience was, and ask if anything came up they were uncertain about. At the end of this debrief, thank them again, and (assuming all went well), *ask them to volunteer again*. This ask to volunteer again should be specific and discrete.

Supervising volunteers also involves keeping records of which volunteers did which tasks so that you can use that information when they come back to volunteer again. See Catherine Shaw's excellent book (information provided in the Resources section) for specific examples of trainings, resources, and scheduling techniques for campaign volunteers.

Above all, make the most of a volunteer's time—remember, they are giving their valuable time to help your candidate, cause, or work. Critical to doing this are several key priorities:

1. Respect your volunteers' time—this is a precious resource. Being respectful of people's time encourages them to come back (and bring friends!). Be ready to begin at the time you ask people to arrive, and have all of the preparation for the volunteers to do their work complete (i.e., have routes or "**turf**" already planned or "cut," material to hand out or "**literature**" divided, phone lists ready).
2. Be smart in matching volunteers and tasks in ways that set people up for success, so that they continue to want to support your efforts.
3. Keep in mind that volunteers are often also stakeholders in other ways—they could be potential voters, donors, constituents, etc.
4. Communicate clearly. Set definite times and tasks. Ask people to do one thing at a time, be clear about what it will involve, how much time they will need, and what they need to do to prepare (should they wear comfortable shoes, bring a clipboard, pay for their own parking, wear a particular color, etc.). Provide written instructions whenever possible. When you can, call in advance to remind them of essential instructions, and listen actively to any concerns or challenges they share with you.
5. Through the above priorities, make them feel like a part of the bigger campaign effort. You can never thank volunteers enough. Make sure they hear their efforts contribute to the overall work of the campaign or office, how things are going, and what a difference they make.

> **FURTHER REFLECTION: Your Volunteer Activity**
> Think back to a recent time you were asked to volunteer for a cause or candidate. How were you asked? Did you participate? If yes, was it a good experience? If no, why not? What could the campaign or organization have done to make people more likely to participate, and to make it a better experience for those involved?
>
> You could also ask these same questions about an event or effort for which you asked others to volunteer. How did you ask? Did people participate? What could you have done to make people more likely to participate, and to make it a better experience for those involved?

Developing Volunteers to Move Up the Volunteer Ladder

A critical part of effective volunteer management in political settings is volunteer development. Assuming that initial experiences with a volunteer go well, smart campaigns think about ways to develop a volunteer and then help volunteers to do so. **Volunteer development** involves recognizing the assets that your volunteers bring to their work, and encouraging them to build upon those assets in new ways to support your campaign. This can involve helping the volunteer grow into a

long-term volunteer or supporting the volunteer in being able to take on more substantive responsibilities.

As you work with volunteers, keep records of the tasks they complete, their strengths, individual interests, availability, etc. This will help you develop volunteers into more committed volunteers or to assess the potential they may have for different volunteer positions or paid positions. For example, many internships have the potential to lead to paid work, but if you have not supervised your interns well or gathered information on their performance, you and your colleagues will not have the information needed to determine whether they are a good fit for a paid opening.

Think of volunteer development as a ladder with increasing responsibilities and time commitment that a volunteer may have. This image can guide you in thinking about ways to help connect volunteers with more committed or more long-term volunteer assignments. For example, if someone has attended a volunteer event, a campaign might ask whether the volunteer would be willing to organize a group to come volunteer together. If a volunteer has written an email for the campaign, perhaps the volunteer would next be willing to make a phone call or meet with a legislator. If someone has agreed to place a lawn sign at their house, a campaign might encourage the volunteer to consider putting up lawn signs in other places. If a volunteer has been active in your advocacy campaign for a long time, are they interested in joining the board of your organization?

While an image of a ladder can serve as a useful guide for developing volunteers, keep in mind that success at one volunteer task does not necessarily lead to success in other areas. If you have a volunteer who shows aptitude for making successful phone calls, that does not necessarily mean you should "promote" them to other tasks. If they are good at phone calls and like to do them, you may instead want to support and encourage them to become an expert in that area.

Section 5: Key Political Social Work Staff Positions

While volunteers are used extensively in political settings, the right team is critical to the success of your campaign or work in your political office. In many settings, that includes paid staff members. We have listed several key books, journals, and websites in the Resources of this chapter that you may find helpful if you are part of the hiring and management process.

Common roles in an advocacy or electoral campaign include the following. In some larger campaigns, each role is carried by a different individual(s). In smaller campaigns, individuals may take on multiple roles.

- Campaign manager
- Treasurer
- Field organizer
- Volunteer coordinator
- Scheduler
- Finance director

- Press secretary/communications director/spokesperson
- Speechwriter
- Field director
- Field organizer/regional field organizer/deputy field director
- Paid canvass director
- Political director/organizer
- Technology director/social media manager
- Research director
- Legal counsel

Key roles in the office of an elected official (which also may be combined in small offices) include the following.

- Chief of staff
- Policy or legislative director
- District or state director (for legislative officials, where the capitol is far from the district)
- Scheduler
- Communications director/press secretary
- Office manager/administrative director
- Research director
- Legislative aide/assistant
- Legislative correspondent
- Social media manager
- Staff assistant
- Constituent services staffer/caseworker
- Outreach staffer
- Committee clerk (along with other committee staff, may work for the chair/ranking member)
- Intern

POLITICAL SOCIAL WORKER PROFILE: Susan Collins, MSW
Chief of Staff, U.S. Representative Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) (Fig. 10.1).

Fig. 10.1 Susan Collins, MSW

"Most of my work before coming to DC was working with immigrant populations," in Texas and as a volunteer in Nicaragua along the US-Mexico Border. This work inspired Susan to pursue an MSW degree with a specialization in political social work. After graduation, Susan continued to work with immigrant populations, specifically newly arrived families with children. Through this work, Susan came to understand that "a huge part of [immigrants'] ability, or lack of ability, to do the best they can and to raise their children the way they want comes down to their legal status," and that these barriers are further "complicated by issues of poverty and not speaking the language".

In 2001, Susan pursued a fellowship to work on immigration policy in Washington, D.C. She has not left D.C. since, and now works for U.S. Representative Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), "the national leader on immigration reform." She continues to focus on immigration every day, along with Rep. Gutierrez. Susan says, "As a Chief of Staff, it is really my job to make sure that everyone is working together as a team to make sure that the legislator meets his policy goals," as well as being the legislator's lead advisor on those goals.

At any given time, Susan manages 20 staff members in the office, which can include "mentoring, motivating the team, managing the budget… anything from the practical to the human aspects of running the office." Although these staff members hold a range of duties, Susan notes that "no one works in this office without doing some policy work." Susan has always felt that her social work training and experience has been beneficial to all her job duties. Social workers are trained to focus on "people's strengths, how to set goals, and how to reach them," and this translates directly to the mentoring work that Susan does with her staff.

Working in a "Congressional setting is very competitive." This can mean that conflicts that would seem extreme in a nonprofit setting are more common in getting political business done. Susan reports that she finds "my ability to work with all kinds of people" and to "remain calm and not take things personally" benefits her in this very competitive climate. She attributes these skills to her social work training.

Ultimately, Susan doesn't see a significant difference between managing and supporting staff or volunteers and many of the direct service positions she has held. She believes that "it's all about helping people reach their best potential." Most of her management work involves helping staff or volunteers "to identify [systematic] obstacles that are in their way, or figuring out ways for them to become better advocates for themselves."

Who Is in Charge?

The most senior position in a political setting is typically the campaign manager, executive director, chief of staff, or another position with a similarly senior title.

In electoral campaign efforts, your campaign manager is the most important hire. The campaign manager should have a solid understanding of campaign finance and election laws at the geographic location and level of the campaign. Generally, an electoral campaign manager focuses on a single campaign, although in smaller races, this position may focus on an entire slate. For federal, state-wide, state legislative races, and larger cities, this position is generally a paid staff member, while for down-ballot races, the campaign manager may be a key volunteer.

An advocacy campaign may be led by an executive director, campaign director, campaign chair, or lead organizer. They could be focused on a single electoral or advocacy campaign, or they could be running these efforts as part of a larger job. This key hire could be working on a volunteer basis or as a paid staffer; as with electoral campaigns, the size of the campaign often determines whether this person is paid.

In the office of an elected official, this key hire is typically the chief of staff, which is typically a paid position. Elected officials in small localities may have no staff members, while smaller state legislatures may share one staff member among several elected officials. If the "staff" of the elected official is only one person, that person might be called a legislative aide or clerk.

Regardless of the setting or title, essential attributes in the key political hire are excellent people skills, ability to communicate with media, good time management, and an ability to see the big picture and think beyond day-to-day situations and crises. This key hire will frequently be the face of the campaign or elected official, and often functions when necessary as a **surrogate**, a proxy for the candidate or elected official. As with the treasurer, the reputation of your key hire and their relationships with others in the community are essential, and reflect on your campaign.

It is critical that this key hire be able to communicate with the candidate, elected official, or board of directors and provide them with honest critical feedback as needed (Shaw 2014)—and it is critical that this hire is someone that the decision-maker trusts. For most candidates, elected officials, or board members to be confident leaving significant decisions in the hands of the key hire, they need to trust this person's judgment and competency. In order to be able to give the candidate or elected official honest feedback, the campaign manager should be someone who has some distance, so it is not generally seen as best practice for this hire to be a family member, and **nepotism laws** may make it illegal for elected officials to hire relatives.

The role of campaign manager in an electoral campaign is especially challenging as it is the candidate's own name and personal reputation that are under review by the public. Hiring and supervising an electoral campaign manager can be complicated if there are conflicting opinions about whether the campaign manager or candidate has final say in decisions. Haynes and Mickelson (2010) argue that the

candidate's time is best served by talking to undecided voters, and the campaign manager should make all significant campaign decisions, albeit with input from the candidate. A similar dynamic takes place with chiefs of staff. Clarity of who is responsible for decision-making of various types in an elected official's office is essential.

The Hiring Process

At times, these key hires are found through a formal search process. Often, however, hiring in political settings is done through networking and recommendations of others. Challenging questions are tied up in the issue of how to approach hiring both key hires and other political staff. It is widely acknowledged in the political world that hiring staff members through word of mouth is a preferable approach. This approach leads to interviewing and hiring staff who have shown themselves to be successful in similar settings and who have built a positive reputation. At the same time, it is exactly this type of process—hiring through word of mouth—that historically has prevented women, people of color, and even social workers from entering into political settings. We encourage you to consider ways to balance both of these factors: take references and reputations seriously, but also be mindful of seeking out yet-undiscovered talent.

However you choose to approach the hiring process for key hires, asking for contact information for several references is critical. Where feasible, we suggest a similar process for all senior hires, including campaign consultants, fundraisers, and schedulers, as well as district directors and legislative directors. For campaign staff, ask for references not just from campaigns where the potential staffer's side was successful, but also from campaigns where they were not successful. You may be familiar with hiring situations in which reference contact information is collected, but references are never contacted. This could be because the employer gathers information about the candidate from other connections not on the reference list, or because the employer chooses not to reach out to references. In a political setting, we strongly encourage you to contact references. You want to be fully aware of any concerns about your potential hire. Questions to references should include would the reference work with this person again? What was their level of trust in the potential hire? Reputation is one's livelihood in the political world. Comparing your impressions of potential key hires with those of people who have worked directly with them in the trenches can give you a good picture of whether they would be good fits for your office, campaign, and candidate.

Especially when hiring for key roles in an advocacy campaign, ask potential hires (and references) to discuss the presence and quality of the relationships the potential hire has built with decision-makers and stakeholders. What existing relationships does the person have with community members, members of your board of directors, donors, staff, and activists? It is certainly possible for a key hire to build relationships from scratch (you may well choose to hire a well-regarded and highly successful advocate from Maryland to lead your advocacy campaign in Wisconsin),

but it is important to be fully aware of whether your potential hire already has relationships that she can draw on. If the potential hire does not have relationships with stakeholders in your area, is there evidence that he has been able to build them in past campaigns? Relationships with decision-makers or their gatekeepers are important, but relationships with community stakeholders are also very important to successful political efforts. If you are hiring someone to lead an advocacy campaign on behalf of a community, are you hiring someone who is a member of that community? If not, then why not? What will you do then to ensure that the community voice is heard?

Similarly, for each of these settings, it is important to ask potential hires to discuss their familiarity with the specific legal and/or political processes that shape the work that your office or campaign does. While this knowledge, too, can be built from scratch, you need to be aware that a hire who does not have this knowledge is starting with this deficit. In Texas, for example, it is common for advocacy campaigns and offices of elected officials at the state level to limit their paid staff hires to individuals who have interned or worked in a prior legislative session (a great incentive to gain this experience as a social work intern!), and who therefore both bring existing relationships and knowledge of the intricacies of the legislative process to their work. Some legislators may even prefer to hire staff that also have electoral campaign experience. This enables staff to understand the processes involved in both arenas, making them well equipped to consider both the policy and political ramifications of potential decisions.

> **FURTHER REFLECTION: Your Kitchen Cabinet and Campaign Manager**
> Put yourself in the position of a first-time candidate for a local office. Who would be in your kitchen cabinet? What are the most important attributes in your campaign manager?

Review of Key Terms and Concepts

Debriefing: provides a brief opportunity for the volunteer to report what happened, what went well, any problems, and anything that the person delegating to them needs to know about how the task went.

Direct voter contact: often called "canvassing," "ground game," or "field work," this outreach is used to reach voters individually. It leans heavily on volunteers for its success.

Door knocking: knocking on the doors of potential voters, also referred to as canvassing.

Duty of care: the responsibility for board members to participate actively in the work of the board and use their expertise to benefit the organization.

Duty of loyalty: the responsibility for board members to put the needs of the organization above the board member's own personal or professional interests.

Duty of obedience: the responsibility for board members to ensure that the board is working in accordance with its mission and in compliance with all relevant state and federal laws.

Kitchen cabinet: volunteer advisors who provide informal advice and counsel to a candidate or officeholder.

Lawn signs: signs posted in yards or in certain public locations to express support for a candidate or issue.

Lit drop: the process of leaving campaign literature by volunteers who don't talk with the voters directly (also called a "literature drop").

Mailing: a set of mail sent out as needed by the campaign.

"Neighbor to neighbor": campaigning in which the key feature is asking voters to reach out directly to other voters without much supervision from the campaign.

Nonprofit board members: the group of volunteers who are legally responsible for the governance of a nonprofit organization.

On-boarding: the process of bringing a new volunteer or employee into an organization and training them on any systems or processes needed for their work.

Phone banking: making phone calls for a campaign at a set time with a group of other people.

Treasurer: the person legally responsible for ensuring that legal and financial rules are honored by the campaign.

Volunteer development: recognizing the assets that volunteers bring to their work, and encouraging them to build upon those assets in new ways to support a campaign.

Resources

Books:

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Journal:

Human Service Organizations: Leadership, Management and Governance Journal (formerly called *Administration in Social Work*): https://socialworkmanager.org/journal/

Websites:

Austin Legislative Internship Program Blog: https://gcswlegislativeinterns.wordpress.com/
Becoming an Effective Manager:
http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/leadership/effective-manager
Center for Nonprofit Leadership at Adelphi University: http://nonprofit.adelphi.edu/
Developing a Strategic Plan and Organizational Structure: http://ctb.ku.edu/en/developing-strategic-plan-and-organizational-structure
Example of state campaign finance training from Colorado:
https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/CampaignFinance/CPFtraining.html
National Conference of State Legislatures: http://www.ncsl.org/
National Council of Nonprofits.
    Main website: https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/
Resources for employees: https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources-tags/employment
Resources for management: https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources-tags/management
"Neighbor to Neighbor" campaigning from the Obama Campaign: https://my.barackobama.com/page/content/n2nhostguide
Network for Social Work Management: https://socialworkmanager.org/resources/downloadable-documents/ or go to https://socialworkmanager.org and in the menu under "Resources" click "Download Documents."

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