

Problem Statement

The current volunteer onboarding process at the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County (SAWC) is taking time away from value-added activities that serve the adult individuals.

Rationale

Because the Volunteer and Development Coordinator has to manually on-board, train, collect and verify paperwork, and handle volunteer/team communications, she often finds that the time-consuming work pulls her away from other tasks and results in low volunteer retention. SAWC is looking for a more efficient and optimized process for both current and future Coordinators, so that they can reduce on-boarding work time and increase volunteer retention, targeting those who start applications and never finish due to complicated onboarding tasks or lack of communication.

Goals and Current State

Project Goals:

- Streamline SAWC volunteer onboarding process
- Reduce unnecessary work time of the Volunteer and Development Coordinator
- Increase volunteer retention

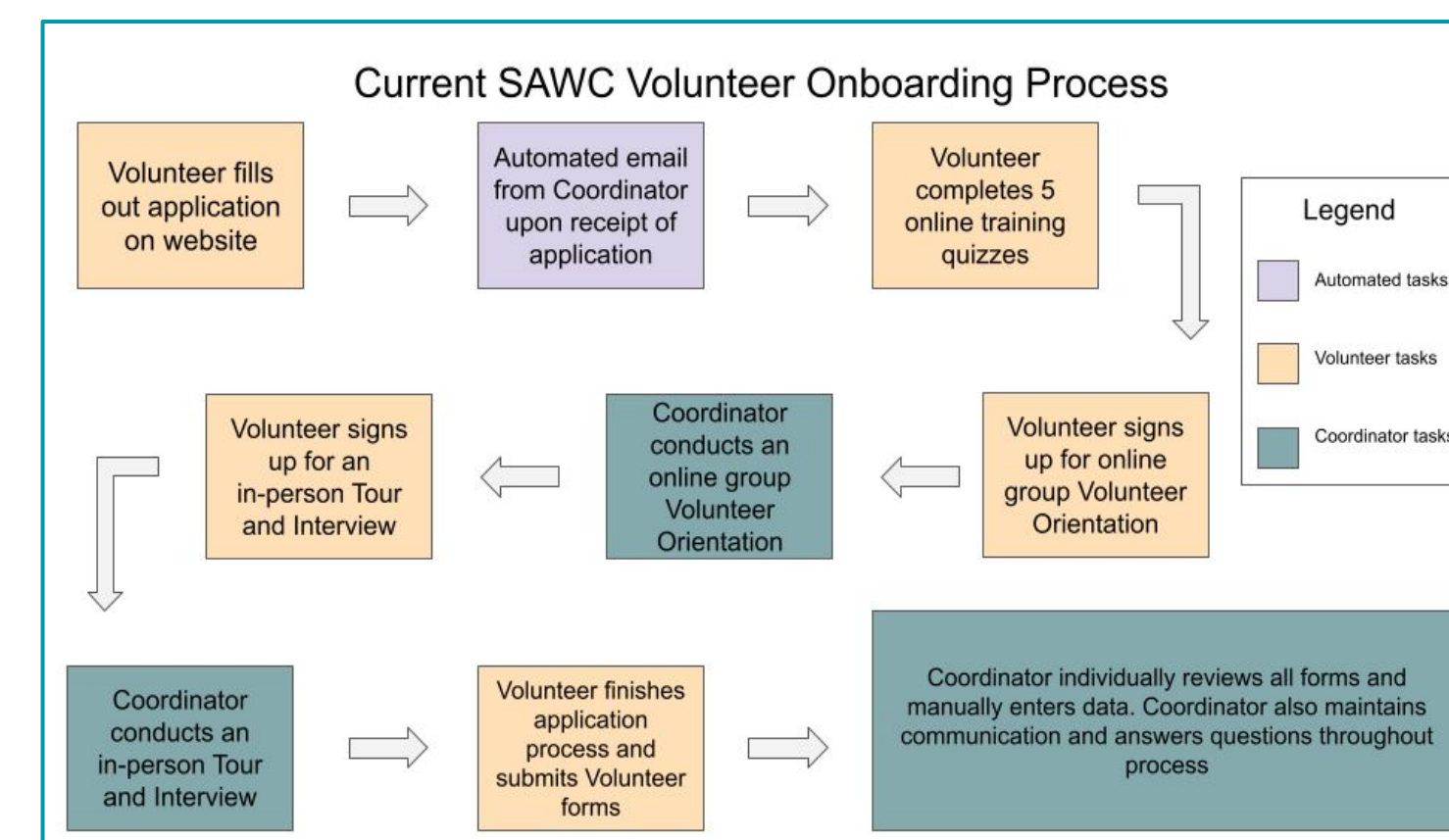


Figure 1: Current SAWC Onboarding Process grouped by task and who completes them

Project Design Model

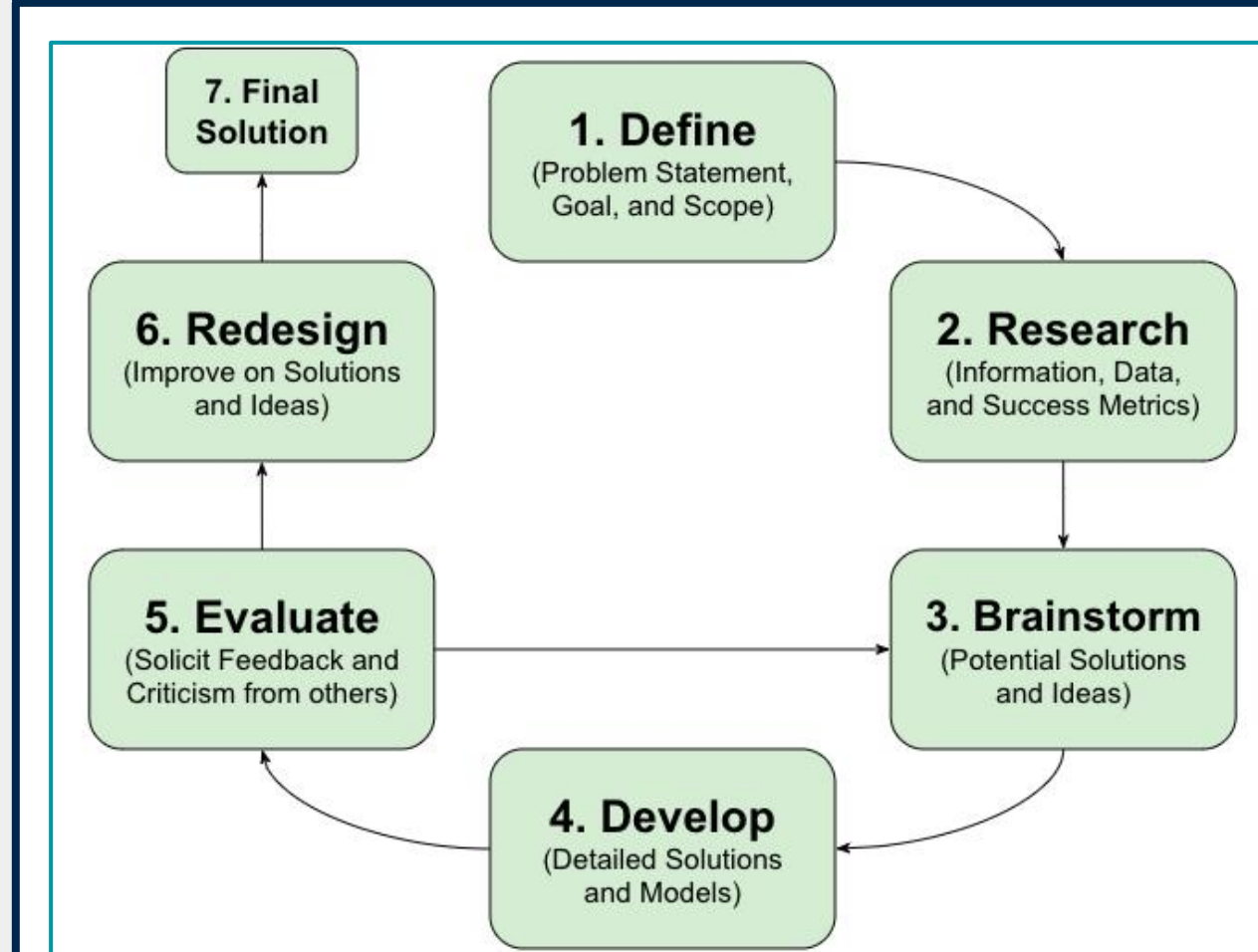


Figure 2: Project Design Model for improving Volunteer and Development Processes at SAWC to reduce work time and increase volunteer retention

Design thinking was used in order to create a project design model that keeps the final users, the SAWC volunteers and coordinators, in mind. It was clear that evaluation and feedback from final users was necessary to create a useful and meaningful solution.

Findings

Current State at SAWC	~90 active volunteers in their database schedules ~20 volunteers in a typical week
Ideal State	120 active volunteers in the database

Table 1: Current vs. Ideal State at SAWC for Volunteer Retention Goals

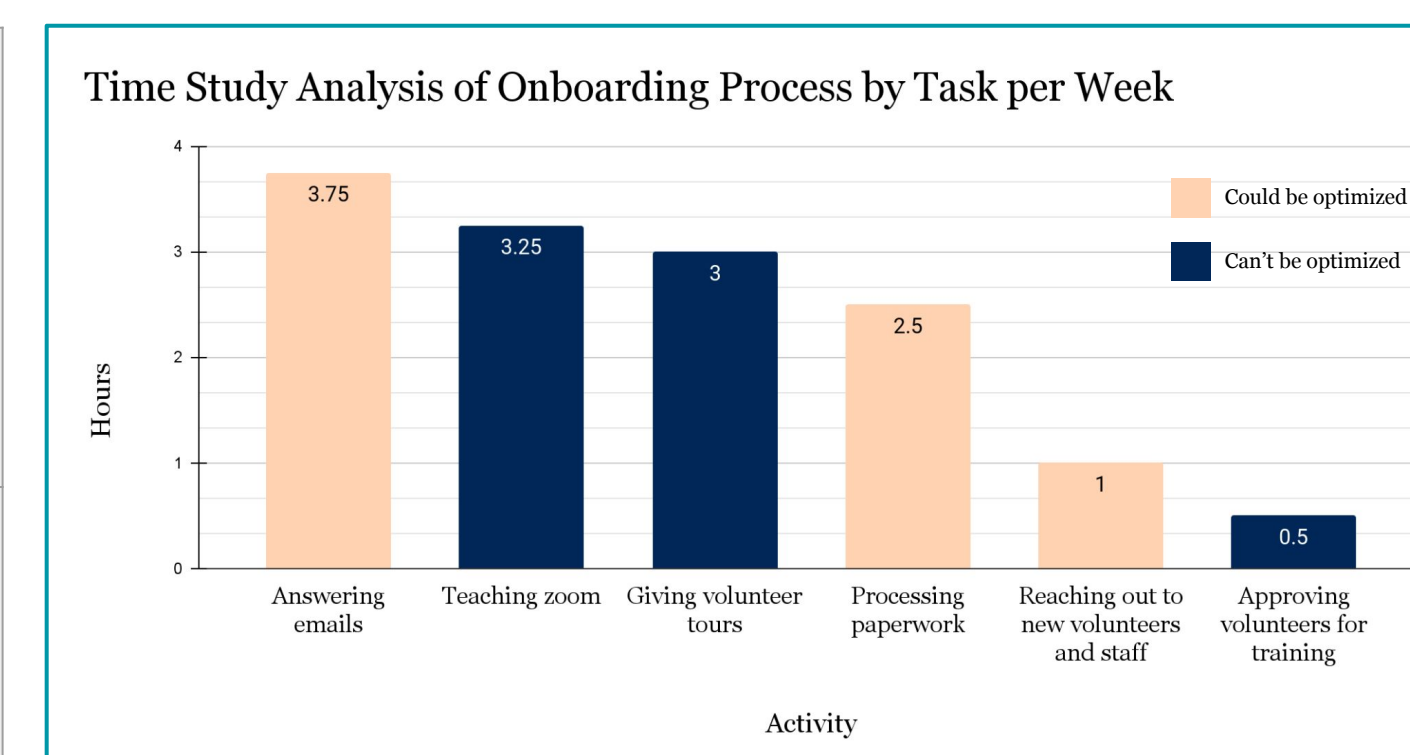


Figure 3: Analysis of Time Study on Hours spent per Week by Coordinator on Onboarding Tasks

Initial findings from data collected by survey and time study shows that volunteer retention goals at SAWC involve a 33.3% increase in their active member database and 51.8% of the time spent per week by the Volunteer and Development Coordinator could be optimized or automated.

Literature Review/Benchmarking

After conducting the initial data collection, literature review of relevant IOE topics and practices, as well as benchmarking current usages of the database, BetterImpact in local organizations were also utilized for the development of our solutions.

Literature review included the following topics: Effects of COVID-19 on Housing Insecurity and Shelters, Risk Analysis and FMEA, Simulation and Success Measurement, Process Optimization with Kaizen, Value Stream Mapping, and Scheduling Models. Benchmarking was done with special thanks to Regen Stahl, the Volunteer Coordinator at SOS Community Services.

Criteria for Solution

Some basic expectations from the client for the solution include:

- A more automated onboarding process
- Standard operating procedures for new functionalities in BetterImpact
- Front and back end changes that follow UX design principles

The use of the software is essential for increasing automation and redirection of questions within pages and people.

Chosen Solution and Pilot

The chosen solution incorporated many portions of the goals for improvement.

There is now a place to submit paperwork embedded in the application.

The application is sectioned in an ergonomic manner and is easy to understand.

The pilot test consisted of members of the SAWC project team and the Volunteer and Development Coordinator and tested the effectiveness of the changes to the application.

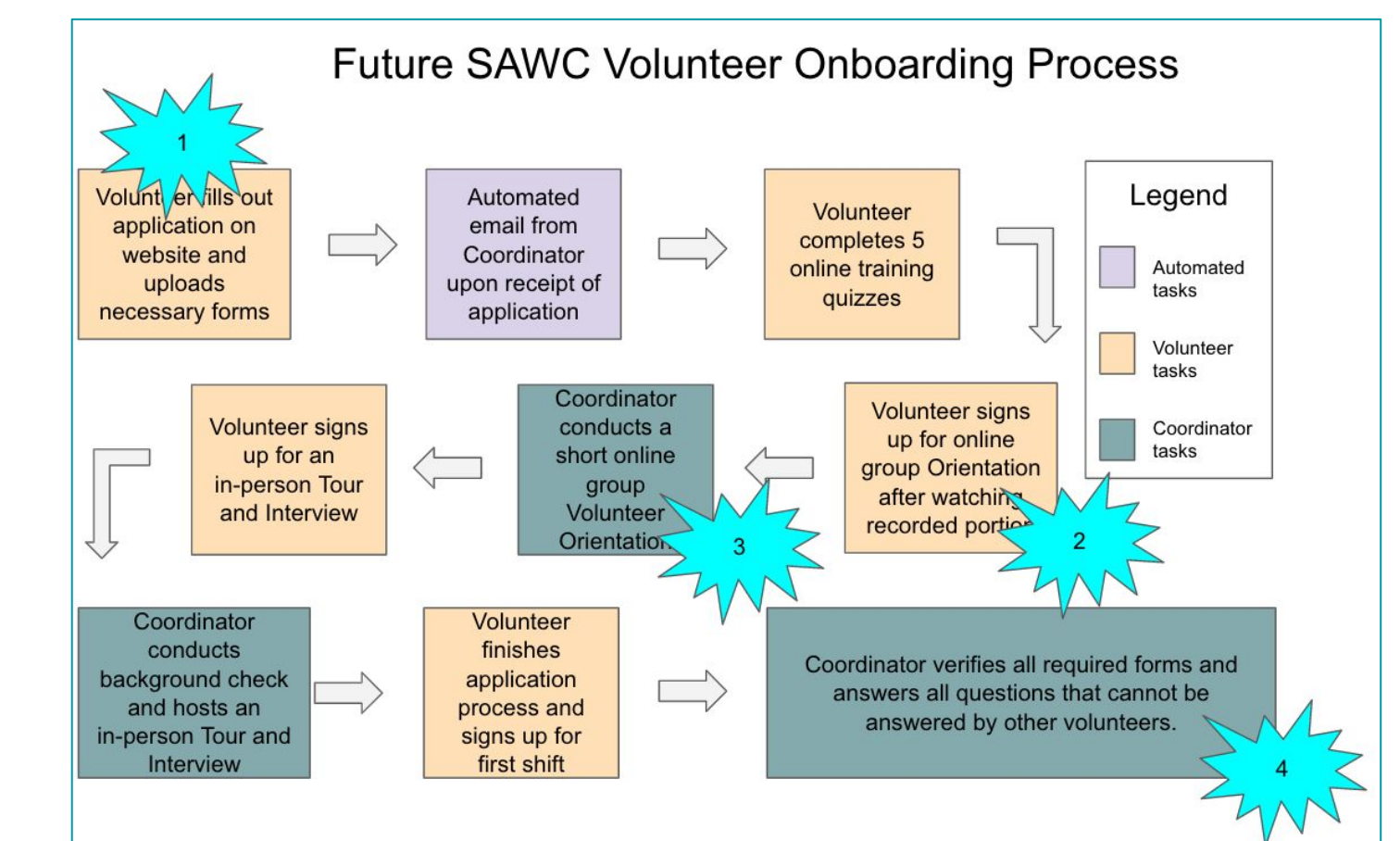


Figure 4: Future SAWC Onboarding Process Grouped by Task and who completes them with Callouts to Automated/Changed Tasks

Adjustments After Pilot

- Fixed small formatting errors and changed the font to be more readable and consistent
- Moved away from BetterImpact calendar implementation and instead formulated recommendations for the google calendar
- Custom fields utilize checkmarks and electronic signatures

Custom Field	Type	Permissions	Displays On	Modules
<input type="checkbox"/> About You				ADM, VOL
<input type="checkbox"/> Please upload an image of your vaccination card.	File	R/W	V3	ADM, VOL
<input type="checkbox"/> Media Release				ADM, VOL
<input type="checkbox"/> By typing my name here, I agree to the aforementioned statement and this shall serve as my electronic signature.	Short Text	R/W	V3	ADM, VOL

Figure 5: Adjusted Custom Fields in BetterImpact

Implementation Plan

Implementing our changes to BetterImpact and to the volunteer onboarding process include the following deliverables and action items:

- Tutorial/initial walkthrough of updated version of existing database and its new functionalities
- Standard work instructions of the updated version of the existing database and its functionalities to aid in future use
- Final approvals and decisions made by SAWC and the Volunteer and Development Coordinator

Project Takeaway

Shelters that serve individuals suffering from housing insecurity require efficient and standardized processes to perform their valuable services to the community. IOE practices and principles can aid in streamlining these processes, among many others.