



HANDS ON ATL

2026 HANDS ON HUNGER

ROADMAP TO RETENTION



YOU'RE USED TO
TIC TAC TO
WITH X'S AND O'S
BUT LET'S USE
KITCHEN SCRAPS INSTEAD
LIKE CARROT TOPS VS
ASPARAGUS HEADS!

ROADMAP

- **First Impressions Matter**
- **Organized Operations**
- **Support & Engagement**
- **Connection & Community**
- **Feedback & Continuous Improvement**
- **Closing/ Action Steps**



FIRST IMPRESSIONS MATTER

THE ENTRY POINT

- GREET VOLUNTEERS WARMLY AND INTRODUCE THEM TO THE SPACE
 - ORIENT THEM TO ROLES, TASKS, AND PANTRY OPERATIONS
 - EXPLAIN SAFETY PROTOCOLS AND EXPECTATIONS CLEARLY
 - ENSURE TOOLS AND SUPPLIES ARE READY
-

The Kickoff – More than Instructions

- Welcome + thank volunteers
- Staff introductions
- Share your mission and the story of your pantry.
- Explain who in the community you serve and why your work matters.
- Provide any housekeeping: bathrooms, where to store belongings
- Project instructions & expectations

The Closeout—Ending with Impact

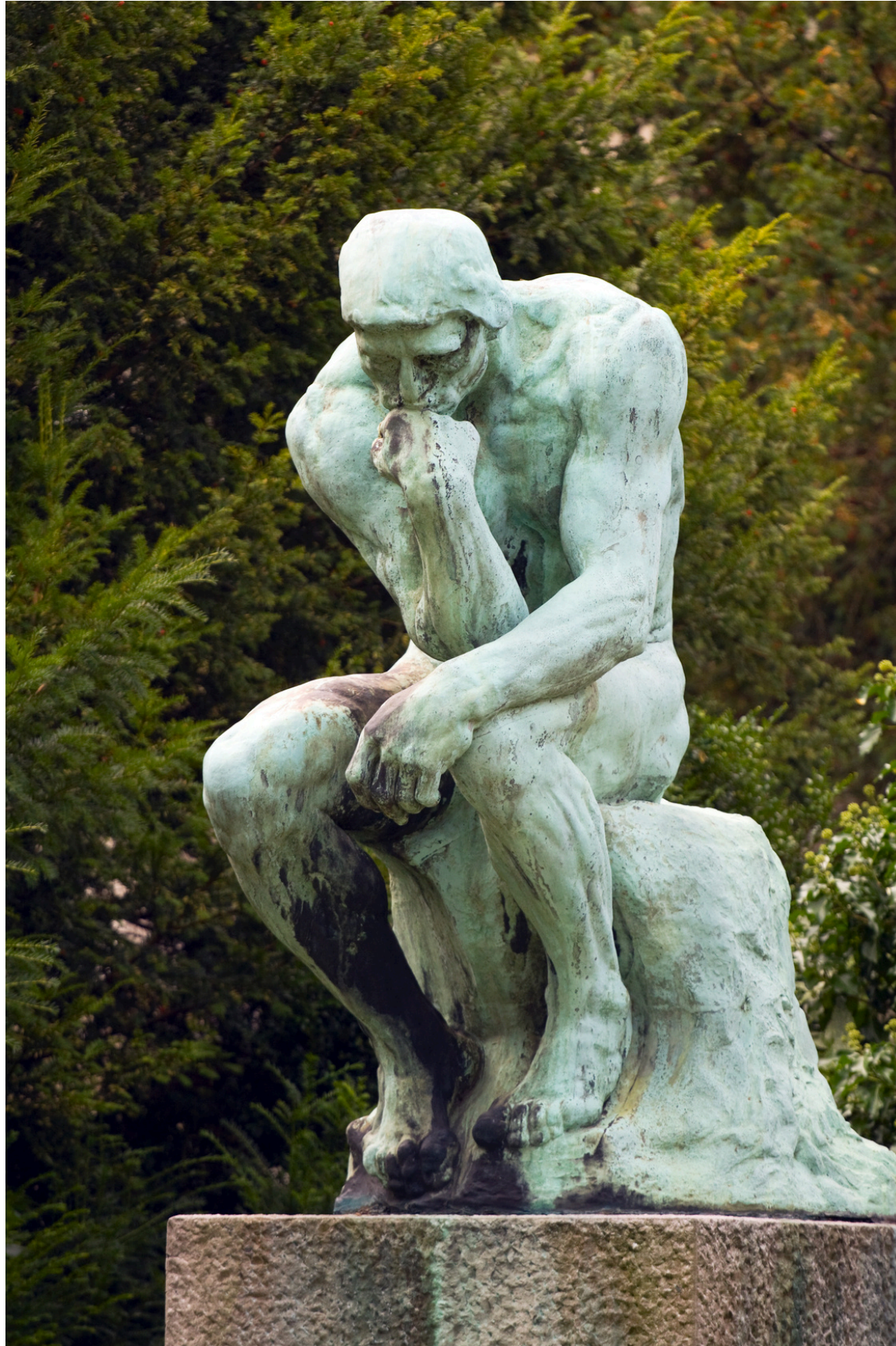
- Take 5–10 minutes to gather volunteers, even after a busy or physical project.
- Say **thank you** and share the impact their work made.
- Invite volunteers to reflect about their favorite moment or what they learned.
- Take a Group Picture!!
- Encourage them to return—highlight the next opportunity to get involved.
- Make sure they leave feeling that their time and effort were valuable.

ORGANIZED OPERATIONS



- Clear schedules, roles, and responsibilities
- Defined tasks that minimize confusion or downtime
- Ready tools and supplies
- Consistent communication before and during shifts

SCENARIO #1



Scenario: A Busy Morning at the Pantry

Situation:

A group of 10 volunteers arrives for their shift, but no one is there to greet them. They wait a few minutes, unsure where to go or what to do.

When a staff member finally welcomes them, there isn't time for a full orientation. Volunteers aren't sure how the pantry operates or what tasks they should be doing. Tools and supplies are still being gathered, and staff are figuring out assignments as the shift begins.

Some volunteers start helping where they can, while others wait for direction. By the end of the shift, volunteers helped, but several felt unsure if they were useful or doing the right tasks.

SCENARIO #1 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What could have improved the volunteers' first impression?
- How might better organization have changed the experience?
- What simple steps could make the shift run more smoothly?



VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK



THERE WERE TOO MANY VOLUNTEERS. NOT ENOUGH WORK. THE ARRIVAL TIME WAS 8:30AM BUT THEY DON'T ARRIVE TILL 9AM.

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HELPFUL TO HAVE A VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR WORKING WITH THE GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS. WE SPENT A GOOD BIT OF TIME STANDING AROUND, NOT KNOWING HOW TO HELP.

THE BEGINNING OF THIS OPPORTUNITY WAS DISORGANIZED. INSTRUCTIONS WERE MINIMAL SO IT WAS UP TO OUR GROUP TO FIGURE IT OUT.

SUPPORT & ENGAGEMENT

- Assign leads or staff to check in regularly
- Provide guidance, coaching, or clarification as needed
- Recognize volunteers during shifts
- Encourage questions and offer immediate feedback



CONNECTION & COMMUNITY

Goal: Volunteers stay when they feel part of a team and mission.

Tip: Volunteers stay for people and purpose.

 HANDS ON ATL

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

FACILITATE CONNECTIONS



SHARE IMPACT



CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS



CREATE WARM ENVIRONMENTS

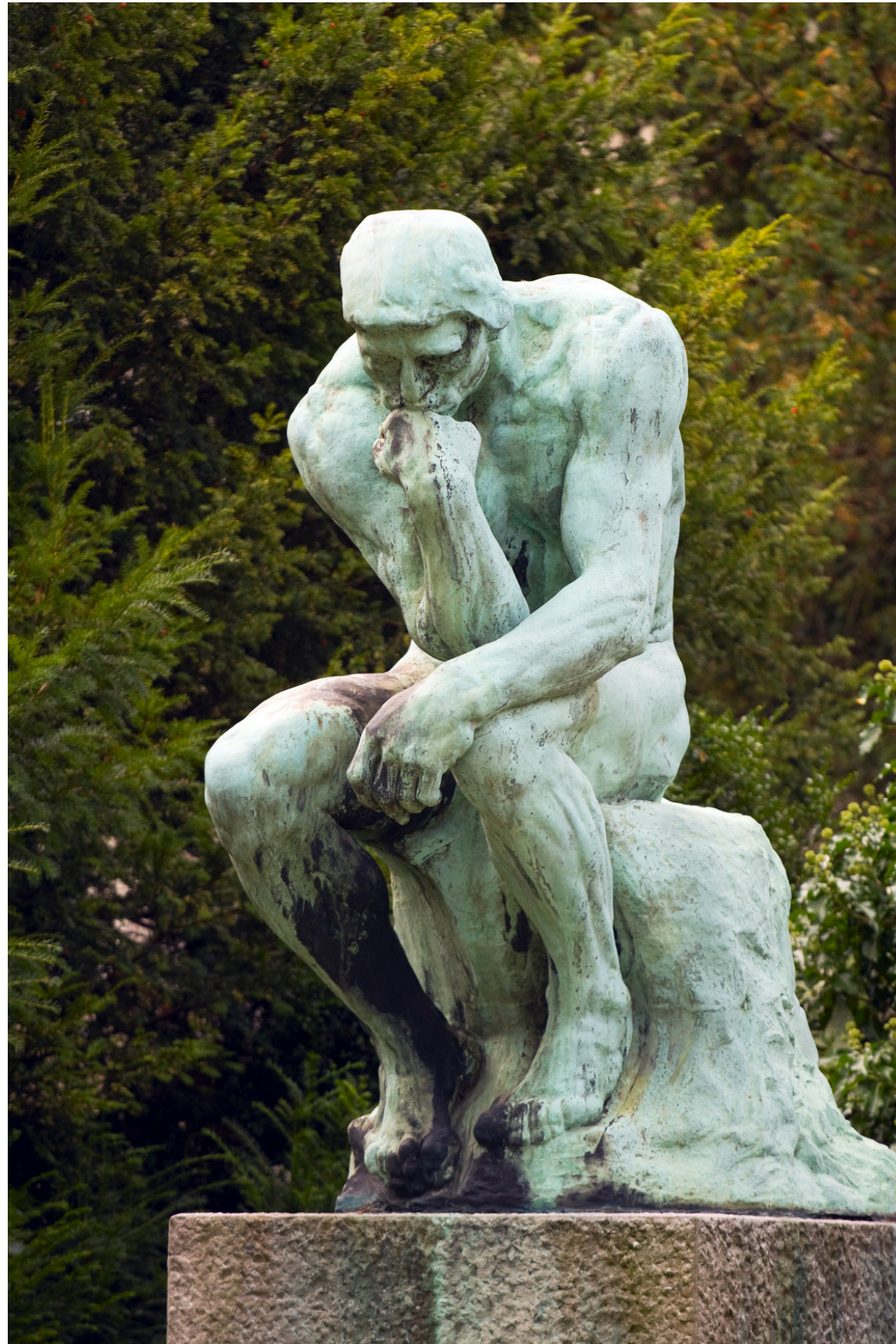


SCENARIO #2

Scenario: Volunteers During the Shift

Situation:

During a busy volunteer shift, everyone gets started on their tasks, but there isn't much interaction from staff or volunteer leads. Volunteers work quietly and only ask questions if something goes wrong. There aren't many check-ins throughout the shift, and volunteers aren't sure if they're doing the tasks correctly. While everyone completes their work, volunteers mostly work individually and don't interact much with each other. At the end of the shift, volunteers leave without hearing how their work helped the community or how many people the pantry served that day.



SCENARIO #2 DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS



- How could staff better support volunteers during the shift?
- What opportunities could help volunteers connect with each other?
- How might sharing impact or recognizing volunteers change the experience?

FEEDBACK & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



YOUR ROADMAP UPDATES

Volunteers feel valued when their voice shapes the experience.

- Ask for feedback at the end of shifts or via surveys
- Implement small improvements based on suggestions
- Keep volunteers informed of updates, successes, and opportunities
- Recognize returning volunteers publicly or personally
- Tip: Listening and adapting reinforces loyalty.

The Overall Experience (Destination: Retention)

YOU MADE IT!!!

- Welcoming entry
- Smooth operations
- Staff support
- Connections and community
- Recognition and feedback





**CLOSING
REMARKS/ACTION
STEPS**

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- Map your current volunteer journey and identify gaps
 - Use a Volunteer Experience Scorecard to track improvements
 - Set 1–2 immediate actions to strengthen the volunteer experience
 - Consider follow-up or cohort training to continue learning

HANDS ON HUNGER

In partnership with the Atlanta Community Food Bank, we build agency capacity through volunteer management, software, and support to boost engagement, retention, and community food distribution.



Improve volunteer management and engagement of 70+ ACFB partner agencies



Scale volunteers engaged and food distributed over the next two years (and beyond)



Empower pantries with resources aligning with the Client-Choice Model



Drive pantry alignment with two (2) specific core behaviors: increasing the hours of operation, and reducing client barriers to visitation through volunteer support + management resources



TECHNOLOGY

- 2 Year Access to Volunteer Management Software
- Automated emails & texts
- On-site Volunteer Check-In



PROMOTION

- Volunteer Recruitment & Marketing
- Support Weekly Newsletter Social Media
- Marketing Toolkit



TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

- Customized Training on Volunteer Management & Software Networking Sessions + Workshops
- 1-on-1 Consulting for 1 Year



MEASUREMENTS

- Data Tracking Insight Reports
- Customized Reports



More information to come soon on the
Hands On Hunger Info Sessions and
cycle!

Roadmap to Retention: Designing
Volunteer Experiences for Long-
Term Commitment



Complete our workshop evaluation!

THIS IS THE END.

