



VolunteerMatch

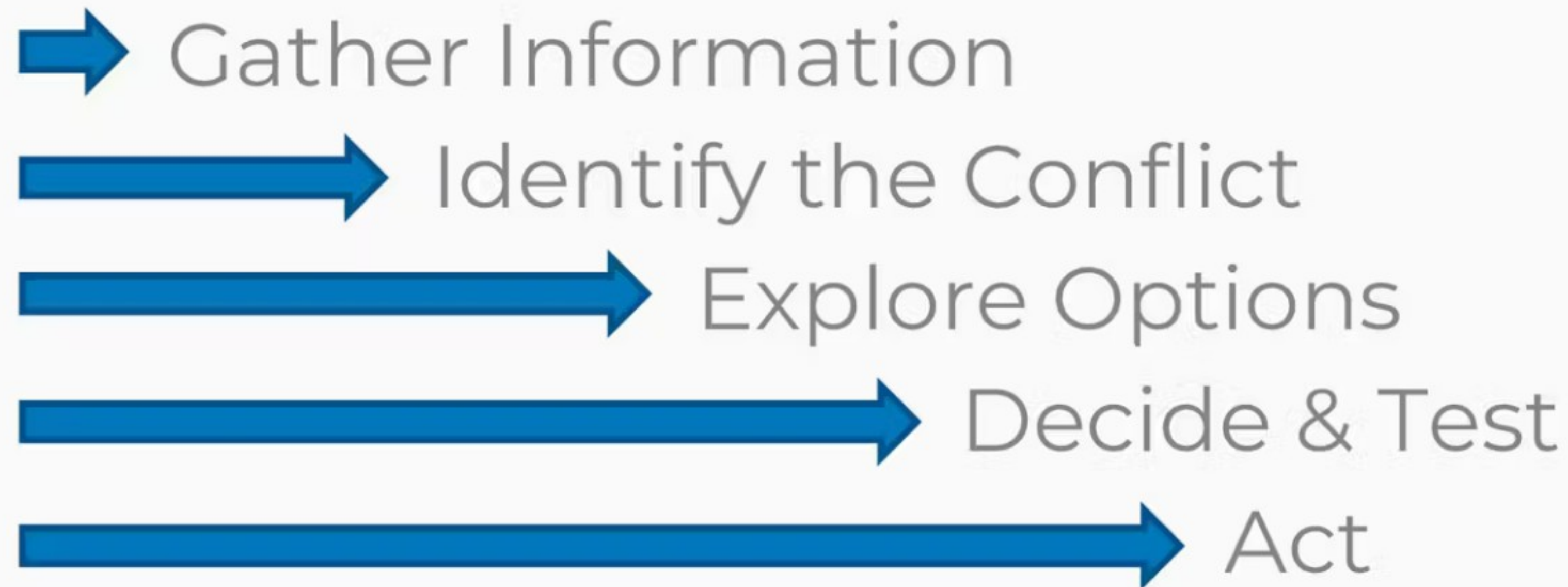
**Learning Pathways
Leading and Advocating
Part 3: Understanding the Role of Ethics**

Quick Review – Core Values

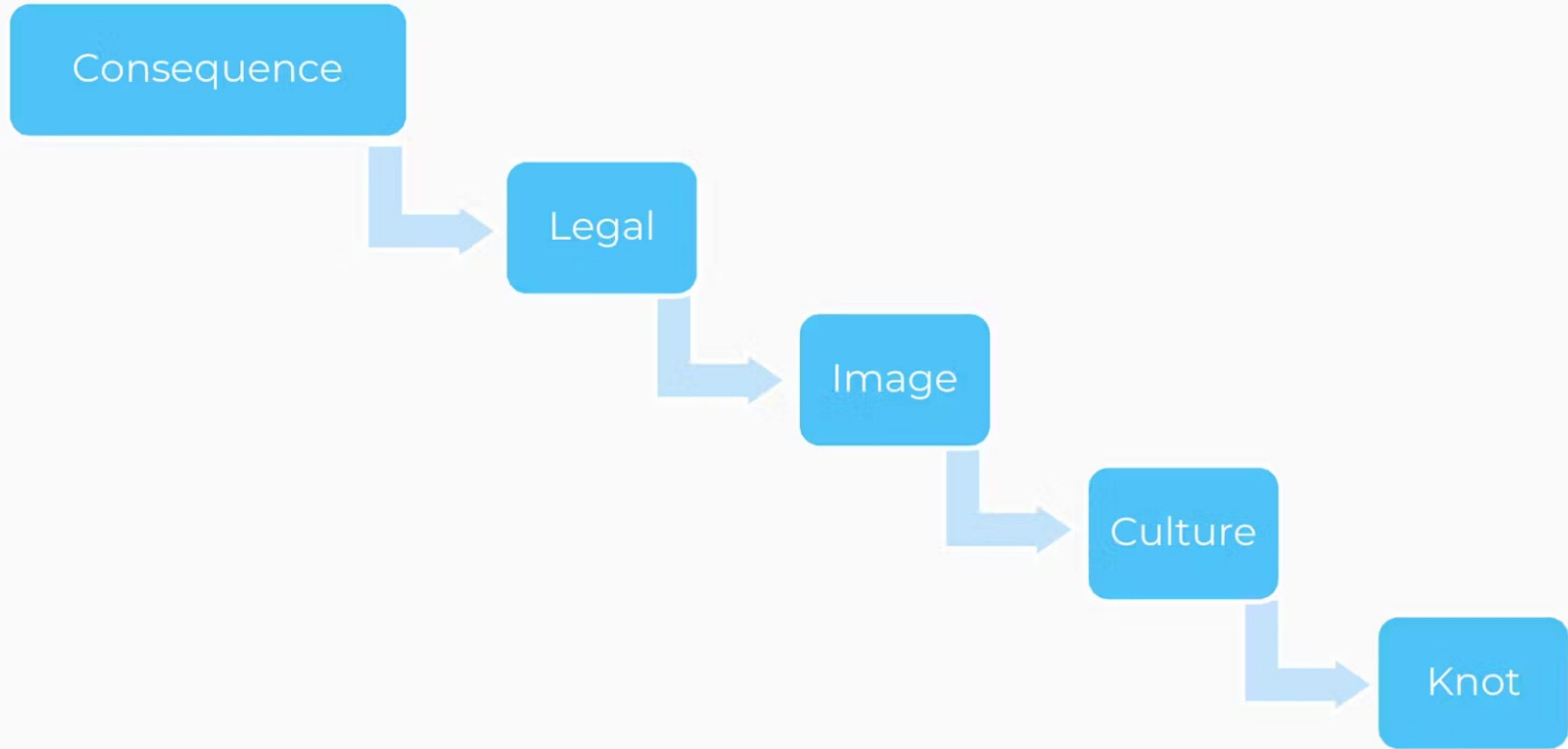
Core values for volunteer engagement professionals:

- Citizenship
- Respect
- Accountability
- Fairness
- Trust

Ethical Decision Making Process



CLICK Test



Scenario #1

What we know

As soon as you arrive in the morning you receive an urgent call: a new client is entering crisis psychiatric care in a few hours. The client is hearing impaired and the program is not equipped with staff or a current volunteer who is fluent in sign language.

The Senior Program Manager suggests a friend who knows sign language and instructs you to “fast-pass” this prospective volunteer through the agency onboarding and screening process. The Manager assures you that he knows this volunteer well enough that you can skip the usual screening and training process.

How should you respond?

What additional information do you need? What questions do you have?

Are we assuming the client knows ASL?

Still request at least starting the screening process for the volunteer. Background checks have come back to haunt me...

How long have then known ASL? Are they a certified translator? Are they familiar with the right terminology

A certified interpreter should be involved, not a random person who claims to know ASL

but fast pace are they suggesting skip the steps or make it a priority screening (where all components are still completed)

Woah! How's this fair to the client? They deserve a trained and qualified interpreter.

do we allow volunteers to sign for patients?

Does the potential volunteer understand the scope and limits of the work we do?

What additional information do you need? What questions do you have?

If they know ASL do they know legal/medical terms?

Has this person worked with our client population or a similar population before? Are they certified in ASL?

What is this person's current role? Can anyone verify that they know ASL? Are there translators that can be hired temporarily instead? Would still want background checks, a brief interview

Would also want a brief conversation with the client care team - what does the client need? What is the best option for them?

The volunteer should be interviewed by someone other than the person who knows them.

Is the Manager allowed and able to "hire" volunteers? So they can take the responsibility?

For me this about respect for the volunteer and the client

Respect, Fairness, Trust

What additional information do you need? What questions do you have?

Yes - we have to follow the same policy for all volunteers

What impact does her schedule have on the program?

could there be other ways around it, and also because Baby boomers might not be computer-literate

Having some flexibility to accommodate needs is important when possible.

Is this an ethical dilemma? What is the conflict?

I see a tension between the tyranny of the urgent (client who deserves service) and the reasons behind the practices in place (why wouldn't we fast track each volunteer)?

Yes...it is not in keeping with our legal requirements (if we're fast passing checks and screening), it looks bad that we're prioritizing friends as volunteers...it isn't fair.

If the volunteer is not screened & properly trained, we'll be liable if something goes wrong. And why are we compromising our values and policies because something is "urgent."

having a manager overlook processes that are in place for a "friend" is difficult to process through. It also sets a precedent for future "I need this yesterday" situations.

We also have to keep in mind that this client is entering into psychiatric care and will be covered by HIPPA.

Agreed, lack of trust.

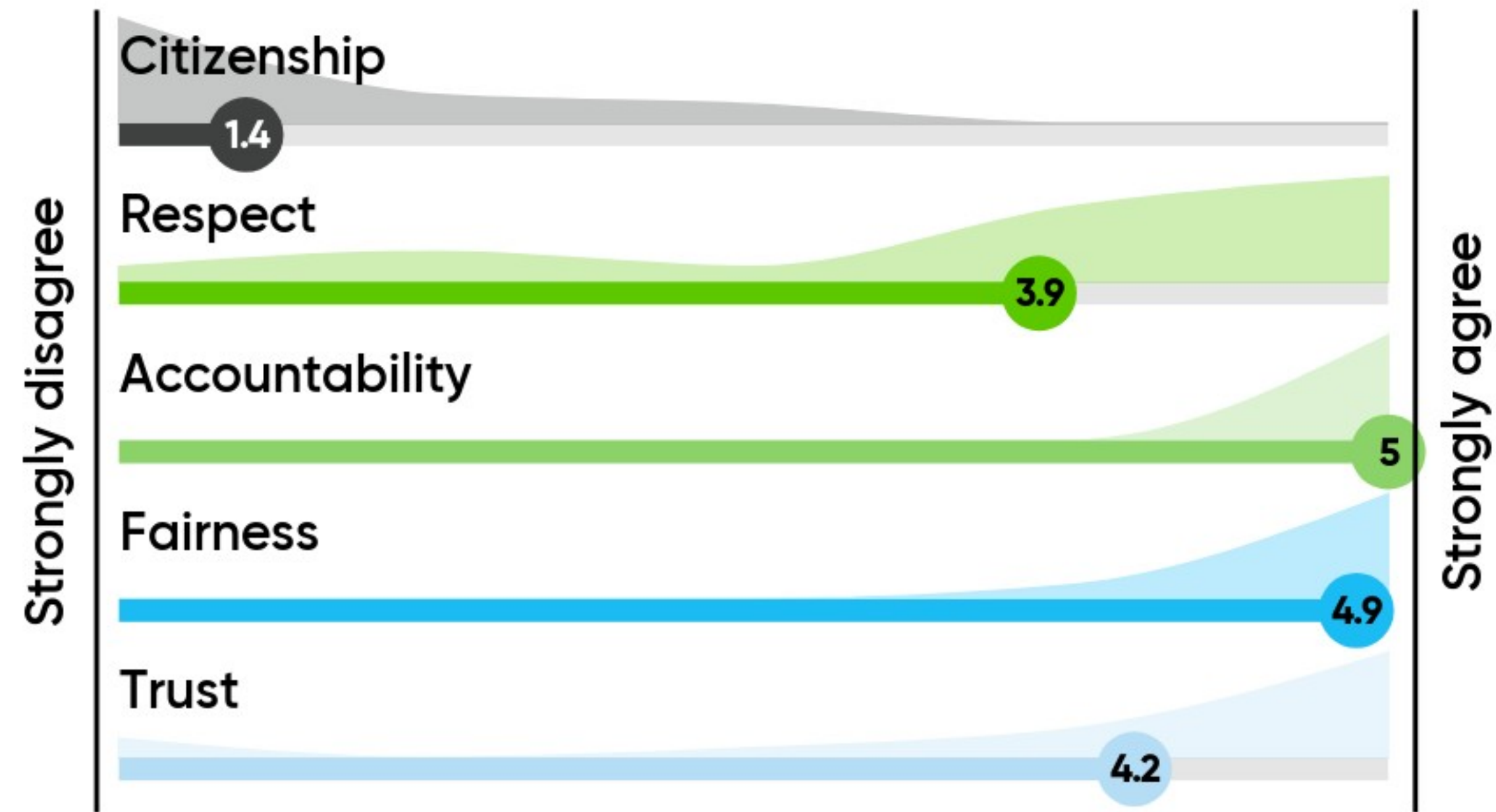
It sure is. We can't give anyone preferential treatment especially when someone is in crisis.

Conflict is the urgency of the decision and using someone we are not familiar with. One of our Core Values is Do the Right Thing for the patient. This is the bottom line

Is this an ethical dilemma? What is the conflict?

If a different person interviews then the conflict can be somewhat averted because it is an non-biased decision.

Which values are involved in this dilemma?



What solution(s) could you explore?

Hiring a professional ASL interpreter

Align with the organizations values which are similar to the ethical values and say no!

No on the volunteer suggestion but bring this up as a future volunteer opportunity.

Partner with another organization that has ASL interpreters

Do they have another means of communicating?

are there digital translation solutions

Inquire about the client's supports outside of care? Do they already have a trusted person? Hire an ASL interpreter. Find an alternate way of communication - text?

Will the facility even allow our volunteer to enter? Do we have any other staff member who does ASL?

What solution(s) could you explore?

We could reach out to other organizations. There are also alternatives to ASL. We can use an iPad or a just a paper and pen.

If the need cannot be met another way, are there any documents that can be provided for short term? How can we follow up with both client and new volunteer to fill gaps on the back end?

Maybe ask the client if they would be okay with the volunteer helping and being transparent?

Core values and patient rights > manager friend

See if there is an alternate way to communicate (via text or tablet) until you are able to properly hire a volunteer that has the proper qualification.

If the volunteer is last ditch effort... asking for credibility of the ASL. Do they have certification/documentation of some sort.

Contact the local NAD to see if they have a volunteer can help

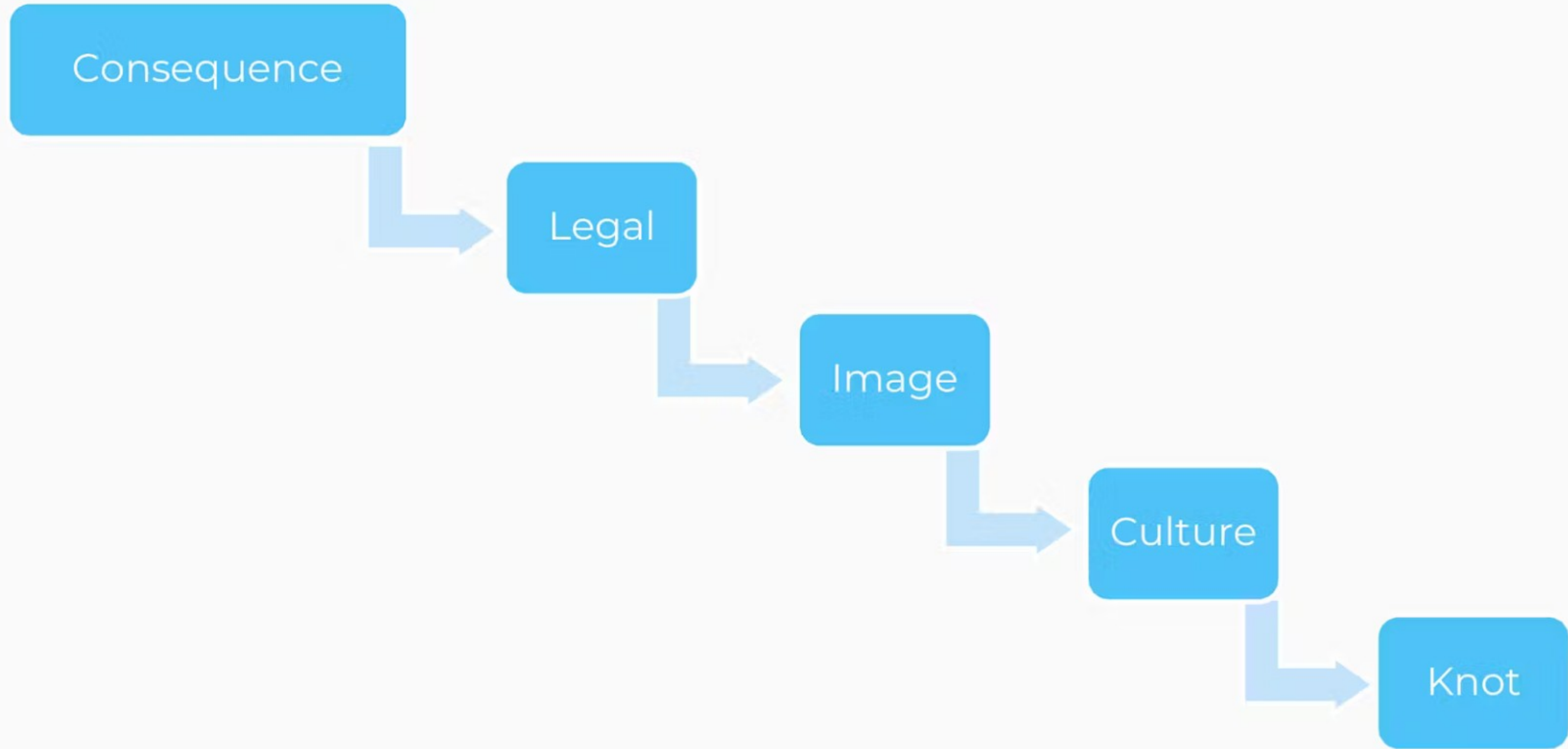
Does the client have someone they can bring with them to help with ASL? Someone they trust? Involve the client as best as you can in the solution

What solution(s) could you explore?

Could we create a policy that outlines when / why we will make exceptions? Is the volunteer valuable to the organization in other ways (for instance, is she also a donor)?

Is there another way she could make up the hours (and have it verified) through her other activities?

CLICK Test



Scenario #2

What we know

A long-term Baby Boomer volunteer refuses to meet the new program requirements that were established earlier that year. She says she gets great personal gratification from the program and wants to continue, but that she can't meet the new minimum time requirement because of other commitments in her life.

Because of her long-term status she is granted an initial exception from the new rule by top management, but her direct supervisor feels she should have to follow the new guidelines or be dismissed.

As Director of Volunteers, what action should you take?

What additional information do you need? What questions do you have?

How short is she on the volunteer time commitment?

Why is the direct supervisor being so firm on this? Is there more to this?

Are they making exceptions for anyone else?

Is it only the time commitment? Are there other issues?

What is the purpose of minimum hours? (Information retention, arbitrary, etc.)?

Are there other volunteers available during her time? Is she key to operations?

Is she a valuable volunteer? Is the supervisor trying to get her to move on for a reason?

Clarify the exception that was made for this volunteer. Also ask if they are making other exceptions so you can do this across the board

What additional information do you need? What questions do you have?

Are there other ways she can volunteer with us (i.e. administrative assistance)?

Is she not pulling her weight?

Is there another role that would fit her needs?

How long has the exception been going on?

Why is it so important that she makes that time commitment? Can you move the volunteer to a different manager.

Is there something else her hours can be used towards? The supervisor relationship is interesting.

What interferes with her completing the new requirements? Can the requirements be adjusted to meet her time needs. Will you do this for other volunteers? What is the history of this volunteer.

Are there other ways to get hours that haven't been explored?

What additional information do you need? What questions do you have?

If you make an exception for one volunteer then you will have to make for others. It is better to stick with the policy requirements. Maybe she needs to take a pause or break?

Agreed about what is the purpose of the minimum hours. I have great people reach out but looking for just 1 day of volunteer, or 1 month. And my requirement is 3 months, due to the time of training.

Is the conflict between supervisor and volunteer?
Is this a friend of person who gave the exception- is she also a big donor

Is the expectation of time realistic of volunteers?

Could the exception be categorized as an accommodation due to illness/caregiving responsibilities, etc?

yes, fairness

Seems like the conflict is actually between the leadership team and direct supervisor - lack of communication. Also unclear whether the exception follows a specific written policy.

Is this an ethical dilemma? What is the conflict?

Yes. Favoritism. Setting a precedent.

Yes. Following guidelines/policies opposed to allowing an exception.

yes,, fairness

Fairness - not treating all volunteers equally. Trust - will this impact trust with other volunteers? With this volunteer? Respect - is it respectful of everyone?

The conflict is trying to retain a long-term volunteer without disrupting organizational structure or allowing exceptions.

not really, is the time requirement really that big of a requirement that needs to be meant. They are a volunteer, time is their payment to the business.

All volunteers should have same guidelines for everyone. they talk and compare!

2 IMO, following guidelines and favoritism. Singling out good or bad can cause issues in the future.

Is this an ethical dilemma? What is the conflict?

Volunteers do talk to each other!

Conflict between the policy of the organization versus the needs of the volunteer.

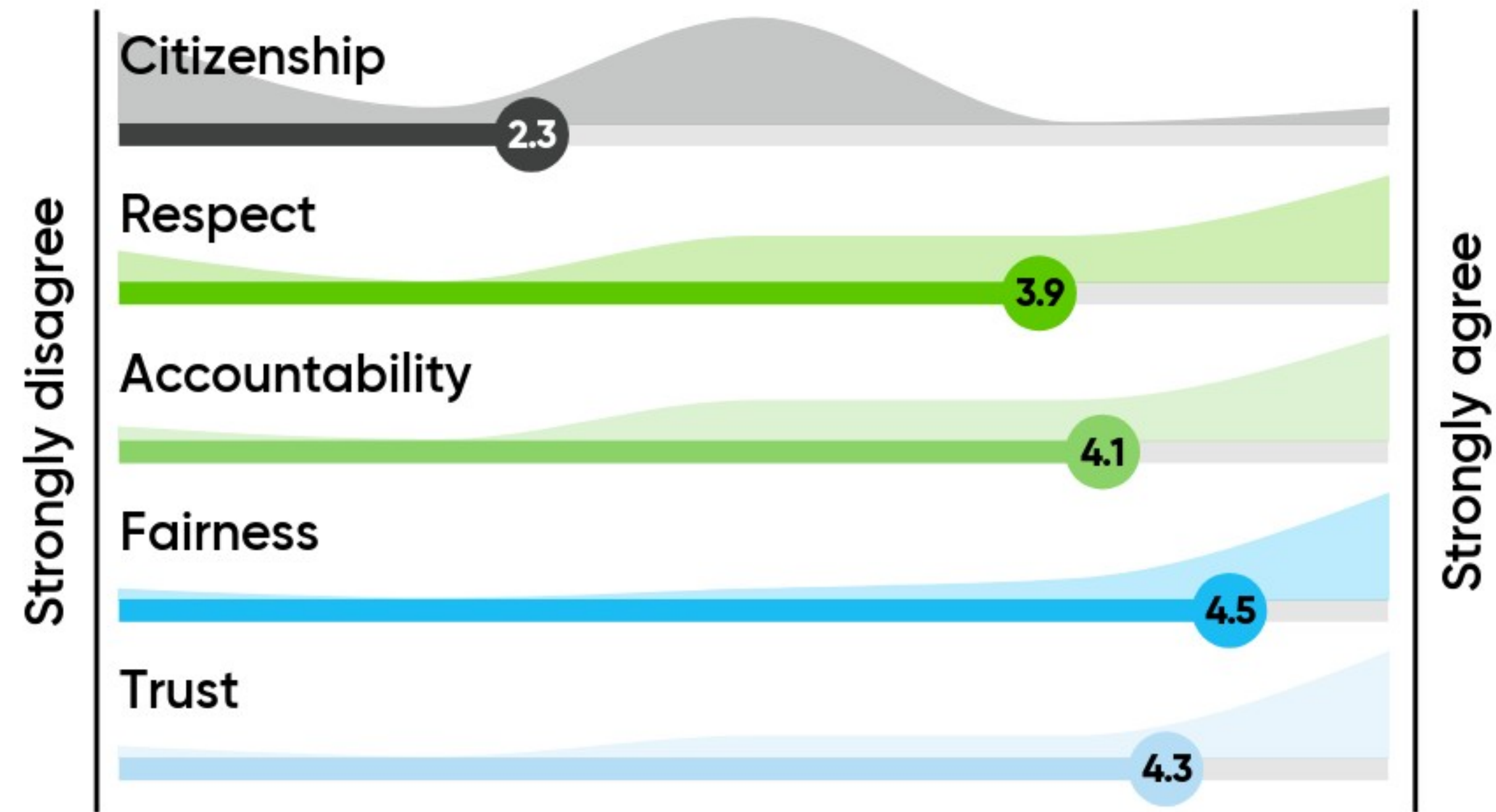
Only if there is interpersonal conflict or if there is critical mission going unmet. In my experience, volunteers have good intentions and are unpaid. I have some roles that are easy to adjust and s.

Still meet expectations

yes...people will share exceptions and potentially annoy other volunteers

agree also with Emeritus role

Which values are involved in this dilemma?



What solution(s) could you explore?

Can volunteers who were hired before X be grandfathered in?

Create policy for when and why we will make exceptions to the time commitment

Offer the volunteer a leave of absence until they can rejoin and meet the requirements

If it's about identity, is there a Volunteer Emeritus role?

Explain the why of the time commitment to the volunteer and then ask them to meet it or determine when their last day will be and how we can best celebrate their service.

If it's interpersonal conflict, can the volunteer report to someone else?

Yes agree with the Emeritus role!

Meet w/supervisor to see if it's interpersonal conflict. If not, then seeing if volunteer could serve as mentor for new volunteers etc. If it is... may be time to move on.

What solution(s) could you explore?

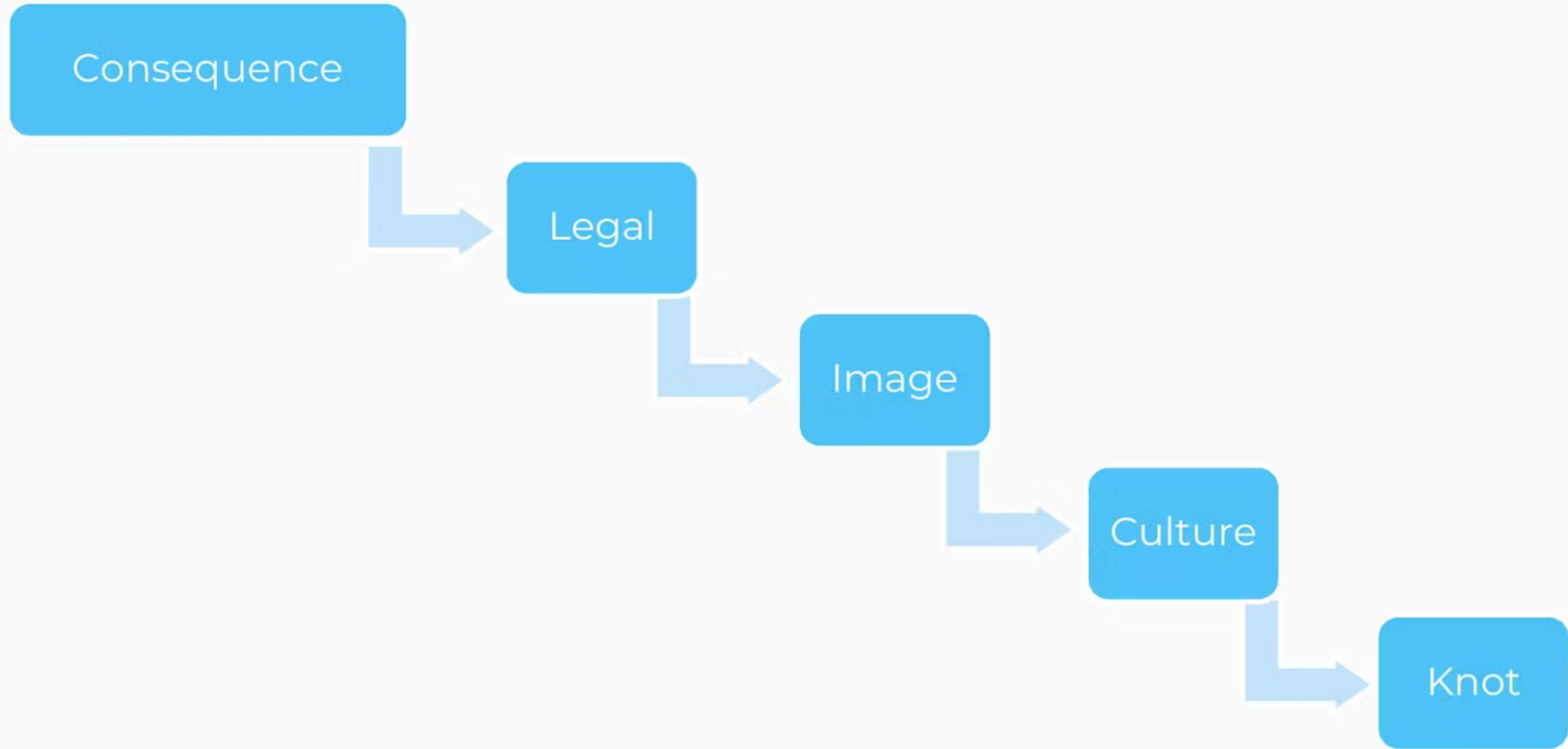
If it is for client benefit, is there a different role that can be met since this doesn't suit their new season?

Reevaluate if time commitment is really needed/nonnegotiable

Volunteer Emeritus role if the knowledge base is worth it.

Transition their role into a mentoring role? I.e. they are with another, new volunteer who will take over after they finish their shift.

CLICK Test



Thank You!

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