The International Journal of Volunteer Administration
Volume XXIV, No. 6 (October 2007)
"Insights and Innovations"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Volunteer organizations (VOs) offer important services the private and public sectors cannot or will not provide. VOs tend not to use information technology (IT) to the extent they could, and so don't receive the benefits it offers. This paper examines the challenges using IT volunteers creates, including limits in availability, expertise, commitment, organizational knowledge, and equipment ownership. A framework for thinking about the effectiveness of IT volunteers is presented.
Keywords: volunteers, information technology, effectiveness, challenges

Using the Hobson-Heler model of nonprofit agency "volunteer-friendliness," the impact of initial assignment quality and treatment by staff on volunteer satisfaction and subsequent continuation of volunteering, and intentions to volunteer in the future and make donations was evaluated with a field sample of 542. Subjects were students at a university commuter campus, assigned to complete a 10-hour service learning project with local United Way affiliates. A written survey was administered at the conclusion of their assignment. Results strongly supported the Hobson-Heler model and indicated that: (1) initial assignment quality and treatment by staff were major determinants of satisfaction and (2) satisfaction was significantly related to continuation of volunteering, likelihood of future volunteering, and likelihood of making future financial contributions.
Key Words: volunteers, volunteer-friendly, satisfaction

Because nonprofit managers often face challenges in deciding how to best incorporate volunteers in working toward the organization's mission, it is important to understand how volunteers view their involvement with organizations. This study provides nonprofit managers with a short survey instrument they can use to help understand the nonprofit-volunteer relationship with volunteers by focusing on four dimensions: trust, satisfaction, commitment, and power balance. These four relationship outcomes are derived from public relations scholarship on the organization-public relationship. This study found that although volunteers all evaluated the relationships with organizations positively, there were significant differences when looking at the amount of time volunteers gave to organizations. This study also offers suggestions on how relationships can be improved with volunteers based on their evaluation of the relationship.
Key Words: volunteer management, relationship, evaluation

The authors introduce a new metaphor of volunteer involvement based on a "slot machine," founded on generating "winning volunteer scenarios." We define a volunteer scenario as a combination of the Assets of a potential volunteer, the Availability of volunteers, and a particular volunteer Assignment or job offered by the host organization. Our model seeks to optimize

"winning" volunteer scenarios -- that is, triple A ratings (AAA) -- in which the Assets and Availability a potential volunteer brings to the organization is matched with, or negotiated to fulfill, an organizational Assignment. The article shows that this model can be useful in understanding changes in the world of volunteerism, designing strategies to adapt to them in a variety of organizational contexts, and helping both individuals and organizations learn how to create and integrate diverse offers of time and resources from prospective volunteers.
Keywords: episodic volunteering, matching, assets, availability, assignments

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

IDEAS THAT WORK

4-H professionals working with volunteers need a feedback process that opens communication and troubleshoots potential problems. The article demonstrates how the New Jersey 4-H Volunteer Review Process is an effective evaluation tool to address this need, as well as to provide an ideal forum for expanding volunteer roles through leadership development and goal setting. The process allows the volunteer and supervisor to engage in dialogue and work together to determine areas that may need improvement and build on strengths and achievements. By investing in the time taken to conduct the interview and by showing an interest in volunteer leaders, 4-H agents and staff help to promote continued and expanded volunteer efforts and programmatic successes.
Key Words: 4-H, volunteers, evaluation, interview

EDITORIAL

The author addresses historical and contemporary aspects of volunteerism in Nepal as a fundamental building block of civil society.
Key Words: volunteerism, civil society, Nepal, Hinduism, Buddhism

FROM THE JOVA ANNALS

Today and into the future, both professional competencies and personal capacities will be critical for volunteer administrators. Professional competencies are knowledge and skills based, serve as a critical intellectual foundation for any profession, and involve fundamental levels of cognitive learning including assessing, comprehending, and applying knowledge to our day-to-day roles and responsibilities. Personal capacities involve the higher levels of cognitive learning including the abilities to analyze specific situations; synthesize new insights from existing knowledge and skills; and evaluate the broader, more abstract current or future situation. Capacities involve affective and emotional components in addition to knowledge and skills. Based upon the literature and their experiences, the authors identify six personal capacities critical to any volunteer administrator: creating and communicating a shared vision; embracing diversity while nurturing pluralism, accepting change and managing ambiguity; acting within shared values and championing ethical behavior; linking effective management to personal leadership; and reflecting.
Keywords: competencies, capacities, volunteer, management, administration

Dedication of Volume XXIV to

Mary V. Merrill, LSW

If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.

(Sir Isaac Newton, 1675)

Volume XXIV of *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration* is lovingly dedicated to the memory of Mary V. Merrill, LSW, a dear friend to any volunteer, a colleague to all managers of volunteers, a mentor to me personally, and the former editor of *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*. Mary left this world suddenly and unexpectedly on February 19, 2006, yet her legacy will remain with us forever.

Mary Merrill dedicated her career and her life as an international speaker and author to providing consultation and training in volunteer administration, board development, and strategic planning to strengthen the leadership and structures that support volunteerism. She was adjunct faculty at The Ohio State University and Editor of *The Journal of Volunteer Administration* from 2002 until her death. Mary taught and consulted internationally in 15 countries, and nationally in 37 of the 50 United States. Working with the Points of Light Foundation she helped establish the first volunteer center in Russia and worked for two years with developing Non Government Organizations (NGOs) in Armenia.
More recently, Mary worked with the Volunteer Development Committee of the United Nations, and presented at the European Volunteerism Conference in Croatia. Mary was an invited speaker for the Asian Pacific Conferences for Volunteer Administration in Korea (2002) and Hong Kong

(2005), the IAVE Latin American Conference on Volunteerism (Venezuela, 1998), and the 1st International Conference of Museum Volunteers (Mexico City, 2002). She was an annual star trainer for the Points of Light National Community Service Conference and recipient of a 2004 Distinguished Service Award from AVA.

Mary's innovative ideas and models have been published in *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*; *Voluntary Action: The International Journal of the Institute for Volunteering Research;* and the *Not-For-Profit CEO Monthly Letter*. She authored a book for the Paradigm Project, Points of Light Foundation, wrote the Volunteer Literacy Manual for Reading Recovery International, and co-authored and produced teleconferences/training videos on risk management, ethical decision making, and, non-profit board development.

Mary was an invited speaker at the 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2004 Biennial World Volunteerism Conferences in Canada, The Netherlands, Korea, and Barcelona (resp.), and presented joint and individual volunteer-related research at the 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 annual conferences of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA). She was past-president of Volunteer Ohio, and a past recipient of the Award for Excellence presented by the Volunteer Administrators' Network of Central Ohio. She helped create and co-taught the Institute for Community Leadership through the Leadership Center of The Ohio State University, and developed pioneering work in the area of impact evaluation for volunteer programs.

So, Mary, if we have been able to see further into the future of volunteerism and volunteer administration, it is because we as your peers benefited from your individual dedication to humanity, your professional passion for volunteerism, and your personal unconditional love for your family, friends and colleagues. You were a giant in our profession, and we miss you dearly.

R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D.
Editor

In This Issue:
"Insight through Innovation, and Innovation through Insight"

Without tradition, art is a flock of sheep without a shepherd.
Without innovation, it is a corpse.
(Winston Churchill)

I would argue that the successful management of today's volunteer programs involves the innovative use of tradition, and the traditional use of innovation.

Many of the "traditional" practices and procedures fundamental to our profession today are practically identical to when they were first suggested in the 1970's by pioneers such as Marlene Wilson and Ivan Scheier (e.g., basic components of the management of volunteers, written volunteer position descriptions, volunteer training formats, etc.) Indeed, such longstanding "traditional" aspects of the management of volunteers continue today to provide much needed continuity to our profession and have withstood the test of time in "shepherding" a profession that was newly-recognized in the late 20th century into a new century and millennium.

However, such "traditions" were considered major "innovations" upon their initial introduction to the non-profit sector, and through the years have continued to evolve and adapt so as to address the emerging needs of contemporary societies across the decades. While volunteer recruitment has always been a fundamental concept in the management of volunteers, myriad recruitment approaches are routinely used today that could never have been imagined in the 1970's (e.g., the internet, Public Service Announcements on public television networks, podcasts, etc.) Who would have ever thought that managers of volunteers would one day be developing written position descriptions for virtual volunteers, or posting such descriptions to cyber chat rooms? And the Web has created an entire new universe for volunteer training opportunities that may be easily targeted for a highly specific target volunteer audience, yet accessible 24/7. Consequently, this issue of *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration* focuses upon insights and innovations as related to the successful management of contemporary volunteer programs.

Six outstanding *Feature Articles* begin with a holistic and thorough review of literature by Australian researchers Andrea M. Petriwskyj and Jeni Warburton addressing motivations for and barriers to volunteering by seniors. With the improved health and increasing longevity of individuals in most developed countries, senior citizens will continue to grow in importance as potential volunteers. Beverly B. Hobbs' timely article focuses upon engaging another fast-growing ethnic group in the United States as volunteers - Latinos. She concludes that, "To successfully engage volunteers from a culturally diverse audience, volunteer administrators must adopt a culturally responsive approach, that is, one that reflects an acknowledgement, appreciation, and acceptance of the differences associated with the culture." Kieran Mathieson's article on using information technology (IT) volunteers succinctly points out what many managers of volunteers already realize yet constantly struggle with: "Volunteer Organizations tend not to use information technology to the extent they could, and so don't receive the benefits it offers". He subsequently examines specific challenges regarding using IT volunteers, including limits in availability, expertise, commitment, organizational knowledge, and equipment

ownership. Two *Feature Articles* address the ever-evolving interface between contemporary non-profit organizations and individual volunteers. Charles J. Hobson and Kathryn Heler use an innovative model to explore the concept of "volunteer friendliness" in non-profit agencies, and Richard D. Waters and Denise Bortree introduce a short questionnaire they may be used by volunteer resource managers to better understand organizational relationships with volunteers focusing on the concepts of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and power balance. Finally, Lucas C.P.M. Meijs and Jeffrey L. Brudney introduce a new metaphor of volunteer involvement based upon that of a slot machine, and guide the reader in consciously seeking to generate "winning" volunteer scenarios.

In *Tools of the Trade*, readers are introduced to two newly emerging professional organizations for managers of volunteers and administrators of volunteer programs. Rita Chick and Joanna Johnson discusse the Congress of Volunteer Administrator Associations (COVAA), and Celeste Sauls-Mark describes the Association of Volunteer Resource Managers (AVRM). Katherine ("Katie") H. Campbell describes the Certified in Volunteer Administration (CVA) credentialing program, and Harriett C. Edwards contributes a *Resource Review* of Betty Stallings' "new and improved" *Training Busy Staff to Succeed with Volunteers: The 55-Minute Training Series* (2007, Philadelphia, PA: Energize Inc.)

Linda A. Strieter and Virginia Powell contribute *Ideas That Work* focused upon "Successful Methods and Positive Outcomes for 4-H Volunteer Evaluation" in New Jersey, and Bishnu Hari Bhatta provides *Editorial* insights into volunteerism and the management of volunteers in contemporary Nepal.

From The JOVA Annals features four articles focused upon the management of volunteers, yet published previously in *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*: "Personal Capacities for Volunteer Administrators: Drawing Upon the Past as We Move Into the Future" by R. Dale Safrit and Mary Merrill (originally published in 1999); "Dollar Value of Volunteer Time: A Review of Five Estimation Methods by Paula M. Anderson and Mary E. Zimmerman (originally published in 2003); "Barriers to the Development of Volunteer Leadership Competencies: Why Johnnie Can't Lead Volunteers" by Barry L. Boyd (published originally in 2004); and "The Volunteer and Staff Team: How Do We Get Them to Get Along?" by Nancy Macduff and F. Ellen Netting (first published in 2005).

We hope this issue of *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration* will provide the reader with practical and thought-provoking insights so that managers of volunteers may continue to successfully bridge tradition with innovation in greater service to the global volunteer community.

R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D.
Editor-In-Chief

Motivations and Barriers to Volunteering by Seniors: A Critical Review of the Literature

Andrea M. Petriwskyj
Australasian Centre on Ageing
The University of Queensland
Brisbane Qld 4072
Tel. +617 33469227 * FAX +617 33657503 * E-mail: a.petriwskyj@uq.edu.au

Jeni Warburton, Ph.D.
Australasian Centre on Ageing
The University of Queensland
Brisbane Qld 4072
Tel. +617 33469698 * FAX +617 33657503 * E-mail: j.warburton@social.uq.edu.au

Abstract

Information about the motivations and barriers to volunteering by seniors is of vital importance to nonprofit agencies seeking to recruit and retain older volunteers. This paper presents a critical review of the social and behavioural literature in relation to volunteering by seniors. The focus in the literature is on what motivates seniors to volunteer, with less attention to barriers to volunteering. Whilst findings from these studies are relatively consistent and provide important general information, a critical review of this literature raises a number of conceptual and methodological concerns that could limit the applicability of findings to the field. For example, many studies fail to differentiate either by age of participants and/or by differences in volunteer activities. Overall, very few studies incorporate validated scales that can be assessed across activities and contexts. It is important that new researchers recognise these limitations and address them in future research, particularly if volunteer administrators are to build the best available evidence into their policies and practices.

Keywords:
volunteering, motivations, barriers, seniors, literature review

Introduction

In recent years, as a result of interest in the development of social capital and community capacity building, volunteering has become a vital part of discussions on the function of society (Baum et al.,1999; Cox, 1997; Kerr & Tedmanson, 2003; Dekker & van den Broek, 1998; Salamon & Anheier, 1998). A particular dimension of this is that relating to volunteering by seniors, particularly in light of the ageing of the population and the growing numbers of active retirees (Warburton, Le Brocque & Rosenman, 1998; Gottlieb, 2002).

Volunteering has a significant impact on society on a number of levels, from economic value to community-level and individual benefits (Greenfield & Marks, 2004; Lum & Lightfoot, 2005; Ironmonger, 2000; Soupourmas & Ironmonger, 2002). In terms of economic value, the United Nations (2001) estimates suggest that volunteering is worth US$225 billion a year in the United States, US$11 billion a year in Canada, US$13.65 billion in the Netherlands, and US$57 billion in

the United Kingdom. These amounts are considerable, and in countries such as Australia, volunteering has been estimated at equivalent to between 7 and 8% of Gross Domestic Product (Ironmonger, 2000).

Whilst harder to measure, there are also important social benefits associated with volunteering. In general terms, volunteering offers opportunities for participation and results in more fulfilling lives, particularly for those otherwise marginalised in society (United Nations General Assembly, 2001). Volunteering contributes to the "reserves of trust and cohesion" (United Nations General Assembly, 2001, p. 4) within and between societies, a significant part of the creation of social capital.

Volunteering activity can also have important psychological and other health benefits for the volunteers themselves. A body of literature highlights the importance of volunteering and social participation on the well-being, quality of life, health and longevity of individuals, and particularly older individuals (Onyx & Warburton, 2003; Warburton, 2006). Indeed, studies of the benefits of volunteering across the life course suggest that there is a particularly strong relationship between good health and volunteering amongst older adults (van Willigen, 2000; Musick & Wilson, 2003). In particular, volunteering is said to provide a role identity and sense of purpose for those retired from paid work (Greenfield & Marks, 2004).

Thus, recent literature suggests that there are clear advantages of volunteering, particularly in later life. However, if individuals are to be encouraged to participate and to benefit from these advantages, attention needs to be paid to recruitment and retention of volunteers (Culp et al., 2006; Bussell & Forbes, 2002; Callow, 2004). In particular, these recruitment and retention strategies need to be based on a thorough understanding of what people are seeking from their volunteer activities as well as what might be preventing them from volunteering. The large body of research that exists on the motivations, expectations and barriers experienced by volunteers and potential volunteers is thus vital. This is particularly the case in an ageing society, where new cohorts of seniors are ageing and retiring. This paper provides a critical review of the current literature on motivations and barriers associated with volunteering by seniors, in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of this body of literature.

Methods

The data collection and review process was conducted in a systematic fashion; that is, criteria were used and a systematic process followed for the inclusion and exclusion of studies, and for data extraction. A literature search was conducted using the following social and behavioural science databases:

- *Psychology: A SAGE Full-Text Collection*; *PsycINFO*; *Social Services Abstracts*; *Sociological Abstracts*; *Sociology: A SAGE Full-Text Collection* using the search terms KW=volunteer* and AB=(motiv* or barrier* or incentive*) and limiters year of publication 1996-2006.
- *Academic Research Library*; *ProQuest Social Science Journals* using the search terms volunteer* AND motiv* OR barrier* OR incentive* in citation and abstract, and limiters of year of publication after 1st January 1996.

- *Ageline* using the search terms volunteer* AND motiv* OR barrier* OR incentive*, and limiters of year of publication 1996-2006.

This search revealed 251 results. Articles were then included if they reported the results of primary research studies in either peer-reviewed journals or reports; explored the motivations and/ or barriers to volunteering; and explored the motivations and/ or barriers *specific* to seniors or those approaching their senior years (to be as broadly inclusive as possible, the sample was defined by the age range 45+). According to this process, the sample of articles was refined as shown in Figure 1.

Study details were systematically explored, and study populations, methods, and findings were compared and contrasted in order to determine common results, research designs including scales used, quality and limitations across studies. Similar methods of review have been employed in studies across a range of disciplines (Harding & Higginson, 2003; McQueen & Klein, 2006; Harden et al., 2004) although many of these studies provide deeper data extraction, including effect sizes, for their analysis. That was not required for this review, as the purpose of this paper is neither to provide a review of research findings nor to provide a meta-analysis. Rather, the information of interest for this review relates to comparison of findings and methodologies employed.

Results and Discussion

Motivations to Volunteer and Barriers to Volunteering

Results of the review of the literature revealed a number of common motivations and barriers to volunteering by older people. These are presented in Table 1 below. For the sake of parsimony, studies were included in this table if they reported the motivator, or barrier/ cost as significant, as pertaining to 25% or more of the sample (some studies did not provide statistical analysis), or as being significantly associated with age, but excluded if the age differences were reported as pertaining to younger participants (that is, findings were not reported for *older* people). Specific motivations were included in the table if they were reported in three or more studies; however, given the small proportion of studies exploring the *barriers* to volunteering, all relevant studies were included in this section.

The review presented in Table 1 shows that seniors are most commonly motivated to volunteer by helping values, social aspects of volunteering, and opportunities to make a contribution to their community or society, to use their skills or share knowledge, to learn, develop new skills and be intellectually stimulated, or to feel good or feel needed. Potential older volunteers are hindered most commonly by health problems, work commitments, full schedule, and lack of time. These findings are potentially useful to volunteer administrators seeking to retain their volunteers or recruit new volunteers. In particular, information such as this is critical because recruitment and retention strategies need to be based on the best available evidence regarding what motivates an individual to begin and continue volunteering, as well as what barriers exist to stop people giving their time (Callow, 2004; Bussell & Forbes, 2002). This body of research can thus be used by volunteer administrators in marketing volunteer opportunities, recruitment

programs, and in developing training programs.

However, while these are important general findings, a deeper exploration of this body of literature suggests that there are some critical points that need to be noted by those seeking to use these findings. In particular, there are two main areas of concern raised by such a critical review. First, there are concerns around the conceptual development of these studies, including a tendency to neglect the potential diversity of volunteer activities, as well as differences in the motivations and needs of different age groups. Second, studies vary considerably in their methodology, and particularly in relation to measurement and analysis. Both of these issues are discussed in more detail below, including the implications of these findings for volunteer administrators seeking to utilise this body of knowledge, as well as researchers seeking to develop and implement new studies.

Conceptual Issues

A review of this literature reveals issues associated with the conceptual mix of factors presented in these studies. Most of the literature presented in Table 1 focuses on the motivations of individuals to volunteer. In fact, the studies on motivations for volunteering are quite numerous and cover a broad range of contexts and specific volunteering areas, offering a significant body of research evidence on which managers and administrators can draw. Such a large evidence base provides a wealth of knowledge for recruitment, training and retention strategies. However, far fewer studies investigating the barriers to volunteering (only 37% of studies reviewed). This is a concerning trend given the potential importance of such information to volunteer recruitment and retention (Ellis, 1996; Callow, 2004). Directing a marketing program towards a particular target group which is based on evidence about their potential motivations will do little to promote sustained volunteering behaviour if there are significant barriers that have not been addressed. Studies looking at why people volunteer have tended to neglect to consider what acts to prevent people from volunteering, and future research should supplement a strong tradition of motivational research with research into the factors that may have the effect of minimising or negating those motivations.

A second conceptual issue is that, in terms of motivations, most studies find strong support for a helping motivation, which is not unexpected; however, few distinguish between helping and altruism. In many cases, a helping motivation, or the motive "I want to/ like to help people" is equated with, or described as, an altruistic motivation. However, according to some theorists, the motivation for the act of helping is not always altruistic, or not entirely so (Maner et al., 2002); altruism is helping, but not all helping is altruistic. No distinction is made in the literature between altruistic and self-advancement motives for helping; rather, the assumption is often made that wanting to help others is necessarily an altruistic urge. Clearly this distinction needs to be made in future research, as these are two conceptually distinct motivations with important implications for both recruitment and volunteer outcomes.

The third area of concern is that studies often fail to acknowledge the importance of diversity amongst volunteers and differences between volunteer activities. Marketers and

volunteer managers are well aware that, in recruiting new volunteers, they must target and appeal to particular individuals or groups (Callow, 2004). For example, not all volunteers are interested in volunteering for social reasons or for service reasons, and some may volunteer in order to maintain their professional skills. It is important to know the motivations and needs of the target audience and also to ensure that the recruitment campaign promotes the tasks to the right candidates.

Motivations can also differ across activities (Clary, Snyder & Stukas, 1996). Most studies neglect to acknowledge diversity by failing to separate types of volunteer activities (Burr et al., 2005; Sauer et al., 2001; Sauer et al., 2002; Silberman et al., 2004; Narushima, 2005). Volunteering is generally treated as one normalised category of activity, without recognition of the wide variety of activities that could potentially comprise volunteering (McDonald & Warburton, 2001). If activities are separated, it is in order to explore one specific volunteering program. For example, trainee lay leaders on an arthritis self-management program reported task-specific motivations such as previous attendance at "Challenging Arthritis" (CA) course resulting in desire to share knowledge and information, and a desire to gain a greater understanding about arthritis and to increase the coping skills repertoire (Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001). Similarly, one of the motivations reported by hospice volunteers was to ease the pain of hospice patients (Black & Kovacs, 1999). In other words, motivation for these volunteers was in some cases a function of the type of volunteering they were engaged in. This suggests that there is a need to distinguish between activities, perhaps in terms of volunteering categories, such as those used in many definitions of volunteering (Petriwskyj & Warburton, 2007; United Nations, 2001). While it can be useful to have generalised information about *volunteering* as a category of behaviour, some motivations and barriers may in fact be specific to a type of volunteering such as environmental, or philanthropic service. Volunteering is not one generic activity, and future studies should ensure that in order to provide the most useful and relevant information for volunteer administrators, they acknowledge the factors that might be specific to a given context, or identify more clearly the context in which the research is conducted.

Further, relatively few of the studies reviewed separate age groups, and instead treat volunteers as a homogeneous group. This is important to note, particularly as those studies that do compare by age group clearly demonstrate important broad differences between older and younger volunteers in the motivations, expectations, and barriers to volunteering reported (Clary et al., 1998; Omoto et al., 2000; Okun & Schultz, 2003; Hendricks & Cutler, 2004). For example, Omoto et al. (2000) found that while older volunteers were more likely to be motivated by service or community obligation concerns, younger volunteers tended to be motivated by concerns related to interpersonal relationships. Such distinctions are useful in understanding some of the broad age cohort differences, although relatively few studies consider this dimension. It must also be acknowledged that there are substantial differences between individual needs and motivations across

the same age cohort, and that there are multiple layers of diversity in the volunteer experience.

However, in looking at this body of literature, it appears that the definition of seniors or older person is also problematic. When studies separate age groups, the age cut-off for 'senior' or 'older person' ranges considerably, from 45 (Chappell & Prince, 1997) to 65 (+- Warburton, Terry, Rosenman, Shapiro, 2001) years of age, however the reason for choosing that cut-off is rarely noted for the reader. For example, in one paper (Black & Kovacs, 1999), although the authors explain that age groupings were based on decade gaps (55-64, 65-74 etc), no explanation is given regarding the choice of 55 as the cut-off between "younger" and "older" volunteers. While this example is by no means unusual, it is indicative of a lack of transparency in research. In other words, diversity amongst seniors is rarely acknowledged in the research design. Consideration of such issues would enable researchers to tap into this diversity and the impact it can have on motivations and barriers.

Thus, in summary, there are important conceptual issues associated with this body of literature, which include a lack of rigorous attention to what stops people from volunteering, as well as what motivates them; a lack of conceptual clarity, particularly in terms of the boundaries between helping and altruism; and a lack of attention to diversity, particularly around volunteer activities, and potential differences by age and life stage. These concerns highlight opportunities for future research in this field to expand and explore new areas to contribute to the body of knowledge. In the next section, we turn to some of the methodological issues associated with this literature.

Methodological Issues

The second major issue raised in the review relates to the methodologies incorporated into these studies. Generally, the literature includes a broad range of methodologies and measures (Table 2).

For example, there are studies that utilise closed-ended techniques (Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003; Sauer et al., 2002; Sauer et al., 2001; Silberman et al., 2004), as well as open-ended techniques, or a mixture of the two (Fisher et al., 1998) (although the vast majority were closed-ended). Studies incorporate methods such as interviews (Narushima, 2005; Fisher et al., 1998), questionnaires (Black & Kovacs, 1999) or use of census or national survey data (Chou et al., 2003; Chappell & Prince, 1997).

Such variation in methods, particularly the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods, can be seen as a strength for a research field, bringing richness through triangulation of the findings. However, to allow comparisons across age groups, volunteer activity and motivations, there is a need for validated measures and scales, and these are generally absent from the literature. One important exception is the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI; Clary & Snyder, 1991), which is incorporated into a number of studies (Okun et al., 1998; Ferrari et al., 1999; Okun & Schultz, 2003). However, the large majority of studies do not use a validated scale, do not report any form of evaluation process and do not discuss the reliability or validity of the measures used. This is a pattern which raises concern about the transparency of

research and the utility of the measures developed.

Further, different methods of analysis have been used, ranging from simple percentages (Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003; Sauer et al., 2002; Sauer et al., 2001; Silberman et al., 2004) to multivariate statistical analysis (Warburton, Terry, Rosenman, & Shapiro, 2001; Chappell & Prince, 1997). These variations in both method and analysis have resulted in a range of predictors and motivations being identified. Although some flexibility is vital given the variation in findings for different activities and target groups, as Clary and Snyder (1991) observed, "the widespread use of measures of unknown reliability and validity is troublesome" (p. 137). This presents concerns for transparency of research, interpretation, and replicability. It is also of major concern for those wishing to use these results to recruit new groups of volunteers, or market volunteering in a particular field of practice.

Conclusions

It is clear from the literature that there is a broad range of recent studies into motivations to volunteer (and, to a lesser extent, barriers to volunteering). The question of why people choose to volunteer has generated considerable research interest over the past three decades. However, a systematic review of this literature has revealed that relatively few studies focus specifically on seniors or include seniors as a specific group in their study, despite the importance of this information for volunteer administrators seeking to recruit and retain older volunteers. The review also reveals other conceptual and methodological concerns associated with this body of literature, which need to be addressed in future research if practical outcomes are to be achieved from research endeavors.

It is clearly not appropriate simply to treat all volunteers as a homogeneous group. There are important potential differences between volunteers across activities, in why they volunteer and what they seek from their volunteering, as well as potential differences by age cohort. Age is a particularly important consideration – seniors vary considerably in their interests, capacity, and experience and it is important that such heterogeneity is recognised by potential recruiters. It also needs to be recognised that retirement offers an important opportunity for nonprofit organisations to bring experience and skills to their organisations, but more knowledge is needed in how best to attract those on the brink of retirement. These are important concerns both for researchers in this field, and for administrators using such research evidence as a basis for their recruitment, training and retention strategies.

The review reveals some conceptual confusion in the literature which limits both the applicability of the results as well as comparisons across age groups and across contexts. Limitations of the methodologies employed in these studies are also concerning. In particular, the failure to separate age cohorts and activities means that results are quite general and of less use to volunteer administrators than if the research was clearly targeted and identified. It is important that researchers attempt to strike a balance between flexibility of methodology and the use of validated and reliable measures. At the very least, researchers need to demonstrate an awareness of the nature of the scale they are using, and its

properties, even if pilot-testing is not viable or appropriate to their methodology. Researchers need to ensure that the research design process is transparent and clearly articulated. Such clarity is important not simply for other researchers, but also to ensure that the research is of maximum practical use to those developing volunteer practice and policy.

Thus, both conceptual and methodological issues affect the generalizabilty, analysability, and utility of the body of research into seniors' motivations to volunteer and the barriers they report. Clearly, researchers need to be aware of their methodology and carefully consider their research design. Choice of scale, analysis and method, as well as the activity under investigation, can have an impact on findings. There are clearly opportunities for the type of clear and targeted information useful to recruiters and managers to be gleaned from this type of research, if methodologies are carefully designed and presented. Although a number of findings are common across studies, the implications for researchers are clear: temper flexibility with empirical caution.

References

Barlow, J., & Hainsworth, J. (2001). Volunteerism among older people with arthritis. *Ageing and Society, 21*(2), 203-217.

Baum, F., Modra, C., Bush, R., Cox, E., Richard, C., & Potter, R. (1999). Volunteering and social capital: An Adelaide study. *Australian Journal on Volunteering, 4*(1), 13-22.

Black, B., & Kovacs, P. J. (1999). Age-related variation in roles performed by hospice volunteers. *Journal of Applied Gerontology, 18*(4), 479-97.

Bowen, D. J., Andersen, M. R., & Urban, N. (2000). Volunteerism in a community-based sample of women aged 50 to 80 years. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30*(9), 1829-1842.

Burr, J. A., Choi, N. G., Mutchler, J. E., & Caro, F. G. (2005). Caregiving and volunteering: Are private and public helping behaviors linked? *Journals of Gerontology: Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, 60B*(5), S247-S256.

Bussell, H., & Forbes, D. (2002). Understanding the volunteer market: The what, where, who and why of volunteering. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing, 7*(3), 244-257.

Callow, M. (2004). Identifying promotional appeals for targeting potential volunteers: An exploratory study on volunteering motives among retirees. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing, 9*(3), 261-274.

Chappell, N. L., & Prince, M. J. (1997). Reasons why Canadian seniors volunteer. *Canadian Journal on Aging, 16*(2), 336-53.

Chou, K.-L., Chow, N. W. S., & Chi, I. (2003). Volunteering aspirations of Hong Kong Chinese soon-to-be-old adults. *Activities, Adaptation & Aging, 27*(3-4), 79-96.

Clary, E. G., & Snyder, M. (1991). A functional analysis of altruism and prosocial behavior: The case of volunteerism. *Review of Personality and Social Psychology, 12,* 119-48.

Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., & Stukas, A. A. (1996). Volunteers' motivations: Findings from a national survey. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 25*(4), 485-505.

Clary. E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., Haugen, J., & Miene, P. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*(6), 1516-1530.

Cox, E. (1997). Social capital and volunteering: How close is the connection? *Australian Journal on Volunteering, 2*(2), 4-7.

Culp, K., Aldenderfer, A., Allen, L., Fannin-Holliday, S., Ford, R., & Goodwin, C. (2006). Volunteer recruitment packets: Tools for expanding volunteer involvement. *Journal of Extension, 44,* Article no. ITOT5, Retrieved August 1, 2007 from http://www.joe.org/joe/2006february/tt5.shtml

Dekker, P., & van den Broek, A. (1998). Civil society in comparative perspective: Involvement in voluntary associations in North America and Western Europe. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 9,* 11-38.

Dinger, E., & AARP Knowledge Management (2003). *2002 AARP Maryland member opinion survey.* Washington, D.C.: AARP, Knowledge Management.

Ellis, S. (1996). *The volunteer recruitment (and membership development) book.* Philadelphia, PA: Energize, Inc.

Ferrari, J. R., Loftus, M. M., & Pesek, J. (1999). Young and older caregivers at homeless animal and human shelters: Selfish and selfless motives in helping others. *Journal of Social Distress & the Homeless, 8*(1), 37-49.

Fisher, B. J., Day, M., & Collier, C. E. (1998). Successful aging: volunteerism and generativity in later life. In D. E. Redburn (Ed.). *Social Gerontology,* (pp. 43-54). Westport, CT: Auburn House.

Gottlieb, B. (2002). Older volunteers: A precious resource under pressure. *Canadian Journal on Aging, 21,* 5-9.

Greenfield, E. A., & Marks, N. F. (2004). Formal volunteering as a protective factor for older adults' psychological well-being. *Journals of Gerontology Series*

B- Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, 59B(5), S258-264.

Harden, A., Garcia, J., Oliver, S., Rees, R., Shepherd, J., & Brunton, G.. (2004). Applying systematic review methods to studies of people's views: An example from public health research. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 58*(9), 794-800.

Harding, R., & Higginson, I. J. (2003). What is the best way to help caregivers in cancer and palliative care? A systematic literature review of interventions and their effectiveness. *Palliative Medicine, 17,* 63 - 74.

Hendricks, J., & Cutler, S. J. (2004). Volunteerism and socioemotional selectivity in later life. *Journals of Gerontology Series B-Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, 59B*(5), S251-S257.

Ironmonger, D. (2000). Measuring volunteering in economic terms. In J. Warburton & M. Oppenheimer (Eds.), *Volunteers and volunteering* (pp. 56-72). Sydney: Federation Press.

Keith, P. M. (2003). Interests and skills of volunteers in an ombudsman program: Opportunities for participation. *International Journal of Aging & Human Development, 57*(1), 1-20.

Kerr, L., & Tedmandson, D. (2003). "Active citizenship", social capital and diversity: When volunteering falls "outside the square." *Australian Journal on Volunteering, 8*(1), 23-32.

Li, Y., & Ferraro, K. F. (2005). Volunteering and depression in later life: Social benefit or selection processes? *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 46*(1), 68-84.

Lum, T. Y., & Lightfoot, E. (2005). The effects of volunteering on the physical and mental health of older people. *Research on Aging, 27*(1), 31-55.

Maner, J. K., Luce, C. L., Neuberg, S. L., Cialdini, R. B., Brown, S., & Sagarin, B. J. (2002). The effects of perspective taking on motivations for helping: Still no evidence for altruism. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 28*(11), 1601-1610.

McDonald, C., & Warburton, J. (2001). The invisibility of volunteers and the need for research: An Australian perspective. *Voluntary Action, 4,* 49-64.

McQueen, A., & Klein, W. M. P. (2006). Experimental manipulations of self-affirmation: A systematic review. *Self and Identity, 5*, 289 – 354.

Mjelde-Mossey, L. A., Chi, I., & Chow, N. (2002). Volunteering in the social services: Preferences, expectations, barriers, and motivation of aging Chinese professionals in Hong Kong. *Hallym International Journal of Aging, 4*(1), 31-44.

Musick, M. A., & Wilson, J. (2003). Volunteering and depression: The role of psychological and social resources in different age groups. *Social Science & Medicine, 56*(2), 259-269.

Narushima, M. (2005). 'Payback time': community volunteering among older adults as a transformative mechanism. *Ageing and Society, 25*(4), 567-84.

Okun, M. A., Barr, A., & Herzog, A. R. (1998). Motivation to volunteer by older adults: A test of competing measurement models. *Psychology and Aging, 13*(4), 608-621.

Okun, M. A., & Schultz, A. (2003). Age and motives for volunteering: Testing hypotheses derived from socioemotional selectivity theory. *Psychology and Aging, 18*(2), 231-239.

Omoto, A. M., Snyder, M., & Martino, S. C. (2000). Volunteerism and the life course: Investigating age-related agendas for action. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 22*(3), 181-197.

Onyx, J., & Warburton, J. (2003). Volunteering and health among older people: A review. *Australasian Journal on Ageing, 22*(2), 65-69.

Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures (2002). *New face of retirement: an ongoing survey of American attitudes on aging.* San Francisco: Civic Ventures.

Peters-Davis, N. D., Burant, C. J., & Braunschweig, H. M. (2001). Factors associated with volunteer behavior among community dwelling older persons. *Activities, Adaptation and Aging, 26*(2), 29-44.

Petriwskyj, A. M., & Warburton, J. (2007). Redefining volunteering for the global context: A measurement matrix for researchers. *Australian Journal on Volunteering, 12*(1), 7-13.

Salamon, L. M., & Anheier, H. K. (1998). Social origins of civil society: Explaining the nonprofit sector cross-nationally. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 9*, 213-248.

Sauer, J. H., AARP Knowledge Management, & FGI Inc. (2002). *Volunteerism: A survey of New York AARP members.* Washington, D.C.: AARP, Knowledge Management.

Sauer, J. H., FGI Inc., & AARP Knowledge Management State Member Research (2001). *AARP 2001 Delaware member survey: Volunteerism.* Washington, D.C.: AARP, Knowledge Management.

Silberman, S. L., Burton, C., & AARP Knowledge Management (2004). *2004 AARP South Dakota member survey: Volunteerism.* Washington, D.C.: AARP, Knowledge Management.

Soupourmas, F., & Ironmonger, D. (2002). *Giving time: the economic and social value of volunteering in Victoria.* Victoria, Melbourne: Department of Human Services.

Tschirhart, M. (1998). Understanding the older stipended volunteer: Age-related differences among AmeriCorps members. *Public Productivity & Management Review, 22*(1), 35-48.

United Nations General Assembly (2001). *Support for volunteering: Report of the Secretary-General.* New York: The United Nations.

van Willigen, M. (2000). Differential benefits of volunteering across the life course. *Journal of Gerontology Social Sciences, 55B*(5), S308-S318.

Warburton, J. (2006). A feeling of worth: The relationship between volunteering and health in later life. *Voluntary Action, 8*(2), 3-15.

Warburton, J., & Dyer, M. (2004). Older volunteers participating in a university research registry: Helping others my age. *Educational Gerontology, 30*(5), 367-381.

Warburton, J., Le Brocque, R., & Rosenman, L. (1998). Older people-the reserve army of volunteers? An analysis of volunteerism among older Australians. *International Journal of Aging & Human Development, 46*(3), 229-245.

Warburton, J., & Terry, D. J. 2000, Volunteer decision making by older people: a test of a revised theory of planned behavior. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 22*(3), 245-257.

Warburton, J., Terry, D. J., Rosenman, L. S., & Shapiro, M. (2001). Differences between older volunteers and nonvolunteers: Attitudinal, normative, and control beliefs. *Research on Aging, 23*(5), 586-605.

About the Authors

Andrea M. Petriwskyj is a Ph.D. candidate at the Australasian Centre on Ageing (ACA), The University of Queensland. Andrea holds an undergraduate honours degree in Psychological Science, and is currently completing a doctoral degree in policy and engagement of older people. Her research interests include policy issues for older people, social and political participation by older people, and community engagement.

Dr. Jeni Warburton is a Senior Research Fellow at the ACA and a Senior Lecturer at the University of Queensland. Her main research interests focus on volunteering and community,

particularly relating to older people and their contribution to society, as well as social policy issues relating to an ageing society.

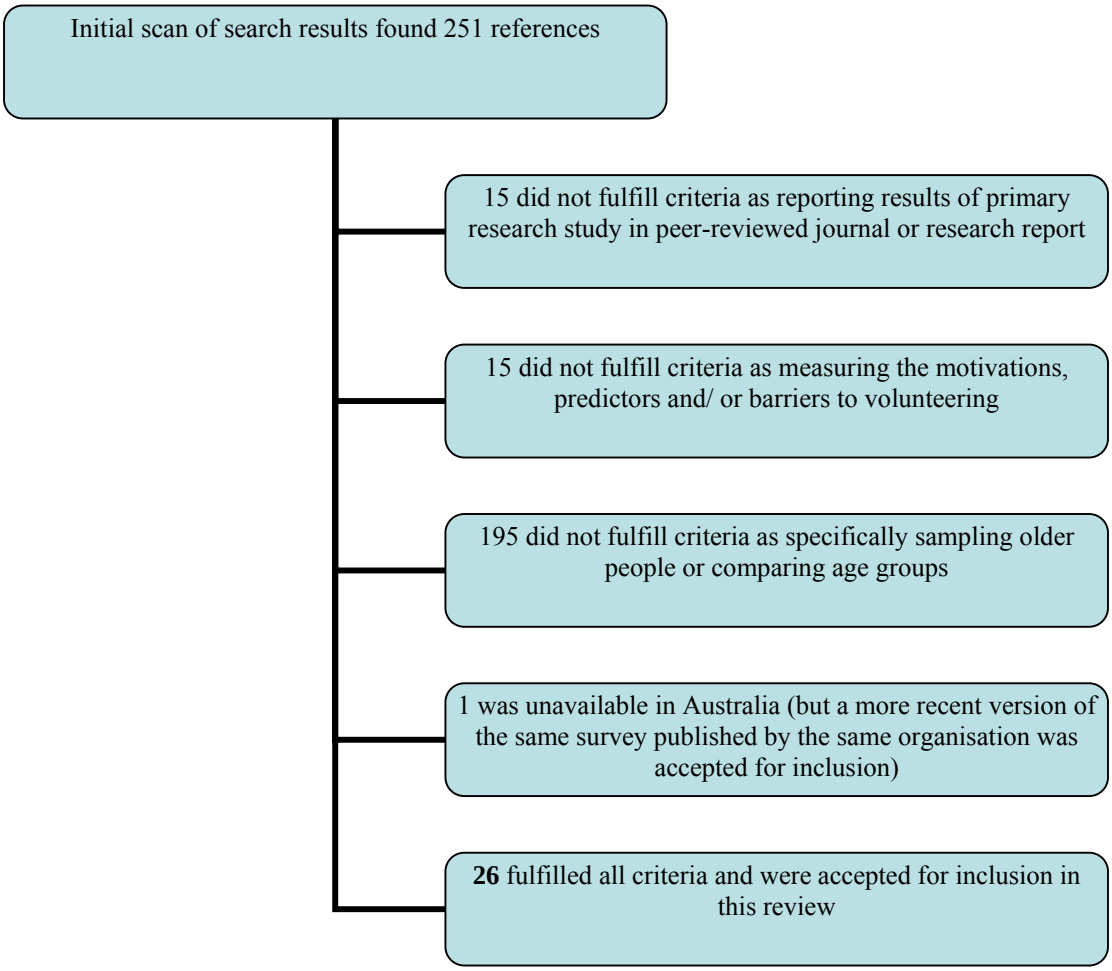

Figure 1. *Flowchart of sample selection*

Table 1. *Common Motivations and Perceived Barriers Reported in the Literature*

Concept Investigated	Studies Reporting Findings	Data Sources
Motivations		
Helping motivation/ helping values/ VFI values scale	▪ Mjelde-Mossey, Chi & Chow, 2002	Questionnaire
	▪ Tschirhart, 1998	Questionnaire
	▪ Fisher, Day & Collier, 1998	Interview using closed-and open-ended questions
	▪ Bowen, Andersen & Urban, 2000	Computer-assisted telephone interview including VFI
	▪ Burr, Choi, Mutchler & Caro, 2005	Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House 1995)
	▪ Warburton, Terry, Rosenman & Shapiro, 2001	Questionnaire and telephone survey
	▪ Barlow & Hainsworth 2001	Semi-structured telephone interviews
	▪ Black & Kovacs 1999	Survey adapted from a rape crisis volunteer survey (Black & DiNitto, 1994)
	▪ Chou, Chow & Chi, 2003	Survey run by Department of census, face-to-face interview
	▪ Sauer, AARP Knowledge Management and FGI Inc, 2002	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Sauer, FGI Inc & AARP Knowledge Management, 2001	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Silberman, Burton & AARP Knowledge Management, 2004	AARP volunteerism survey
Social motivation/ VFI social scale	▪ Warburton & Dyer, 2004	Questionnaire developed from qualitative phase
	▪ Fisher et al., 1998	Interview using closed-and open-ended questions
	▪ Bowen et al., 2000	Computer-assisted telephone interview including VFI
	▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002	
	▪ Warburton et al., 2001	Questionnaire

Concept Investigated	Studies Reporting Findings	Data Sources
	▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001	Questionnaire and telephone survey
	▪ Okun & Schultz, 2003	Semi-structured telephone interviews
	▪ Sauer et al., 2002	Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) (Clary & Snyder, 1991)
	▪ Sauer et al., 2001	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Silberman et al., 2004	AARP volunteerism survey
Generativity/ Contribution to community or society	▪ Warburton & Dyer, 2004	Questionnaire developed from qualitative phase
	▪ Keith, 2003	Volunteer application form and mail questionnaire
	▪ Sauer et al., 2001	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Sauer et al., 2002	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Silberman et al., 2004	Face-to-face interviews
	▪ Narushima, 2005	Interview survey
	▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002	
Use or contribute skills or knowledge	▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002	Questionnaire
	▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001	Semi-structured telephone interviews
	▪ Black & Kovacs, 1999	Survey adapted from a rape crisis volunteer survey (Black & DiNitto, 1994)
	▪ Sauer et al., 2002	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Sauer et al., 2001	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Silberman et al., 2004	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Narushima, 2005	Face-to-face interviews
	▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002	Interview survey

Concept Investigated	Studies Reporting Findings	Data Sources
Learn or develop skills/ intellectual stimulation/ VFI understanding scale	▪ Warburton & Dyer, 2004	Questionnaire developed from qualitative phase
	▪ Okun et al., 1998	VFI
	▪ Bowen et al., 2000	Computer-assisted telephone interview including VFI
	▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001	Semi-structured telephone interviews
	▪ Sauer et al., 2002	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Sauer et al., 2001	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Silberman et al., 2004	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Narushima, 2005	Face-to-face interviews
	▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002	Interview survey
Feel good/ Feel needed/ VFI Enhancement/ Esteem scale	▪ Bowen et al., 2000	Computer-assisted telephone interview including VFI
	▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002	Interview survey
	▪ Tschirhart, 1998	Questionnaire
	▪ Okun et al., 1998	VFI
Barriers/ costs		
Health problems	▪ Li & Ferraro, 2005	Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House 1995)
	▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002	Interview survey
	▪ Silberman et al., 2004	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Sauer et al., 2002	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Sauer et al., 2001	AARP volunteerism survey

Concept Investigated	Studies Reporting Findings	Data Sources
Age	▪ Li & Ferraro, 2005	Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House 1995)
	▪ Warburton et al., 2001	Questionnaire and telephone survey
Perceived lack of ability/ lack of confidence/ feelings of vulnerability	▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001	Semi-structured telephone interviews
Communication difficulties	▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001	Semi-structured telephone interviews
Unwillingness to be tied down	▪ Warburton et al., 2001	Questionnaire and telephone survey
Prefer other activities	▪ Warburton et al., 2001	Questionnaire and telephone survey
Lack of time	▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002	Questionnaire
	▪ Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002	Interview survey
	▪ Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001	Semi-structured telephone interviews
Family obligations	▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002	Questionnaire
Full schedule	▪ Sauer et al., 2001	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Silberman et al., 2004	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Sauer et al., 2002	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	AARP volunteerism survey
Work commitments/ preference for paid work/ commitment to 'more important' work	▪ Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002	Questionnaire
	▪ Chou et al., 2003	Survey run by Department of census, face-to-face interview
	▪ Silberman et al., 2004	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	AARP volunteerism survey
	▪ Sauer et al., 2001	AARP volunteerism survey

Table 2. *Methodologies Reported in the Literature*

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
Burr et al., 2005	▪ General	▪ N = 1,615 ▪ Mean age 64.3 ▪ 56.7% female; 87.2% white; 66.8% married ▪ 38.4% volunteers for a religious or secular organisation	▪ Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House, 1995)
Li & Ferraro, 2005	▪ General	▪ N = 959 ▪ Age range 60-96 For complete data: ▪ Mean age = 67.57 ▪ 71% female; 24% black; 60% married	▪ Data from the Americans' Changing Lives Survey (House, 1995)
Warburton & Dyer, 2004	▪ Membership of a research registry	▪ N = 260 ▪ 63% female; 37% male ▪ Age range 50 to 90, mean age 65 years.	▪ Purpose-built closed-ended questionnaire developed from and in-depth qualitative phase
Mjelde-Mossey et al., 2002	▪ General	▪ Hong Kong sample ▪ N = 438 ▪ 36.3% retired; 78% married ▪ 51.6% with university degree or above ▪ 68.7% over 50; 50.2% female ▪ For this section of the survey, N = 190 experienced volunteers	▪ Closed-ended, multiple-choice questionnaire
Warburton et al., 2001	▪ General (formal)	▪ N = 238 ▪ Australian ▪ Age range 65-74 ▪ 52% female; 76% married/cohabiting ▪ 47% volunteered in past month	▪ Questionnaires and telephone survey

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001	▪ Trainee lay leaders on an arthritis self-management program	▪ N = 22 ▪ Arthritis sufferers ▪ Mean age = 57.9 ▪ Members of the 'Challenging Arthritis' course	▪ Semi-structured telephone interviews
Okun et al., 1998	▪ RSVP = Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, heterogeneous settings; ▪ SMHSI Scottsdale Memorial Health Systems Incorporated, health care settings.	▪ Two samples ▪ N = 409 over 50s ▪ Scottsdale Memorial Health Systems Incorporated (SMHSI) ▪ 70% female; 98% white ▪ 40% aged 69 or younger ▪ N = 372 over 55s ▪ Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) ▪ 75% female; 98% white ▪ 49% aged 69 or younger	▪ VFI (Clary & Snyder, 1991)
Ferrari et al., 1999	▪ Animal and human homeless shelters	▪ N = 34 younger (mean age = 18.5 years) ▪ N = 70 older (mean age 54.9 years) ▪ 71.2% Caucasian ▪ 79.8% female	▪ VFI (Clary et al., 1992 ▪ Caregiver scale (Ferrari et al., 1993) ▪ Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960)
Omoto et al., 2000	▪ Hospice	▪ N = 144 ▪ Age range 19-76 ▪ Mean age = 49.86 ▪ Grouped into 3 categories: younger (aged 19-39); middle (aged 40-54); older (aged 55-76)	▪ Closed-ended questionnaire adapted from the AIDS volunteer scale (Omoto & Snyder, 1995)
Okun & Schultz, 2003	▪ Habitat for Humanity International (Christian housing ministry)	▪ N = 523 ▪ 53% aged 50 and over ▪ 46% female; 92% white	▪ VFI

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
		▪ 64% married	
Black & Kovacs, 1999	▪ Hospice	▪ N = 222 ▪ 78% aged 55 or over ▪ 75% female; 47% married	▪ Closed-ended survey adapted from a rape crisis volunteer survey (Black & DiNitto, 1994)
Sauer et al., 2001	▪ General	▪ Delaware ▪ AARP members ▪ 50+ ▪ 40% volunteered in last 12 months ▪ 46% female; 59% married	▪ Closed-ended survey
Dinger & AARP Knowledge Management, 2003	▪ General	▪ Maryland ▪ AARP members ▪ N = 978 ▪ Age 50+ ▪ 49% female; 53% married ▪ 78% white	▪ Closed ended survey
Warburton & Terry, 2000	▪ General	▪ Age range 65-74 ▪ Australian sample Time 1 respondents (N = 296), 151 women/145 men; 75% married ▪ 52% volunteered in last year Time 2 sample (N = 240) comprised 126 women and 114 men.	▪ Closed-ended survey and telephone survey
Sauer et al., 2002	▪ General	▪ New York AARP members ▪ N = 953 ▪ 50+ ▪ 86% white; 47% female ▪ 56% married ▪ 38% volunteered in last 12 months	▪ Closed-ended survey
Silberman et al., 2004	▪ General	▪ South Dakota AARP members ▪ Aged 50+	▪ Closed-ended survey

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
		▪ 49% female; 63% married; 97% white ▪ 49% volunteered in last 12 months	
Narushima, 2005	▪ General ▪ Nonprofit organisations	▪ Canadian ▪ N = 15 ▪ 9 women/6 men ▪ Age range 55 to 93	▪ Face-to face interviews
Chou et al., 2003	▪ General	▪ N = 1,866 ▪ Age range 45-59 ▪ 54.8% female; 86.3% married ▪ Mean age = 51.7	▪ Survey run by Department of Census, face-to-face interview
Clary et al., 1998	▪ General	▪ 2,671 Americans aged 18 or older	▪ National survey of American adults for Independent Sector (including qs from VFI)
Peters-Davis et al., 2001	▪ General	▪ N = 356 ▪ Age range 63-95 ▪ Mean age = 74 ▪ 38% volunteers ▪ 49% female; 49.4% married	▪ Telephone interview ▪ One section of the NEO-PI ▪ Self-report Altruism Scale ▪ Other self-report items
Bowen et al., 2000	▪ General	▪ N = 1,113 ▪ Mean age 63.5 years ▪ 98% white ▪ 22% lived alone ▪ 73% volunteered at some time ▪ All female	▪ Computer-assisted telephone interviews ▪ VFI
Keith, 2003	▪ Ombudsman program	▪ N = 778 ▪ Applicants for resident advocate for nursing facilities ▪ Age range 32-91 ▪ Mean age = 69 ▪ 72% did not work outside the home	▪ Application form and mail questionnaire designed by the researcher

Reference	Type of Volunteering	Sample	Measure
		▪ 76% female ▪ Grouped into younger (under 70) and older (70 and above)	
Peter D. Hart Research Associates & Civic Ventures, 2002	▪ General ▪ At least 5 hours per week ▪ Organised community activity	▪ 84% white; 57% married ▪ 45% aged 50-59, 55% 60-75 ▪ N = 600 ▪ 50% volunteers, 50% non-volunteers ▪ 52% female	▪ Interview survey
Fisher et al., 1998	▪ Senior Ambassador and Medicare Assistance Programs for St Johns Regional Health Centre in Springfield, MO	▪ N = 24 ▪ Age range 56-82 ▪ Mean age = 71.29 ▪ All white; 13 married ▪ 79% retired	▪ Interview using closed- and open-ended questions in a quantitative study using a survey
Chappell & Prince, 1997	▪ General ▪ Formal	▪ N = 7,132 ▪ All aged 45+ ▪ Demographic characteristics reported in Prince & Chappell (1994) ▪ 45.9% of 65+ were formal volunteers ▪ 48.2% of 45-64 were formal volunteers	▪ Data from the National Survey of Volunteer Activity (NSVA) ▪ Mail questionnaires, interview
Tschirhart, 1998	▪ AmeriCorps	▪ N = 1157 People entering AmeriCorps in 1995 ,6 & 7 and 866 respondents to survey after 1 year in Americorps ▪ 5% aged 50 and over	▪ Survey questionnaire ▪ Hackman & Oldham's (1980) instrument for measuring critical psychological states ▪ Perry's (1996) public service motivation scale

Culturally Responsive Practice: The Key to Engaging Latinos as Adult Volunteers

Beverly B. Hobbs, Ph.D.
Professor and 4-H Youth Development Extension Specialist
College of Education
105 Ballard Hall
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331
Tel. 541-737-1319 * FAX 541-737-1332
E-mail: beverly.hobbs@oregonstate.edu

Abstract

To successfully engage volunteers from a culturally diverse audience, volunteer administrators must adopt a culturally responsive approach, that is, one that reflects an acknowledgement, appreciation, and acceptance of the differences associated with the culture. This article presents elements of culturally responsive volunteer practice based on the Oregon 4-H program's efforts to increase the involvement of Latino adults as 4-H volunteers.

Keywords:
volunteers, Latino, Hispanic, 4-H, culture, culturally responsive

Introduction

The changing cultural make-up of the United States requires that many volunteer-based organizations reassess their current volunteer administration practices, asking the question, Do our practices continue to serve us well in face of the increasing diversity of our communities (Rodriguez, 1997; Merrill, 2006)? Over the past ten years, the Oregon 4-H program through the 4-H Oregon Outreach Project, has mounted a targeted effort to increase the involvement of Latino youth and adult volunteers in 4-H. During that time, experience demonstrated that it is critical to employ culturally responsive practices if youth participation is to be gained and if Latino adults are to be successfully recruited as 4-H volunteers.

Culturally responsive practices may be defined as those practices that reflect acknowledgement, appreciation, and acceptance of the differences presented by a culture, including differences of cultural traditions, beliefs, and values (Koss-Chioino & Vargas, 1999). It means moving beyond respect and acceptance of those differences to taking actions that capitalize on them (Klump & McNeir, 2005). In most cases this requires adjusting current practices or creating new practices.

As a result of its experience with Latino outreach, the Oregon 4-H program broadened its approach to volunteer administration to include new or modified strategies. This article is written to share elements of culturally responsive practice related to recruiting and supporting adult Latino 4-H volunteers, practices that were learned through the 4-H Oregon Outreach Project.

The 4-H Oregon Outreach Project is an effort undertaken to increase access to community-based programs for Latino youth and families and to increase the statewide capacity of 4-H to design and deliver such programs. The project began in 1997 with

Latino outreach programs in three counties, and today involves 4-H outreach programs in 13 of Oregon's 36 counties. Through local programs, Latino youth engage in 4-H clubs, camps, and after school programs in which they learn about subjects as varied as technology-based videography and pod casting, cultural dance, and stream restoration. Latino volunteers are recruited to lead many of the program activities.

Methods

At the end of its second year, the 4-H Oregon Outreach Project found that while its Latino youth membership had grown significantly, it had much less success in recruiting Latino adults as 4-H volunteers. It was apparent that a different approach to recruiting Latino volunteers was needed. Turning to the literature on volunteerism, little was found on this topic. Thus it was decided that an exploratory research study (Marshall & Rossman, 1995) was needed to provide the understanding that was required to better design volunteer recruitment practices.

This article reports the findings of a study based on focus groups conducted in 1999 and also provides examples of subsequent experience drawn from the 4-H Oregon Outreach Project in reference to those findings. The focus group study was conducted by the 4-H Oregon Outreach Project to learn more about the Latino culture as it relates to volunteerism and to identify practices that would encourage Latino adults to become volunteers in community-based organizations. A total of eighteen adults with experience in recruiting and working with Latino adult volunteers participated in three focus groups. Thirteen of the participants were Latino and five were Anglo. Sixteen were female, and two were male. Four key questions were used with the focus groups:

- How do Latino adults volunteer within their cultural community?
- What motivates Latino adults to volunteer?
- What factors hinder participation of Latino adults as volunteers in the greater community?
- What steps might mainstream organizations take to encourage the involvement of Latino adults as volunteers?

The focus group discussions were audio-taped and transcribed. The analysis and interpretation of the data proceeded inductively using a content analysis strategy whereby the data were organized and scrutinized through the development of a coding scheme and data displays (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Initially 20 patterns or themes were identified from the data. These were later subsumed into eight over riding themes. Conclusions were drawn and verified based on a preponderance of evidence.

The 1999 study provided a framework to guide the Project's work with current and potential Latino volunteers. Examples of how the findings were applied are included in the findings section to illustrate their impact on subsequent field practice.

It is important to note that the 4-H Oregon Outreach Project largely works with Latinos of the first or second generation whose country of origin is Mexico. Although much of the information shared here would be applicable in many Latino communities, the great variability that exists within any particular population, including Latinos, must be recognized. Knowing the community well is critical to choosing strategies for engaging Latino adults.

Findings

Helper vs Volunteer

The word *helper* as opposed to *volunteer* is more meaningful to the Latino audience. Describing the need for volunteers in a personal manner motivates participation. The focus groups revealed that the definition of volunteerism in Latin America, as in many other regions of the world, differs from that found in the United States. Traditionally in Latin America, it has referred to work carried out by churches or wealthy individuals, particularly women, on behalf of the poor. Latinos coming to the United States, who are often poor, do not see themselves as volunteers. Additionally, in the United States Latinos associate volunteers with mainstream organizations with which they have little or no connection. Thus being a volunteer isn't within the realm of the Latino experience.

What is characteristic of the Latino community is *helping*, first within the family and then within the church and the Latino community. One focus group member remarked, "Helping isn't so much a thing to do … as it is, that's how we do it." Helping and caring occur spontaneously as needs arise. Whether it's giving time, money, or other resources, Latinos willingly volunteer to help family, friends, and other community members. Focus group participants recommended that outreach staff ask for helpers rather than volunteers.

Field staff also found it effective to describe the need for help through personal stories. When a group of Latino adults were asked to provide comment on a recruitment brochure written in the form of a novella, one woman responded, "This is my story. How did you know this?" Putting a face to an issue resonates with Latino audiences.

Connecting with the Community

The development of personal relationships and the establishment of trust are the foundation of work with Latino communities. Throughout the focus groups' conversations, participants emphasized the importance of personal relationships and trust within the Latino community. They identified them as the foundation for everything that happens. Additionally they made the point that to establish a presence and build trust requires time and an unobtrusive, respectful approach. Strategies suggested by the focus groups and used by outreach staff to facilitate the process included the following.

- Be seen in the community (in restaurants, shops) and participate in events.
- Spend time learning about the community and the individuals within, understand the differences that exist and the cultural context.
- Enlist the support of elders, other community leaders (informal as well as formal), and community organizations that are respected by Latinos.
- Demonstrate respect for the Latino culture at all times.
- Be patient. Building relationships takes time and is an ongoing process.

While staff learned about the community, community members also learned about the staff and the organization. Latinos, like other potential volunteers, were found to want a volunteer experience that would help advance their children, the community in general, or their own skills. Education was one area of great concern within the community, and thus the educational opportunities presented by 4-H were emphasized by staff.

Talking about the organization's long-term commitment to the community was also very important. Focus group participants noted that many people have had the experience of placing trust in a program, only to have the program abruptly

end. They warned that potential volunteers may demonstrate a reluctance to accept a new program without the reassurance of a long-term commitment. Staff made certain to underscore the history of 4-H in local communities and the program's commitment to a long-term relationship with the Latino community.

Choosing Outreach Staff

The most important attribute of outreach staff is the ability to relate to and be accepted by the Latino audience. Project experience demonstrated that the most important characteristic of outreach personnel is that they be able to relate to the audience and earn the trust of the people they seek to engage. Additionally bilingual and bicultural skills were also seen as critical. Less important, however, was whether or not staff members were Latino. The project experienced Latino staff who were not successful and non-Latinos who were successful in being accepted by the Latino community. What made the difference was how well staff members were able to relate to the people.

Inviting Participation (Recruitment)

Successful recruitment of Latino volunteers depends on using strategies that take into account cultural characteristics, and provide information and support on an individual basis as needed. An important insight provided by the focus groups was the importance of inviting people to volunteer rather than simply announcing volunteers were needed. Inviting reflects a more personal approach; one that suggests the person is individually being hosted. Other recruitment strategies offered by the focus groups included the following.

- Extend personal invitations to volunteer through visits or phone calls. This may be done directly by the organization or with the help of partners who have close ties with the Latino community. Project staff found most volunteers were recruited through personal visits. Flyers, posters, and other print information were used to supplement personal invitations, but they did not replace them.
- Utilize Spanish radio to issue invitations. It is very popular medium, one that conveys a certain amount of credibility to the information broadcasted. Although it was not as successful a strategy as personal visits, Spanish radio was successful in attracting a few volunteers.
- If a meeting is held for potential volunteers, expect the whole family to attend. Latinos are family oriented and often attend functions as a group. Outreach staff learned to prepare for family attendance, providing activities for children while parents attended a meeting. Staff also found it important that the male head of the household attend informational/recruitment meetings, as his endorsement was often needed if female family members were to become involved.
- Choose meeting spaces that are familiar to the people and where all will be comfortable. Don't assume, for instance, that the Catholic Church is the church all attend. Cultural centers and schools were most often used by project staff for community meetings.
- Make meetings social events. Social interaction is important within the Latino community. Allow time for people to visit. Offer beverages and/or food, music, and door prizes if funds allow.

- Be prepared to deliver information in Spanish if the people are Spanish speakers. Spanish-only speakers will participate more actively in a meeting conducted in Spanish rather than translated into Spanish. Those who are bilingual will appreciate the use of Spanish as an acknowledgement of their culture. There were times when project activities required that communication occur through English-Spanish translation. Although more time consuming and cumbersome, it did work to convey information.
- Talk to potential volunteers about how their skills and talents will make a difference in the community. Most Latinos are quite modest and feel they have nothing to offer as a volunteer, but upon discussion they can be helped to identify their talents and ways they can contribute. Staff worked individually with adults to learn of their interests and skills and to show them how they could make a valuable contribution.
- Initially recruit for short-term assignments. Within the Latino community, help is usually offered in response to immediate needs. Short-term assistance is a familiar pattern. Also, rather than wait for someone to step forward and volunteer, go to people and ask them directly to carry out a particular task.
- Simplify paperwork and explain why it is needed, who will read it, and how the information will be used. Many Latinos are unfamiliar with and intimidated by filling out forms. Staff found it helpful to go through the forms with volunteers, having them complete the forms section by section.
- Don't become discouraged by limited response. Keep asking. All focus group participants and outreach project staff struggled to recruit Latino adult volunteers.

Supporting Volunteers

As with strategies for recruitment, focus groups noted that the support provided to volunteers must take into account their daily life experience and the influence of culture. They stressed that organizations must take steps to make the environment welcoming, to address personal needs that might keep the volunteers from carrying out their responsibilities, and to help volunteers gain any needed knowledge and skills. Specifically they recommended the following steps.

To create a welcoming environment:

- Be sure to greet volunteers when they arrive to help and thank them when they depart. Find time to visit with volunteers on a regular basis. This is especially important for volunteers working independently. Continue to build and reinforce personal relationships through social interaction.
- Offer food, even if it is only a beverage, at all meetings. Extending hospitality increases the volunteers' feelings of acceptance.
- Create a multi-cultural office/program environment by displaying a mix of artifacts, posters, and written language. Someone who speaks Spanish always should be available to talk with Spanish speakers. Extension 4-H offices struggled with the latter. If front office personnel were not fluent in Spanish, most offices had one or more persons trained to tell the caller/visitor in Spanish how to reach outreach staff.

- Review program policies and practices to identify any that might discourage Latino participation. For instance, Latino culture stresses cooperative rather than independent work styles. Are there opportunities to volunteer as part of a team? Make any needed changes and inform all current volunteers of the changes and why they are being made.

To help with personal challenges:

- Be prepared to provide child care as needed. Parents usually prefer to bring their children with them wherever they go. 4-H activities for children, held concurrently with volunteer meetings, was one way programs addressed child care needs.
- Be prepared to help with transportation. Many families have only one car, and it may not be available when the volunteer needs it. Programs arranged car pools or had staff pick up participants as ways to overcome transportation barriers.
- Avoid out-of-pocket expenses. Many families struggle economically.
- Take into consideration work schedules when planning meetings for volunteers and scheduling volunteer hours. Often adults work long hours with little flexibility for schedule changes. Indeed, project staff reported the need to work as a major barrier for those who wanted to volunteer.

To improve skills:

- Provide quality training that builds on the knowledge and experience of volunteers. Be specific about what volunteers are asked to do and how to do it. Recognize that many prefer to learn through listening, demonstration, and group interaction rather than by reading handouts. Most project staff found it best to provide separate training for those volunteers who had limited English language skills, low literacy levels, or a minimal understanding of the organization and its programs. Providing a separate training offered protected space for volunteers to gain knowledge and skills and encouraged them to persist.
- Consider a mentoring approach to training. Staff found that initially adults readily agreed to help, but many actually followed through only if the person perceived as *in charge* was present. A mentoring approach between a staff member and a volunteer was one way staff helped volunteers build confidence in their skills and ability to work with youth independent of staff.
- Involve volunteers in planning as well as carrying out plans. The experience will build additional skills and help them feel part of the organizational team. Also, it was observed by staff that in instances where volunteers came up with an idea or a plan for an activity, they went on to mobilize additional support in the community. As a result, far more people turned out to volunteer than would have otherwise.

Recognizing Volunteers

Some typical recognition strategies may not be the most appropriate for Latino volunteers. Volunteer recognition is an essential component of good volunteer administration practice, and it can be carried out in many ways. One focus group member pointed out that for some Latinos, individual recognition in front of a large group would create an awkward situation. In the Mexican

culture people tend to be quite modest and want to minimize individual attention. She recommended that before choosing this option, staff members ask the volunteers if they will be comfortable before a large group. Otherwise, many less dramatic ways can convey heartfelt thanks. Project sites provided framed certificates or plaques and found ways to convey thanks in day-to-day interactions. Small celebrations for volunteers and their families (picnic, camping trip) were especially meaningful. Other forms of recognition cited by focus group participants included providing opportunities for additional training and moving a volunteer to a position of greater responsibility.

Discussion and Implications

Latino adults are a significant source of potential volunteers in a time when the Latino population is increasing rapidly and in a time when it is a constant challenge to find volunteers generally. To tap this resource, organizations need to critically assess their current volunteer practices and make adjustments to create an inviting environment, one that reflects the cultural background and experience of Latino adults. The findings presented above detail some of the specific strategies that may be used in recruiting and supporting Latino volunteers. They also suggest three topics that need consideration before recruitment begins: the amount of time needed to recruit Latino adult volunteers, the cultural competency of staff who will recruit and support Latino volunteers, and ways the organization can create a supportive organizational environment for the new volunteers.

Time Commitment

The organization must make a long-term commitment to Latino outreach. The relationships and trust that need to be developed before Latinos will engage with the organization cannot be hurried. Rather, they require time for potential volunteers to get to know staff, to understand the goals of the organization, and to learn what difference a volunteer's efforts will make. Latino adults must also be convinced that the organization intends to have a presence in the Latino community for the long term. Initially, recruitment may go very slowly, but over time with consistent effort, the Latino volunteer base will build.

Staff Competency

The focus groups and project experience identified bilingual and bicultural skills as key characteristics of staff working to recruit and support Latino volunteers. An additional benefit is generated if staff are members of the local Latino community. Above all else, the ability of staff to relate to Latino adults and be accepted by them is critical. When deciding to target Latino adults as volunteers, the organization must assess the competency of existing staff to do so. If the needed competencies are lacking, training should be made available or additional staff hired.

When hiring for Latino outreach, include the voice of the local Latino community in the selection process. To invite applications for the position, networks that provide access to the Latino community must be used. These include Spanish language newspapers, Spanish radio, and talking with community leaders and with organizations that serve the Latino community. Often candidates are best reached by word of mouth.

Supportive Environment

Just as recruiting Latino volunteers requires an understanding of the Latino culture and the local Latino community and

a willingness to reflect that understanding in practice, so does retaining the involvement of volunteers. Volunteers will not persist if they do not feel comfortable. Organizations must look at current practices in light of what we know about creating supportive environments for Latinos and take quick action as needed. One area that should not be overlooked is helping non-Latino volunteers to understand any organizational changes in policies and practices that are made and the reasons for them. If the organization has a long tradition of standard practices, changes can be difficult for current volunteers to willingly accept (Schauber & Castania, 2001), spurring resentment of newcomers for whom the changes are made.

Generalization of Findings

Throughout this article the information shared has been based on research and experience with Latinos whose country of origin is predominantly Mexico and who are of first or second generations. While this information may be used with Latinos of different origins, generalization of the findings should always be considered in light of the specific information known about an individual or group.

Conclusions

Gaining the participation of Latino volunteers increases the overall volunteer base. In turn, it strengthens programs the organization provides, expands the audience programs reach, and provides a personal growth experience for all volunteers and staff. The success of efforts to recruit and support Latino volunteers depends on awareness of and sensitivity to the cultural differences that will be introduced and how willing the organization is to accommodate those differences. Through it all, patience is key. Building relationships with the Latino community, developing trust, and learning how to work together all take time. Progress will be incremental. The outcomes, however, justify all the hard work.

References

Klump, J., & McNeir, G. (2005). *Culturally responsive practices for student success: A regional sampler*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Koss-Chioino, J., & Vargas, L. (1999). *Working with Latino youth: Culture, development, and context.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1995). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Merrill, M. (2006). Global trends and the challenges for volunteering. *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration*, *24*(1), 14.

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Bevery Hills, CA: Sage.

Rodriguez, S. (1997). Diversity and volunteerism: Deriving advantage from difference. *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, *15*(3), 18-20.

Schauber, A., & Castania, K. (2001). Facing issues of diversity: Rebirthing the Extension Service. *Journal of Extension* [On-line], *41*(5). Retrieved August 17, 2007 from http://www.joe.org/joe/2001october/comm2.html

About the Author

Beverly B. Hobbs, Ph.D., is Professor and 4-H Youth Development Extension Specialist in the College of Education at Oregon State University. She joined the Oregon 4-H Extension faculty in 1993 and has focused her work on increasing the participation of new and underserved audiences in the 4-H program. She has provided leadership for the 4-H Oregon Outreach Project since its inception in 1997.

Using Information Technology (IT) Volunteers: A Conceptual Framework

Kieran Mathieson
Associate Professor of Information Systems
Department of Decision and Information Sciences
School of Business Administration
Oakland University
Rochester, MI 48309
Tel. 248-370-3507 * FAX 248-370-4275 * E-mail: mathieso@oakland.edu

Abstract

Volunteer organizations (VOs) offer important services the private and public sectors cannot or will not provide. VOs tend not to use information technology (IT) to the extent they could, and so don't receive the benefits it offers. This paper examines the challenges using IT volunteers creates, including limits in availability, expertise, commitment, organizational knowledge, and equipment ownership. A framework for thinking about the effectiveness of IT volunteers is presented.

Keywords:
volunteers, information technology, effectiveness, challenges

Volunteer organizations (VOs) are central to social and cultural life, offering services the private and public sectors cannot or will not provide. They define their missions not in economic terms, but by values, be they social (e. g., a hospice), cultural (e. g., a choir), educational (e. g., a literacy program), spiritual (e. g., a church), or political (e. g., a group opposing an ordinance).

Some volunteers do IT work. This can be risky for VOs (Ticher, Maison, & Jones, 2002), since IT volunteers may, for example, lack expertise, not be available when needed, and ignore important tasks like data backup. Many VOs do not have a choice, however. They use IT volunteers, or do not use IT. Many VOs do not integrate IT with their core business activities (Burt & Taylor, 1999). Further, while IT management is difficult enough for larger VOs (Peizer, 2001), smaller organizations are even less likely to use IT (Princeton Survey Research Associates, 2001). Some struggle with even basic hardware and software needs (Forster, 2003).

Little is known about IT volunteers. CompuMentor (2001) offers VO leaders guidelines for managing IT volunteers, but there is more to learn. In fact, there is almost no empirical work on IT volunteers: who they are, why they volunteer, what problems they face, what their relationship with VO leadership is like, and so on. This lack of information prevents VOs from maximizing the value of IT volunteers' time. Further, if VO leaders do not offer IT volunteers opportunities to meet their personal goals, the volunteers may leave in frustration.

Resources exist to fill this knowledge void. Management information systems (MIS) researchers study how companies use IT to achieve their goals. Topics include the use of IT to support strategic positions (Chung, Byrd, Lewis, & Ford, 2005), how business needs are translated into accurate system requirements (Teng & Sethi, 1990), and how decision support systems can help

people become more disciplined ethical decision makers (Mathieson, in press). Unfortunately, few MIS researchers, even those in public universities, have considered questions outside the private sector. Work on IT in volunteer organizations could help both VOs and MIS researchers. Empirical research on, for example, why IT personnel volunteer, could be of great value to volunteers, leaders, consultants, and others. VOs could help MIS researchers test and refine their ideas about the role of IT in organizations.

This paper offers a conceptual framework for understanding the relationships between VOs, IT volunteers, and their environments. The framework serves two purposes. First, it can help VO leaders understand IT volunteers and the constraints under which they operate. The framework is a guide to thought, identifying issues that can influence the effectiveness of IT volunteers, and, therefore, the ability of a VO to use IT to support its mission. Second, the framework identifies issues that MIS researchers could study. MIS research does not offer easy solutions to IT management problems. In fact, if there is one thing we have learned, it is that the mythical "silver bullet" is just that: mythical. However, MIS research can identify stumbling blocks to success, and suggest ways to avoid them.

The discussion proceeds as follows. First, the context in which IT volunteers operate is examined. Second, attributes of volunteers are discussed, considering such issues as why they volunteer, what they want to work on, and what constraints they face. Third, a framework is presented that helps organize questions about IT volunteering.

Volunteer Organizations (VOs)

Febbraro, Hall, and Parmegiani (1999) suggest that VOs are (1) organized, (2) private, (3) self-governing, (4) use volunteer labor, and (5) do not distribute profits. Organizations fitting this definition vary widely in resources, scale, and management expertise. While those like Habitat for Humanity are large and well-organized, many VOs are small groups working in their local neighborhoods. Small VOs typically have no IT staff (PSRA, 2001). Their budgets are limited, and they would rather spend what money they do have on their missions, not on IT.

Norms of cooperation are more prevalent among VOs than private companies (Ticher et al., 2002). Certainly there are tensions between some VOs, such as rival religious and political organizations. Brown and Kalegaonkar (2002) show how goal fragmentation among nongovernmental organizations reduces the sector's overall effectiveness. Nevertheless, cooperation is central to the basic philosophy of most VOs, while competition is central to the basic philosophy of most businesses.

Some VOs are affiliated with larger organizations. Different central organizations have different degrees of control over individual VOs. For example, individual Catholic churches and individual Unitarian Universalist churches belong to larger organizations, but Catholic churches are more constrained by their central body than are Unitarian Universalist churches.

External agents can force a VO to innovate. For example, some funders require VOs to submit reports on the services they provide to clients. This can prompt VOs to do more data gathering and reporting than they might otherwise.

Support organizations are important to many VOs, helping them do things they have difficulty with on their own. Of particular interest here are nonprofit technology assistance providers (NTAPs), organizations that help VOs use IT (McInerney, 2003). CompuMentor (http://www.compumentor.org) is an

example. Created in 1987 and based in San Francisco, CompuMentor offers a broad range of consulting and other services. Through its Web site TechSoup (http://www.techsoup.org), CompuMentor helps VOs exchange IT advice, buy discounted IT products, and find IT services.

There is some research on VOs' use of IT. Office automation (e. g., word processing) and communication (e. g., email) are common (Forster, 2003). Record keeping applications such as client management, fundraising, and volunteer tracking are also in general use (Forster, 2003). Many VOs have Web sites, using them for things like promotion, fund raising, advocacy support, and volunteer recruitment (Cukier & Middleton, 2003).

Custom database systems can have significant value for VOs (Ticher et al., 2002). However, implementing database systems that are sustainable over the long term is challenging (Duffy, 2000), requiring both technical and organizational sophistication. Further, keeping data up-to-date takes continuous effort, even as a VO's leadership and goals change.

Volunteers

Let us turn to the volunteers. First, we should consider their motivations. People volunteer so they can express values like altruism, learn new things, form relationships with others, develop job-related skills, protect their egos (e. g., avoiding guilt), and enhance their egos (e. g., boosting self-image) (Clary et al., 1998). Altruism is a particularly common motivation (Bussell & Forbes, 2002). Volunteer satisfaction depends on the match between their motives and the outcomes of their volunteering experience (Hynes & Nykiel, 2005).

Many volunteers have a limited desire to work on tasks not directly related to the goals of the VO. For example, someone working in a food bank might be more interested in packing food than entering data. This effect may be moderated by their reasons for volunteering. Someone volunteering to improve their job skills might be more willing to perform IT tasks than someone motivated by altruism. Further, while volunteers often share social norms of cooperation rather than competition, this may depend on their motives for volunteering. For example, two volunteers motivated by ego enhancement might not want to share social power.

An important difference between the private and volunteer sectors is that volunteers can refuse to follow the VO leadership's instructions with little penalty. For instance, someone might simply refuse to document a business function if that task doesn't match her motives for volunteering. People can also leave VOs at any time, taking their expertise with them. This can have dire consequences if, for example, the only person who knows an important computer password becomes disenchanted with a VO and leaves.

Most volunteers have other responsibilities besides their VO work. Even highly motivated people might only spend a few hours per week volunteering. This can lead to (1) task fragmentation, where several volunteers are needed to perform a task that, in a business, one person would handle; (2) projects taking longer to complete; and (3) slow accumulation of expertise based on experience.

Volunteers bring many different skills to VOs. In classifying skills, we can readily identify technical expertise (i.e., ability to use IT in various ways), domain expertise (e. g., accounting knowledge, project management skill, writing ability), and organizational expertise (familiarity with the VO, including its goals, procedures, and resources). We will add relationship expertise to the list, that is, the ability to

work with other people. This can strongly affect productivity (Goleman, 1995).

Of course, "expertise" is not a unified concept. For example, someone might possess the technical skills needed to create a newsletter, but not to maintain a Web site. "Expertise" is a useful abstraction for this discussion, but is too coarse- grained to predict whether a particular person has the particular technical skills needed to work on a particular project.

Finally, a volunteer with expertise, motivation, time, and equipment might not be effective if he or she has poor work habits (CompuMentor, 2001). Someone who doesn't check email, keep commitments, or document work, might be more of a liability than an asset. An IT novice who makes slow progress with unsophisticated technology can often contribute more to a VO than an unreliable expert.

Framework

The issues discussed thus far can be arranged in the framework shown in Figure 1. It shows that IT effectiveness depends on the match between a task, technology, and an IT volunteer. This notion was derived from ideas about task/system fit (Vessey, 1991; Vessey & Galletta, 1991).

IT tasks are performed in organizational environments that influence goals, available resources, and other factors. VOs exist in their own broader environments, labeled "external" in Figure 1. This includes VO groups (e. g., a national organization to which local groups belong), clients, funders, assistance organizations, and others.

Figure 1 identifies important attributes of each of the three central constructs: tasks, technology, and volunteers. IT tasks are defined by their skill requirements, time demands, and other resource needs (e. g., money). Three types of skills are listed here: organizational, domain, and relationship. They were discussed above. Important IT volunteer attributes are skills (organizational, technical, domain, and relationship), motivation source (that is, the reasons why people volunteer), motivation level, work habits, time availability, and equipment availability (IT volunteers working with small VOs may use their own equipment). Finally, technology attributes include availability (what VOs or volunteers have or can acquire), the types of tasks supported by the technology (e. g., word processors aren't particularly useful for accounting), and the skills and time required to use the technology.

Using the Framework

Issues raised by the framework are grouped into the following categories, starting at the center of the figure and moving outward:

- The volunteers themselves;
- The relationships between volunteers and tasks;
- The relationships between volunteers and technology;
- How organizational variables affect IT volunteers; and
- How VOs' external environments influence IT volunteers.

In cases where issues could fall into more than one category, the category that seemed the best fit was chosen.

Recall that this paper is concerned only with IT volunteers. The discussion omits issues that, while important, are not directly relevant to volunteering.

IT Volunteers

The reason why an IT expert volunteers is one of the most important issues VO leaders and researchers can consider. Questions include:

1. What motivates people with IT expertise to volunteer? Why do others choose not to volunteer?
2. Do psychographic variables predict

IT volunteerism (e. g., education, family background, values, and faith orientation)? Are IT experts who volunteer different from IT experts who don't? For example, do IT experts who volunteer value cooperation more than those who do not?

3. Are IT volunteers' motives and skills correlated? For example, do volunteers motivated by ego enhancement have poorer relationship skills?
4. Are IT volunteers different from volunteers without IT skills?
5. Do IT volunteers have good work habits (e. g., tracking commitments)? Can this variable be predicted? Can work habits be improved?
6. Are there typical profiles of IT volunteer expertise? Are some skills more readily available among IT volunteers than among the general population of IT experts, and vice versa?
7. How much time do IT volunteers give (i.e., availability)? What predicts availability?
8. How can a particular VO estimate the IT capabilities of its volunteers? How can it find out if important skills are missing?
9. How can a VO persuade people with IT expertise to volunteer? To keep volunteering? For example, what IT volunteer recognition programs are effective?
10. How can a VO persuade volunteers that working on IT and associated administrative tasks is a valuable contribution to the VO's goals? How can volunteers be encouraged to follow good IT practices (e. g., data backup)?
11. How can a VO persuade volunteers with limited IT expertise to develop IT skills? If volunteers agree to this goal, how can training actually occur? Would an apprenticeship model match VO norms? Would a combination of classroom training and apprenticeship be more effective than either one alone?
12. Can a VO offer people technology training in exchange for IT work? Would these people work well with true volunteers?

Let's take one of the questions above, and see how addressing it could help VOs. Consider question 10, "How can a VO persuade volunteers that working on IT and associated administrative tasks is a valuable contribution to the VO's goals?" Suppose a VO has a Web site with a request for information (RFI) form. Site visitors are invited to enter their names and addresses, and literature is mailed to them. Someone in the VO has to actually do the work of mailing literature in response to RFI requests. How VO leaders describe the task may affect volunteers' interest in doing it. If the task is presented as an administrative burden that someone "has to do," people might be reluctant to take it on, and those who do might not take it very seriously. On the other hand, VO leaders could describe the task as one that contributes to the VO's goal of informing people about their mission. Volunteers might see the task as worthwhile, and complete it more assiduously.

Tasks and IT Volunteers

Besides volunteers themselves, there are questions about how the attributes of volunteers and tasks interact.

13. What tasks do IT volunteers perform? Are there some they prefer more than others? Are

people with different attributes (e. g., different motivation types) more willing to perform some tasks than others? Can tasks be changed to be more attractive?

14. Are volunteers more successful at some tasks than others? CompuMentor (2001) lists tasks they believe are suited to volunteers.
15. What skills do various tasks (e.g., maintaining a Web site) require of IT volunteers?
16. How should IT volunteers' time be allocated across tasks?
17. Some IT volunteers work only a few hours per month, so tasks must be broken into small pieces and distributed to several volunteers. What issues does this introduce?
18. How can tasks be designed to reduce the need for skills few IT volunteers possess?
19. CompuMentor (2001) suggests that IT volunteers are best used for well-defined, short-term tasks that are not urgent. What should a VO do if it has tasks that do not fit these criteria, and it cannot afford to hire professionals?

Again, let's take one of the questions, and see how it might affect practice. This time we'll take question 14. Perhaps a given IT task could be partitioned to better appeal to people with various goals. Consider, for example, the task of maintaining a Web site. A socially-motivated volunteer might be more interested in talking to other people about new content, rather than the technical work of changing HTML code (the computer language in which Web pages are expressed). A technically-motivated volunteer might be more interested in the underlying system. So, rather than hand-coding the Web site, a task which mixes content and technical tasks, perhaps the VO should use a content management system (CMS). A CMS is a Web site management tool that separates the task of maintaining content from that of maintaining the technical artifacts (templates, menus, etc.) in which the content is embedded. Each volunteer works on what he or she likes best. The final result may be a Web site that is both technically capable and filled with high-quality content.

IT Volunteers and Technology

The following questions are about the interaction between IT volunteers and aspects of technology.

20. Software tends to be written for commercial environments. Vendors might make assumptions about, for example, the availability and motivation of IT staff. Do these assumptions hold for VOs and their IT volunteers?
21. The technical expertise available to a VO changes over time as volunteers enter and leave the organization. Are some technologies less vulnerable to these changes than others?
22. Do the technologies VOs are using, or want to use, match what their IT volunteers know? What happens when they don't?
23. Ticher et al. (2002) suggest that some VOs have poor IT security practices. What is the extent of the problem? What role do IT volunteers have in both creating and ameliorating security issues?

Consider question 21. Suppose a software company builds an information system that records potentially sensitive financial information about people. The application will have a permission system to

limit the number of users who have access to the data. When the software is used in a business with fulltime employees, only one or two people might be needed to maintain the data. Permissions can be relatively coarse in this case. For example, there might just be two permission levels: data access (users can access all data but not change any of it) and data update (users can access and change all data).

The situation might be different when a VO tries to use the same software. Since volunteers have limited time to give, data maintenance tasks might be divided up into small pieces and distributed across volunteers. The software would need a fine-grained permission system, where users are given access only to the data they need to do their small parts of the total job. The two-level permission system described above would be inadequate. Instead, the application might need, say, ten permission levels, giving access and update permissions to different parts of the overall data set.

VOs and IT Volunteers

IT volunteers work within a VO, which they influence and are influenced by. What are some of the organizational issues that affect IT volunteers?

24. Are IT experts drawn to some VOs more than others? Which ones? Why?
25. What do particular VO strategies and tactics demand of IT volunteers?
26. What frustrations do IT volunteers have with VO leadership, and vice versa?
27. What do IT volunteers think about the organizational cultures of their VOs?
28. How should VOs track IT volunteers? What performance variables should they measure? How do IT volunteers react to measurement?
29. How often do IT volunteers become VO leaders? What happens when that occurs?
30. Do VO leaders budget for IT volunteer training?
31. Can VO leaders predict when an important IT volunteer is thinking of leaving? What can be done to preserve important information?

Consider question 27, "What frustrations do IT volunteers have with VO leadership, and vice versa?" MIS researchers have known for some time that managers' willingness to participate in and even lead IT projects affects the chances of project success (Franz & Robey, 1986). Ideally, the people with the best understanding of the business process to be supported should define system goals, with IT experts as consultants. Unfortunately, managers often say to IT personnel, "You're the technology experts. You build the system." This is a recipe for failure. It is just as unreasonable to expect IT personnel to become marketing experts as it is to expect marketing personnel to become IT experts.

The same, no doubt, applies in VOs. Suppose a VO is building a Web site, the main goal being to attract new members. The project leader should be the most senior person in charge of membership issues, (e.g., the board's membership coordinator). Whether that person knows much about Web sites is less relevant than the fact that (1) the project leader knows about membership, and (2) the project leader has the organizational authority to, for example, ensure that the site's content is updated with new membership information. IT people can handle the technology, but technology that does not serve VO goals is useless.

The VO External Environment and IT Volunteers

32. NTAPs could help VO leaders learn about the possibilities IT provides, as well as predict and overcome the problems that inevitably attend IT projects (Ticher et al., 2002). What do VO leaders need to know? How should this information be communicated?
33. What IT tasks should NTAPs help VOs with? What should they avoid?
34. Suppose an NTAP worked with open source developers to create software to serve many VOs. What skills would be needed to administer and use it? How many IT volunteers would have those skills? Could some of the tasks be taken over by the NTAP?
35. Could NTAPs partner with, for example, universities to offer training in various locations?
36. How can NTAPs attract and keep volunteers of their own? Some firms allow employees time off work to volunteer (Bussell & Forbes, 2002). Would companies offer IT expertise to NTAPs?
37. Can NTAPs and/or VOs trade volunteer time? For example, one VO might help another with system administration, in return for accounting advice.
38. How do funders influence VOs' need for IT skills? How do VOs react?
39. Can funders help VOs acquire the skills they need to, for example, comply with reporting requirements? Should funders partner with NTAPs that already have support resources in place?

One of the most intriguing possibilities for VO IT is the continuing development of sector-wide cooperative institutions. There are some already, like techsoup.org, but more could be done. For example, imagine an NTAP that offers free Web server space, CMS software, and consulting to any sexual abuse support VO in North America. A few experts with basic funding could build a capable technical infrastructure supporting hundreds of VOs from Halifax to Mexico City. The cooperative norms of VOs make this possible.

Conclusions

Ticher et al. (2002) recommended against using volunteers for IT work (and for good reason). However, many VOs have no choice. They either use volunteers, or do not use IT.

VOs have a potential advantage over commercial firms: their norms of organizational cooperation. Groups of VOs and NTAPs may be able to create IT support structures that are not feasible in the private sector. For example, suppose a volunteer at a local library worked on cross-referencing literature on ethical decision making. He or she might store the information in a database system created by an open source software team. The team might have been organized by an NTAP, and its infrastructure needs underwritten by a foundation. The library volunteer's output could be available to other VOs around the world. Volunteer, VO, software team, NTAP, foundation: a loose federation able to do significant work.

MIS researchers could help. They are in a unique position, possessing both the technical skill and organizational insight needed to help VOs. They could be important contributors to the design of nontraditional IT support structures. However, this will not happen unless VO leaders and MIS researchers start building relationships with each other.

One can imagine two different ways VO leaders can think about IT problems. Some leaders, probably most, will consider only the immediate goals of their own organizations. Their interest is limited to today's need to create a Web site, build a donor database, etc. There is nothing wrong with this, of course. However, there will be little accumulation of knowledge. The next VO needing a donor database will face the same challenges, as will the next, and the next.

Hopefully, a few VO leaders will take a different approach, building long-term relationships with funders, technology companies, MIS researchers, and others. Perhaps they will be NTAP leaders with a broad vision that extends beyond today's problems to tomorrow's solutions. Eventually, the next VO that needs a donor database will find that a standard package with software, server space, training, and consulting help is already available. The VO can focus on its mission, knowing that a loosely-coupled, sector-wide IT support structure is clearing away some of the obstacles in its path.

References

Brown, L. D., & Kalegaonkar, A. (2002). Support organizations and the evolution of the NGO sector. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 31*, 231-258.

Burt, E., & Taylor, J. (1999). Information and communication technology: Reshaping the voluntary sector in the information age? Glasgow Caledonian University. Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://virtualsociety.sbs.ox.ac.uk/events/volseminar.htm

Bussell, H., & Forbes, D. (2002). Understanding the volunteer market: The what, where, who and why of volunteering. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing, 7*, 244-257.

Chung, S., Byrd, T. A., Lewis, B. R., & Ford, F. N. (2005). An empirical study of the relationships between IT infrastructure flexibility, mass customization, and business performance. *DATA BASE*, *36*, 26-44.

Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., & Haugen, J. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*, 1516-1530.

CompuMentor. (2001). Working with Technical Volunteers: A Manual for Nonprofit Organizations.

CompuMentor. Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://www.techsoup.org/howto/Files/TechVolMan2001v1.2.pdf

Cukier, W., & Middleton, C. (2003). Evaluating the web presence of voluntary sector organizations: An assessment of Canadian web sites. *IT & Society, 1*, 102-130.

Duffy, M. (2000). What do nonprofits use databases for? TechSoup (September 29, 2000). Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://www.techsoup.org/howto/articles/databases/page1036.cfm?cg=searchterms&sg=duffy

Febbraro, A., Hall, M., & Parmegiani, M. (1999). Developing a typology of the voluntary health sector in Canada: Definition and classification issues. Voluntary Health Sector Project, Ottawa. Retrieved July 30, 2005, from http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/vs-sb/voluntarysector/publications/typology_full/index.html

Forster, J. (2003). Revolution or evolution? A longitudinal study of technology use by nonprofit organizations, 2000-2002. N-TEN. Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://nten.org/uploads/SurveyReport20021.pdf

Franz, C.R., & Robey, D. (1986). Organisational context, user involvement, and the usefulness of information systems. *Decision Sciences, 17* (3), 329-356.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence.* New York: Bantam.

Hynes, R. A., & Nykiel, A. I. (2005). Maximizing outcomes of volunteer programs through a functional approach to motivation. *Journal of College and Character, 2*. Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://www.collegevalues.org/pdfs/Hynes.pdf

Mathieson, K. (in press). Towards a design science of ethical decision support. *Journal of Business Ethics*.

McInerney, B. (2003). Nonprofits, NTAPs, and information technology. N-TEN. Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://www.nten.org/reports

McNutt, J., & Boland, K. M. (1999). Electronic advocacy by nonprofit organizations in social welfare policy. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 28*, 432-451.

Peizer, J. (2001). Rethinking technology in the non-profit arena: Strategic differences and new models of deployment. OSI Internet Program report. Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://www2.soros.org/internet/ngomodel.html

Princeton Survey Research Associates. (2001). Wired, willing and ready: Nonprofit human services organizations' adoption of information technology. Independent Sector. Retrieved February 8, 2005, from http://www.independentsector.org/pdfs/wiredwillingready.pdf

Teng, J., & Sethi., V. (1990). A comparison of information requirements analysis methods: An experimental study. *DATA BASE, 20*, 27-39.

Ticher, P., Maison, A., & Jones, M. (2002). Leading the way to ICT success. Baring Foundation. Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://www.baringfoundation.org.uk/publications.htm#ictsuccess

Vessey, I. (1991). Cognitive fit: Theory-based analyses of the graphs versus tables literature. *Decision Sciences, 22*, 219–241.

Vessey, I. & Galletta, D. (1991). Cognitive fit: An empirical study of information acquisition. *Information Systems Research, 2*, 63-84.

About the Author

Kieran Mathieson is associate professor of information systems (IS) at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan. Most of his research has applied psychological theory and methods to IS, including models of technology use, definitional variation and its effects on beliefs about IS, and the effects of different types of experience on IS evaluations. His current research is on using IT to help people make better ethical decisions, and in the use of IT in volunteer organizations. Ombudsmen in Kentucky in development of and training about outcome measures and with other ombudsman programs regarding the documentation of their work.

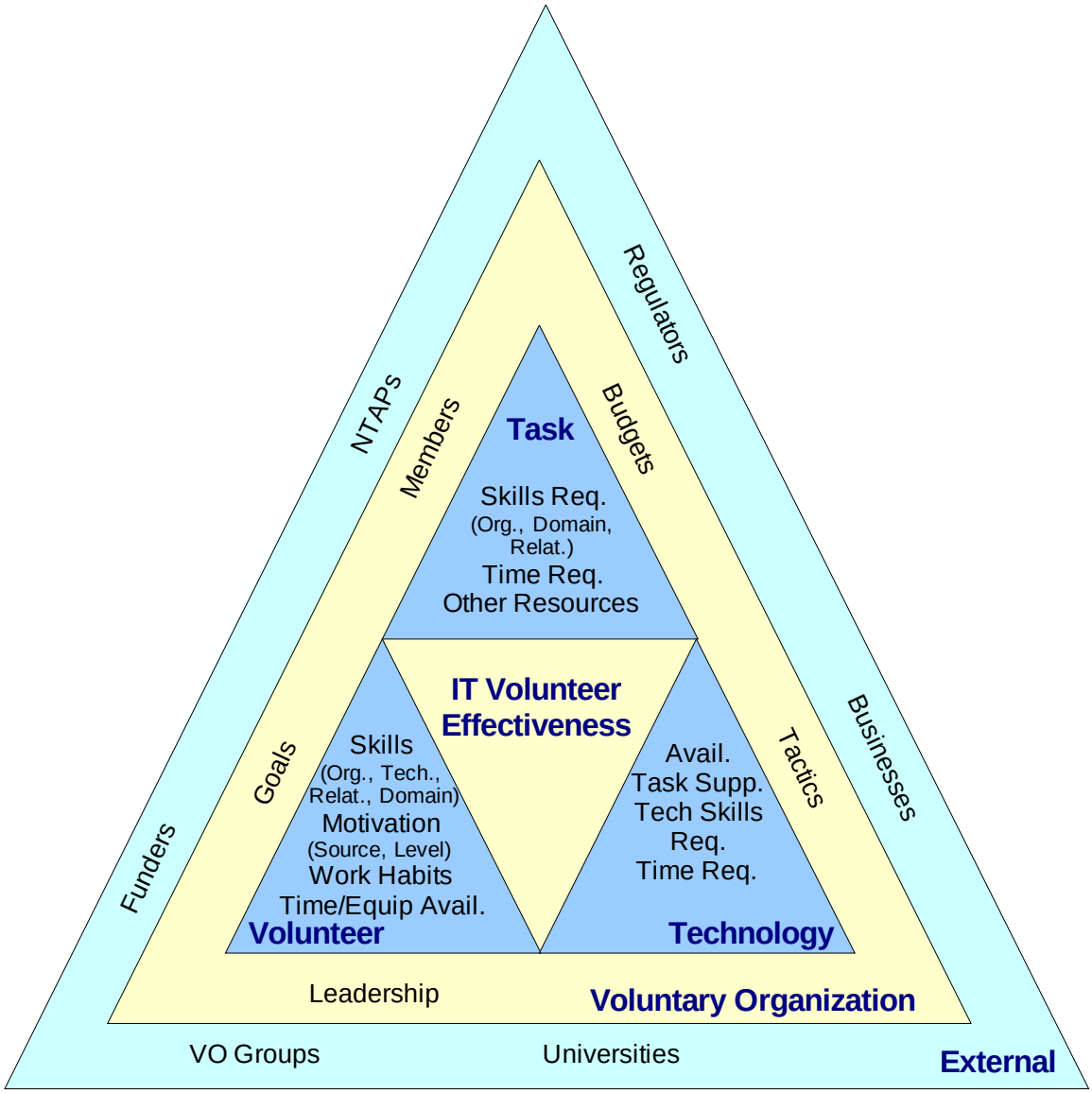

Figure 1. *VO IT Volunteer Effectiveness Framework*

The Importance of Initial Assignment Quality and Staff Treatment of New Volunteers: A Field Test of the Hobson-Heler Model of Nonprofit Agency "Volunteer-Friendliness"

Charles J. Hobson, Ph.D.
School of Business & Economics
Indiana University Northwest
3400 Broadway
Gary, IN 46408
Tel. 219- 980-6903 * FAX (219) 980-6916 * E-mail: chobson@iun.edu

Kathryn Heler, Ph.D.
Department of Accounting & Business
Manchester College
North Manchester, IN 46962
Tel. 219- 982-5302 * FAX (219) 982-5043 * E-mail: kcheler@manchester.edu

Abstract

Using the Hobson-Heler model of nonprofit agency "volunteer-friendliness," the impact of initial assignment quality and treatment by staff on volunteer satisfaction and subsequent continuation of volunteering, and intentions to volunteer in the future and make donations was evaluated with a field sample of 542. Subjects were students at a university commuter campus, assigned to complete a 10-hour service learning project with local United Way affiliates. A written survey was administered at the conclusion of their assignment. Results strongly supported the Hobson-Heler model and indicated that: (1) initial assignment quality and treatment by staff were major determinants of satisfaction and (2) satisfaction was significantly related to continuation of volunteering, likelihood of future volunteering, and likelihood of making future financial contributions.

Keywords:
volunteers, volunteer-friendly, satisfaction

Introduction

Several significant developments that affect nonprofits and their interaction with volunteers have been chronicled recently by both researchers and the popular press. The "good news" for nonprofits is that the number of volunteers has been increasing and this trend is projected to continue (Merrill, 2006). An estimated total of 65.4 million Americans volunteered in 2005, with the figure expected to rise to 75 million by 2010 (*Time*, September 4, 2006).

The major challenges facing nonprofits are three-fold. First, there has been explosive growth in the size of the nonprofit sector. The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University (2006) estimated a 67% increase in registered 501(c)(3) organizations from 1995 (626,225) to 2005 (1,045,979). Thus, there are substantially more nonprofits competing for volunteers.

A second challenge noted by Merrill (2006) and others centers on the evolving needs/expectations of volunteers. Among the most important are: (1) the desire for meaningful work, (2) scheduling accommodation, (3) flexible assignments, and (4) the availability of short-term project

options. It appears that volunteers are becoming more selective when considering opportunities to give their time and less likely to accept or tolerate unfulfilling work.

Unfortunately, many nonprofits have been slow to respond to the evolving needs/expectations of volunteers. This third challenge perhaps represents a generalized lack of awareness on the part of nonprofits and inability or unwillingness to modify traditional approaches to engaging volunteers (Merrill, 2006).

Evidence confirming the serious consequences associated with this problem appeared in *Time* (September 4, 2006). The article cited (p. 76) an estimate by the Corporation for National and Community Service that "nearly 38 million Americans who had volunteered with a nonprofit in the past didn't show up last year [2005]." It is likely that nonprofits' collective failure to meet the needs/expectations of these individuals resulted in their unwillingness to continue volunteering.

In discussing global trends and challenges for volunteering, Merrill (2006) called for increased sensitivity and flexibility on the part of nonprofits in structuring opportunities to meet the changing needs/expectations of volunteers. Hobson, Rominger, Malec, Hobson, and Evans (1996) developed a conceptual model of nonprofit "volunteer-friendliness" that can be very useful in understanding and improving the ways in which agencies engage volunteers.

Volunteer Friendly Model

Hobson et al. (p. 29) defined volunteer-friendliness as "the extent to which an agency's staff, policies, and programs provide a positive, pleasant, and rewarding experience for volunteers and prospective volunteers." Their model consists of four major components: (1) Volunteer Attraction and Recruitment, (2) Initial Personal Interaction with Agency Staff, (3) Volunteer Utilization and Assignment, and (4) Post-Volunteering Follow-Up.

The fundamental premise of the model is that volunteer-friendly nonprofits will have a positive impact on prospective and current volunteers through the development of favorable perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and behaviors. Hypothesized benefits for nonprofits include such factors as: (1) more effective recruitment of volunteers, (2) enhanced retention of volunteers, (3) increased volunteer productivity, and (4) potential expansion of the financial donor base.

Subsequent research with the Hobson et al. model involved the operational definition, field measurement, and norming of initial telephone contact quality between prospective volunteers and nonprofit staff in 500 agencies (Hobson & Malec, 1999). In 2000, Malec, Hobson, and Guziewicz developed, field tested, and normed a survey tool (Hobson-Heler Volunteer-Friendly Index©) to systematically measure all components in the conceptual model. Heler (formerly Malec) and Hobson (2002) demonstrated the utility and value of Hackman and Oldham's (1976, 1980) Job Characteristics Model of job design in measuring the quality of work assignments given to volunteers.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to test five specific propositions stemming from the Hobson-Heler Volunteer-Friendly Model concerning hypothesized determinants and consequences of volunteer satisfaction. They include:

Proposition 1: Volunteer job quality is positively correlated with volunteer satisfaction.
Proposition 2: Perceived treatment of volunteers by nonprofit agency staff is positively correlated with volunteer satisfaction.
Proposition 3: Volunteer satisfaction is positively correlated with continuation of volunteering.
Proposition 4: Volunteer satisfaction is positively correlated with intent to volunteer in the future.
Proposition 5: Volunteer satisfaction is positively correlated with intent to donate financially in the future.

Methods

Subjects

The subjects in this study were 542 undergraduate and MBA students enrolled in one of three business classes: (1) freshman/sophomore level Introduction to Business, (2) junior/senior level Organizational Behavior and Leadership, and (3) graduate level Management and Organizational Behavior. All of the subjects were students at a midwestern regional campus of a state university, located in an urban setting.

Volunteer Project

One of the course requirements for students in each of the above mentioned classes involved the completion of a 10-hour volunteer project at a local nonprofit organization and preparation of a 1-2 page final report. The purpose of the volunteer project was to introduce and reinforce the concept of social responsibility, and provide students with "hands-on" experience working with the nonprofit sector. The local United Way agency partnered with the university in sponsoring the project.

Guidelines for the completion of the volunteer project were distributed at the beginning of each course, along with a list of the 48 agencies sponsored by the county United Way. Students were not limited to the listed agencies, but were encouraged to identify a local nonprofit that they were interested in helping. The only restrictions included no proselytizing or involvement with hate groups.

Volunteer Survey

Upon concluding their 10-hour volunteer project at the end of a semester, students could earn 20 in-class participation points by voluntarily and anonymously completing the survey described below. Those who did so were allowed to print their names on a roster that was circulated in class, in order to receive the extra points. The written survey consisted of the following items:

(1) Job Quality Hackman and Oldham (1976, 1980) developed a theory of job quality known as the Job Characteristics Model and a measurement tool called the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS). This tool consists of a series of descriptive statements that are rated on a 1-7 scale, from *low* to *high*. Five core job dimensions are assessed by the JDS, including:
a. Skill Variety – the degree to which a job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work.
b. Task Identity – the degree to which a job requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work.
c. Task Significance – the degree to which a job has a substantial impact on the lives of other people.

d. Autonomy – the degree to which a job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out.
e. Feedback – the degree to which carrying out the work on a job provides an individual with direct and clear information about performance effectiveness.

(2) Staff Treatment Perceived treatment by agency staff was measured on a 1-10 scale, from *low* to *high*.

(3) Satisfaction Overall satisfaction with the volunteer experience was assessed on a 1-10 scale, from low to high.

(4) Volunteer Work Continuation Whether students continued their volunteer work after completion of the 10-hour class project was measured with a simple *yes*/*no* question.

(5) Future Volunteering The likelihood of volunteering at the agency again in the future was evaluated on a 1-10 scale, from *low* to *high*.

(6) Future Financial Donation The likelihood of making a financial donation to the agency in the future was assessed on a 1-10 scale, from *low* to *high*.

(7) Biographic Information Basic biographic information was collected, including age, gender, marital status, hours employed per week, and class level.

Data Analysis

The following analyses were conducted. First, basic descriptive statistics were calculated for demographic characteristics of the sample. These included frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Second, using Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model, the quality of jobs given to volunteers was determined. Specifically, they recommend computing an overall measure of job quality, known as the Motivating Potential Score (MPS). This value is calculated by combining scores on the five core job dimensions discussed above in the following manner: MPS = (Skill Variety + Task Identity + Task Significance)/3 X Autonomy X Feedback.

Third, the relationship between job quality and volunteer satisfaction was examined by calculating the correlation between MPS and rated volunteer satisfaction. In addition, the correlations between each of the five core job dimensions and volunteer satisfaction were also computed.

Fourth, the degree to which treatment by staff was related to volunteer satisfaction was evaluated by calculating the correlation between the two.

Fifth, the combined effects (and relative importance) of job quality and staff treatment on volunteer satisfaction were assessed using a statistical procedure known as multiple regression. Specifically, the five core job dimensions and staff treatment were tested as possible determinants or predictors of volunteer satisfaction.

Sixth, the impact of volunteer satisfaction on continuation of volunteering was determined by computing a special type of correlation. The point-biserial correlation is used when one variable is measured on a continuous scale (volunteer satisfaction was rated from 1-10) and the second is measured with two categories (volunteer continuation was measured as either *yes* or *no*).

Seventh, the relationship between volunteer satisfaction and the likelihood of volunteering in the future was examined by calculating the correlation between them. Finally, in the eighth analysis, the linkage between volunteer satisfaction and

likelihood of making future financial donations was investigated by computing the correlation between the two.

In all instances, the test statistics appropriate for each analysis were accompanied by two important additional indicators. First, the likelihood that the findings occurred by chance was indexed by an associated probability level (or p-value) and second, the strength of relationships between variables was estimated with an effect size. In this study, effect sizes consisted of correlation values squared – r^2 or R^2.

Results

Sample Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics of the sample of 542 subjects were as follows (Table 1). NOTE: Due to limited missing data, the item totals do not all equal 542.

Table 1.

Age: Mean = 25.6,
Standard Deviation = 7.7
Gender: Male - 230 (43.7%)
Female - 296 (56.3%)
Marital
Status: Single - 376 (71.4%)
Married - 126 (24.0%)
Divorced - 24 (4.6%)
Hours Worked Per Week:
Mean = 31.0,
Standard Deviation = 16.6
Class
Level: Freshman/Sophomore - 206 (38.5%)
Junior/Senior - 194 (36.3%)
Graduate - 135 (25.2%)

Determinants of Volunteer Satisfaction

Complete results of the statistical testing for the five propositions evaluated in this paper are provided in the Appendix.

Proposition 1. Volunteer job quality is positively correlated with volunteer satisfaction. A strong, statistically significant, positive correlation ($r = .49$) was found between overall job quality (Hackman and Oldham's Motivating Potential Score) and volunteer satisfaction. In addition, the correlations between each of the five core job dimensions and volunteer satisfaction were also large, positive, and statistically significant. Specifically, the computed correlations were .45 for skill variety, .37 for task identity, .51 for task significance, .35 for autonomy, and .48 for feedback.

These results provide solid support for Proposition 1. It appears that the quality of job assignments given to new volunteers is an important determinant of their satisfaction with volunteering.

Proposition 2. Perceived treatment of volunteer by nonprofit agency staff is positively correlated with volunteer satisfaction. Obtained results provided validation of Proposition 2. Perceived treatment by agency staff was significantly correlated with volunteer satisfaction ($r = .39$). This finding confirms that well-treated volunteers are more likely to be satisfied with their volunteer experience than those treated poorly by agency staff.

The multiple regression analysis that was performed allowed for an assessment of the combined effects of job quality and staff treatment on volunteer satisfaction, as well as an evaluation of their relative importance.

Using Hackman and Oldham's five core job dimensions and perceived staff treatment as potential determinants of volunteer satisfaction, the results indicated that nearly half ($R^2 = .46$) of the variance in satisfaction

scores could be explained by a combination of five of the above six factors. The relative order of importance, from highest to lowest was: (1) perceived treatment by staff, (2) task significance, (3) skill variety, (4) feedback, and (5) autonomy. The core job dimension of task identity was not found to be a statistically significant predictor in this analysis.

The multiple regression results provided compelling evidence of the importance of staff treatment and job quality in creating a satisfying experience for volunteers. Taken together, these two variables accounted for a sizeable 46% of the variance in volunteer satisfaction.

Consequences of Volunteer Satisfaction

Proposition 3. Volunteer satisfaction is positively correlated with continuation of volunteering. The obtained correlation between volunteer satisfaction and volunteer continuation (coded as 1 = *no*, 2 = *yes*) was .33 and statistically significant. Thus, satisfied volunteers were more likely to continue their agency work than those who were not satisfied with their initial experience, providing solid support for Proposition 3.

Proposition 4. Volunteer satisfaction is positively correlated with intent to volunteer in the future. The correlation between the two variables in this proposition was .63 and statistically significant. This finding confirms a very strong relationship between satisfaction and future volunteering, and confirms Proposition 4.

Proposition 5. Volunteer satisfaction is positively correlated with intent to donate financially in the future. Results yielded a correlation of .35, which was statistically significant. Satisfied volunteers indicated a higher likelihood of future donations than those who were less satisfied with their experience, validating Proposition 5.

Discussion and Conclusions

Three principle conclusions can be reasonably drawn from the results of this study. First, strong support was provided for the validity of the Hobson-Heler Model of Nonprofit Volunteer Friendliness. Tests of the five model propositions all yielded statistically significant results, with large associated effect sizes.

Second, the perceived treatment of volunteers by agency staff and the quality of initial assignments were major determinants of volunteer satisfaction. Third, results confirmed that volunteer satisfaction was significantly related to three critically important outcome variables: (1) continuation of volunteer work, (2) likelihood of volunteering in the future, and (3) likelihood of making financial donations in the future.

Implications

Nonprofit Administration

Based upon the results of this study, there are several important implications for nonprofit administrators. First, a renewed focus on volunteer satisfaction and its role in overall agency success is clearly warranted. These findings suggest that regular measurement, analysis, and improvement of volunteer satisfaction is imperative. Constructing a satisfaction survey is relatively straightforward. Items can consist of a series of basic statements about volunteer experiences at an agency, including work assignments, interaction with clients, scheduling, and relations with staff. A simple 5-point response format can be used, from "*strongly disagree*" to "*strongly agree*."
Volunteers should be allowed to complete the satisfaction survey

Table 2.

Five Core Job Dimensions and Motivating Potential Score	Student Volunteer Sample Means (n=542)	Original Normative Sample Means (n=6,930)
Skill Variety	4.35	4.53
Task Identity	4.56	4.65
Task Significance	5.02	5.47
Autonomy	4.62	4.78
Job Feedback	4.66	4.81
MPS	116.20	122.10

anonymously. Responses can be entered into a spreadsheet and analyzed to provide means for all items. A review of item means will reveal agency strengths and areas for improvement.

Given the strong relationships found in this study between volunteer satisfaction and continued volunteering, future volunteering, and future donating, periodic measurement of volunteer satisfaction is essential. Results should be carefully reviewed and used to capitalize on existing agency strengths and improve areas of weakness.

Second, agency staff should be thoroughly briefed on their vital role in impacting volunteer satisfaction. Positive interaction with volunteers is critical to their retention, future volunteering, and likelihood of making financial donations. Agencies should revisit or develop standards for staff treatment of volunteers as internal customers, critical to organizational success. In many instances, it may be helpful to conduct staff training workshops to adequately address this issue.

Third, more attention is needed in developing high quality job assignments for volunteers. A comparison of the student volunteer sample in this study with Hackman and Oldham's original normative sample for the Job Diagnostic Survey (Hackman et al., 1978), including the five core job dimensions and motivating potential score is particularly instructive.

In all five instances, the mean scores for the core job dimensions are lower in the volunteer sample than in the original sample. Not surprisingly, the mean MPS is lower as well. These results indicate that the average job performed by the student volunteers was less motivating than the average non-volunteer job in the original sample. Given the uncompensated nature of volunteer work, one could argue that jobs for volunteers should be more carefully designed to maximize their motivating potential. In view of the results obtained in this study, the typical nonprofit manager would benefit from using the Job Characteristics Model framework to assess and enhance the motivating potential of jobs given to volunteers.

When assigning work to volunteers, especially new volunteers, it is important for staff to resist the urge to give undesirable tasks to them. Reports from the volunteers in this study indicated that in many instances they were given menial, boring jobs to do, including sweeping floors, cleaning washrooms, picking up trash, "stuffing envelopes," making copies, and collating/stapling mailers.

When a new volunteer joins a nonprofit, there is a critical period during initial work

activities for the organization to effectively engage the individual and begin to foster motivation, commitment, loyalty, and a sense of fulfillment. High quality job assignments are essential to the success of this process.

A fourth implication centers on the finding that satisfied volunteers are more likely to donate financially to an agency in the future than dissatisfied ones. Assuming an organization has done well in providing a satisfying, fulfilling experience to volunteers, it may be advisable to include them in future fundraising efforts, either via mail or telephone solicitation.

Finally, a fifth potential implication involves the use of the Hobson-Heler Volunteer-Friendly Index© to conduct a comprehensive assessment of how well an agency interacts with volunteers and potential volunteers. Based upon the results, an organization could identify its current strengths, as well as prominent areas for improvement. Copies of the instrument are available from the first author.

Future Research

The results of this study suggest that future research would be useful in the following five areas. First, longitudinal designs are needed in order to confirm the intentions expressed by satisfied volunteers in this study to volunteer again in the future and make financial donations. Intentions are an important determinant of future behavior as conceptualized in Ajzen's (1985, 1991) Theory of Planned Behavior and supported by extensive research (Armitage & Conner, 2001). However, empirical confirmation would further underscore the importance of volunteer satisfaction.

More comprehensive measurement of the various facets of volunteer satisfaction and how they relate to important nonprofit organization outcomes is needed. Additional attention is warranted on how to foster supportive interaction between staff and volunteers, especially during initial contact with an agency.

Finally, more research is needed on developing "high quality" work assignments for volunteers and carefully evaluating their impact. Finally, given the strong support for the Hobson-Heler propositions, a large sample, comprehensive assessment of all major components in their model and associated agency outcomes would be very useful.

Study Limitations

When interpreting the results of this study, the following four potential limitations should be considered. First, the sample was limited to undergraduate and graduate college students at a commuter campus. While this demographic group is clearly an important source of volunteers, other groups were not included. However, there is no compelling theoretical or empirical reason why the results of this study should not be generalizable to all volunteers. Second, the design of the study was cross-sectional in nature. This did not permit the evaluation of dynamic relationships between variables over time. Third, all variables used to test the Hobson-Heler Model were measured by the volunteer survey, without independent verification or validation. Thus, mono-method bias could have served to slightly inflate the magnitude of the observed statistical relationships. However, given the documented strength of these relationships, a slight downward adjustment for mono-method bias would not substantively alter the study's findings. Fourth, volunteer satisfaction was measured with a single item, on a 1-10 scale. In all likelihood, this variable is multi-faceted, thus requiring more items for comprehensive, accurate assessment.

References

Ajzen, I. (1985). From intentions to action: A theory of planned behavior. In J. Kuhl & J.Beckman (Eds.), *Action control: From cognitions to behaviors* (pp. 11-39). New York: Springer.

Beckman (Eds.), *Action control: From cognitions to behaviors* (pp. 11-39). New York: Springer.

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50*, 179-211.

Armitage, C.J., & Conner, M. (2001). Efficacy of the theory of planned behaviour: A meta-analytic review. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 40,* 471-499.

The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. (2006). Four trends in giving. *Philanthropy Matters, 14*(2), 12-13.

Hackman, J.R., & Oldham, G.R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 16,* 250-279.

Hackman, J.R., & Oldham, G.R. (1980). *Work Design.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Heler, K.C., & Hobson, C.J. (2002, March). *Evaluating volunteer jobs: Using the Job Characteristics Model.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Business Administration Association, Chicago, IL.

Hobson, C.J., & Malec, K.L. (1999). Initial telephone contact of prospective volunteers with nonprofits: An operational definition of quality and norms for 500 agencies. *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, *Sum-Fall*, 21-27.

Hobson, C.J., Rominger, A., Malec, K.L., Hobson, C., & Evans, K. (1996). Volunteer-friendliness of nonprofit agencies: Definition, conceptual model, and applications. *Journal of Nonprofit and Public Sector Marketing, 4*(4), 27-41.

Hobson, C., & Evans, K. (1996). Volunteer-friendliness of nonprofit agencies: Definition, conceptual model, and applications. *Journal of Nonprofit and Public Sector Marketing, 4*(4), 27-41.

Kadlec, D. (2006, September 4). The right way to volunteer. *Time*, 76.

Malec, K.L., Hobson, C.J., & Guziewicz, J. (2000, March). *A field application of the Hobson-Malec Model of nonprofit agency volunteer-friendliness.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Business Administration Association, Chicago, IL.

Merrill, M. (2006). Global trends and the challenges for volunteering. *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration, 24*(1), 9-14.

Oldham, G.R., Hackman, J.R., & Stepina, L.P. (1978). *Norms for the job diagnostic survey* (Tech. Rep. No. 16). New Haven, CT: Yale University, School of Organization and Management.

About the Authors

Dr. Charles J. Hobson has an active research program on volunteerism, has published and presented papers in the field, and is co-developer of the Volunteer-Friendly Index for nonprofits. Dr. Hobson has been a volunteer board member for the Visiting Nurse Association and the Lake Area United Way, as well as board member and President of the Northwest Indiana Wellness Council. He has also volunteered with the LEAD Initiative in Indiana to prevent youth substance abuse.

Dr. Kathryn Heler is an active researcher on volunteerism, having published and presented several papers in the field and co-developed the Volunteer-Friendly Index for nonprofits. She has taught a number of college courses on volunteerism and provided related workshops to the American Lung Association of Indiana, the National Association of Meal Programs, the Drifting Dunes Girl Scout Council in Merrillville, Indiana, and the Lake Area United Way. Dr. Heler has also volunteered with the Oak Park Township (Illinois) Senior Advisory Council; Caritas Adult Day Care, Crown Point, Indiana; and the American Lung Association of Indiana.

Measuring the Volunteer - Nonprofit Organization Relationship: An Application of Public Relations Theory

Richard D. Waters, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Communication
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
North Carolina State University
Winston Hall 201, Box 8104
Raleigh, NC 27695
Tel. 919-515-9736 * FAX 919-515-9456 * E-Mail: rdwaters@ncsu.edu

Denise Bortree, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Advertising and Public Relations
College of Communications
Penn State University
0115 Carnegie Building
University Park, PA
Tel. 814-865-1274 * FAX 814-863-8161 * E-mail: dsb177@psu.edu

Abstract

Because nonprofit managers often face challenges in deciding how to best incorporate volunteers in working toward the organization's mission, it is important to understand how volunteers view their involvement with organizations. This study provides nonprofit managers with a short survey instrument they can use to help understand the nonprofit-volunteer relationship with volunteers by focusing on four dimensions: trust, satisfaction, commitment, and power balance. These four relationship outcomes are derived from public relations scholarship on the organization-public relationship. This study found that although volunteers all evaluated the relationships with organizations positively, there were significant differences when looking at the amount of time volunteers gave to organizations. This study also offers suggestions on how relationships can be improved with volunteers based on their evaluation of the relationship.

Keywords:
volunteer management, relationship, evaluation, public relations

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2005), more than 65 million Americans volunteer their time at nonprofit organizations annually. According to Allen (2006), organizations have an endless supply of volunteers when they are able to identify and motivate them to give their time and energy for worthwhile causes. Once recruited, the organization must focus on managing volunteers in a manner that meets the needs of both groups—the volunteers and the organization. Volunteer coordinators have to do a significant amount of work to retain volunteers.

Researchers studying the nonprofit sector have made significant progress in identifying strategies that organizations can implement to increase volunteer retention.

Hager and Brudney (2004) found the three strategies most often used by organizations were regular supervision and communication, screening procedures such as an interview, and annual recognition activities. Having written policies and job descriptions for volunteers and offering volunteers professional development opportunities can also improve volunteer retention efforts (Brudney, 2005).

Although these studies have been helpful in providing useful information to organizations on how they could improve their volunteer management programs, the strategies rarely involved seeking information from volunteers to help shape their experience. The purpose of this study is to apply relationship management theory to the nonprofit-volunteer relationship. This research focuses on the measurement of this relationship and provides a reliable and valid instrument that can be used to help organizations improve their volunteer management programs.

Literature Review

Defined as the management of relationships between an organization and its stakeholders, public relations provides an ideal setting to study the dynamics of volunteering. Within the last 10 years, significant advances have been made in the measurement of organization-public relationships (OPR). Drawing from interpersonal communication literature, Hon and Grunig (1999) developed an instrument to measure the OPR that focuses on four dimensions of relationship quality: trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality.

Trust

Quite simply, trust refers to one party's confidence that it can be open and honest with another. Ledingham and Bruning (1998) operationalized trust as "doing what an organization says it will do" (p. 98). The trust scale measures three dimensions of trust, including integrity, which centers on the belief that both parties involved in the relationship are fair and just; dependability, which is primarily concerned with whether the parties involved in the relationship follow through with what they say they will do; and competence, which focuses on whether the parties have the abilities to do what they say they will do.

For volunteers, feeling that an organization is trustworthy is critical when deciding to continue to help advance the organization's mission. Nonprofit organizations that actively listen to volunteers' suggestions and demonstrate social accountability have a greater likelihood of seeing volunteers stay with an organization for an extended period of time because they not only understand the nonprofit but also feel it is capable of accomplishing its mission.

Commitment

Bruning and Galloway (2003) report that commitment—the level of dedication to an organization—is a key component of OPR because it is fundamental to the public's attitude of the organization. Hon and Grunig (1999) defined commitment as "the extent to which one party believes and feels that the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote" (p. 20). This scale contains measures of both attitude and behavioral intention, and unlike the other relationship outcome measures, it is the only one that hints toward future behavior.

Though nonprofits understand that volunteers have very diverse motivations for giving time to nonprofits, many become involved with organizations because of their own personal interests in seeing a problem addressed or resolved. These active publics have a deep commitment to mission of the

organization, and nonprofit organizations can benefit by tapping into this personal dimension.

Satisfaction

Originally proposed by Ferguson (1984), the dimension of satisfaction serves to measure whether the parties involved have positive feelings about one another. Hon and Grunig (1999) note that "a satisfying relationship is one in which the benefits outweigh the costs" (p. 3). Previous research from relationship marketing suggests that when parties are satisfied with the nature of the relationship, they are more likely to be committed to maintaining it (Dwyer & Oh, 1987). Therefore, organizations that invest into developing satisfying relationships with targeted stakeholders are likely to produce beneficial results for the organization in the long term, such as the continued volunteer efforts over time.

Ledingham and Bruning (2000) argue that satisfaction is a dimension of the organization-public relationship that can be increased if the organization invests the time and resources. By dedicating resources to the job descriptions, interviews, and personalized reviews, volunteer coordinators can generate a sense of satisfaction within the organization's volunteers that they are involved with a professionally-managed organization and with a rewarding experience.

Power Balance

The final dimension of relationship quality involves the balance of power. Termed "control mutuality" by Hon and Grunig, this component seeks to evaluate which party has more power over the other. Power exists in any relationship, and its distribution has a tremendous impact on the perceptions and actualities of the organization-public relationship.

Power is often misunderstood in the nonprofit organization-volunteer relationship. Many assume that because volunteers are willing to work for organizations without pay that they retain the power because they can walk away from the relationship. However, organizations also have a significant amount of power. Many volunteers want to assist in resolving community issues that interest them, and they need the organizations to help fulfill that desire. Additionally, organizations often offer professional development training and opportunities for volunteers to enhance their resumes. For a healthy relationship with its volunteers, an organization needs to balance the levels of power with them. The organization may need to be assertive and fire a volunteer, but it may also need to be willing to compromise with its volunteer base to see a project succeed.

Given this study's aim to determine how well these dimensions measure the nonprofit-volunteer relationship, the following research question was created:

RQ1: *To what extent do volunteers give nonprofit organizations favorable evaluations of the four relationship dimensions?*

Several studies have found that women are more likely to evaluate themselves as being more altruistic than men in terms of volunteering for the community (Wilson & Musick, 1997; Mills, Pederson, & Grusec, 1989; Greeno & Maccoby, 1993; Mesch, Rooney, Chin, & Steinberg, 2002). Some have found that men volunteer more than women (Hayghe, 1991; Gallagher, 1994) while others maintain that there is no difference between a person's gender and their connection to volunteering (Smith, 1994; Sundeen, 1990). Though men and women both report that they enjoy

volunteering and find it personally rewarding, the lack of a consensus on gender's connection to volunteering leads to the second research question:

RQ2: *Does gender influence how men and women evaluate their involvement in the nonprofit organization-volunteer relationship?*

Finally, because public relations literature suggests that individuals will evaluate their relationships differently based on levels of involvement with that organization, a third research question was created to determine if the dimensions of the OPR could be used to predict which volunteers are more involved with the organization:

RQ3: *Can an individual's work with a nonprofit organization (as determined by the number of hours volunteered) be predicted by his or her evaluation of the relationship using the four dimensions?*

Methodology

This project used intercept surveys that were administered to participants in volunteer fairs at two large Florida cities by students enrolled in a nonprofit management course. Students were given extra credit for recruiting adults to complete the survey. Of the 300 adults asked to complete the surveys, 144 completed usable surveys, resulting in a survey completion rate of 48%.

The survey designed for this study was based on Hon and Grunig's (1999) four outcome scales. These questions were used to evaluate the relationship volunteers had with an organization where they had volunteered with in the previous calendar year. Participants also provided information about their demographics, including gender, age, race, and number of volunteer hours worked at the organization per month. The volunteer hours were then classified into two groups (high and low involvement) based on calculating the cutoff points from the hours reported by the participants.

The relationship with the volunteer organization was tested using the above-mentioned scales, which were measured using a modified 9-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (9). The survey had four questions for power balance, five for commitment and satisfaction and six for trust, which are presented in Appendix A. These indices were found to be reliable with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .80 to .86.

Results

The participants in the study represented a wide variety of backgrounds. The respondent group was 57% female and 43% male. Most (70%) of respondents were Caucasian; 15% were African-American, 14% were Latino, and 1% were Asian. The mean age of the participants was 23 years old, ranging from a low of 18 years to a high of 85. Finally, the participants volunteered an average of 17.4 hours per month at nonprofit organizations (15.01 standard deviation).

The first research question asked how volunteers perceived their relationship with the organizations for which they volunteered. As shown in Table 1, the data indicate that the volunteer tend to perceive the relationship positively on all four relationship dimensions.

The second research question asked whether men and women would evaluate the volunteer-nonprofit organization differently since previous studies have provided contradictory results in terms of the effect gender has on an individual's motivation to volunteer and the evaluation of volunteering.

Table 1. *Volunteers' Evaluation of their Relationship with Nonprofits based on Gender***.**

	Overall			**Males**		**Females**	
	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Trust	7.16	1.20	.80	7.19	1.09	7.14	1.29
Commitment	7.03	1.46	.83	7.07	1.21	7.00	1.62
Satisfaction	7.35	1.25	.86	7.40	0.91	7.30	1.46
Power Balance	7.06	1.38	.84	7.49	0.93	6.75	1.57

Table 2. *One-Way ANOVA on Evaluation of the Volunteers' Relationship with the Nonprofit Organization*.

Source of Variation	**SS**	**df**	**MS**	**F-score**	**p-value**
Trust	.09	1,142	.09	.07	.79
Commitment	.16	1,142	.16	.07	.78
Satisfaction	.37	1,142	.37	.23	.63
Power Balance	19.51	1,142	19.51	11.03	.001

Analysis reveals that there was no significant difference in how the genders evaluated the relationship for three of the four relationship outcome variables. However, as shown in Table 2, there was a difference in how the genders perceived the balance of power with the organizations. Men were more likely than women to feel that power was balanced between the volunteers and the organizations.

The third research question explored whether a volunteer's evaluation of the nonprofit-volunteer relationship could be used to predict a volunteer's level of involvement with the organization as determined by the number of hours volunteered per month. To examine the predictive nature of the dimensions, discriminant analysis was used to compare the four OPR index scores (trust, commitment, satisfaction, and power balance) with the classification level of volunteer hours (high or low). Table 3 presents the results of the discriminant analysis.

As Table 3 shows, the most important variables that led to group prediction when considered individually were trust and commitment even though all were statistically significant. These two variables have the lowest Wilks' λ values, meaning that 61% and 66% of the variance in these variables is not explained by the group differences, respectively. The group differences explained even less variance for the remaining variables. Because the function was statistically significant, the model can be tested to see if it can properly predict group membership.

Table 4 shows that a volunteers' evaluation of the trust and commitment dimensions can accurately predict an individual's inclination to volunteer. Of the 69 individuals giving the most time to nonprofit organizations, 59 of the cases were successfully predicted to have worked more

Table 3. *Discriminant Analysis of Overall Relationship with Nonprofit Organization.*

					Group 1 (n = 74)		Group 2 (n = 70)	
	b	B	Wilks' λ	F (1, 142)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Constant	-7.11							
Trust	.89	-.08	.61	90.94*	6.43	1.06	7.93	0.79
Satisfaction	-.26	.36	.77	42.97*	6.76	1.33	7.96	0.78
Commitment	.44	.81	.66	73.38*	6.21	1.42	7.90	0.88
Power Balance	-.07	-.02	.79	36.69*	6.46	1.44	7.70	0.96

R = .65, Wilks' λ of function = ..58, $\chi 2 = 76.08$, df = 4, p<.001, centroids = (-.82, .87)
*p < .001

Table 4. *Classification Matrix of Discriminant Analysis Function.*

	Predicted	
Original	Group 1 (High Volunteer Hours)	Group 2 (Low Volunteer Hours)
Group 1 (High Volunteer Hours)	59	15
Group 2 (Low Volunteer Hours)	10	60

$\chi 2 = 61.73$, df = 1, p <.001

volunteer hours. The model also was able to predict most of those who did not volunteer a large number of hours to the organizations. Of the 75 cases predicted to have low volunteer hours, only 15 were predicted incorrectly. Overall, the success rate of this model at predicting the group membership was 83% (119 of 144 cases correctly predicted).

Discussion

This study found that volunteers evaluate their relationships with nonprofit organizations positively. That alone is not surprising given the numerous studies that have highlighted the public's willingness to become involved in causes or nonprofit organizations that address issues that are important to them (Lysakowski, 2003). However, exploring the results further provides insight into the nonprofit-volunteer relationship.

All of the relationship outcomes were statistically important in predicting which volunteers were more likely to donate their time to help organizations carry out their programs and services. It is not surprisingly that people would be committed to an organization that they willingly expend their time and energy to help see community issues they care about resolved. Volunteer managers can work to build an individual's commitment to a program or cause by getting them excited about the vision and goals of an organization. By describing the value of a program and showing how they can make a difference, managers can build feelings of commitment within an

organization's volunteer base. However, commitment alone is not enough to keep volunteers returning to an organization.

Trust is an important component of the nonprofit-volunteer relationship for both parties. It is vital that organizations screen volunteers to ensure they are qualified and dedicated to carrying out the mission of the organization. However, as this study found, trust is one of the most significant variables in predicting which volunteers are likely to give more volunteer hours to an organization. To build trust, nonprofit management literature has shown that organizations need to recognize the uniqueness of their volunteers by allowing them to work on projects that use their particular skillsets.

As the Baby Boom generation retires, many are seeking volunteer opportunities to stay connected to their communities and social networks. Many of these individuals have years of work experience that could be used to help advance nonprofit organizations if they are utilized properly. By asking qualified volunteers to audit an organization's finance or develop a marketing plan, organizations can help build a relationship with those individuals that will produce significant returns in future investments of volunteer time.

Clary and Snyder (1999) found that young professionals often seek volunteer opportunities to broaden their professional portfolio while helping the community address important issues. One organization, the Taproot Foundation, is focusing on this aspect to help connect worthwhile nonprofits with experienced and qualified marketing, Internet technology, and human resources professionals who work on specific capacity-building projects that use their knowledge and skills.

To foster healthy relationship growth with its volunteers, organizations' leaders need to remember that volunteers do many things in their daily lives, and their skills can be used to help organizations in ways that may not recognized immediately. Staff time needs to be devoted to engage volunteers in conversations and actively listen to their comments. By responding to the volunteers' needs and identifying their key interests, managers can build trust in the nonprofit organization-volunteers relationship.

The volunteers in this study indicated that satisfaction also was important. By providing applications and interviewing potential volunteers, organizations can better understand an individual's motivation to work for an organization. Management can place that individual in volunteer situations where they are likely to have their motivations met. For example, college students and young professionals often use the volunteer experience to develop social networks upon moving to new cities (Grube & Piliavin, 2000). Organizations can increase levels of satisfaction by asking these volunteers to aid in planning and carrying out a special event will be far more meaningful to a volunteer wanting to build a social network than performing routine office work.

Finally, the balance of power was also found to be significant in predicting the amount of time a volunteer gives to an organization. However, unlike the other three relationship outcomes, men and women volunteers did not evaluate this construct similarly. Instead, males felt the balance of power between themselves and the organization was more evenly distributed than women. Although women did not view that the balance of power was completely one-sided, they did indicate that they did not feel as powerful in the relationship as men did based on the survey data.

This revelation poses an intriguing challenge for managers who work with a wide variety of volunteers. Volunteer

coordinators must work to make sure that volunteers do not feel that they are simply being used by the organization. By actively listening to volunteers' suggestions, demonstrating appreciation and showing recognition for the volunteers' efforts, and involving volunteers in meetings and the decision-making process can help lead to feelings of balanced power.

Conclusions

This study sought to offer practitioners in volunteer coordination some insight into how they can improve relationships with those they manage. By providing nonprofit organizations with the Hon and Grunig (1999) scales for measuring the relationship they have with their volunteers, this study offers a measurement instrument that can measure the volunteers' evaluation of their involvement with an organization. This survey can be incorporated into the volunteer management program in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The results can then be used by each nonprofit to tailor their volunteer program to one that is most appropriate for the organization.

Nonprofit organizations need to know how volunteers view their relationship with the organization. In many cases, organizations cannot meet their programmatic goals without the contributions from volunteers. Having individuals evaluate their nonprofit-volunteer relationship provides management with valuable insight into how to best prepare for the organization's future. Positive evaluations not only help identify individuals that are more likely to donate more time to an organization, but the survey also helps identify areas where managers can improve their interactions with volunteers. For example, managers may need to be more inclusive when it comes to program goals and decision making for volunteers who score the relationship lower on the trust items.

Although this study found that volunteers had a positive views of the nonprofit-volunteer relationship, managers who receive negative evaluations from this survey also gain insight into how they can improve their organizations. Negative evaluations may indicate that the organization needs to conduct a strategic planning process that includes volunteer representatives so they feel they are involved in helping improve the existing services and programs. Management can also encourage volunteers to share their concerns and make suggestions on how the organization can improve its efficiency and program delivery.

The relationship evaluation items provided by this study allow nonprofit managers insights into how they can evaluate their relationship with volunteers. The participants in this study represented a cross-section of two different communities, and they volunteered at a variety of nonprofit organizations. The data demonstrated that the four relationship dimensions—trust, commitment, satisfaction, and power balance—can be used to predict which volunteers are more likely to donate more time to work for an organization. By reviewing volunteers' evaluation of the relationship, the items also help indicate how managers can improve their relationships with volunteers. Although this study found support for the measurement of the nonprofit-volunteer relationship by focusing on residents of different communities, it did not specifically look at one particular organization. An in-depth analysis of one organization would provide additional insight into how organizations can develop relationships with their volunteers. Then, scholars would be in a position to offer volunteer management programs not only the tool for measuring

their relationship with volunteers but also strategies for improving that relationship.

References

Allen, K. (2006). From motivation to action through volunteer friendly organizations. *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration, 24*(1), 41-44.

Brudney, J. L. (2005). Designing and managing volunteer programs. In R. D. Herman (Ed.), *The Jossey-Bass handbook of nonprofit leadership and management* (pp. 310-345). Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.

Bruning, S. D., & Galloway, T. (2003). Expanding the organization-public relationship scale: Exploring the role that structural and personal commitment play in organization-public relationships. *Public Relations Review, 29*(3), 309-319.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2005). *Volunteering in the United States, 2005.* Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Labor.

Clary, E. G., & Snyder, M. (1999). The motivations to volunteer: Theoretical and practical considerations. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 8*(5), 156-159.

Dwyer, F. R., Schurr, P. H., & Oh, S. (1987). Developing buyer-seller relationships. *Journal of Marketing, 51*(April), 11-27.

Ferguson (1984, August). *Building theory in public relations: Interorganizational relationships as a public relations paradigm*. Paper presented to the Association for education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Gainesville, FL.

Gallagher, S. (1994). Doing their share: Comparing help given by older and younger adults. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 56*, 567-578.

Greeno, C., & Maccoby, E. (1993). How different is the different voice? In M. J. Larrabee (Ed.), *An ethic of care* (pp. 193-198). New York: Routledge.

Grube, J. A., & Piliavin, J. A. (2000). Role identity, organizational experiences, and volunteer performance. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26*(9), 1108-1119.

Hager, M. A., & Brudner, J. L. (2004). Volunteer management practices and retention of volunteers. Retrieved online March 3, 2007, from http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411005_VolunteerManagement.pdf

Hayghe, H. (1991). Volunteers in the US: Who donates their time? *Monthly Labor Review*, 114, 16-24.

Hon, L. C., & Grunig, J. E. (1999). *Guidelines for measuring relationships in public relations*. Gainesville, FL: The Institute for Public Relations. Retrieved January 30, 2006, http://www.instituteforpr.com/pdf/1999_guide_measure_relationships.pdf

Ledingham, J. A., & Bruning, S. D. (1998). Relationship management in public relations: Dimensions of an

organization–public relationship. *Public Relations Review, 24*(1), 55-65.

Ledingham, J. A., Bruning, S. D. (2000). *Public relations as relationship management: A relational approach to the study and practice of public relations*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lysakowski, L. (2003). What's in it for me? *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising, 39*, 53-64.

Mesch, D. J., Rooney, P. M., Chin, W., Steinberg, K. S. (2002). Race and gender differences in philanthropy: Indiana as a test case. *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising, 37*, 65-77.

Mills, R. S., Pederson, J., & Grusec, J. E. (1989). Sex differences in reasoning and emotion about altruism. *Sex Roles*, *20*, 603-621.

Smith, D. H. (1994). Determinants of voluntary association participation and volunteering: A literature review. *Nonprofit and Volunteer Sector Quarterly, 23*, 243-263.

Sundeen, R. (1990). Family life course status and volunteer behavior. *Sociological Perspectives*, *33,* 483-500.

Wilson, J., & Musick, M. (1997). Who cares? Toward an integrated theory of volunteering. *American Sociological Review, 62*, 694-713.

About the Authors

Richard D. Waters is an assistant professor in the Department of Communications in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at North Carolina State University. His research interests include the fundraising process, relationship management and cultivation in the nonprofit sector, and the use of public relations by nonprofit organizations. He is a former fundraising practitioner and consultant to healthcare organizations in Northern California.

Denise Bortree is an assistant professor of communication in the College of Communication at Penn State University. Her research interests include relationship management, online communication, and youth and media. She is a former marketing and communications manager for a Fortune 500 company.

Appendix A

Dimensions	Question Items
Trust	The organization respects its volunteers.
	The organization can be relied on to keep its promises.
	When the organization makes important decisions, it is concerned about its volunteers.
	I believe the organization takes the opinions of volunteers into account when making decisions.
	I feel very confident about the organization's ability to accomplish its mission.
	The organization does not have the ability to meet its goals and objectives. (Reverse coded)
Satisfaction	Volunteers are happy with the organization.
	Both the organization and its volunteers benefit from the relationship.
	Most volunteers are happy with their interactions with the organization.
	Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship the organization has established with me.
	The organization fails to satisfy the needs of its volunteers. (Reverse coded)
	Most volunteers enjoy dealing with this organization.
Commitment	I feel that the organization is trying to maintain a long-term commitment with its volunteers.
	I cannot see that the organization wants to maintain a relationship with its volunteers. (Reverse coded)
	There is a long-lasting bond between the organization and its volunteers.
	Compared to other nonprofit organizations, I value my relationship with this organization more.
	I would rather have a relationship with this organization than not.
Power Balance	The organization and volunteers are attentive to each other's needs.
	The organization does not believe the opinions and concerns of its volunteers are important. (Reverse coded)
	I believe volunteers have influence on the decision-makers of the organization.
	The organization really listens to what its volunteers have to say.
	When volunteers interact with this organization, they have a sense of control over the situation.
	This organization really listens to what its volunteers have to say.

Winning Volunteer Scenarios: The Soul of a New Machine

Lucas C.P.M. Meijs
Erasmus University
Rotterdam School of Management
Department of Business - Society Management
P.O. Box 1738
3000 DR Rotterdam
The Netherlands
E-mail: LMEYS@RSM.NL

Jeffrey L. Brudney, Ph.D.
Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs
Cleveland State University
2121 Euclid Avenue, UR 238A
Cleveland, OH 44115 USA
Tel. 216-687-5269 * FAX 216-687-9342 * E-mail: brudney@urban.csuohio.edu

Abstract

In this article we introduce a new metaphor of volunteer involvement based on a "slot machine," founded on generating "winning volunteer scenarios." We define a volunteer scenario as a combination of the Assets of a potential volunteer, the Availability of volunteers, and a particular volunteer Assignment or job offered by the host organization. Our model seeks to optimize "winning" volunteer scenarios -- that is, triple A ratings (AAA) -- in which the Assets and Availability a potential volunteer brings to the organization is matched with, or negotiated to fulfill, an organizational Assignment. The article shows that this model can be useful in understanding changes in the world of volunteerism, designing strategies to adapt to them in a variety of organizational contexts, and helping both individuals and organizations learn how to create and integrate diverse offers of time and resources from prospective volunteers.

Keywords:
episodic volunteering, matching, assets, availability, assignments

The past two decades have witnessed great changes in the scope and nature of volunteering. Scholars of volunteerism and participation document the assumed "passing" of the traditional volunteer, the rise of episodic (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Handy, Brodeur, & Cnaan, 2006; Macduff, 2005) and other forms of volunteering (stipended, service-learning, employee volunteer programs, campaigning, virtual, etc.), an apparent loss of social capital (Putnam, 2000), the emergence of postmodernism (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003), and problems in building citizenship and community. Practitioners in the field of volunteerism, such as directors of volunteer programs or resources, find themselves at the front lines of these changes, and struggle to make sense of them, let alone to cope with them. Such dramatic changes prompt volunteerism experts Steve McCurley and Susan J. Ellis (2003, p. 1) to ask, "Are We using the wrong model for volunteer work?"

In this article we introduce a novel model for adapting to these changes based on analogy to a "slot machine." The model is founded on generating "winning volunteer scenarios." The article shows that the new

model can be useful in understanding changes in the world of volunteerism, designing strategies to adjust to them in a variety of organizational contexts, and helping both individuals and organizations learn how to create and integrate diverse offers of time and resources from prospective volunteers. We begin by differentiating types of volunteers; we then introduce and explicate the slot machine metaphor and it's application to volunteerism.

Emerging Types Of Volunteers

Despite the complexity of volunteering, most offers and requests to contribute time can be broken down into two basic components: availability and assets. Discussions of episodic versus traditional volunteering center nearly exclusively on the issue of (changing) availability (Cnaan & Handy, 2005; Handy, Brodeur & Cnaan, 2006; Macduff, 2005). Episodic volunteering can be defined as giving one's time sporadically without an ongoing commitment, only during special times of the year, or at one-time events, often in the form of self-contained and time-specific projects (Weber, 2002). By *traditional*, we mean volunteering at regularly scheduled intervals, such as weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly on an ongoing basis. We can thus classify episodic volunteers as having *low* availability for organizational assignments, and traditional volunteers as having relatively *high* availability.

Our model introduces the concept of volunteer assets into this mix, that is, the talents, capabilities, knowledge, and expertise that volunteers wish to use or apply in their assignments, or those elements that the host organization needs or is willing to accept. For heuristic purposes, we again classify assets into the categories *low* and *high*, with the caveat that the classification is not an inherent quality but an assessment of the assets the prospective volunteer wishes to devote to an assignment or that the organization cares to use. Cross-tabulating availability and assets in Table 1 yields four emerging types of volunteers that confront administrators of volunteer programs. For convenience, we label the different types *service*, *star*, *sweat*, and *specialist*.

Service volunteers are characterized as offering high availability but low assets. These are the traditional back-bone volunteers who supplied the donated labor on which so many social services are predicated and traditional volunteer programs built. We stereotype them as low assets not because of anything inherent to their capabilities, but because volunteer programs may not have called upon them or expected them to use many of their assets

Table 1. *Emerging Types of Volunteers*

Traditional/ Episodic	Assets	Availability	Emerging Type of Volunteer
Traditional	Low	High	Service
	High	High	Star
	Low	Low	Sweat
Episodic	High	Low	Specialist

in volunteering. These volunteers simply gave their time or services based upon more or less general competencies and what the organization asked them to do.

Stars are volunteers with high availability that host organizations engage precisely to benefit from their assets, such as high levels of professional training or accomplishment, influence in the community, association with important decision-makers, etc. These volunteers might make ideal board members. Organizations design positions around their assets, which might include legal, accounting, risk management, etc.

Sweat volunteers have low availability and also low assets to contribute for a given assignment. In many cases, they include younger volunteers and students engaged in service learning, who may just be starting work in organizations and lack experience. Alternatively, they encompass individuals changing careers and looking to volunteering for professional development or experimentation but without the skills or background to proceed (Handy & Brudney, 2007). They can also be trained professionals looking to do something outside of their chosen career field (for example, a doctor who would like to prepare meals). From the perspective of the organization, these volunteers bring few assets to the assignment beyond those commonly encountered.

Specialists again have low availability, but they have high assets that they wish to contribute. Accomplished professionals such as doctors, engineers, attorneys, and highly trained people spanning the gamut of fields (including the physical, natural, biological, organizational, and other sciences) may wish to donate their talents to recipient organizations for concentrated, nonrecurring time intervals. Indeed, they may not have the opportunity (availability) to contribute these valuable skills on an ongoing basis but are attracted to episodic volunteering.

For heuristic purposes, Table 1 displays the dimensions and resulting types of volunteers as categorical. In actuality, they are continuous and dynamic. Individual offers to volunteer fall along a continuum from low to high, and the assets they bring or are asked to apply in organizational assignments are likewise variegated. With regard to types, individuals can choose to be "sweat" volunteers in one organization, while they are "stars" in another. Within the same organization, too, individuals can transition or change from one type of volunteering to another. For example, a change in the life circumstances of a volunteer (for example, retirement) can increase availability so that a "specialist" volunteer becomes a star. We would also hope that an organization provides opportunities for asset-building and productive experiences that can transform "sweat" volunteers into "specialists." As well, they might offer "sweat" possibilities to former "stars" who want to lessen their engagement but remain involved.

The types of emerging volunteers identified and described here are logical categories for analysis, not judgments of the value of the contribution. Indeed, our model presented below is intended to adept to these developments in the world of volunteerism and optimize the involvement of all four types of volunteers.

Optimizing Winning Volunteer Scenarios

Understanding that the dimensions and types of volunteering are dynamic, we require a more dynamic way of negotiating volunteer assignments in host organizations. In our judgment, we need to move beyond the dichotomy of either starting from existing volunteers to define organizational tasks, or, alternatively, beginning with pre-set tasks to recruit volunteers that "fit" them

(Meijs and Hoogstad, 2001). Also there is a growing understanding that different organizational settings necessitate different models of managing volunteers to include the matching and selection process (Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001; Rochester 1999). We seek and develop a new model that incorporates both perspectives.

For this purpose, we introduce the metaphor of the slot machine to create "volunteer scenarios." A volunteer scenario is a combination of the *assets* the volunteer has and wants to offer or develop, the *availability* of the potential volunteer to offer them, and the volunteer *assignments* the organization has to engage her or him in this activity. Volunteer assets consist of skills, competencies, and resources; availability pertains to frequency, duration, and location; and assignments embrace goal-oriented and task-oriented.

In our model, volunteer scenarios can be "winning" or "losing." A winning scenario is a feasible combination of volunteer assets and availability with a volunteer assignment -- an AAA match -- that is accepted by the volunteer. A losing scenario is a nonfeasible combination; such as an individual with low, general assets for the assignment who is available for only 4 hours a year but wants to be chair of a Red Cross chapter (an assignment requiring specific skills and high availability). The volunteer scenario machine conceptualization offers a promising method to create and optimize winning volunteer scenarios.

In this article we present and discuss the model conceptually, although we see no inherent obstacle to developing a computer program or interactive Web site that would put it into practice. We use the slot machine metaphor because it is readily understood and communicated, yet distills and conveys important insights for the engagement of volunteers.

As in a slot machine, our model begins with three tumblers that represent the components of a volunteer scenario: assets, availability, and assignments. These three tumblers combine to form winning (feasible) or losing (non-feasible) volunteer scenarios. Just as the slot machine player seeks a pay-off by matching three tumblers, the prospective volunteer tries to find a winning volunteer scenario, that is, a practicable combination that meets her or his preferences for involvement. We envision, that much like the slot machine, the potential volunteer will play the volunteer scenario machine repeatedly until she or he encounters a winning volunteer scenario. In that happy circumstance, the administrator of volunteer services would follow-up with the standard tools of the profession, such as further screening, orientation, training, and eventual placement.

Alternatively, if in playing the game, potential volunteers *lose* too much or too often -- that is, they fail to encounter feasible winning volunteer scenarios in which their offers of availability and assets match organizational assignments -- the volunteer administrator is to intervene and provide assistance in the matching process. At this stage the opportunities for learning are robust, for both sides. For his or her part, the volunteer administrator would explain to prospective volunteers the reasons that the offer to volunteer is not feasible (lack of availability for organizational assignments, lack of assets, or both) and work with them to remedy the situation. In complementary fashion, the administrator of volunteer services would consider if, in light of the offer to volunteer (that is, combination of availability and assets), organizational assignments should be altered or new ones created to increase the stock and diversity of winning volunteer scenarios. The purpose of the volunteer scenario machine is, thus, not to "fill"

positions, but to optimize the opportunities for successful volunteer engagement.

Accordingly, the volunteer scenario machine differs in important ways from conventional, organization-centered approaches to volunteer job design and placement (compare Culp et al., 1998; McCurley & Lynch, 1996; Ellis, 1996a, 1996b; Brudney, 1990; Wilson, 1976). First, any of the three concepts or *tumblers* (assets, availabilities, and assignments) can be used as a starting point for a potential volunteer or an organization to create a winning volunteer scenario: The organization, or the volunteer, can begin the *game* from assets (what resources do the volunteer want to contribute and that the organization also needs?), availabilities (how often and for what length of time does the volunteer want to contribute, and can important organizational tasks be accomplished within this framework?), or assignments (what tasks might motivate the volunteer and at the same time satisfy organizational needs?).

The second, more fundamental difference is that in developing volunteer scenarios, the needs of the organization are not the only focal point. Also the needs of the volunteer, and we would argue, of the client but most important the community over the long run, have to be taken into account. Through mutual learning, the goal is to create so many winning volunteer scenarios that the machine yields a profitable (if not optimal) pay-off for all volunteer "players," that is, the four types of volunteers identified above: service, star, sweat, and specialist. In this conception the "house" (organization, client, and community) wins only to the extent that potential volunteers also succeed by finding winning volunteer scenarios. In our view, volunteer administration can no longer be only about "tapping the resources of your community" (Ellis, 1996b, p. 107) but also has an obligation to maintain and grow these resources in the long run.

To do so, the volunteer scenario machine shifts the focus from filling pre-determined volunteer jobs to designing and maximizing winning volunteer scenarios. In the short-run, organizations may not realize an immediate pay-off from some volunteers. Handy and Brudney (2006) acknowledge that volunteers can "cost more than they return" to the host organization (Graff, 2006, p. 24), especially when they bring low assets and uncertain availability, or when organizational assignments are haphazard. Nevertheless, as Handy and Brudney (2006) argue, they are still worth the "investment," as a result of the positive externalities or spillovers volunteer involvement generates for the community. As Graff (2006, p. 25) observes… most volunteering is organized to generate benefits beyond the persons engaged in it. Hence, it is widely acknowledged that volunteering can produce benefits for the organization engaging the volunteer and/or for service users, program participants, and communities at large. In this sense there is usually an expectation that volunteers will generate value through their involvement.

In sum, the volunteer scenario machine is concerned with fostering learning by individuals and organizations that will generate and increase the possible opportunities for volunteer involvement in the community.

Deconstructing The Machine: Tumblers

The most visible parts of the volunteer scenario machine are the tumblers. As described above, a volunteer scenario is a combination of the assets the volunteer has and wants to offer, the availability of this offer, and the volunteer assignments the organization creates or provides.

The first tumbler represents the assets a volunteer wants to exercise or extend in an

assignment. We draw on research by Cnaan and Amrofell (1994), who proposed Volunteer Mapping Sentences as a categorizing device to track differences in types of volunteering so that apparently disparate research findings could be more easily comprehended and cumulated. Cnaan and Amrofell described ten facets of volunteering, including what is being volunteered (such as service, expense, prestige, connections). In our model, the assets tumbler consists of three components: skills, competencies, and resources. Skills can be general, or can be specialist proven skills (Ellis, 1996a). For the assets tumbler the generalist skills are called *competencies*. Specialist skills can be in line with what the organization uses in its core business or not. Resources encompass the things the volunteer may bring to the assignment, such as use of a computer, office space, transportation, etc. Important for this tumbler is that it is the potential volunteer who decides what she or he will give to the organization. If, for example, an accountant does not want to donate that skill but prefers to do direct service, the organization gets a generalist skill.

The second tumbler is the availability of the volunteer. As discussed above, changes in the availability of potential volunteers toward more episodic engagements constitute one of the most critical trends in volunteerism. Again we rely on a facet of Cnaan and Amrofell (1994) to include frequency of the volunteer offer (for example, times per year or per month) and its duration (for example, number of hours per volunteer session). We extend this facet or tumbler to include other availability factors, such as geographical location for volunteering (on-site, off-site, automobile, virtual, etc.).

The third assignment tumbler consists of two main categories: goal-oriented and task-oriented. These two categories are not exactly the same as direct service (working with clients) and indirect service (working for but not in direct contact with clients). The goal-oriented classification is the broader categorization that helps potential volunteers make the crucial first choice of the policy area or focus in which they would like to donate their time (that is, youth service, recreation, health care, literacy, etc.). To a large degree these choices have already been made by the volunteer before she or he seeks to find a winning volunteer scenario in a particular organization. The volunteer scenario machine presumes that the policy preferences of volunteers are met, and offers them assignments within this broader domain given their particular assets and availabilities. The task-oriented category is most similar to what current volunteer administration defines as volunteer positions.

Table 2 portrays the main features of the volunteer scenario machine, with illustrative detail. We emphasize that the particular characteristics of the tumblers will differ by host organization: Each agency must explicate the assets, availability, and assignments tumblers in accordance with the assets it regards as most useful and meaningful; the availability parameters that it views as most relevant and critical for effective participation; and the assignments that it seeks to place and accomplish.

Populating a Database of Feasible (Winning) Volunteer Scenarios

The central element to the volunteer scenario machine is a database of feasible volunteer scenarios. Ideally for a given organization, this database will be developed with input from prospective volunteers, and will include a wide variety of feasible volunteer scenarios commensurate with the preferences of emerging types of volunteers (see above). For illustrative purposes Table 3 presents a few examples.

Table 2. *Tumblers for the Volunteer Scenario Machine*

Assets Tumbler	**Availability Tumbler**	**Assignment Tumbler**
The assets the potential volunteer wants to offer	*The availability of the potential volunteer*	*The assignment for the potential volunteer*
Skills • Specific skills related to the core business of the organization • Specific skills not related to the core business of the organization	Frequency • Times willing to volunteer per year or per month, etc.	Goal-oriented assignment • Part of program in which volunteer prefers to work • Target groups or clients whom volunteer wants to help
Competencies • Prestige, contacts, general capabilities, etc.	Duration • Number of hours per volunteer session, etc.	Task-oriented assignment • Administrative, indirect service, direct service, fund raising, special, events, public relations, advocacy, etc.
Resources • Computer, fax machine, automobile, office space, etc.	Location • On-site, off-site, automobile, virtual, etc.	

Table 3. *Illustrative Feasible (Winning) Volunteer Scenarios*

	Assets	**Availability**	**Assignment**
1	General competencies	4 hours a year, on-site	Help with festival to recruit new members on certain days
2a	Specialist skills, non-core (financial)	A few times a year on call, virtually	Financial adviser to the board
2b	Specialist skills, non-core (legal)	A few times a year on call, virtually	Legal adviser to the board
3a	Specialist skills, core (first aid)	Bi-weekly on Saturday	First aid volunteer at bi-weekly home soccer game
3b	Specialist skills, core (first aid)	A few times on call, on site, hometown	First aid volunteer at special tournaments
4a	Specialist skills, core (violin player)	Monthly 4 hours, on site, hometown	Perform in orchestra of church choir
4b	Specialist skills, non-core (violin player)	Monthly 4 hours, on site, anywhere	Perform at volunteer recognition event with Red Cross
5	Prestige and contacts	A few times per year	"Celebrity" Ambassador

We can illustrate nonfeasible volunteer scenarios based on the feasible (winning) scenarios depicted in Table 3. The first example becomes nonfeasible immediately if specific skills are needed, or if the availability is only off-site, or if the organization offers only very limited days. The second example likewise becomes nonfeasible if the potential volunteer wants to offer specialist skills (for example, legal) that are not needed at this moment. The third scenario becomes difficult if the soccer association plays on Sundays, or if the days of the tournaments do not meet the schedule of the potential volunteer.

The database of feasible volunteer scenarios can be created in different ways. The first way is quite traditional: The volunteer administrator develops a range of assignments and defines minimum and maximum values for assets and availabilities. Ellis (1996a) and McCurley and Lynch (1996) present methods of volunteer job design based on involving paid staff. In this way many winning volunteer scenarios might be created in advance. As an illustration, for the assignment to be a chair for a local scouting chapter, the minimum availability might be 4 hours bi-weekly with a maximum of 8 hours per week, on site, requiring assets such as well-developed general competencies and proven skills in chairing. For the assignment to be an organizational "celebrity" ambassador, (i.e., a well-known or -recognized spokesperson) (Table 3), the requirements for availability might be very low, but the assets needed, such as prestige, contacts, and reputation, would be very high and selective.

The second approach to developing a database of feasible volunteer scenarios is quite nontraditional. It begins with the organization seriously considering the different minimum and maximum availabilities of potential volunteers, and carefully examining and questioning whether it can/should devise meaningful volunteer assignments to accommodate them. The same procedure can be implemented from the starting point of assets: Can/should the organization design assignments to meet all the assets offered? This approach can lead to the development of new, probably noncore business related assignments.

A third, non-traditional approach made possible by the volunteer scenario machine is for administrators of volunteer resources to keep track of all "losing" availability and/or assets readings of potential volunteers, and to discuss with them possible assignments that would make a winning scenario: both volunteers and organizations can learn as a result. The opportunity for the former is to become more realistic about their availability in light of aspirations for asset use or development. For the latter, the learning centers around becoming more adept and creative in regard to developing volunteer assignments attuned to societal changes. The volunteer assignments are revised and incorporated into the database of feasible (winning) volunteer scenarios.

This last method, in particular, illustrates the feedback and mutual learning that the volunteer scenario machine builds into the volunteer-organization negotiation process. It does not start from the perspective of the organization and is not dominated by it.

A New Conception of Volunteer Matching and Selection

According to Ellis (1996a, pp. 94-95), in the matching and selection process a volunteer administrator should explain honestly to prospective volunteers the tasks that need to be done, the context of the work, the time considerations, possible out of pocket costs, the training the organization offers, the qualifications and characteristics

that would be ideal, and the benefits for the volunteer (cf. Brudney, 1990). Rather than finding the best candidates for vacant volunteer positions by "screening out," the volunteer scenario machine conceptualization aims at "screening in." That is, the purpose of applying the model is to find or create meaningful assignments that give (all) interested individuals an opportunity to demonstrate the investment they are prepared (assets) and willing (availability) to make in volunteering (assignment). This perspective leads to having many feasible volunteer scenarios, some of which may not fall within the core business of the organization but are important, nevertheless, in building community capacity.

A concern that we have and alleviate through our model is that by refusing offers of citizens to contribute time, organizations lessen the chances for future engagement, not only within their own auspices but also for other groups, agencies, and causes in the community. Moreover, since giving time and giving money are highly correlated, diminishing the supply of volunteers will likely decrease the number of financial contributors to nonprofit institutions and activity in the community as well. These effects seem to be particularly pronounced among younger people, and are likely to be carried over the life-course with negative consequences for community building.

A study by the Independent Sector Organization (2002) in the United States found that adults who participated in volunteering in their youth give more money and volunteer more time than adults who began their philanthropy later in life. Fully two-thirds of adult volunteers began volunteering their time when they were young, and adults who began volunteering as youth are twice as likely to volunteer as those who did not volunteer when they were younger. In every income and age group, those who volunteered as a youth contributed more and volunteered more than those who did not. The Independent Sector (2002) report strongly suggests that choking off the influx of people into volunteering by refusing their offers is hazardous to community health.

From the perspective of the volunteer scenario machine conceptualization, this problem translates into not having or finding suitable assignments that match the assets and availabilities offered by prospective volunteers. A strength of the model is that the volunteer, or the organization, can begin the matching process with any tumbler: assets, availability, or assignments. The approach fails when these potential service collaborators can arrive at no winning scenario, that is, feasible combination of the volunteer's assets and availabilities that can be matched to the organizational assignments that move prospective volunteers -- a result we wish to avoid. Before this juncture is reached, however, the model calls for the volunteer administrator to discuss with the prospective volunteer the reasons why there is no winning match, and what can be done by either or both parties to resolve the impasse. This is an important feedback loop offered by the approach.

Perhaps the problem lies in rote reliance on today's winning volunteer scenarios, which can reduce the flexibility and adaptability of the organization to meet its own needs and those of volunteers over the long run. Or, perhaps there are institutional obstacles to volunteering that can be ameliorated (Ellis, 1996a). Or the reason may be that potential volunteers bring novel or unique assets that need to be translated into new winning volunteer scenarios.

But it can, of course, also be the case that the potential volunteer seeks an impossible or unrealistic combination of assets, availability, and assignments. In this instance the volunteer administrator needs to

educate or negotiate with the potential volunteer. Conceptually one can say that this potential volunteer is over-demanding in the sense that she or he seeks to maximize the pay-offs for herself or himself at the expense of the organization, the client, or the community.

This type of feedback comes from repeated playing of the game in which potential volunteers and the volunteer administrator discover that there are not enough winning volunteer scenarios. The implication: the tumblers have to be adjusted or expanded so that more winning volunteer scenarios are possible. If potential volunteers continue to play the scenario machine but too rarely or never receive a pay-off, that is, a winning volunteer scenario, the danger is that they will become disillusioned, frustrated or worse, and elect not to play the game again -- much to their own detriment, and that of the client, the organization, and the community. The volunteer scenario machine is designed to encourage learning to minimize, or overcome, this negative outcome. In this way it will improve the long-run volunteerability in the community (Meijs et al, 2006).

Conclusions

The volunteer universe is changing. New volunteers, mainly episodic, dot the landscape. Volunteer administrators seem to be very active and inventive in chunking existing job descriptions into much smaller parts to accommodate them. Yet, the volunteer universe is not traditional or episodic -- it is both and all gradations in between. We maintain that organizations working with volunteers need to develop winning volunteer scenarios that together over the long run are:

- useful for organizations and clients by providing more and better services.
- attractive for potential volunteers and at the same time offer them enough flexibility to be able to do something for the organization (and for themselves) within their assets and availabilities.
- conducive to change in the asset and availability combinations of volunteers.
- helpful in building the volunteer capacity of the community

In this article we have developed a volunteer scenario machine. conceptualization with the objective of generating multiple winning volunteer scenarios attractive to different types of volunteers. The types are defined by their assets and availabilities: service, star, sweat, and specialist volunteers. Volunteer administrators need to invest strategically both in creating assignments attuned to these volunteers and in educating prospective volunteers to the concept of winning volunteer scenarios. Our model offers one approach to meeting these vital, inter-related goals.

References

Brudney, J. L. (1990). *Fostering volunteer programs in the public sector, planning, initiating, and managing voluntary activities*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Cnaan, R. A., & Amrofell, L.M. (1994*). Mapping volunteer activity.* Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, *23*(4), 335-351.

Cnaan, R., & Handy, F. (2005). Toward understanding episodic volunteering. *Vrijwillige Inzet Onderzocht [Voluntary effort studied]*, *2*(1), 28-35.

Culp, K., Deppe, C. A., Castillo, J. X., & Wells, B. J. (1998). The GEMS model of volunteer administration. *Journal of Volunteer Administration*, *16*(4), 36-41.

Ellis, S. J. (1996a). *The volunteer recruitment (and membership development) book.* Philadelphia, PA: Energize.

Ellis, S. J. (1996b). *From the top down; the executive role in volunteer program success* (Rev. ed.). Philadelphia, PA: Energize.

Graff, L.L. (2006). Declining profit margin: When volunteers cost more than they return. *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration, XXIV*(1), 24-32.

Handy, F., & Brudney, J. L. (2007). When to use volunteer labor resources? An Organizational Analysis for Nonprofit Management. Vrijwillige Inzet Onderzocht [Voluntary effort studied], 4*(supplement), 91-100.*

Handy, F., Brodeur, N., & Cnaan, R.A. (2006). Summer on the island: Episodicvolunteering. *Voluntary Action*, *7*(3), 31-46.

Hustinx, L., & Lammertyn, F. (2003). Collective and reflexive styles of volunteering: A sociological modernization perspective. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, *14*(2), 167-187.

Independent Sector (2002). *Engaging youth in lifelong service*. Washington, D.C.

Macduff, N. (2005). Societal Changes and the rise of the episodic volunteer pp. 49-61, in J. L. Brudney (Ed.), *Emerging areas of volunteering*. Indianapolis, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA).

Macduff, N., Netting, F. E., & O'Connor, M. K. (2006). Rethinking the nature of volunteerism: A multi-paradigmatic approach to volunteer management. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, Chicago, IL, November 16-18, 2006.

McCurley, S., & Ellis, S.J. (2003). Thinking the unthinkable: Are we using the wrong model for volunteer work? *e-Volunteerism 3*(3). Retrieved August 19, 2008 from http://www.e-volunteerism.com/quarterly/03apr/pov3c.php

McCurley, S., & Lynch, R. (1996). *Volunteer management: Mobilizing all the resources of the community.* Downers Grove, IL: Heritage Arts Publishing.

Meijs, L.C.P.M., & Hoogstad, E. (2001). New ways of managing volunteers: Combining membership management and programme management. *Voluntary Action*, *3*(3), 41-61.

Meijs, L.C.P.M., Ten Hoorn, E.M., & Brudney, J.L. (2006). Improving societal use of human resources: From employability to volunteerability. *Voluntary Action*, *8*(2), 35-51.

Putnam, R.D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rochester, C. (1999). One size does not fit all: Four models of involving volunteers in voluntary organizations. *Voluntary Action*, *1*(2), 7-20

Weber, M. (2002). What can be learned about episodic volunteers form a national survey of giving and volunteering? Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of The Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), Montreal, Canada, November 13-16.

Wilson, M. (1976). *The effective management of volunteer programs.* Boulder, CO: Johnson Publishing Company.

About the Authors

Jeffrey Brudney is the Albert A. Levin Chair of Urban Studies and Public Service at Cleveland State University's Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs. He frequently publishes on the management of volunteers and volunteering policy in the United States.

Lucas Meijs is professor of volunteering, civil society and businesses at the RSM Erasmus University, The Netherlands. He frequently publishes on the management of volunteers and corporate community involvement.

The Congress of Volunteer Administrator Associations (COVAA): Looking Forward

Rita Chick
Chief Human Resources Officer
American Red Cross
Bay Area Chapter
85 Second Street, San Francisco, CA 94105
Tel. 415-427-8112 * FAX 415-427-8122 * E-mail: chickr@usa.redcross.org

Joanna Johnson, CVA
Volunteer Services Coordinator
Town Lake Animal Center
Austin, TX 78703
Tel. 512-972-6017 * FAX: 512-972-6036 * E-mail: Joanna.Johnson@ci.austin.tx

Abstract

The Congress of Volunteer Administrator Associations (COVAA) formed as a result of a historical convening of official representatives of existing associations of volunteer program managers throughout the United States. Mandated by the delegates, COVAA's Steering Committee is committed to forming a new national association for leaders in volunteer engagement that is positive, relevant, and sustainable. Maximizing the opportunity to create a vibrant, healthy organization, the building process has been intentional, strategic, and inclusive of a variety of stakeholders, both inside and outside the traditional volunteer management field. The following article describes the origins of COVAA, its goals, and the exciting opportunity that faces the field in this birthing process.

Keywords

volunteers, professional association, leadership, professional, congress

Every leader of volunteers recognizes the power of citizen involvement in creating change in communities. To ensure maximum impact, such power must be harnessed and channeled through effective volunteer management practices and systems. To enhance and sustain the positive impacts of volunteers in our diverse communities, the Congress of Volunteer Administrator Associations (COVAA) serves as the catalyst to foster collaboration, promote professional development, define best practices, and advocate for leaders in volunteer engagement.

A New Approach

In 2006, after the dissolution of the Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA), representatives from the field of volunteer management engaged in lengthy dialogue about the feasibility and need for a new national professional association. In December, a group of roughly 90 delegates, representing more than 6,000 volunteer managers from across the United States, gathered in Denver, Colorado to begin to organize around questions such as:

- What are existing associations already doing well?
- What might a national organization provide that is value-added?

- How might a congress encourage the formation of new associations in geographic areas without such a group now?
- What might be the interrelationship between a national congress and local associations?

In short, COVAA began as a grassroots *event* to ensure that all involved with the field of volunteer management would have the opportunity to participate in determining the future of the profession. It was a first-ever convening of official representatives of existing associations of volunteer program managers throughout the United States. During an intensive two-day process of thoughtful dialogue, delegates of the congress voted to form a new, national member association for leaders in volunteer engagement. Funding for these activities has been provided by the Volunteer IMPACT Fund and The Leighty Foundation, as well as many individual donors.

Guided by Passion and Purpose

Since the Congress in Denver, a select group of delegates have been charged with designing this new national entity. The Steering Committee—made up of dozens of passionate leaders in volunteer management from around the country—is working very thoughtfully to ensure that the new membership association is relevant, positive, and sustainable. All of these leaders are donating their expertise and time by serving on a sub-committee. The sub-committees are led by the volunteer Steering Committee with the assistance of a paid project strategist.

COVAA is following a broad, inclusive path that will lead to a strong professional association. Steering Committee members are systematically building a national membership association to assist in meeting the needs of volunteer managers as well as serving as a primary connector between efforts across the field of volunteer management. Besides being a resource for the profession and local DOVIA (Directors of Volunteers in Agencies) chapters, the new organization is going to be an advocacy organization on behalf of the profession, a standard bearer, and a developer of leaders for our communities.

Part of the Steering Committee's mandate is to establish a formal association quickly, while taking the time to do it well. The goal is to complete organizational development and hand off the new association to its first board of directors by January 2008. The Steering Committee believes that this building process is as important as the ultimate goal. They are dedicated to maximizing this opportunity to build a healthy foundation for the new organization by thinking strategically about its direction, the future of volunteerism, and the implications for the field.

Maximizing the Opportunity to Create a New Direction

Since the demise of AVA, a vacuum has been created. Many organizations have stepped up to fill the gap or take advantage of the opportunity to become part of the volunteer management sector. The result has been sector fragmentation. The sector needs alignment. COVAA has observed all of this and is looking intentionally at the various fragments in the sector to better understand what role we can provide and what gap in the sector we can fill.

To date, several exciting possibilities are being sketched through dialogue and collaboration. A sampling of these possibilities include: providing support on a regional basis to ensure accessibility to members; using the model of an association of associations to unite the field across areas of geographical and resource differences; and the potential of creating a certification process for volunteer programs so that

organizations would be rewarded for fully investing in their volunteer program structure. COVAA is looking to help provide uniformity in the field as a convener and collaborator.

In addition, there is recognition of the increasing number of volunteers who are engaged in less formal, grassroots, community engagement activities. The leaders of these volunteers may not see themselves as "professional volunteer managers", yet they would appreciate and benefit from the support of a network like COVAA. We are exploring how to broaden our reach to all leaders in community engagement (paid or unpaid) and enhancing the spirit of volunteerism in America.

Following a Broad, Inclusive Path

COVAA's building process has and continues to incorporate representatives of the profession that will ultimately be served. In addition, COVAA is looking outside of the usual sphere of volunteer management to obtain input from other people or organizations with a broader perspective. COVAA is especially interested in the input of potential partners to ensure an approach that is relevant. For example, the process for naming the new entity will include thinking about language that resonates with potential members, collaborators, and the general public too. As a result, the new organization that is born will be positive and sustainable.

This past summer, the Steering Committee held a retreat to finish the discussion from the Congress event of last December. At the retreat, delegates worked on organizational identity as a foundation to the business plan and developed project timelines and work plans to ensure sub-committees have a clear picture of the next steps required to build the COVAA foundation. The Steering Committee is working very diligently and thoughtfully to ensure that the new organization has a solid foundation.

The following mission statement is a result of the ongoing work of the Steering Committee. While not yet finalized, it articulates the vision and direction of this new organization. The Steering Committee and the entire delegation are very excited about the potential of this new national association to revolutionize the field of volunteer management and we welcome input and feedback on our progress.

Draft Mission Statement

(New entity name to be determined) serves to enhance and sustain the spirit of volunteerism in America by fostering collaboration and networking, promoting professional development, and providing advocacy for leaders in volunteer engagement.

Laying the Foundation for the Future

Effective volunteer management is a vital component of effective citizen engagement and creating change in communities. COVAA is committed to revolutionizing the field of volunteer management and taking advantage of this juncture in the field to create an organization that will meet the current needs and the future needs of leaders of volunteers. At the same time, COVAA is committed to avoiding duplication of existing resources and serving as a conduit to the wealth of knowledge and information that is available to the field. COVAA will fill a unique niche as an advocate to promote the critical role that leaders of volunteers play in our society. Without a larger entity that represents the best of volunteer management, it will be difficult for the profession to obtain the respect and visibility needed to support volunteer capacity on the local level.

Ultimately, COVAA's vision is to inspire and empower leaders of volunteers to be an effective catalyst for social betterment and change, and that these leaders of volunteers are viewed by all as essential catalysts for invigorating community engagement. To learn more about the Congress of Volunteer Administrator Associations and to get involved, please visit our Web site at www.covaa.org.

About the Authors

Rita Chick has been employed by the American Red Cross since 1989, and is responsible for 110 employees and over 2000 volunteers. She has served on multiple task forces and has given many presentations on volunteer management at Red Cross conferences. Currently, she is a member of the California Diversity Council and states that "The opportunity to serve as Co-Chair of COVAA has been exciting and rewarding."

Joanna Johnson has served as the Volunteer Services Coordinator for a municipal animal shelter in Austin, TX for seven years, and is responsible for the management of 400 volunteers. A former elementary school teacher, she completed her CVA in April of 2007. Her current volunteer experiences include the Central Texas American Red Cross, Pets America, a local Campus Advisory Council, the Parent-Teacher Association, Boy Scouts of America, and church ministry teams.

Building the Association of Volunteer Resource Management (AVRM)

A. Celeste-Sauls Marks, CVA
President and Founder
Association of Volunteer Resources Management
3100 MainStreet #155
Dallas, Texas 75225
Tel. 1-866-627-7643 * FAX 214-853-5880 * celeste.sauls@vrm-roundtable.org

Abstract

The author discusses the creation of a new national association for professional managers of volunteer resources. Conversations that were initiated on the Volunteer Resource Management (VRM) Roundtable listserv in early 2006 resulted in the formation of a team to construct an industry survey. Survey results gathered from 737 respondents clearly identified the areas that professionals felt it was important for a professional organization to address in terms of services and products, and also identified various aspects of the organization, such as geographic scope. Based on the survey results, a taskforce was developed to address a variety of issues and build elements necessary to become a sustainable, transparent organization that was incorporated on March 5, 2007 as the Association of Volunteer resource Management (AVRM). On October 3-5, 2007, the Association held its first national conference in Dallas, Texas. In January 2008, a new board of directors will replace the founding board and will guide the new organization through its continued development focused upon principles of transparency, sustainability, diversity and inclusion.

Keywords:
professional, association, volunteer resource managers

Introduction

Volunteer Resources Managers (VRMs) do very important work everyday. They move people and support nonprofit organizations that provide a wide variety of services. Their hands touch the lives of millions of people everyday. Given the uniqueness of the work they do, they need the best professional support available to them to develop and hone their skills. Without ongoing professional support, VRMs new to the field would not have the training and mentoring support they need. Also, experienced VRMs would not have the continued professional support needed to meet changing industry needs.

The Association of Volunteer Resources Management (AVRM) was created to meet the needs of VRMs in today's world. AVRM was also created with a vision of the future. By developing a flexible organization that is able to adapt the changing industry trends, AVRM will be able to serve professionals well into the future. It all began one evening with a simple idea: Build the new national professional association for VRMs. I was connected with a donor who could provide the web solutions to support the project. That was the beginning of the VRM Roundtable and the journey to build the new association.

Conversations began on the VRM Roundtable listserv and by late March 2006, a team was formed to construct an industry survey. The focus of the survey was to identify and clearly define the types of support that VRMs wanted and needed

most. The survey was posted and drew responses from 737 professionals in the field. The results clearly identified the areas that professionals felt it was important for a professional organization to address in terms of services and products. It also identified various aspects of the organization, such as geographic scope, that would be key to how services would be delivered.

Based on the survey results, a taskforce was developed to address a variety of issues and build elements necessary to become a sustainable, transparent organization. The taskforce was composed on ten teams of 10. Each team was charged with specific tasks to accomplish. Also, each team elected a team leader. Together, these team leaders comprised the Leadership Team who guided the organization's development. Through the industry survey, the Leadership Team was able to develop the philosophical underpinnings that have driven the entire project. Teams continued to work through the summer and fall of 2006 on tasks such as developing the bylaws, governance structure and membership program.

The development of AVRM has been guided by the principles of transparency, sustainability, diversity and inclusion. All discussions and information has been in open forums and shared through the website. Through the efforts of many, the new organization is emerging. Below is a discussion of some of the work that has been accomplished.

Organizational Name

The organization's name was drawn directly from the survey results. In the survey, respondents were asked to identify words they would like to have included in the name of the new association. These words were compiled and a variety of sample names were prepared from the list. These were presented to the members of the VRM Roundtable through a survey in which they could vote on the names they identified with most or suggest alternate names. Ultimately, the name "Association of Volunteer Resources Managers" was selected. A broad spectrum of VRMs felt it was meaningful and correctly reflected their profession.

Mission Statement

The mission statement was developed through a process similar to the naming process. The Taskforce gathered information and posted the elements that had been suggested. After a final vote, the statement was presented to the VRM Roundtable members for a final review. The goal was to develop a mission statement that was narrow enough to guide the organization yet broad enough to encompass the diversity of the field. VRM Roundtable participants made it clear that it needed to be meaningful to all of the VRMs the organization would serve whether paid and unpaid.

The statement that was developed is as follows:

> *The Association of Volunteer Resources Management is a member-driven organization serving Managers of Volunteer Resources in the United States by providing professional development, leveraging resources and promoting effective volunteerism.*

Incorporation

Just a year after the process began, the Association became a reality when it was incorporated on March 5, 2007. The organization was formed under the bylaws developed by the Governance Team. Day to day business elements, such as post office box, phone and fax lines, had been put into place. AVRM has also filed for the 501(C)3 designation from the IRS.

Membership

In August, 100 Cornerstone, or founding, memberships were made available. These memberships represent those individuals who wish to fully support the new organization by building a solid foundation. General membership has also opened.

Conference

On October 3-5, 2007, AVRM held the first national conference in Dallas, Texas. The 100 participants who attended, engaged in workshops and networking sessions that broadened their skills and discussed new industry trends. The conference will continue to be one avenue for VRMs to engage in cutting edge professional development opportunities.

The Road Ahead

AVRM has an unlimited potential. In January 2008, a new board of directors will replace the founding board. Drawing on the vision and passion of the membership, they will guide the new organization through its continued development. The possibilities for future programming, such as online training, is broad. The avenues used to reach the goals of the organization, though, will be driven by the clear purpose for the association which is to leverage resources and serve the professional development needs of all VRMs, regardless of the geographic location, field subject matter or local DOVIA support. It is a tremendous undertaking but one that touch the lives of many people.

About the Author

A. Celeste Sauls-Marks serves as the Agency Relations Director for Dallas County Government Relations and Disaster Management at the Volunteer Center of North Texas (VCNT). As the Founder and Leadership Team Leader for the VRM Roundtable, she is leading the project to build the Association of Volunteer Resources Management. Ms. Sauls-Marks serves as the Editor-In-Chief of Volunteer Management Review and on the Steering Committee of International Volunteer Manager Appreciation Day. As a frequent speaker, Ms. Sauls-Marks' engaging style and insights offer participants the tools to develop and manage robust volunteer programs.

The CVA Credential: A Mark of Excellence

Katherine H. Campbell, CVA
Executive Director
Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration
P.O. Box 467
Midlothian, Virginia 23113 USA
Tel. 804-794-8689 * E-mail: ccva@comcast.net

Abstract

The Certified in Volunteer Administration (CVA) credential offers an important professional development tool for practitioners with at least three years of experience mobilizing and managing volunteers. This performance-based certification program consists of an exam and a written portfolio, and provides a way for individuals and organizations to demonstrate their commitment to excellence.

Keywords:
volunteer management, certification, credentialing

To put CVA after my name ensures to all that I will bring legitimacy, integrity and a high standard of performance to the area of volunteer management."
Nancy Scott, CVA, Nova Scotia, Canada

Introduction

Certification is one of the hallmarks of a profession, and a very effective way for practitioners to demonstrate their commitment to excellence. The field of volunteer resources management is no exception, as represented by the Certified in Volunteer Administration (CVA) credential which is offered by the international Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration.

While the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration is a new organization, the CVA certification program is not new. It was developed over 35 years ago by another international organization, the Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) and underwent a major revision in 2000. In early 2006, when it became clear that AVA was being forced to dissolve, efforts immediately began to preserve the CVA program. Ownership was transferred to the newly created CCVA in June 2006. The Council is now uniquely positioned to greatly expand the impact of the CVA credential through a federated approach involving national and international organizations which support the field of volunteerism and volunteer management.

The CVA is a voluntary designation, grounded in core competencies and standards developed by colleagues and peers. Unlike other certificate programs available from colleges or universities, the CVA credential is not based on a set of required classes or courses. Rather, it is designed to measure an individual's "knowledge-in-use"— the application of knowledge and skills by those with real-life experience in this role. This includes the assessment of a candidate's ability to structure tasks, produce ideas, and solve

problems as measured through an exam and a peer review process.

Over 750 individuals, primarily in the U.S. and Canada, have earned their CVA since the program began, with an average of 100 new candidates registering each year. It is open to salaried and non-salaried individuals from all types of organizations and settings who have at least 3 years of experience in volunteer resources management. The CVA designation is steadily becoming more widely known, and is now beginning to appear in job advertisements for positions in nonprofits and government agencies.

Core Competencies

Individuals pursuing the CVA credential are expected to demonstrate successfully their knowledge and ability to apply skills required for competent volunteer management, based on their actual performance in the role. Periodic surveys (every 4-5 years) are conducted in order to identify critical skills and knowledge relevant to effective volunteer involvement. A task force of practitioners and academic representatives develops the survey, and oversees its distribution to those in the field. This process captures the most current practices in the field and provides a credible basis for professional training, education and certification. The current set of core competencies focus on these areas:

Professional Principles—ethical practice, pluralism, professional development, and advocacy
Leadership—types and models, decision making
Organizational Management—models, tools such as communication and team building, financial and program accountability
Planning—strategic and operational, risk management
Human Resources Management—volunteer program management, supervision, staff/volunteer relationships, information collection, and reporting

Value of the CVA Credential

A highly visible, credible credential sends powerful messages to employers, supervisors, academics and practitioners. It reinforces the need for best practices, ethical standards, and competent management of volunteers as a human resource for accomplishing an organization's mission. It also improves an organization's reputation and community image, thus attracting support from volunteers and donors. Finally, a credential that is promoted and supported across the entire service field becomes the generally accepted foundation for all related training and education.

For the individual manager of volunteers, earning the CVA can bring many personal and professional benefits. Jan Rosser of Norfolk, Virginia, described her experience:

"I am very proud to have become Certified in Volunteer Administration. The process was both challenging and fulfilling. I am fortunate that my supervisor not only encouraged me to apply to the program, but also rewarded me with a compensation increase at the time of completion. In addition, she encouraged me to submit a report to our Board of Directors outlining job titles, descriptions and salaries of those with the CVA distinction. Receiving the CVA is by far one of the most important accomplishments for me in terms of my professional development."

Candidates who complete this certification also find that the process provides a unique opportunity to:

- clarify and articulate personal values and professional ethics
- assess individual expertise against standards of performance
- gain self-esteem through peer recognition

- increase confidence in problem-solving skills
- educate others about volunteer resources management
- increases personal and professional credibility
- demonstrates the transferability of knowledge, skills, and abilities
- enhance employability
- gain greater respect from coworkers

The CVA credential is also viewed as valuable for those serving in resource roles, such as Volunteer Centers and state commissions on service and volunteering. Teresa Gardner-Williams of the Prince George's County Volunteer Center comments, "Volunteer Centers have not only the tasks of recruiting and referring volunteers but the responsibility to enhance and strengthen the local volunteer resources management community. My CVA gives me the opportunity to both model professional achievement for colleagues and to educate the general public about the profession and the core competencies we practice."

The Credentialing Process

A two-part measurement methodology has been designed to demonstrate a candidate's knowledge and application of the core competencies. The multiple choice Exam is made up of 80 questions documented to the CVA primary references. It is a two-hour proctored test, given once a year in May at local sites selected by candidates. Multiple choice questions include knowledge, application and case study formats directly linked to several books and articles which address the core competency areas. Many candidates form local study groups to prepare for the exam, and find that the readings help to affirm and polish their on-the-job practices.

The Portfolio is written according to a specific format to reflect the candidate's real-life experience in volunteer administration. It has two sections: a 500-word personal philosophy statement, and a 1500-word management narrative analyzing a program or project in which the candidate was or is involved as a volunteer administrator. Both pieces are written based on the candidate's experience within the field (i.e. observations, actions, insights, lessons learned) rather than on presenting information from textbooks or classes.

The CVA program runs on an annual cycle, with registration open from October 1 to March 1. Interested candidates may visit the CCVA web site at www.cvacert.org for more information about the process and how to get started.

About the Author

Katherine H. Campbell, CVA, serves as Executive Director of the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration. She has been active in the field of volunteer management for over 30 years as practitioner, author, trainer, consultant and leader. For several years she worked at the Virginia State Office of Volunteerism, and served as executive director of the international Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) from 1997 to 2003. Katie has authored and co-authored several articles and publications on the subject of volunteerism and teaches as adjunct faculty at Virginia Commonwealth University and University of Virginia. She earned her CVA credential in 1996.

Training Busy Staff to Succeed with Volunteers: The 55-Minute Training Series
Betty Stallings (2007). Philadelphia, PA: Energize Inc. (Advanced Review copy: 345 pages plus PowerPoint slides. Electronic Form ISBN: 0-940576-43-0).

"New and improved" certainly describes the latest edition of Betty Stallings' *Training Busy Staff to Succeed with Volunteers: The 55-Minute training Series*. This updated resource, available in electronic format only, takes this standard training tool for administrators of volunteer programs to a new level of utility.

Available as either a complete training series, or as single training modules, the text features lesson plans and full sets of handouts to complement the lessons. Each module includes an introduction to the topic, learning objectives and general notes for the trainer, a presentation overview, presentation script (including suggested timeframes), thumbnail views of slides, suggestions for additional activities, suggested resources, and a full set of handouts needed for the module. Professionally designed PowerPoint slides visually support the training sessions, and are provided for each module. The 12 separate modules included in the resource series are: 1) Designing Positions for Volunteers, 2) Volunteer Recruitment, 3) Interviewing Volunteers, 4) Volunteer Motivation, 5) Supervising Volunteers, 6) Orienting and Training Volunteers, 7) Delegating to Volunteers, 8) Mutual Performance Reviews, 9) Handling Volunteer Performance Problems, 10) Volunteer Program Evaluation, 11) Risk Management in Volunteer Programs, and 12) Volunteer Recognition.

Each module provides materials in a succinct and thorough format that translate into (as the series title suggests) a 55-minute workshops focused topic. Expansion activities allow for creating more in-depth training sessions in which additional time might be devoted to each topic. Materials are designed ideally to provide basic, introductory information for each topic; thus, the resources are ideally targeted to new administrators of volunteer programs or staff members for whom concepts of the management of volunteers are new.

One very helpful component of this new resource is the introductory section included with the purchase of the full series. This material covers general information on adult learning and tips for preparing and using visuals in training, and also includes a needs assessment tool to assist a trainer in determining the needs of the learners for whom training sessions might be planned. These tips and techniques provide good, basic preparatory information and resources for designing appropriate trainings to meet the expressed needs of targeted participants, and serve as valuable resources for those who are not experienced adult educators.

While the materials are very useful, some concerns exist with issues of format and access (again, NOT the quality of the information). As with any electronic document, after investing the initial fee for purchasing the materials and downloading the actual document (the advanced review copy was sent as a pdf file), the buyer is then faced with the cost of printing a large quantity of text pages (345 in the advance review document). The PowerPoint slides are included as a wonderful resource, but can create compatibility issues with varying formats of the software used to

access them (here at the university, we are locked into Windows 2003). Again, this is not unique to this resource, but is certainly an issue for some who may have access to limited computer resources. An initial "Software Requirements" page or notice would benefit the user greatly. Finally, the pages are numbered in each of the 12 modules for purchase as separate units. Thus, when the entire series is purchased and printed, the page numbering is confusing in that the same numbering is repeated for each of the 12 individual modules, so when consolidated as a single holistic document, the identification of unique modules requires a little patience. The problem is easily fixed with binder dividers for the printed text, but can be disconcerting at first glance.

Overall, this is truly a valuable addition to any volunteer administration library. The 12 modules stand-alone for training, or may be combined into a series for multiple day training. It is certainly worth the $69 purchase price, and I know that I will be using this material repeatedly in the coming years.

About the Reviewer
Harriett C. Edwards, Ed.D. is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in Continuing Volunteer Education in the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family & Consumer Sciences at North Carolina State University. Her research is focused upon episodic volunteerism and teens as volunteers, and she currently provides leadership to a special initiative supporting youth in military families with deployed parents.

Successful Methods and Positive Outcomes for 4-H Volunteer Evaluation

Linda A. Strieter, M.A.
Gloucester County 4-H Agent
Offices of Government Services
1200 North Delsea Drive
Clayton, NJ 08312-1096
Tel. 856-301-6450 * E-mail: strieter@aesop.rutgers.edu

Virginia Powell, M.S.
Chair, Department of 4-H Youth Development
Martin Hall, Room 329, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
88 Lipman Drive
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8582
Tel. 732-932-5000, Ext. 596 * E-mail: gpowell@aesop.rutgers.edu

Abstract

4-H professionals working with volunteers need a feedback process that opens communication and troubleshoots potential problems. The article demonstrates how the New Jersey 4-H Volunteer Review Process is an effective evaluation tool to address this need, as well as to provide an ideal forum for expanding volunteer roles through leadership development and goal setting. The process allows the volunteer and supervisor to engage in dialogue and work together to determine areas that may need improvement and build on strengths and achievements. By investing in the time taken to conduct the interview and by showing an interest in volunteer leaders, 4-H agents and staff help to promote continued and expanded volunteer efforts and programmatic successes.

Keywords:
4-H, volunteers, evaluation, interview

Volunteer development is an ongoing process, whether a volunteer is newly recruited or has been with an organization for 50 or more years. Each volunteer deserves individualized attention throughout his/her volunteer career. The New Jersey 4-H Policy and Procedure for Staffing with Volunteers utilizes the I.S.O.T.U.R.E. (Boyce, 1971) Volunteer Development System as the basis of its structure. The seven-phase process consists of: Identification, Selection, Orientation, Training, Utilization, Recognition, and Evaluation. The E - 'Evaluation' portion of this model is often the most difficult to implement. It can be seen as negative, confrontational, and requires conflict management skills. The authors, along with the Volunteer Management Committee were challenged to dispel these ideas and create a positive method of communication to 'evaluate' the volunteer.

Because volunteers are essential to the successful delivery of 4-H programs to youth, a periodic evaluation of their performance is a critical element of program planning. Without some form of meaningful evaluation, how will one ever know if his/her efforts are having the desired effect determined in the objectives? (Baillere & Mozenter-Spiegel, 2001). Feedback obtained through a formalized evaluation process should be considered key to improving and expanding 4-H programs.

The New Jersey 4-H Volunteer Review Process was designed to serve as the E, or evaluation in the I.S.O.T.U.R.E. model. The title "review" was chosen to replace the term "evaluation" in order to seem less threatening to the volunteer, as well as to support the goal to review the entire situation, from both the volunteer and staff's perspectives. The process incorporates both formal and informal techniques, while effectively promoting constructive feedback to help shape the overall performance of the volunteer.

The goals of the New Jersey 4-H Volunteer Review Process are to: 1) maintain communication and open dialogue; 2) provide a method to discuss and address concerns; 3) validate the experience of the new, as well as, the more experienced volunteer; 4) gain volunteer input for the overall 4-H Youth Development Program; 5) follow a consistent process and system for evaluation (that may be used to document the efforts made to resolve volunteer performance problems); 6) guide the volunteers who need or want help in their volunteer roles; and 7) provide an opportunity for volunteers to set goals for the coming year(s).

The review process was first piloted in seven of the 21 New Jersey counties. Paid staff and volunteers utilized the *Review of Volunteer Contributions* form and process, and participated in a follow up survey. Results verified the effectiveness and value of the review process. Staff felt the process opened lines of communication that may not otherwise have occurred. This led to more follow up with volunteers and greater support of volunteer efforts. Because the review also gave volunteers an opportunity to comment on training, office support and other related topics, it allowed paid staff to identify ways to improve support and resources for volunteers. When there were specific issues, problems, or concerns that needed to be addressed, all paid staff participating in the pilot study felt that this process enabled them to address these issues and create open dialogue. Staff also reported that all volunteers participating in the review felt it was a positive experience.

The *New Jersey 4-H Review of Volunteer Contributions* form includes questions on general information, training, satisfaction, resources, and goals. A series of 44 questions are scaled to a five item Likert-type scale of "None of the Time"; "Some of the Time"; "Most of the Time"; "All of the Time"; "Does not apply"; as well as a check for "*Goal for Next Year*." Topics include: Club Management; Club Activities; Member Projects; Inclusion; Foster Team Work; Meet Deadlines; Communication; and Leadership.

The New Jersey 4-H volunteer review process is designed to be conducted at the end of a volunteer's first year to validate his/her personal experience and to determine what help, support, or guidance is needed or desired to make the volunteer experience more enjoyable and rewarding. The review is also conducted with those volunteers who have completed five years (and then every five years thereafter) in their role. The purpose of the periodic volunteer review is to help shape the volunteer's overall performance. The volunteer and supervisor set goals together for areas that may need improvement. When necessary, follow-up can then be done through a formal meeting or an informal discussion.

The county 4-H agent can conduct the review of the volunteers or delegate this responsibility to a 4-H Program Associate, 4-H Program Assistant or other 4-H staff member who has been trained on the process, goals, and philosophy of volunteer reviews. To effectively conduct the review, the interviewer initially contacts the volunteer to set up an informal meeting.

Prior to the interview, the volunteer receives the appropriate forms and documents. These include a letter explaining the process, a *New Jersey 4-H Review of Volunteer Contributions* form, and a *How Effective is Your Club?* checklist. These should be completed by the volunteer and brought to the meeting.

When setting aside time for the meeting, it is important to allow adequate time to address the needs and concerns of the volunteer. Ideally, the meeting would take place in person, but a telephone interview is also acceptable. If possible, this meeting should take place in an informal, relaxed setting. The 4-H staff person should bring the *NJ 4-H Volunteer Appointment Agreement* which details the standards of behavior, any related position description, and other related paperwork or resources that would make the session effective and successful.

The atmosphere at the meeting should be relaxed and informal while establishing ground rules for listening and interacting. The staff person should ask the volunteer to share a self-assessment related to volunteer contributions and club effectiveness. The volunteer often is harder on him/herself than is the reviewer. Based on this, the interviewer should be prepared to provide positive feedback; identify agreed upon performance levels; encourage and help the volunteer set performance goals; and listen to concerns that the volunteer expresses.

After the meeting, the staff member should make sure to follow up with the volunteer any requests for materials, training, etc. If there are performance problems that have not been resolved with informal guidance and supervision, staff refer to the *Formal System for Resolving 4-H Volunteer Personnel Issues* for more information.

This process allows the volunteer and supervisor to set goals together for areas that may need improvement, and to build on strengths and achievements. In addition, this method of performance measurement provides feedback that helps to strengthen the 4-H program's quality and effectiveness. By investing time to conduct the interview and by showing an interest in volunteer leaders, 4-H agents and staff help to promote continued and expanded volunteer efforts. This is a win-win process where both the volunteer and the supervisor greatly benefit.

References

Baillere, J.S., & Mozenter-Spiegel, M. (2001). *4-H public relations: A blueprint for expansion.* Chevy Chase, MD: National 4-H Source Book.

Boyce, M.V. (1971). *A systematic approach to leadership development*. Washington, D.C.: USDA, Extension Service. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 065 793).

About the Authors

Linda Strieter is the County 4-H Agent/Assistant Professor III with Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Gloucester County, NJ. Linda is responsible for recruiting, training, supervising and evaluating adult volunteers to work with youth and reinforcing learning with recognition.

Virginia Powell is Assistant Director, Rutgers Cooperative Extension and Chair, Department of 4-H Youth Development/Associate Professor II. Her responsibilities include personnel

administration, staff and volunteer development, mentoring, orientation, performance appraisal & evaluation, etc. Virginia is one of the original authors/editors of the New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series, the basis of volunteer training in NJ and has been adopted by several states.

Volunteerism in Nepal

Bishnu Hari Bhatta
Director - Volunteer Program
PSD - Nepal
P.O Box 19782, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel. 977-1-4283577 * Cell: 984-1-285379

Abstract

The author addresses historical and contemporary aspects of volunteerism in Nepal as a fundamental building block of civil society.

Keywords:
volunteerism, civil society, Nepal, Hinduism, Buddhism

Volunteering is a fundamental building block of the civil society. It brings to life the noblest aspirations of humankind. The pursuit of peace, freedom, opportunity, safety and justice for all people, volunteering is an essential element of all societies.

As the government alone cannot meet the multiple needs of people, the only alternative is to let people be active individually or through organizations to cater to their own needs to the largest extent possible. So is the case with Nepal, too.

Volunteerism has a long history in Nepal. The two major religions, Hinduism and Buddhism which are practiced in Nepal teach that any voluntary work that brings relief and solace to the people in distress leads one to salvation or *moksha.* To sacrifice a part of what one owns for the benefit of others is considered a virtue. Such voluntary philanthropic acts are believed to ensure better life in the future births as it is believed in Nepal. Since the time immemorial, the people in Nepal have been deeply motivated to render voluntary services for the benefit of the poor, sick, destitute, downtrodden and neglected members of the society. The manifestations of such voluntary works, for instance, are public wells (*kuwa*), stone taps (*dhunge dhara*), resting places (*chautaras*) and guest houses (pati-pauwas). Such works in many cases are carried out by individuals who are committed to alleviation of the suffering and hardship of the people.

What matters the most is that volunteerism was institutionalized even in those days in Nepal though its nature, purpose and functioning are somewhat different to what is practiced in today's world. Voluntary works that were institutionalized in the good old days of Nepal, to name only a few, are the dispensaries (*aushadhalya*), orphanages (anathalaya), public schools (*pathshala*) and trusts (*guthi*). Such institutions were set up and managed by the groups of people. Though they were autonomous in nature, the people responsible for management were accountable to the communities. Many such voluntary organizations still exist and are very useful platforms to perform a number of social, cultural functions in the community.

The voluntary organizations initiated and managed by the communities continued even during the Rana period when the rulers were extremely autocratic. However, a staunch supporter of Mahatma Gandhi in India started a voluntary organization in 1926 to train people to make hand-spun

thread and hand-woven cotton clothes. This was followed by the establishment of another voluntary organization called *Paropakar Auhsadhalya* (Charitable Medical Trust) in 1947. These two associations were the pioneer voluntary organizations run with people's voluntary participation in its true sense. After the dawn of democracy in Nepal in 1951, the government was liberal to voluntary organizations which resulted in phenomenal growth of such organizations. As the years passed by, the government felt the need for establishing a strong mechanism to coordinate, regulate, and strengthen their activities. Hence, the Social Service National Coordination Act 1977 was introduced and the Social Welfare Council, a body constituted by the government, was been given the responsibility of coordinating the activities of all voluntary organizations in Nepal.

Youth and Volunteerism

Youth are the vital force of a nation and account for half of the world's population. Youth are the biggest factor in deciding the future of society and have significant roles to play in the process of nation building. Present day youth are facing and suffering from various social, economical, and cultural conflicts across the world. Youth sometime get involved in the violent expressions of unrest that characterize economic, social, and political problems.

Youth empowerment is an important issue to alleviate the feelings of frustration that lead them to get involved in such activities. They feel pressure from different domains of life. Thus, coping with such a confusing surrounding is a greater challenge for youth at the moment. Peace depends upon our own values, attitudes, and understanding. Understanding of peace must be planted, learned and, above all, exhibited through practice in every individual's daily life. Youth must act to transform conflict and misunderstanding into cooperation and understanding to establish and foster peace. Young people have greater potentiality for solving their own problems, but they need support in developing the skills, knowledge and attitude that can enable them to exhibit their potential as active members of civil society.

Volunteerism: A "means to an end" to youth

Volunteerism is the best way to learn, understand, and practice ethical values and develop positive behaviors and attitudes, which help to transform society as whole. There are many learning opportunities around the globe where one may offer something within his/her capacity and gain new experiences, enhance life skills, and explore possible fields of employment according to their interests.

Why Do People Volunteer?

It is pertinent here to deal with a question of how people in Nepal look at volunteerism. Without going into the in-depth study, some reasons why people volunteer that I have observed in my work include:

- Feel they have something to offer;
- Influenced by others who have done voluntary work;
- To meet their own needs;
- They have time, resources and energy;
- It would be good for learning;
- It gives higher status in the society;
- To get experience for a possible field of employment;
- A gate to new comers for getting involved in the life's business;
- An alternative to something which is less pleasant;
- A means to an end;
- To alleviate guilt;

- Sense of gratitude to give back what they have taken/received;
- A sense of responsibility and duty;
- A particular commitment to specific subject and issue;
- An alternative interest;
- Relieve loneliness;
- Aware of the need and task to be done and no one else to do it;
- Desire to help; and
- Desire to influence some form of change (e.g., social, conservation, economic, etc.)

Benefits of Volunteer Work

Possible benefits to an individual volunteer that I have observed include:

- Make new friends and mix with different culture;
- Gain experience of working in different environment;
- Feel part of a workforce and community;
- Improve self-confidence, develop communication skills, and network and make new contacts;
- Learning the values of unpaid work;
- Enhance life skills and experiences; and
- Learn different cultural values and practices.

Principles of Volunteerism

Volunteers are not "free"

Volunteer involvement generates administrative and project costs. Volunteers need to be recruited, placed, trained, and supervised. A volunteer, like a paid staff member, needs logistical support, supplies, information, staff assistance, and other job necessities.

Volunteers contribute more than initially meets the eye

Volunteers embody an organization's capacity to deliver services, share talents and expertise, and open new doors to particular segment of community. Volunteers are innovators and risk takers and bring an element of passion and enthusiasm to an organization.

"Volunteer" does not mean "amateur"

A volunteer who receives training in an unfamiliar task and can perform that task competently is as valued as a professional paid employee.

Volunteers and the organizations they serve must meet each other's expectations

Volunteers benefit from their experiences. Volunteer performance management systems should parallel the system for paid employees; this helps to ensure across-the-board quality control in leadership and service delivery.

Strengthening Volunteerism in Nepal

In order for volunteering to have the greatest impact and to be as inclusive as possible, it must be well planned, adequately resourced and effectively managed. This is the responsibility of leaders of volunteers. They are most effective when their work is recognized and supported. Therefore, we call on:

- Non-governmental-organizations (NGOs) to make volunteerism integral to achieving their mission and elevate the role of volunteer leaders within the organization.
- Government at all levels to invest in sustainable development of high quality volunteer and volunteer leadership and to model excellence in the management of volunteers.
- Businesses in the private sector to understand the importance of volunteerism and volunteer resource management and to assist volunteer organizations in developing this capacity.

- Donors and the philanthropic sector to support the commitment of resources to build the capacity of volunteer and management.

Volunteerism and Humanism

What does volunteerism have to do with humanism? Everything! The individuals that Humanists look up to the most throughout history all have several attributes in common. Amongst the compassion and the ability to use reason to solve problems, they also had the courage to take responsibility to create change in the world around them. They did so, often in adverse environments. In fact, the more adverse the situation, the more we look up to an individual who persevered to stand up for the ideals we hold so dear.

To me, the great Humanists are not great just because of their ability to express themselves with words, but also because they put their philosophy into action and do something positive to help create the change they envisioned in the world.

Volunteering is a great way to create change, and volunteers want to have an impact on the future. There are as many volunteering opportunities as there are problems that need to be solved. Volunteerism may take many forms; anytime you take it upon yourself to take action to create change, you are volunteering.

For Humanists, volunteering is a way to put philosophy into action.
I had a friend in college who told me that all he really wanted out of life was to have a positive impact on just one person. He wanted to live his life in such a way that it created an example for others to follow that did not require him to preach about his beliefs and values. He wanted his beliefs and values to be evident from his actions. He felt that if just one person learned by his example, he would have succeeded. He was, of course, a model by himself after a friend from whom he had learned. It is a good way to live. And, it is my belief that by volunteering in the community, I expand the number of people for whom I am likely to set a good example. By volunteering, we expand ourselves as individuals and show through example what it means to be a Humanist.

Is Volunteering Easy?

No - it takes time, energy and commitment, all of which are in short supply. In addition, volunteers do not always succeed at the tasks they set out for themselves and so must often deal with failure. This is why volunteers are considered such exceptional people; they persevere past the disappointments and keep going towards the better world they can see is possible. The current environment is adverse to say the least. However, as the saying goes, all it takes for evil to flourish is for good people to do nothing. And, since we know that we as Humanists are good people, we will do something: volunteer. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, *Life's most urgent question is: Are we doing for others?*

About the Author

Bishnu Hari Bhatta is Director of Volunteer Programs for the Partnership for Sustainable Development (PSD) in Kathmandu, Nepal. PSD is a non-governmental, social development organization seeking to better support to the poorest communities and the most vulnerable people

in Nepal. Bishnu has his Masters Degree in Business Administration, and is a former employee of the American Peace Corps, Save The Children Foundation in the United Kingdom, and Student Partnership Worldwide. In his present position, he leads consultancy and training activities. He has participated in over 20 national and international conferences and is a member of various working groups on the international level.

Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted (with updated format editions) from The Journal of Volunteer Administration, 1999, 17(4), pp. 28-43

Personal Capacities for Volunteer Administrators: Drawing Upon the Past as We Move Into the Future

R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D.
Professor and Extension Specialist
Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family & Consumer Sciences
North Carolina State University
Campus Box 7606
Raleigh, NC 27695-7606
El. 919-513-0306 * FAX 919-515-7812 * E-mail: dale_safrit@ncsu.edu

Mary Merrill, L.S.W.
(deceased)
President, Merrill Associates
Columbus, OH

Abstract

Today and into the future, both professional competencies and personal capacities will be critical for volunteer administrators. Professional competencies are knowledge and skills based, serve as a critical intellectual foundation for any profession, and involve fundamental levels of cognitive learning including assessing, comprehending, and applying knowledge to our day-to-day roles and responsibilities. Personal capacities involve the higher levels of cognitive learning including the abilities to analyze specific situations; synthesize new insights from existing knowledge and skills; and evaluate the broader, more abstract current or future situation. Capacities involve affective and emotional components in addition to knowledge and skills. Based upon the literature and their experiences, the authors identify six personal capacities critical to any volunteer administrator: creating and communicating a shared vision; embracing diversity while nurturing pluralism, accepting change and managing ambiguity; acting within shared values and championing ethical behavior; linking effective management to personal leadership; and reflecting.

Keywords:
competencies, capacities, volunteer, management, administration

During these times of rapid and ongoing change, split-second electronic communications, virtual volunteerism, doing more-with-less, and program impact and accountability, do you sometimes feel as though things just don't seem to work like they used to? Consider some common scenarios. For the second time this year, a

long-standing volunteer program offered by your agency (that once attracted groves of excited volunteers) has only attracted a few interested individuals, and you're at a loss to understand why. Last week, you found yourself caught in an ethical dilemma involving a conflict between a well-meaning volunteer and an established agency policy with no clear-cut way out. This morning, you sat through a two hour meeting of the newly-established human service collaboration in your community, which once again resulted in little more than polite (yet readily apparent) squabbling over agency turf issues and personal agendas. As an experienced and respected administrator of volunteers, you work hard to keep informed and up-to-date on new ideas, programs and approaches in volunteer management. But, nowhere does there seem to be any easy answers or quick panaceas to the kinds of work-related challenges involved in these scenarios. You feel somewhat helpless and confused, and just thinking about these challenges drains your physical and emotional energy.

While agreeing with and supporting the current renewed focus on identifying and clarifying critical professional competencies needed by volunteer administrators (K. Campbell, personal communication, August 13, 1999), we believe that equally (if not more) important for the future of volunteer administration are those personal capacities needed in contemporary volunteer administration. By personal capacities, we mean the higher-level attitudes and aspirations needed to take fundamental competencies of our profession an easily adapt them to our ever-changing world.

Professional Competencies and Volunteer Administration

Professional competencies are knowledge and skills based, and serve as a critical intellectual foundation for any profession (Figure 1). They involve fundamental levels of cognitive learning including assessing comprehending, and applying knowledge (Bloom, 1956) to our day-to-day roles and responsibilities as administrators of volunteer programs. Hedges (1995) defined a competency as. "an observable and measurable behavior that has a definite beginning and ending, can be performed within a limited amount of times... and leads to a product, service, or decision" (p. 13). More recently, Evers et al. (1998) approached competencies as the link between what is learned through education and what must be done in the workplace, or the "interface between education and employment" (p. 3). Fisher and Cole (1993) extensively discussed the knowledge basis for volunteer management competencies, while Ellis (1986, p. 181) described more recently the emergent of volunteer administration as a profession since "the skills of developing and managing volunteers are being codified so that newcomers to this responsibility can learn from the experience of their predecessors." Schindler-Rainman (1986) identified 11 board areas of professional competencies in volunteer administration, while the Association for Volunteer Administration identifies five functional areas in which a volunteer administrator should be able to demonstrate competence in order to become certified: program planning and organization; staffing and directing functions; controlling functions; individual, group, and organizational behavior; and grounding in the profession. Some common examples of volunteer administration competencies include conducting a needs assessment, developing a written volunteer job description, planning an annual volunteer recognition event, and managing a specific program budget.

Individual competencies are the

foundational building blocks for any profession, including volunteer administration. Competencies are defined by the profession and subsequently applied to all members therein. They are externally focused, largely on management-related concepts involving doing things right (Bennis, 1989) or transactional leadership approaches involving interactions that occur between leaders and followers (Burns, 1978.)

Figure 1. *Comparing Attributes of Professional Competencies and Personal Capacities*

Professional Competencies	**Personal Capacities**
Intellectual intelligence	Emotional intelligence
Content focus	Context focus
Focused upon cognitive & skill domains (i.e., knowledge, action)	Focus upon affective domain (i.e., feelings, emotions)
Involve assessing, comprehending, & applying knowledge	Involve analyzing, synthesizing, & evaluating knowledge
Defined by profession & applied to individuals	Defined by individuals & applied to their profession
Do things right	Do the right things
Management/transactional leadership	Transformational leadership

Personal Capacities and Volunteer Administration

In today's rapidly and constantly changing world, we would argue that while a firm competency foundation provides continuity and permanence to our profession, competencies alone are not sufficient to shelter and sustain volunteer administrators in the myriad of complex, contemporary situations they may find themselves. Therein lies the importance of personal capacities.

Personal capacities involve the higher levels of cognitive learning (Bloom, 1956) including the abilities to analyze specific situations; synthesize new insights from existing knowledge and skills; and evaluate the broader, more abstract current or future situation (Figure 1). Whereas competencies are knowledge and skills based, capacities involve affective and emotional components in addition to knowledge and skills, and may be likened to Coleman's (1998) concept of emotional intelligence. Capacities are developed by an individual, first focused internally and then applied to their professional responsibilities and situation; they focus more on leadership-related concepts involving doing the right things (Bennis, 1989) for the individual volunteer administrator, their clients and colleagues, and the organization in which they work. Whereas competencies focus on content and skills mastery, capacities focus upon recognizing specific contexts and adapting the necessary competencies as appropriate. They involve transformational leadership approaches (Bums, 1978) wherein "an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader [i.e., volunteer administrator] and the follower [i.e., volunteer, staff member, etc.]" (Northouse, 1997, p. 131). Capacities involve "leadership from the inside out" (Cashman, 1998, p. 15) that creates meaning and value in our roles as individuals first, and then peers in the volunteer administration profession.

The literature supporting the idea of capacity development draws from the broader personal and civic leadership domain. Apps (1994, pp. 57-58) defined leadership capacity as "(1) the ability to reflect while acting and then make appropriate adjustments ..., (2) acquiring leadership competencies that apply to many leadership contexts, and (3) evolving a personal philosophy of leadership." Although Vail (1998) does not use the term "capacity," he does discuss in great length the critical need for vision, vitality, and spirit in contemporary and future executive leaders. Lappe and Dubois (1994) expound on the social and civic energies and beliefs that serve as a catalyst for citizens of a successful democracy "to become creators of our future, creators of a democracy that works because it is alive with the insights and energies of us all" (p. 18).

Personal Capacities in Retrospect

The basic ideas contained within the concept of personal capacities relate directly to the ideas and insights of numerous historic and contemporary pioneers and leaders in our profession. The Association for Volunteer Administration (1999) identified that "over the past 30 years, leaders in the volunteer administration profession have amassed a generic core of knowledge and principles that help people who coordinate volunteers to achieve results in any setting" (p. 1). Such principles are important components of personal capacities. As early as 1967, Harriet Naylor noted:

It takes a remarkable combination of enthusiasm, flexibility, sensitivity and courage to practice an undefined profession. ... There is also a very real danger that professionalization with all its trappings will

stifle the spontaneity and quick warm responsiveness which have given the work enjoyability. People who cannot survive an atmosphere of ambiguity and confusion should not attempt to manage a volunteer program. (p. 190)

In The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs (1976), Marlene Wilson stated:

> It is important to understand that the term [manager] itself simply defines a function, and is therefore neither good nor bad. It is how a person carries out that function that matters. The important thing for those directing volunteer programs is to understand the impact they have on the lives of others—volunteers, staff and clients—and to take that responsibility seriously. (p. 26)

Nora Silver (1988) described the:

> enormous change which is impacting all aspects of our lives—at home, at work, in our communities, and in the world at large. These changes have also affected the very heart and soul of nonprofit agencies ... the volunteers.... And yet far too many voluntary agencies and organizations are still looking at the volunteer as the problem instead of examining their own systems, attitudes, and processes. (preface)

Susan Ellis and Katherine Noyes (1990) recognized that "there is agreement that a core of general knowledge and skills is necessary to being effective as a leader of volunteers and that these should be based on a philosophy that affirms the importance of volunteering" (p. 348) while Sue Vineyard (1993) concluded that:

> Through the attitude of servant-leadership, our profession of volunteer administration will lead the way through the turmoil and violence of diverse demands to a spirit of community and shared commitment for a safer, healthier and mutually-supportive world. The road will not be an easy one. (pp. 221-222)

Spontaneity and warm responsiveness... understanding impact on peoples' lives... examining our own attitudes and processes... becoming servant leaders. These historic components of volunteer administration are still very critical to our profession. Yet, although they each have some basis in knowledge and skills, they also involve strong individualized affective and emotional components. We suggest that professional competencies and personal capacities are both critical to a contemporary manager of volunteers or administrator of a volunteer program. The professional competencies necessary to effectively plan events and activities involved in a new volunteer program are critical, yet what about the personal capacities needed to modify/adapt that in-process planning in order to adapt to a changing clientele or situation. The professional competencies needed to work within a defined non-profit mission are important, but what about the personal capacities needed to create a new, shared vision based upon that mission as one organizational member of a new collaboration. The professional competencies necessary to recruit and supervise volunteers are fundamental, yet what about the personal capacities required to make ethical decisions focused upon an individual volunteer's situation, or a managerial situation that is not clearly addressed in the organization's current policies?

Individuals develop capacities based upon their individual values, beliefs, and experiences (both personal and professional). We have traditionally (and unconsciously) abdicated the development of capacities to real-life experience and "on-the job" training. However, recognizing the

relative short tenure of the majority of today's volunteer administrators, and with the rapid turnover and lateral/ upward mobility of our peers, on-the job training most often does not provide sufficient time for capacity development. Thus, we advocate the increasing importance of internships, professional associations (AVA, DOVIA's, etc.), formal and informal mentoring, and viable peer relationships in developing personal capacities in volunteer administrators.

Personal Capacities in Contemporary Volunteer Administration

Whereas we would never presume to argue that the following personal capacities apply to each specific colleague in our profession, we would argue that they may be generalized to contemporary volunteer administration as a profession (Figure 2). Thus, we challenge each reader to both consider these capacities as related to their individual situation and identify capacities unique to themselves and their context.

Figure 2. *Important Personal Capacities for Contemporary Volunteer Managers*

- Creating & communicating a shared vision
- Embracing diversity while nurturing pluralism
- Accepting change & managing ambiguity
- Acting within shared values & championing ethical behavior
- Linking effective management to personal leadership
- Reflecting

We have identified these capacities based upon our personal experiences as both former managers of volunteers and current performance consultants with nonprofit organizations; based upon ideas both documented in published literature and generated in countless discussions among each other and with peers; based upon both the existing knowledge base of the volunteer administration profession and the ever-changing individual philosophies and emotions of actual volunteer administrators we encounter. We encourage you to not accept them merely as new matters-of-fact or managerial criteria, but rather to use them as catalysts to strengthen your current knowledge and skills as a volunteer administrator with your individual attitudes, emotions, and aspirations as a unique leader.

Creating and Communicating a Shared Vision

Vision is "the capacity to be forward-looking and foresighted" (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 95). Vision does not imply an inherent gift of prophecy nor a genetically determined sixth sense. We believe that visioning is a fundamental contemporary organizational function which is best derived from the individual ideas and insights of all organizational stakeholders, both paid and unpaid.

In 1995, the Points of Light Foundation published the results of a research study called The Paradigm Project, which identified 11 characteristics of highly successful volunteer programs. The first two characteristics identified in the study emphasize the importance of vision.

> Less effective volunteer programs are seen as add-ons by agencies. Volunteer efforts in these agencies are viewed as supportive of the real work of the agency rather than critical to that work. Such agencies hobble themselves by this limited vision of volunteer involvement ... changing this involves a change in the way the agency looks at itself as well as how it looks at volunteers. It

> requires a new vision of how the agency plans and operates.(Lynch, 1995, p.1)

DePree (1997) shared the following observation about vision:

> Consider the distinction between sight and vision and the importance of both to the organization. People without sight develop other abilities; people without vision constantly struggle to find hope. ... Organizations without vision remain mere organizations surviving but not living, hitting temporary targets but not moving toward potential. Perhaps a way to think about the difference between sight and vision is this: we can teach ourselves to see things the way they are. Only with vision can we begin to see things the way they can be. (pp. 116-117)

Volunteer administrators have traditionally been called upon to learn and practice skills in program planning and evaluation. However, the recent focus upon impact evaluation has placed new emphasis on defining volunteer programs in terms of making significant contribution to achieving the agency's mission while working towards its vision. Volunteer administrators, while competent in program planning, often struggle to connect program activities with outcome measures that move beyond people involvement and activities. Impact assessment challenges us to see the larger picture, the ultimate vision for our programs and agencies. As Brinckerfoff (1994) concluded:

> Organizations that succeed, organizations that thrive organizations that are going to be the providers of services in the next century, all know where they are going. A vision of what you want you organization to be and a road map of how you want to get there from here to there is absolutely essential if you are to be a good steward of your organizations resources (p.130)

Today's volunteer administrators are challenged to look beyond the traditional managerial roles they have occupied in the organization. They are called upon to be visionaries who draw staff together to articulate and formulate a shared vision of the role of volunteers within the organization. It is often difficult to be visionaries in the midst of the myriad of tasks, conflicts, and competing interests that must be addressed each day; it is easy to become stuck in the present status quo, doing things by rote, accomplishing tasks, checking off lists, and putting out fires. These can cause us to struggle to find hope, to develop vision.

Nurturing a shared vision is one of the greatest gifts volunteer administrators can contribute to an organization. When Alice, in *Alice Through The Looking Glass,* met the Cheshire Cat she asked, "Would you tell me, please, which way I out to go from here?" The cat replied, "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to" (Carroll, 1983, p. 63). Effective leaders have a vision of "where they want to get to." They help form mental pictures of what the ultimate destination looks like, then they assist in designing steps to get there.

Galena Bogdonavich is the Director of Moscow Charity House, Moscow, Russia. She works in an antiquated, top-down management structure with very limited resources. But Galena has a dream. She sees volunteerism as the rebirth of the democratic foundation in Russia. She believes it is the hope of the future for the Russian people. She can make you believe that anything is possible when you are with her. You want to be a part of that vision, that movement, that

incredible happening. Although it is initially her individual vision, she willingly listens to your comments and insights, and quickly, it becomes your shared vision.

Creating a shared vision is more than the knowledge and skills required to assemble words into an inspirational vision statement. It is the personal capacity to draw people together to design and articulate a shared vision through the involvement of emotions, feelings, and aspirations.

It is the role of leaders to take the input of the entire vision community, focus it and bring it into a coherent, powerful vision. Leaders listen. Leaders see the connections between today and tomorrow. Leaders show you what the vision will look like once you get there. (Barker, 1990)

A vision that is understood and shared by a leader alone does not create the power for organized movement. People do not follow a vision of which they are not a part, in which they have no ownership. Volunteer administrators must develop the capacity to not only see the future, but to communicate that future so that all around them see it as well. Shared vision creates a sense of teamwork and collaboration between paid and volunteer staff. Shared vision links individual volunteer efforts to the overall organizational mission. Shared vision sustains hope, builds commitment and makes both our individual jobs and our shared profession more meaningful.

Embracing Diversity While Nurturing Pluralism

Diversity will be remembered as a major societal buzzword of this final decade of the millennium. With its American moral and legal roots anchored firmly in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and '60s, we have as a society, as a profession, and as individuals worked diligently to understand and "practice" diversity in volunteer administration. Countless diversity seminars have been offered; diversity task forces and ad hoc committees formed, disbanded, and reformed; and non-profit organizational value statements written and rewritten to include a public commitment to diversity. But in spite of all of these well-intentioned, well-planned and well-executed efforts, we remain a very homogeneous profession, still largely white, largely middle-class, and largely female, advocating what is still a largely white, female, middle class social phenomenon (i.e., volunteerism). We understand the concept of diversity; we have developed the individual skills and organizational abilities to "practice" diversity. The core competencies are there; then, what is the problem?

We suggest that in order to truly embrace the concept of diversity, we must do more than knowing and doing it; we must each develop the personal capacity to value it. The American Cancer Society's National Task Force on Diversity (1998) defined diversity not as a product, but rather as "a process of valuing differences in people through actions. These differences include: race, gender, age, physical ability, sexual orientation, economic status, education and culture" (p. 1). Until we each work to internalize and personalize the fundamental knowledge and skills needed to reach out to those who look, think, sound, love and believe differently than us, we will as a profession continue to struggle and grope with this issue.

Furthermore, the capacity to value diversity is, in itself, not enough for the continued success of volunteer administration into the next millennium. Yes, we must develop the knowledge, skills, and capacity to understand and value diverse individuals, but we must further move beyond embracing diversity to nurturing pluralism. According to the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. (American Cancer Society, 1998), pluralism is a "system that holds

within it individuals or groups differing in basic background experiences and culture [i.e., diversity]. It allows for the development of a common tradition while preserving the right of each group to maintain its cultural heritage. Pluralism is a process involving mutually respectful relationships" (p. 1).

Volunteer administration is founded upon one of the oldest yet most over-looked pluralistic phenomena in Western culture: volunteerism. As volunteer administrators, we encourage, mobilize and support individual youth and adults from different personal and professional backgrounds (i.e., diversity) to share their talents and skills with each other in order to promote the common good (i.e., pluralism). In fact, the authors define a volunteer as anyone who gives their time, energies, or talents to any organization, group, or non-related individual without being paid for their efforts, benefiting the common good. Our competence in mobilizing diverse individuals to work together in order to benefit the larger, pluralistic good is critical to our profession; likewise, our individual capacity to value the individualities involved in this synergy is critical to us as volunteer administrators. We suggest that to reach consensus regarding today's ongoing debate regarding the diverse concepts of volunteerism, service, national service, service learning, man-dated service, and community service, we as volunteer administrators must recognize that regardless of the specific form of helping others, the ultimate outcome we all seek is improving ourselves, others, and our society. When viewed in this holistic, pluralistic context, many of the debates and heated discussions we find ourselves in today almost seem redundant.

Accepting Change and Managing Ambiguity

We live in a time unlike any previous in human history, where the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge and technologies is occurring at such an accelerated rate that many of us are at a loss to try to keep up. We have moved from a former time when change was slow, gradual, and (most often) predictable to today when change is rapid, ongoing, and (most often) unpredictable. Although Vail coined the phrase "permanent whitewater" in 1991 (p. 3), the metaphoric comparison of change to flowing water is as old as the Greek philosopher Heraclites (as cited in Fandray, 1999) who stated, "You could not step twice into the same river; for other waters are ever flowing on to you." Apps (1994) refers to our era as the "Emerging Age" since it is ever-changing, and just when we feel like we have a solid understanding of the current situation it has already changed and a new situation emerged in its place.

Naylor (1967) was our first peer to write about rapidly shifting patterns of community participation; Seita and Waechter (1991) have more recently brought the changing nature of change to our professional attention. They conclude that "quick fixes" are no longer effective; volunteer organizations must seek real transformations that will enable them to survive in the change-related chaos surrounding them.

> The implementation of change for today's successful organization must be achieved through a variety of methods which utilize the ideas and abilities of all those within the organization. The 'cookbook' method, where you follow old rules or someone else's [sic] rules for your organization, may get you into deeper trouble than you are already in. (pp. 7-8).

The challenge of change lies in the fact that we each approach it differently and with differing levels of comfort and anxiety. Consequently, we often immediately transfer our understanding of and abilities to change (i.e., competencies) to those around us without first stopping to try to understand their individual context or perspectives (i.e., capacities). Too often, we participate in professional meetings, training seminars, national conferences, and personal discussions where change is resented, villainized, and even cursed. Yet, change in itself is neither good nor bad; how we approach change and what we make of it greatly affect our perceptions of it.

The reality is, change will happen and is beyond our abilities to control it. We may work to better understand it, we may practice how to better manage and control it, but we may never eradicate it. Computerized calendars, state-of-the-art personal day timers and scheduling systems, new hand-held technologies linking us immediately to the office from remote locations, and virtual meetings all pro-vide us with new knowledge and skills in order to better manage change. But, all too often they may merely complicate and compound the personal frustrations and anxieties that are the by-products of "permanent whitewater." We attempt to always be on top of any given situation, regardless of whether we are at the office, on the road, working from home, or even on vacation. We have created organizational cultures in which our time, both professional and personal, is the currency of choice, and to admit uncertainty or not knowing is considered failure.

We must develop the personal capacity to approach change and the ambiguity that will always result from it as merely new ways of doing business within contemporary volunteer organizations. We are not suggesting using these two concepts as rationalizations for lack of adequate preparation or failure to accept professional responsibility for our programs. We must continue to be wise stewards of the resources provided to us in non-profit organizations; "well, I just don't know" is not an acceptable response to budgetary or policy-related questions. We must continue to minimize the risks involved to our clients, our volunteers, our agencies, and our peers working within volunteer-delivered programs and services; "I just never imagined this could ever happen to our program" is not an acceptable response to an organizational crisis. We must continue to learn and grow professionally regarding the necessary knowledge and skills needed to be effective and efficient as contemporary managers of volunteers and administrators of programs; "I was certified in 1995; that wasn't part of the training" or "they've never covered that in any workshop I've been to" are not acceptable responses to our continual challenge to remain competent and current.

Contemporary volunteer administrators must develop the competencies and capacities to become lifelong learners in volunteerism and management rather than merely experts on volunteer management. Our roles and responsibilities will then expand to become leaders of learning organizations, where change is seen as an opportunity to institutionalized learning that "begins at the level of the individual, proceeds through the level of the team, and is internalized, codified and stored ... so that everyone ... is able to participate (Kline & Saunders, 1993, p. 15). When volunteer programs and agencies become learning organizations, change is accepted as a normal component of contemporary society, and managing ambiguity is accepted as a daily challenge to each paid and unpaid organizational stakeholder to learn and grow together.

Acting Within Shared Values and Championing Ethical Behavior

The realties of change and ambiguity in our profession today necessitate an ongoing examination of our guiding values and ethics. "As our world becomes at once smaller and more complex, as change becomes more fast paced, as the economy becomes tighter and the demand for services greater there is a need for ... a closer look at values and ethics" (Johnstone & Waymire, 1992, p. 1). The Association for Volunteer Administration published the second edition of *The Statement of Professional Ethics in Volunteer Administration* in 1996 as a tool to assist volunteer administrators in ethical decision-making. The document begins with a statement of eight core values, recognizing that ethical decisions are based on an understanding of our core values as a profession. According to Johnstone and Waymire (p. 1), "Values are the deep-rooted principles or core beliefs, which influence our attitudes and decisions." We each hold personal values that guide our personal behavior and decisions; as employees, we work within a set of organizational values; as professionals, we are expected to act within a set of shared professional values.

> Organizational values define what we stand for and what is important to us as an organization. A sign of a healthy, productive organization is agreement between an organization's values and the daily actions and behaviors of its members and leaders. A positive impact on performance results from all members of an organization understanding and identifying with the group's organization-al values. (Safrit & Merrill, 1995, p. 15)

How we will work with one another as paid staff and volunteers should be reflected in an organization's values through a statement of philosophy or a code of ethics. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Tenth Edition, 1996, p. 398) defined ethics as "moral duty or obligation; a set of moral principles or values; the science of ideal human behavior." It is rooted in the Greek word "ethos" meaning custom or character. Ethics are not limited to professional behavior but rather are a reflection of the "ideal behavior" we strive for as individuals and organizations.

According to Harvey and Lucia (1995, p. 115), "our current job descriptions identify the specific functions we perform. But it is our values that describe how we should perform those functions." According to Lynch (1993):

> Underlying the purpose of the successful organization is a set of values, a set of beliefs that drive the action of its people. These values contribute to the level of success the group enjoys.... The right values, internalized by each group member, lead to right actions on the part of the organization. (p. 147)

We have all experienced situations where our professional responsibilities come into conflict with our personal values. Long time, faithful volunteers resent recent organizational changes and passively (or overtly) refuse to follow procedures. The volunteer applicant you are interviewing has two visible tattoos and three body piercings. You are asked to give a job reference for a volunteer that has been a wonderful asset and a good friend, but the job is not compatible with their skills and abilities.

These are the situations that we struggle with and labor over because the answers are difficult and the options numerous. Most of us know how to make choices between good and bad, right and wrong. Ethical decisions are between good and good choices (Kidder, 1995). They force us to weigh our personal values in a shared-values decision-making setting.

> Knowing from what value base we and those around us operate serves as the basis for the ground rules by which we relate to each other. Furthermore, it guides our decision-making. The clearer and better understood these ground rules are, the more effective we can be. (Johnston & Waymire, 1995, p. 8)

Volunteer administrators are called upon to increase the effectiveness of programs and create a greater sense of shared leadership by going beyond what we are doing and how we are doing it to help the organization identify and understand what we stand for and what we believe in (Merrill, 1995). Leaders assume a primary role for developing and communicating shared values but actively involve followers in the identification process. Leaders rely on an organization's mission, vision, and relationship to its clients to determine the behaviors and actions that will most effectively guide the organization in the pursuit of its goals.

> Traditional managers regard such matters as values as too ethereal.... Effective leaders realize that [values] are extremely important. By putting the emphasis on creating a culture that carried with it positive beliefs about the capabilities and qualities of each member of the organization, effective leaders help each person come to believe that she or he possesses those capabilities. (Lynch, 1993, p. 150)

Values serve as a guide for both behavior and decision-making. Volunteer administrators may exhibit competence in identifying and defining values, but they also need the capacity to reinforce values and keep them alive through communication, recognition and support, and personal example. As volunteer administrators increasing assume leadership roles within organizations, personal and professional actions will be scrutinized for congruence between what is said and what is done. After all, 'The classic functions of management such as planning, organizing, and controlling are essential for success, but aimless without a meaningful context.... that context must be our values" (Harvey & Lucia, 1995, p. 122)

Linking Effective Management to Personal Leadership

Volunteer management courses have traditionally taught management functions to volunteer managers. Little attention has been given to the role of leadership, often because volunteer mangers have not been viewed as leaders within the organization. They have been considered mid-level managers, and educational programs and courses have sought to impart primarily the skills and competencies needed to perform the job. According to Levitt (as cited by Zaleznik, 1977, p. 68), "management consists of the rational design, organization, direction and control of the activities required to attain the selected purposes, and the motivating and rewarding of people to do the work". The *Changing the Paradigm* research of the Points of Light Foundation (1995) articulated the need to combine inspiring leadership with effective management for highly effective volunteer program development. This language reflects what is being discussed and written about by a wide range of experts in both the public and private sector. Workplace and generational changes call into question reliance on management techniques that grew out of industrial era, hierarchical structures. Today's employees and volunteers want to be part of the decision-making process, engaged in the planning and evaluation of programs and projects. They look for leadership rather than management (Kouzes & Posner, 1995). Wheatley (1997)

suggested that:

> Most of us were raised in a culture that told us that the way to manage for excellence was to tell people exactly what they had to do and make sure they did it. We learned to play master designer, assuming we could engineer people into perfect performance. But you can't direct people into perfection: you can only engage them enough so they want to do perfect work. (p. 25)

Lynch (1993) concurred:

> Quietly a revolution in leadership is occurring across North America.... As the pace of change accelerates, the need for leadership becomes more critical. Those who continue to manage in the old ways will find their organizations in crisis... . If we are to be a work-able society, if we are to make the world a better place in which to live, those in management positions must lead as well as manage.... To respond quickly to changing circumstances, first-line and middle-level managers must exercise leadership. (p.3-4)

The debate between management and leadership is not a contemporary one (Manske, 1987; Zalezik, 1977); the conclusions, however, are:

> While both management and leadership are necessary, the change and complexity associated with the future demands that the leadership role takes precedence over the management role.... Leading in this environment implies learning new ways of operating and behaving based on the demands and reality of a changing context.... Commitment to improve one's personal capacity to lead is generally based on intrinsic motivation.... The leadership role in today's organizations places great emphasis on transforming the enterprise through others. (Hall, 1997, pp. 395, 402)

There is increasing awareness that shared leadership, (i.e., leaders at all level - policy making, executive and middle management) is the most effective model for encouraging and facilitating high impact volunteer involvement within organizations. It is no longer sufficient for a volunteer administrator simply to have the management skills for organizing and operating a volunteer program. Today's volunteer administrators must serve as a focal point for the leadership of the volunteer program (Merrill, 1995). The management functions become dispersed throughout the organization. The volunteer administrator assumes a greater role in training and working with paid staff, as well as volunteers, to accomplish organizational goals. There is less focus on managing volunteers and greater emphasis on creating and communicating the shared vision and values. As leaders, volunteer administrators facilitate relationships and support systems that allow volunteers to make significant contributions to the organization's mission. This change in role necessitates a new look at the competencies required for leadership.

> Traditional management teaching implies that the ideal organization is orderly and stable, that the organizational process can and should be engineered so that things run like clockwork.... Traditional management teachings suggest that the job of management is primarily one of control.... Leaders don't command and control: they serve and support. (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, pp. 15-16)

According to Wheatly (1997):

> People do not need the intricate directions, time lines, plans, and organizational charts that we thought we had to give them. But people do

> need a lot from their leaders. They need information, access to one another, resources, trust, and follow-through. Leaders are necessary to foster experimentation, to help create connections across the organization, to feed the system with rich information from multiple sources - all while helping everyone stay clear on what we agreed we wanted to accomplish and who we wanted to be. (p. 25)

Drucker (1996) suggested that:

> The core characteristics of effective leaders ... include basic intelligence, clear and strong values, high levels of personal energy, the ability and desire to grow constantly, vision, infectious curiosity, a good memory, and the ability to make followers feel good about themselves.... Built on [these] foundation characteristics are enabling behaviors ... including empathy, predictability, persuasive capability, the ability and willingness to lead by personal example, and communication skills.... It is the weaving together, the dynamic interaction, of the characteristics on a day-by-day, minute-by-minute basis that allow truly effective leadership. (pp. 222-225)

Vineyard (1993) wrote about the changing role of volunteer program administrators. She identified the need to move away from the direct management of volunteers to a greater leadership role within the organization. She coined such terms as "leadershift" and "relational management" which had "little to do with directing the nuts and bolts but has more to do with how people relate to work, them-selves and others" (pp. 186-187). Vineyard gradually changed her language from "volunteer executives" to "leaders" as she described the competencies required to move the profession into the next century. Volunteer administrators have traditionally viewed themselves as managers of people and programs. Yet, many have served as pioneers, designing, directing, and sustaining volunteer pro-grams with limited resources and often little organizational support. They served as leaders in an emerging profession, going beyond designing systems of control and reward by displaying innovation, individual character, and the courage of conviction.

Contrary to the myth that leadership is reserved for only a few, or that leaders are born not made, a wide range of contemporary experts have shown that leader-ship is a learnable set of capacities that can be acquired by ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results (Apps, 1994; Kouzes & Posner, 1995). According to DePree (1989):

> Leadership is an art, something to be learned over time, not simply by reading books. Leadership is more tribal than scientific, more a weaving of relationships than an amassing of information.... The goal of thinking hard about leadership is not to produce great or charismatic or well-known leaders. The measure of leadership is not the quality of the head, but the tone of the body. (pp. 3, 11-12)

Reflecting

Reflection is perhaps the single most important capacity underlying each of the other capacities we have addressed.

Vision can never emerge without individual and organizational reflection regarding the future we seek to create. Diversity will never be embraced nor pluralism achieved without careful and sincere reflection regarding the rights of each individual within the common good of the group. Change and ambiguity may not be manifested professionally without first

reflecting upon them as individuals. Shared values result from individual and group reflection and are brought to life through ethical behavior that reflects the values. Effective management may not be linked to personal leadership until each leader reflects upon what is important to them as they work with others towards a common goal.

Within an educational context, Apps (1994) warns against the failure to constantly reflect:

> Educators of conscience have constantly sought improvements over the years. But in the past, many educators became comfortable with strategies and doctrine that they believed worked well, and they have stuck to them. Some educators have resisted critically examining what they do, why they do it, and who might benefit or be harmed by their efforts. (pp. 165-166)

He concluded that "we can learn much through reflection, purposefully attending to and processing what we are experiencing" (p. 205). This supports a major premise that we constantly promote: Questions of "why' must precede questions of "what" or 'how."

The enemies of reflection are all around us. Rapid and on-going change has us scheduling ourselves for every waking moment; who has time to reflect? Contemporary demands on our abilities and emotions leave us exhausted and worn at the end of the day; who has the energy to reflect? In today's world of prescribed processes and template programs, we are encouraged to not reinvent the wheel; what expert can tell me exactly how I should reflect? Unfortunately, we may unwearyingly find ourselves in a catch-22 situation where we defend (justifiably so) our inabilities to make reflection a priority in our lives while espousing the virtues that could arise from it.

Fundamental to certification in volunteer administration are the knowledge, skills, and aspirations to define and articulate our individual, personal philosophy of volunteerism. The creation of such a philosophy forces us to stop, think, and reflect upon that thinking in order to clearly and succinctly clarify our fundamental values and beliefs regarding volunteerism and volunteers, and our role in nurturing and supporting both. Closely related to the concept of a personal philosophy of volunteerism is that of a personal philosophy of leadership (Safrit, Merrill, & King, 1998). Both relate to our abilities to work with and through others in order to achieve the common good.

The capacity to reflect is one that, while shared among the profession, must be as individualized as each of us comprising the profession. Apps (1994) described many approaches to reflecting, including asking others' perspectives, providing new and thought-provoking reading materials, and sharing stories with others regarding our experiences. However, reflection can be as simple as keeping a daily personal diary or weekly professional journal; thinking about the attributes and characteristics of people we admire and respect, and then applying those thoughts to current situations in which we find ourselves; or jotting down those spontaneous insights and "ah-hahs!" that come to us as we drive, garden, or shower in the morning. The knowledge and skills needed in order to reflect may be accessed through countless books, work-shops and seminars; the capacity to reflect originates within each of us when we make a priority of the critical importance to pause, relax, think back upon the countless personal and professional experiences that have gotten us where we are today, and apply those thoughts to where we want to be in the future.

Drawing Upon the Past as We Move Into the Future

As the cliché goes, "what goes around comes around." Although not labeled as such during either the embryonic or adolescent years of our profession, many of the basic ideas and tenets of personal capacities have been fundamental to volunteer administration throughout. Now, as our profession matures to the degree that it is able to identify basic competencies necessary for volunteer administrators to function effectively and efficiently today and into the future, let us not forget the more personalized, affective, emotion-al aspects of what it means to be a manager or administrator of volunteers. To quote Coleman (1998):

> The rules for work are changing. Were being judged by a new yardstick: not just how smart we are, or by our training and expertise, but also by how well we handle ourselves and each other.... The new measure takes for granted having enough intellectual ability and technical know-how to do our jobs; it focuses instead on personal qualities, such as initiative and empathy, adaptability, and persuasiveness.... Whatever your job, understanding how to cultivate these capabilities can be essential for success in your career. (pp. 3-4)

We would simply add to Coleman's last sentence, "...and your life."

References

American Cancer Society. (1998, July). *Building a diverse volunteer base: A state-of-the-art review.* Atlanta, GA: Author.

Apps, J.W. (1994). *Leadership for the emerging age.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Association for Volunteer Administration. (1999). *Portrait of a profession: Volunteer administration.* Richmond, VA: Author.

Barker, J. (1990). *The power of vision.* [Videotape]. (Available from Chart-House Learning Corporation, Burnsville, MN)

Bennis, W. (1989). *Why leaders can't lead.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Bloom, B. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive domain.* New York, McKay.

Brinckerhoff, P.C. (1994). *Mission-based management: Leading your not-for-profit into the 21st century*. Oak Park, Illinois: Alpine Guild, Inc.

Burns, J.M. (1978). *Leadership.* New York: Harper & Row.

Carroll, L. (1983). *Alice in wonderland and Alice through the looking glass.* New York: Julian Messner.

Cashman, K. (1998). *Leadership from the inside out.* Provo, UT: Executive Excellence Publishing.

Coleman, D. (1998). *Working with emotional intelligence.* New York: Bantam Books.

DePree, M. (1977). *Leading without power: Finding hope in serving community.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

DePree, M. (1989). *Leadership is an art.* New York: Dell Publishing.

Drucker, P. (1996). *Leader of the future.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Ellis, S.J. (1986). *From the top down: The executive role in volunteer program success.* Philadelphia: Energize, Inc.

Ellis, S.J., & Noyes, K.H. (1990). *By the people: A history of Americans as volunteers.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Publishers.

Evers, F.T., Rush, J.C., & Berdrow, I. (1998). *The bases of competence: Skills for lifelong learning and employability.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Fandray, D. (1999, July). *Measuring stick.* Continental, 63.

Fisher, J.C., & Cole, K.M. (1993). *Leadership and management of volunteer pro-grams: A guide for volunteer administrators.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Hall, M. J. (1997). *Changing the way we access leadership.* Acquisition Review Quarterly (Fall), p.395.

Harvey, E. & Lucia, A. (1995) *Walk the talk and get the results you want.* Dallas, TX: Performance Publishing.

Hedges, L.E. (1995) *Developing your curriculum guide: From competencies to student performance objectives.* Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University, Department of Agricultural Education.

Johnston, G. & Waymire, J. (1992). *What if… A guide to ethical decision making.* Carp, Ontario, Canada: Johnston Training and Consultation.

Kidder, R.M. (1995). *How good people make tough choices.* New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc.

Kline, P., & Saunders, B. (1993). *Ten steps to a learning organization.* Arlington, VA: Great Ocean Publishers, Inc.

Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (1995). *The leadership challenge.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Lappe, F.M., & Du Bois, P.M. (1994). *The quickening of Americal: Rebuilding our nation, remaking our lives.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Lynch, R. (1993). *LEAD! How public and nonprofit managers can bring out the best in themselves and their organizations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishing.

Lynch, R. (1993). *Laying the foundation with mission and vision: Creating a strategic volunteer program.* Washington D.C.: The Points of Light Foundation

Manske, F.A. (1987). *Secrets of effective leadership: A practical guide to success.* Memphis, TN: Leadership Education and Development, Inc.

Merril, M.V. (1995). *The Paradigm Organizational Effectiveness Series #3: Combining inspiring leadership and effective management: The underpinnings of a strategic volunteer program.* Washington, D.C.: The Points of Light Foundation.

Naylor, H.H. (1967). *Volunteers today: Finding-training and working with them.* Dryden, NY: Dryden Associates.

Safrit, R.D. & Merril, M. (1995, October). *Charting a course: Involving stakeholders in effective strategic planning. Participant resource handbook.* Invited pre-conference at the 1995 International Conference on Volunteer Administration, Boston, MA.

Northouse, P. (1997). *Leadership: Theory and practice.* Thousand Oaks, CA:

SAGE Publications, Inc.

Safrit, R.D., Merrill, M., & King, J. (1998, August). *Transforming volunteer organizations through transformational volunteer administrators.* Seminar conducted at the 15th Biennial World Conference of the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Schindler-Rainman, E. (1986). Volunteer administration: New roles for the professional to make a difference. *Journal of Volunteer Administration*, *V (2),* 13-17.

Seita, T., Waechter, S. (1991). *Change: Meet it and greet it.* Downers Grove, IL: Heritage Arts Publishing.

Silver, N. (1998). *At the heart: The new volunteer challenge to community agencies.* San Francisco: The San Francisco Foundation.

Vail, P.B. (1991). *Managing as a performing art: New ideas for a world of chaotic change.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Vail, P.B. (1998). *Spirited leading and learning: Process wisdom for a new age.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Vineyard, S. (1993). *Megatrends & volunteerism: Mapping the future of volunteer programs.* Downers Grove, IL: Heritage Arts Publishing.

Webster, M. (1996). *Merriam Webster's collegiate dictionary: Tenth edition.* Springfiled, MA: Merriam-Webster Incorporated.

Wheatly, M. (1997). *Goodbye command and control.* Leader to Leader, 5 (Summer), p.25.

Wilson, M. (1976). *The effective management of volunteer programs.* Boulder, CO: Volunteer Management Associates.

Zalenik, A. (1977). *Managers and leaders: Are they different?* Harvard Business Review (May-June)

About the Authors

R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D. is a Professor and Extension Specialist in the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family & Consumer Sciences at North Carolina State University. Formerly a faculty member at The Ohio State University, Dale has established a firm reputation as a visionary leader and motivational presenter. He coordinates a graduate program for professionals working with youth in non-school settings, and coordinates professional development for more than 150 statewide 4-H professionals. He has been an administrator for a county based volunteer program in North Carolina and a statewide volunteer specialist in Ohio, and currently serves as the editor-in-chief of *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration.*

Before her untimely death in 2006, Mary Merrill, L.S.W., was President of Merrill Associates

in Columbus, Ohio. An internationally known speaker and author, and adjunct faculty at The Ohio State University, Mary served as editor-in-chief of the former *Journal of Volunteer Administration*. She provided consultation and training services in volunteer administration, boardsmanship, corporate/employee volunteer program development, and communication skills; and was a frequent presenter at conferences and a facilitator of strategic planning and staff retreats for a wide range of organizations. Through the Points of Light Foundation she helped establish a volunteer center in Moscow, Russia. Mary was a facilitator at the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, and was an invited speaker at the 1998, 2001, 2003, and 2005 Biennial World Volunteerism Conferences and the 1998 Latin American Conference on Volunteerism in Venezuela. She was a star trainer for the Points of Light Foundation.

Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted (with updated format editions) from The Journal of Volunteer Administration, 2003, 21(2), pp. 39-44

Dollar Value of Volunteer Time: A Review of Five Estimation Methods

Paula M. Anderson, CVA
Grand Junction, CO

Mary E. Zimmerer, Ph.D., CPA
Professor of Business
Mesa State College
Grande Junction, CO

Abstract

There is a renewed call in the United States for volunteer service, and volunteers are answering the call - in fact, in 2000, it is estimated that 44 percent of U.S. citizens volunteered within our communities. Meanwhile, volunteer program managers struggle to account for the value of their volunteers' efforts. One of the prominent practices is to place a dollar value on hours of service - often referred to as the dollar value method. This review addresses the variables present in several methods, and applies those methods to one city's statistics. The result emphasizes the lack of uniformity in dollar value practices. The most effective method attempts to equate work of paid employees to the work of volunteers.

Keywords:
value, volunteerism, financial, volunteers

Our nation's citizens are rallying to meet the call for community volunteer service in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York. President Bush is seeking a legion of Americans, each of whom will make a personal lifetime commitment to volunteer service of at least 4,000 hours. Civic engagement—volunteerism—he believes, will help build the Homeland Security network of citizens needed to fight terrorism (Grier, 2001).

Even before the national call to service, Americans were volunteering in record numbers. According to a recent survey, in the year 2000, 44 percent or 83.9 million people volunteered their time. These volunteers provided a service equivalent to more than 9 million full-time employees at a value of $239 billion (Points of Light Foundation, 2002).

The challenge for non-profit and governmental organizations is to select a valuation system to use in financial reports and grant proposals. The challenge for each volunteer service manager should be to provide a realistic estimate of the value of volunteer time. It should be noted that this would provide a minimum value for hours of service, and is very different from calculating the value of tasks completed. Further analysis of the real impact of volunteer service would reveal a much different and almost certainly higher "value added." Since calculation of the value of time is the only efficient method readily

available to most organizations currently, we offer a range of options, and concluded with a recommendation.

Although the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB)—the national board which establishes guidelines for accountants, requires the reporting of the value of most volunteer services on corporate financial statements, it fails to provide guidelines for doing so (Bechtold). A review of the literature substantiates the perception that there are many methods now in use—methods that provide varying estimates of the dollar value of volunteer service.

This paper reviews several common methods of valuation and, using actual volunteer time data from a city-run volunteer program as a basis, provides an analysis of the application of five different valuation methods.

The purpose of the paper is to compare those dollar value methods, and to recommend a method for use in volunteer program management in local governmental and non-profit agencies. The review provides guidance for volunteer management personnel in non-profit and governmental organizations at all levels.

The City of Grand Junction, in Colorado, enlists the assistance of approximately 350 volunteers each year throughout its seven different departments. The population is about 55,000. The City government employs about 430 staff. This growing program recorded that approximately 350 citizens provided 25,721 volunteer hours in 2001—the equivalent of 14.9 full-time positions. The volunteer program is administered through the city's human resources department. It is the data from this program that serves in this study as the basis for an analysis of dollar value estimation methods.

The Value of Community Service to the Organization

Putman (Grier, 2001) wrote, "The positive benefits of such civic engagement and social connectedness ... consistently produce, for example, better schools, faster economic development, lower crime and more effective government. Life is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital." Volunteers serve in every facet of public life, and by so doing, supplement the contributions that organizations can make through their own efforts. Services extended to citizens through the city's volunteer program illustrate some of the contributions that improve the quality of life of city residents. For example, the area Job Corps center, a training center for socially and economically challenged youth, supplied a crew and a paid supervisor, as well as equipment, to paint the interior and exterior of the city's senior center. The value of this contribution is far more than an average rate of pay times hours of service, and would indicate this contribution provided a long-term improvement to a major recreational facility within the community. In an example such as this, there is a clear opportunity to explore how impact measurement could be applied for a more complete picture of the "value added by volunteers" above the dollar value attached to the time they donated. The results would surely demonstrate that taxpayers get more services for each investment in volunteering.

Organizations seeking grants must attach some dollar value to the work of volunteers, along with reporting the costs of managing the volunteer program. The general practice, therefore, is to take the more simple approach of estimating the dollar value of volunteers' time. The concern is that organizations account for the value of volunteer hours when the output of the volunteer service is often much more

valuable and meaningful than an hourly wage equivalent.

Dollar Value Methods

A review of the literature provided specific descriptions of a number of methods used in Grand Junction agencies, and their variations. Because the application of each method provides a different financial result, it is important for managers to select a method that best fits the mission of the organization.

It is clear that, without guidelines, organizations base their calculations on methods that may or may not be in the best interests of the volunteer services program. Financial reports and grant proposals lack a very basic construct of accounting - comparability. Methods reviewed here include Comparable Worth, Minimum Wage, Average Wage, Living Wage, The Independent Sector Formula, and Person/Year Computation.

The following table shows the range of dollar values estimated from the use of various methods.

Table 1. *Estimated Dollar Value of Volunteer Time - Analysis of Five Methods (Based on 25,721 Volunteer Hours of Service to the City of Grand Junction)*

Method	Hourly Wage	Est. Value
Average Wage — 10% Benefits	$14.30	$367,812
Comparable Worth — 10% Benefits	$ 7.156	$184,059
Independent Sector — 12% Benefits	$16.05	$412,823
Living Wage — 10% Benefits	$ 9.05	$232,776
Minimum Wage — 10% Benefits	$5.67	$145,840

Comparable Worth. The comparable worth method attempts to equate the work of paid employees to the work of volunteers. Actual assigned tasks are matched as closely as possible. It is assumed that the dollar value of the volunteer's time equates to the dollar value of a paid employee's time. This method is called the "input cost" approach when used in Australia. Hopkins (2000) analyzes the method with a caveat that the approach is based on the concept that volunteer and paid employees are perfect substitutes.

In addition to this questionable assumption, Hopkins states that there are many unknown variables. For example, there is no determination of the level of compensation selected. The level could be an entry-level hourly wage, an average weekly or monthly wage, or some variation of any of these (2000). Behrens (2000) supports the comparable worth method, but calls it the replacement value approach. He states that the method must be measurable to be sound, an illusive goal, at best.

Susan J. Ellis addresses this computational method, giving credit for its origin to G. Neil Karn (Ellis, 1999). She refers to the method in terms of equivalent dollars. It is her premise that it is the volunteer managers' responsibility to compute dollar value estimates fairly. Her recommendation is to find equivalent positions within the organization, and then using the salaries of those positions, begin the computation. Fringe benefits as appropriate to volunteer benefits should be added to the salary figure. She cautions that the calculation should be computed on actual hours served by the salaried personnel, acknowledging that volunteer hours do not include vacation time and other non-productive hours.

The city program studied uses this method in calculating its estimated dollar value of volunteer time, using the proficient level to assign a comparable wage, as opposed to

using entry level wage. Actual volunteer assignment descriptions detail the tasks to be completed, and these tasks are matched as closely as possible with paid positions. Fringe benefits are calculated specifically for each position and include Social Security, Medicare, and Workers' Compensation. Data for the comparable worth computation within this study reflects those individualized benefit calculations estimated to average approximately 10 percent.

The city has presented a very conservative calculation of volunteer time value—one that does not recognize the value of volunteer impact. True, volunteer output is rarely measured, but the dollar value of volunteer time can be estimated; therefore, the method is acceptable in that it is a fair measure of estimated dollar value of volunteer time.

Minimum Wage. Many organizations use federal minimum hourly wage computations —$5.15—as a basis for their volunteer time dollar value estimates. This system sometimes also reflects an additional computation for fringe benefits.

Ellis (1999) feels this method is a trap, easy to use but not reflective of volunteer activities. Her position is that most volunteer assignments are above minimum wage levels—maybe even above median wage levels.

One Grand Junction no-pay medical facility uses this method (Foster, 2002); this clinic serves indigent citizens. According to Foster, the minimum wage computation results in an estimate of the dollar value of volunteer time which closely reflects the economic reality of the clinic and its clientele. Unadjusted federal minimum wage—$5.15 per hour—is the basis for estimates, and those data are reported in financial information and grant proposals. This method does not, in any way, reflect the value of the per hour expertise of the volunteers.

It would not be meaningful for the City of Grand Junction to use the minimum wage method when estimating the dollar value of volunteer time—the computations would have little relationship to the pay scale of the city or to the value of volunteer time contributions.

Average Wage. Average wage calculations can be gleaned from census data and reflect a middle ground to be used for calculations. This calculation is a wide-spread method of estimation of the dollar value of volunteer time (Hopkins, 2000, National Centre for Volunteering, 2002). Ross (1998) supports this method, indicating that Canadians often use this method, based on national average hourly wages published by Statistics Canada.

In computing average wage in this study, the local metropolitan area Bureau of Labor Statistics data were used to determine the mean wage. Third quarter 2001- the most recent information -lists mean wage in the area at $13. Using the wage plus benefit method most closely applied in this study, the wage calculated at average hourly wage plus 10 percent benefits is $14.30. This method is patterned after the national Independent Sector Formula, and therefore employs the methodology of the national method with the added advantage of local orientation.

This calculation results in a significantly higher estimated value than does the comparable wage method currently used by the city and because it is localized, may be a viable alternative.

Living Wage. New on the horizon is the concept of value based on dollars required to subsist. That value is aligned with the federal poverty line for a family of four - $17,800 a year or about $8.23 per hour

(Wagner, 2002, Foster, 2002). This concept when applied to the dollar value of volunteer time moves the calculation to a level more reflective of the cost of living.

The living wage valuation method may be a useful approximation if applied to basic skill volunteer tasks. The City of Denver, for example, applies this value to those assuming entry-level positions. (Wagner, 2002). One Grand Junction charity uses a living wage of $10, a subsistence estimate which organization leaders believe to be appropriate for the area. (Anderson, 2002). Using the more defensible federal poverty line figure of $8.23 per hour, volunteer managers could develop financial information which could withstand scrutiny from foundations and funding agencies. The living wage concept, however, lacks any relationship to the nature of volunteer service and, unless matched with low skill services, lacks any tie to the value of volunteer hours contributed.

The Independent Sector Formula. One the most widely used calculation methods for estimating the dollar value of volunteer time applies the average hour earnings of all production and non-supervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls (as released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). It then increases the rate by 12 percent (estimated fringe benefits) to arrive at the dollar value of volunteer time each year (Independent Sector, 2002). That dollar value for 2002 is $16.05 - significantly above the dollar value computed using local average wage data.

This method is used widely throughout government and non-profit sectors. Working closely with the Independent Sector are the Points of Light Foundation and the Corporation for National Service. Both of these organizations promote volunteerism and provide community-level support for volunteer centers. Among the network associates are government organizations such as the Bureau of Land Management, the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the National Parks Service. Non-profit associates include AmeriCorps and RSVP. The over 500 volunteer centers coordinated through these organizations use the Independent Sector Formula to estimate the dollar value of volunteer time.

Person/Year Computation. Canadian scholars have proposed that it is useful to value volunteer time in terms of full-time, year-round positions, or "person-years" which the volunteer hours would equal (Ross, 1998). The computation is completed by dividing total volunteer hours per year by the annual average number of hours worked by a full-time employee. An organization with accurate volunteer service and payroll records can use this formula to estimate person-years of volunteer service. No effort is made to differentiate the type of work, the quality and quantity of work, or the estimated dollar value of the volunteer's time.

If a typical worker had two weeks of vacation time, ten days of holiday time, and ten days of sick and personal leave, the worker would be available for 46 weeks (37.5 hours per week) or 1,725 hours annually. Using 2001 city volunteer time data and an annual 1725 average full-time equivalent employee hours, the contribution of volunteers to the city and its citizens is significant. This method is an accurate, non-financial assessment of volunteer time contributions; it could only be used as a footnote in financial reports if an estimated per year wage were not attached.

Volunteers supplemented the city's level of service by contributing nearly 15 person-years, a noteworthy addition to its service efforts.

Table 2. *Full-time Equivalent Volunteer Person-Year Computation:*

Hours Contributed /Annual Full-Time Hours = Person-Years Contributed

25.721 hours / 1,725 hours = 14.9 years

Conclusions

The purpose of the paper was to identify those dollar value methods most appropriate for use in volunteer program management in local governmental and non-profit agencies. The recommendations provide guidance for volunteer management personnel in non-profit and governmental organizations at all levels.

Accounting regulations and requests for quantifiable data at management levels require that fair and defensible methods be applied. After studying several methods and applying them to volunteer program data, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. There are no established guidelines for calculating the dollar value of volunteer time.
2. Establishing an estimated dollar value of volunteer time ignores the qualitative and quantitative value of long-term gains to the organization and its clientele.
3. Comparable worth estimates give a reasonable level of substitute value if tasks are closely aligned.
4. Minimum wage estimates do not reflect the substitute value of volunteer service and generally understate the contributions of volunteer time.
5. Average wage (using local data) and the Independent Sector Formula (using national data) measure value in the same way. Of the two choices, it is appropriate for local organizations to use local average wage data because they more closely reflect the economics of the area.
6. Person/Year computations provide valid analytical results.

Recommendations

Local governmental and non-profit agencies should adopt a method which most fairly reports the estimated dollar value of volunteer time, recognizing that the reported data does not include output measures assessing qualitative and quantitative components of volunteer contributions. The two most usable methods for local organizations are comparable worth and average wage. The more accurate of the two is comparable worth: it is also the more complex of the two. Care should be taken to ensure that the cost of compiling comparable worth statistics does not out-weigh the benefit of having such information available to management.

References

Bechtold, B. W., & Worley, S.L. (n.d.). *Meeting the new PASB standards.* Retrieved June 10, 2002, from http://www.energizeinc.com/art/cfasb/html

Behrens, A. (2000). *Responses to be careful what we wish for! The cost-benefit analysis of volunteering.* Retrieved June 7, 2002 from http://www.energizeinc.com/hot/ressept00.html

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2001). *2001 metropolitan area occupational employment and wage estimates, Grand Junction, Colorado MSA.* Retrieved June 14, 2002, from www.gjep.org

Ellis, S.J. (1999). The dollar value of volunteer time. *Focus on volunteering kopyKit, 2nd Ed.,* p. 95.

Grier, P. (2001, January 31). Bush call for volunteerism: Will citizens take heed? *Christian Science Monitor.* Retrieved May 29, 2002, from http://ehostvgw2 epnet.com/ get_xml.asp?booleen Term+Volunteerism&fuzzvTerm+&resu

Hopkins, S. (2000, April). *Researching VET and the voluntary sector: Dealing with ambiguities.* Retrieved June 10, 2002, from http://www.education. monash.edu.au/centres/ceet/wp26. htm

Independent Sector (2002). Value of volunteer time research. Retrieved June 15, 2002, from http://www. independentsector.org/programs/ research/volunteer_tim

National Centre for Volunteering (2002). Information bulletin: Working with volunteers. Retrieved June 10, 2002, from http://www. volunteering.org.uk/ economicvalue.htm

Points of Light Foundation (2002, February). *Facts and stats.* Retrieved June 6, 2002, from http://www. pointsoflight.org/pressroom/2002facts.html

Ross, D. (1998). *How to estimate the economic contribution of volunteer work.* Retrieved June 10, 2002, from the http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/ heritage/ComPartnE/estvo1e.htm

Wagner, R. (2002, June 12). Living wage ordinances can't change economics. *The Business Times of Western Colorado.*

Wilson, B. (2001, February). In praise of volunteerism" News Photographer, Vol. 56, Iss. 2, p. 12. Quoting Robert D. Putnam. (1995). *Bowling alone: America's declining social capital*. *Journal of Democracy;* [no page given]. Retrieved May 29, 2002, from http://ehostvgsv2. epnet.com/get_xml.asp?booleanTerm=volunteerism&fuzzvTerm=&hitNu

About the Authors

Paula M. Anderson, CVA, has been an active volunteer manager in Grand Junction, Colorado, for nearly 10 years. Most recently, she developed and directed the volunteer program for the City of Grand Junction. She is also secretary of the Western Slope DOVIA.

Mary E. Zimmerer, Ph.D., CPA, is a Professor of Business at Mesa State College in Grand Junction, Colorado, where she has taught both management and accounting over the past 14 years. One of her assignments is to coordinate business division interns, many of whom work as volunteers within the community.

Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted (with updated format editions) from The Journal of Volunteer Administration, 2004, 22(4), pp. 17-22.

Barriers to the Development of Volunteer Leadership Competencies: Why Johnnie Can't Lead Volunteers

Barry L. Boyd
Associate Professor and Associate Department Head
Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications
Texas A&M University
107 Scoates Hall, Mailstop 2116
College Station, TX 77843-2116
Tel. 979-862-3693 * FAX 979-845-62396 * E-mail: b-boyd@tamu.edu

Abstract

More than 109 million Americans volunteered for nonprofit organizations in 1998, carrying out almost one-third of the work of the organizations. A nation-wide Delphi study was conducted to identify the competencies that will be required by volunteer administrators (VAs) during the next decade as well as barriers that prevent VAs from acquiring such competencies, and how those barriers may be eliminated. This article discusses 12 barriers to acquiring volunteer leadership competencies, as well as 21 methods for addressing those barriers and motivating volunteer administrators to acquire them. It is recommended that organizations make the acquisition of these competencies a part of the employee's performance expectations, and should redirect resources to assist volunteer administrators in acquiring the competencies. Organizations must also create an organizational culture that values the contributions of volunteers and the role of the volunteer administrator.

Keywords:
volunteer administration, competencies, professionals, barriers, professional development

Introduction

Sue Vinyard (1993), noted author and speaker on leading volunteers, states:

> The volunteer coordinator of the next century will have to command a broader and broader range of expertise to be able to meet the challenges of leading volunteer efforts within organizations. Far deeper than knowing how to plan, organize, staff, direct, control, and reward, the Volunteer Program Executive will have to move far beyond these basic functions of management to embrace techniques and strategies that are both complex and interdependent. (p.129)

Vinyard emphasizes that the volunteer manager of the future will need to empower the entire organization around her to be the best it can be (1993). She further states that managers of volunteers will have to manage their time to include the acquisition and assimilation of new knowledge. This may include reading extensively, attending seminars, or enrolling in graduate courses. Volunteer administrators (VAs) must also be able to transfer this information to the information users through appropriate communication methods. The VAs of the future must be adept at watching trends that

may affect how they do business in the future. In addition, volunteer administrators must be adept at creating and maintaining a supportive, ethical, friendly, and productive climate for volunteers and paid staff. Do volunteer administrators possess these skills?

Fisher and Cole noted that most volunteer administrators are initiated into the profession through on-the-job or previous volunteer experience (1993). Few have formal advanced training in the administration of volunteer programs, management, or personnel experience. In fact, a study of the membership of the Association of Volunteer Administrators in 2000 discovered that 77.8% of volunteer administrators surveyed had received no formal training in volunteer administration prior to their first job experience as a volunteer administrator (Brudney & Schmahl, 2002). More than 26% of the members responding stated that at the time of the survey, they still had not completed any formal training in volunteer administration. About 25% had taken some college courses or completed university certificate programs. Almost 65% had taken some nonuniversity courses, but it is not known how many. A little more than 10% had a nonuniversity certificate in volunteer administration.

Numerous studies have identified the deficiencies of Extension professionals in coordinating volunteers and volunteer programs (Culp & Kohlhagen, 2001; Hange, Seevers & VanLeeuwen, 2002; King and Safrit, 1998). King and Safrit (1998), and Collins (2001) each found gaps between Extension professionals' perceived importance of volunteer management competencies and their competence in these areas. They believe that these gaps represent training needs for these professionals. Hange, Seevers & VanLeeuwen (2002) also found that agents' competencies in nine areas of volunteer administration did not match their perceived importance of those competencies.

Why is the competence of the volunteer administrator (VA) such an important issue? Let's examine the state of volunteerism in the United States today. The Independent Sector (2002) estimates that in 1998 more than 109 million Americans volunteered for nonprofit organizations and human service agencies, a 17% increase over 1995. These volunteers accounted for an estimated $225 billion dollars of services to these organizations, the equivalent of over 9 million full-time employees. More than 80% of nonprofit organizations in the United States rely on volunteers to accomplish almost one-third of their work (Ericksen-Mendoza & Heffron, 1998). Volunteers alone cannot improve their communities. Volunteers need the direction of volunteer administrators who can focus their efforts toward solving specific problems. Volunteer administrators not only recruit, screen, train, and supervise volunteers, they serve as a volunteer management "consultant" to other employees in the agency who utilize volunteers.

The competencies required for volunteer administrators to be effective are well documented. The Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) has defined the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed by volunteer administrators as part of their professional credentialing program. Boyd (2003) independently identified a set of competencies that volunteer administrators will need in the coming decade that are in line with those promoted by the AVA. Schmiesing, Gliem, and Safrit (2002) also identified similar competencies.

In a 1999 study, volunteer administrators identified their own professional development as one of the most important trends affecting their profession in the coming decade (Culp & Nolan, 1999).

What prevents those who direct volunteers from attaining the competencies needed to effectively do their jobs?

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to develop consensus among a panel of experts regarding the competencies that would be required by volunteer administrators in the year 2010 and to identify any barriers that volunteer administrators face in acquiring those competencies. The competencies identified in this study have been discussed in previous publications (Boyd, 2003); this article addresses the barriers VAs face in acquiring the skills and knowledge required to be successful in their jobs.

Methods/Procedures

This study used the Delphi technique for developing group consensus. The Delphi technique was first developed by the Rand Corporation in the 1950s. It is a technique primarily used for forecasting, policy investigations, and goal setting (Ulschak, 1983). While the majority of its use in educational research has been in the area of curriculum development, it has also been widely used to determine essential competencies in many fields (Martin & Frick, 1998; Shinn & Smith, 1999). The Delphi technique uses a panel of experts in a given field to develop consensus regarding the answer to a specific question or series of questions.

This study required three rounds to achieve consensus among thirteen experts in volunteer administration. The panel of experts consisted of volunteer administrators, directors of regional volunteer centers, Cooperative Extension volunteer development specialists, and university faculty members from across the nation. These experts were identified by their reputation among volunteer administrators, their involvement in the profession, or their research and publication record in the field.

Round I: The initial round required the jury of experts to respond to three open-ended questions. The jury was asked to identify three to five competencies that they believed volunteer administrators would need in the year 2010. A competency was identified as a knowledge, skill, motive or characteristic that causes or predicts outstanding performance. They were next asked to identify any barriers that they perceived would prevent volunteer administrators from achieving these competencies. A barrier was defined as anything that impedes the acquisition of these competencies. And finally, the jury was asked to identify ways for organizations to motivate (both intrinsically and extrinsically) volunteer administrators to acquire these competencies or overcome any barriers. Fifteen of the original 20 members of the jury responded to the first round for a response rate of seventy-five percent. Dalky (1969) found that when the size of the jury was greater than 13, mean correlations were greater than 0.80, thus satisfying questions of process reliability.

Round II. Faculty members with experience in volunteer administration examined the statements identified in Round I to find commonalities among them and to combine similar statements. The original language of the expert jury members was retained without trying to clarify or interpret meaning. Combining similar statements resulted in 33 competency statements, 15 barrier statements, and 21 statements regarding motivation. These statements were used to create the instrument for Round II. In Round II, the jury was asked to rate their strength of agreement for each statement on a six-point Likert-type scale with 1= strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree. All fifteen

members of the jury who responded in Round I also responded to Round II.

Round III. The purpose of Round III was to begin the process of developing consensus among the jury. Those statements that received a 5 or 6 (agree or strongly agree) from at least two-thirds of the jury responding in Round II were kept for the third round. Jury members were sent a third revised instrument and asked to re-evaluate each statement retained from the second round using a six-point Likert-type scale. Thirteen of the 15 jury members responded to this round. Dillman's Tailored Design Method (2000) was used for nonresponse follow-up. Frequency distributions were again used to select responses based on a two-thirds majority.

Findings

The original 33 barriers identified during Round I were reduced to 15 in Round II. Consensus was reached on 12 of those barriers by the third round. These barriers are listed in Figure 1. The barriers fall into three categories: organizational barriers, individual traits of the volunteer administrator, and lack of opportunities.

Six of the barriers identified deal with organizational cultures where the use of volunteers to achieve the organization's mission isn't valued. The lack of organizational support may come from a lack of understanding on the part of the organization's leadership. Organizations that have a short history of utilizing volunteers may not understand that volunteer programs are not free, but require financial support as well as changes in organizational policies and attitude. Many volunteer administrators are saddled with too many other responsibilities, demonstrating a lack of importance given to that role in the organization. Such organizations also lack an environment that fosters the improvement and development of their employees. Volunteer administrators aren't encouraged to seek the development of needed competencies.

Figure 1. *Barriers that Discourage Volunteer Administrators from Acquiring Leadership and Management Competencies*

ORGANIZATIONAL BARRIERS

- Lack of organizational commitment/support to volunteers
- Organizational hiring practices
- Volunteer administrator has too many responsibilities other than volunteer administration
- Other professionals in the agency are threatened by volunteers
- An organization that doesn't foster a positive environment for the development of the individual
- Lack of importance given to the role of volunteer administrator

INDIVIDUAL BARRIERS

- Lack of knowledge of necessary volunteer management skills
- Lack of basic understanding of volunteer systems and the drivers of those systems
- Unwillingness of volunteer administrator to learn or change

LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES

- Lack of pre-service or in-service training for volunteer administrators
- Lack of access to necessary training/education to acquire the competencies

(Boyd, 2003, p. 52).

Lack of knowledge on the part of the volunteer administrator is also a barrier. How can volunteer administrators seek skills they don't realize they need? The fact that most volunteer administrators enter the profession without any prior experience (Fisher & Cole, 1993) may account for their lack of understanding of volunteer systems.

While there are many books available, as well as a growing number of Web sites, on

the topic of volunteer administration, many volunteer administrators still do not have access to accurate up-to-date information on managing and leading volunteers. This is especially true for volunteer administrators in rural areas where support organizations may not exist, Internet access is limited, and traveling to professional conferences and workshops is expensive.

Eliminating the Barriers

When asked to identify ways to motivate volunteer administrators to develop these competencies and remove any barriers, the expert panel reached consensus on 20 items. These statements are listed in Figure 2.

Organizational culture is implicated in both motivating volunteer administrators to acquire the competencies and removing barriers to their attainment. Recognizing the importance of volunteer contributions to the agency's mission, acknowledging and rewarding volunteer administrators for acquiring the competencies, and recognizing the professionalism of the volunteer coordinator position both internally and externally to the organization all require an organizational culture that values the contributions of volunteers. Paddy Bowen, Executive Director of Volunteer Canada, describes an organizational need to invest in the professional development of volunteer administrators, "Organizationally, we need to invest time and effort on our management systems around volunteers, from the board to the mail room" (2001, p.37).

It may be up to the volunteer administrator to develop such a culture within their organization. Evaluating the contributions that volunteers make to the organization and communicating those impacts to the leadership of the organization and to other stakeholders such as donors is crucial to establishing the essential contribution of volunteers. Such evaluations must go beyond dollars saved to describe impact on the organization's clientele or community (Culp and Nall, 2000). Making sure that the volunteer program is aligned with the agency's mission will also serve to underscore the importance of the volunteers. Volunteer administrators must also work with other paid staff to help them develop the skills and attitudes necessary for working with volunteers. In addition, VAs must include other paid staff members in discovering ways that volunteers can contribute to the agency and in developing those jobs and job descriptions.

Figure 2. *Motivation Factors and Management Practices that Encourage the Attainment of Volunteer Administration Competencies*

MOTIVATING FACTORS

Require adequate pre-service training before hiring volunteer coordinator.
Require additional training as part of the job expectations and performance review.
Recognize the importance of volunteer contributions to the agency's mission.
Acknowledge and reward volunteer administrators for attaining the competencies.
Include the volunteer administrator in key decision-making and management meetings.
Recognize the professionalism of the volunteer coordinator position both internally and externally to the organization.
Express how volunteer management skills learned are transferable to other jobs and to personal life.
Profile success stories.
Create an environment and desire for life-long learning.

REMOVING BARRIERS

Orient volunteer administrators as to the complexity of the position.
Provide appropriate levels of guidance and

support.
Reimburse staff for training/professional development.
Refocus positions to focus only on volunteer administration.
Offer graduate courses in volunteer administration.
Make sure volunteer program's goals and activities support the organizational mission/vision.
Allow flexible work schedules and official time to obtain needed training.
Realistically advertise for the required knowledge, skills and attitudes.
Provide access to professional development materials in volunteer administration.
Make technology and applications accessible to help volunteer administrators do their job.
Offer an exciting array of professional development opportunities.
(Boyd, 2003, p. 53).

Agency leaders should recognize the importance and the complexity of the volunteer administrator's role. For most organizations, volunteer coordination is a full-time job. Releasing VAs from other duties to concentrate fully on leading the volunteer program would also give them time to acquire the needed skills. Leaders can also make the acquisition of competencies part of the performance appraisal system, rewarding VAs for their efforts at professional development. The acquisition of VA competencies should not cost the volunteer administrator. Agencies should be prepared to reimburse the VA for reasonable expenses related to their professional development. This may be especially important in rural areas where VAs must travel some distance for professional development opportunities. Investing in a professional development library could pay dividends to the agency since all paid staff members could improve their volunteer management skills.

Conclusions and Implications

In their study to identify trends that will affect volunteer leadership in the next ten years, Culp and Nolan (1999) identified the volunteer administrator's professional development as the second most critical trend. The implications are clear: organizations that depend on volunteers to carry out their mission must either hire volunteer administrators with these competencies or make opportunities and resources available for volunteer administrators to acquire them.

This study identified several ways that volunteer administrators can be motivated to acquire volunteer leadership competencies. While requiring adequate pre-service training and recognizing volunteer administrators for attaining the required competencies are both easily implemented management practices, the other motivating factors identified in this study may require a change in the agency's organizational culture. Recognizing the professionalism of the volunteer administrator position, involving the volunteer administrator in the decision-making process, and creating an atmosphere that encourages life-long learning are factors that cannot be implemented overnight. Edgar Schein, in his book, *Organizational Culture and Leadership,* states that it is the prime task of the leader to manage the organizational culture (1996). Multiple barriers may impede volunteer administrators from attaining these competencies. Strategic direction from the organizational leadership will be required to eliminate such barriers. Reallocating resources, aligning the volunteer mission with that of the organization, and redefining the volunteer administrator position to focus only on the volunteer program will greatly enhance the volunteer administrator's ability to attain the required competencies.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations for organizations utilizing volunteers to achieve their mission:

1. Organizations should seek employees who have the necessary competencies in volunteer administration for volunteer management positions;
2. Organizations should make the acquisition of volunteer administration competencies a part of the employee's performance expectations;
3. Organizations should redirect resources to assist volunteer administrators in acquiring the competencies, including provision of educational materials, professional development time, and reimbursement for professional development expenses related to acquiring the competencies; and
4. Organizations should examine their organizational culture to determine if any of the barriers identified in this study are preventing employees from acquiring the needed competencies in volunteer administration.

References

Association for Volunteer Administration. (2002). *Core competencies for volunteer administration.* Retrieved March 21, 2002, from http://www.avaintl.org/about/ comp-stat.html

Bowen, P. (2001). World events emphasize continued need for volunteerism, personal reflection. *Journal of Volunteer Administration, 20*(1), 36-38.

Boyd, B.L. (2003). Identifying competencies for leaders of volunteers during the next decade: A national delphi study. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 44*(4), 47-56.

Brudney, J.L., & Schmahl, S.L. (2002). Survey of volunteer administrators, 1992 to 2000: Trends for the profession. *Journal of Volunteer Administration, 20*(1), 6-14.

Collins, M. (2001). *Michigan 4-H youth development agents' perceptions of the importance of and their competence with selected volunteer management functions.* Unpublished thesis. Columbus: The Ohio State University.

Culp, K., III, & Kohlhagen, B.S. (2001). Kentucky 4-H agents' perceptions of their level of competency and frequency of use of volunteer administration functions. *Annual conference proceedings of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action.* December 1, 2001. Miami, FL.

Culp, K., III, & Nall, M.A. (2000). Evaluating the impact of volunteer leadership programs. *Proceedings of the 2000 Association of Leadership Educators Conference,* Toronto, Canada. Retrieved on July 14, 2003, from http://www.aces.uiuc.edu/ -ALE/ 2000/nall.htm

Culp, K., III, & Nolan, M.M. (1999). Trends which will impact volunteer leadership educators in the next 10 years. *Proceedings of the 1999 Association of Leadership Educators Conference,* San Diego, CA. Retrieved on September 23, 1999, from http://www.aces.uiuc.edu/-ALE/ 99proceedings.html

Dalky, N.C. (1969). *The delphi method: An experimental study of group opinion.* Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation.

Dillman, D.A. (2000). *Mail and internet surveys: The total design method.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Ericksen-Mendoza, H., & Heffron, A. (1998). The importance of volunteers. *Civnet Journal, 2(*4*).* Retrieved April 4, 2002, from http://www.civnet.org/journal/issue8/ngoheric.htm

Fisher, J.C., & Cole, K.M. (1993). *Leadership and management of volunteer programs.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Hange, J.S., Seevers, B.S., & VanLeeuwen, D. (2002, December). 4-H youth development extension agents' attitudes towards volunteer management competencies. *Proceedings of the National Agricultural Education Research Conference.* Las Vegas, NV.

Independent Sector. (2002). Giving and volunteering in the United States: Findings from a national survey. Retrieved March 23, 2002, from http://www.indepsec.org/GandV/skeyf.htm

King, J., & Safrit, D.R. (1998). Extension agents' perceptions of volunteer management. [Electronic version]. *Journal of Extension, 36*(3). Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/l998june/a2.html

Martin, A.G., & Frick, M.J. (1998). The delphi technique: An informal history of its use in agricultural education research since 1984. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 39*(1), 73-79.

Schein, E.H. (1996). *Organizational culture and leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Schmiesing, R., Gliem, J., & Safrit, D. (2002). Factor analysis identifying components of contemporary volunteer administration. *ARNOVA Conference Proceedings.* Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Shinn, G.C. & Smith, K.L. (1999). Anticipating roles of the cooperative extension service in 2010: A delphi technique involving agriculture and natural resource agents and family and consumer science agents in Texas. *Proceedings of the National Agricultural Education Research Conference.* December 11, 1999. Orlando, FL.

Vinyard, S.E. (1993). *Megatrends and volunteerism: Mapping the future of volunteer programs.* Downers Grove, IL: Heritage Arts Publishing.

About the Author

Barry L. Boyd is an Associate Professor and Associate Department Head in the Department of Agricultural Leadership Education at Texas A&M University where he teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses in leading volunteer programs. Dr. Boyd spent 16 years as an administrator of volunteers in the Texas Cooperative Extension system. His research interest includes the development of leadership and management competencies for both current and future volunteer administrators.

Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted (with updated format editions) from The Journal of Volunteer Administration, 2005, 23(1), pp. 21-25

The Volunteer and Staff Team: How Do We Get Them to Get Along?

Nancy Macduff
President, Macduff/Bunt Associates
Adjunct Faculty, Washington State University
925 "E" St.
Walla Walla, WA 99362
Tel 509-529-0244 * FAX 509-529-8865 * E-mail: mba@bmi.net

F. Ellen Netting
Professor, School of Social Work
Raleigh Bldg, Room 226
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, VA 23284-2027
Tel. 804-828-0404 * FAX (804) 828-0716 * E-mail: enetting@vcu.edu

Abstract

Both practitioner and research literatures were reviewed to determine items relevant to developing volunteer and paid staff relationships. An online survey targeted to members of the Association of Volunteer Administration and the CYBERVPM electronic mailing list was conducted. Respondents included 557 volunteer program managers. A nine-item volunteer and paid staff climate instrument was completed, followed by a 27-item behavioral scale. Respondents reported that expressing appreciation, welcoming volunteers, and being present at association meetings are almost always/usually done. These civility items were closely followed by communicating clear information on roles and expectations. Although all items were relevant to at least some programs, instrumental tasks that engaged paid staff and volunteers in the same training events, projects, and meetings occurred in fewer organizations.

Keywords:
paid staff, staff climate, relationships, volunteers

Paid staff acceptance of and cooperation with volunteers has long been recognized as a crucial ingredient to volunteer program success (Wilson, 1973). Today, in an era of dwindling resources, positive relationships between paid staff and volunteers are particularly needed in planning and implementing events, projects, and programs. Conversely, when relationships are strained, volunteers will likely be driven away (Macduff, 2001). Understanding how to create and maintain strong volunteer and paid staff relationships is a desirable and potentially productive aspect of the successful management of a volunteer program.

This paper briefly reviews what is known about volunteer and paid staff relationships, drawing from both the practitioner and research literature and reports the results of a national study of volunteer managers as it relates to positive relationships.

The Practitioner Literature

Practitioner literature is quick to alert volunteer program managers to the need for healthy relationships between volunteers and paid staff (Brudney, 1990; Macduff, 2001; McCudden, 2000; Marin, 1999; Wilson, 1973). Regardless of the author, the description of the symptoms of poor relationships are remarkably similar, including lack of communication, "us" and "them" language, and working in "silos" rather than jointly.

Volunteers can be perceived as a threat to job security or as lacking professional credentials to do the work (Marin, 1999; Pearce, 1993). Marin strongly recommends bringing unspoken worries into the discussion and working to reduce their destructive aspects. The uneasiness of paid staff can lead to "resentment, suspicion, and disrespect" from both volunteers and paid staff (Marin, 1999, p. 1). Most authors on this topic agree with Marin on the negative impact of poor volunteer and paid staff relations.

Practitioners outline elements needed to effect positive volunteer and staff relationships: communication, training, inclusive planning processes, clearly defined roles, mutual responsibilities, and support. (Brudney, 1990; Ellis, 1986; Macduff, 2001; Marin, 1999; McCudden, 2000; Pearce, 1993; Wilson, 1973).

The Research Literature

In 1983 Pearce pioneered the study of paid staff and volunteer relationships with her work, *Volunteers: The Organizational Behavior of Unpaid Workers.* In that book she asked researchers to study the "tension that can exist between volunteers and employee co-workers [that] remains one of the unpleasant secrets of nonprofit organizations" (Pearce, 1993, p. 77).

While there is not a great deal of empirical evidence related to this area of managing volunteers, some data are beginning to emerge. Netting, Nelson, Borders, and Huber (2004) categorized the available studies as those that (1) examine job attitudes and motivations between volunteers and employees, (2) focus on volunteer participation and withdrawal, and (3) debate the optimal mix of paid staff and volunteers.

In terms of job attitudes and motivations, Liao-Troth (2001) responded to Pearce's call for research, extending the study of volunteers and paid staff into a medical center setting in which he found that paid staff and volunteers have similar job attitudes. Focusing on participation and withdrawal, Van Dyne and Ang (1998) studied contingent workers and employees in Singapore, finding more commitment by paid workers than by volunteers. Similarly, Farmer and Fedor (1999) found major differences between volunteers and other workers in how they psychologically contracted with

voluntary organizations. Nelson, Netting, Borders, and Huber (in press) studied volunteer long-term care ombudsmen in one state and reported that the quality of supervisory support from paid staff was an important factor in their decision to leave or stay in their volunteer position. In other research, volunteers and paid staff had slightly different views or used different words, but in the end it appears that communication and trust are critical elements to positive relationships and the longevity of the volunteer's service (Macduff, 2001; McCudden, 2000; Wilson, 1973).

The Study

This study was designed to address the following research questions: 1) What is the perceived climate between volunteer and paid staff in organizations with volunteer programs?, and 2) What behaviors/strategies are being used to facilitate volunteer/staff relationships?

Using the literature cited above, the authors designed a two-part survey. The first was a nine-item assessment of the volunteer and paid staff climate as currently perceived by the manager of volunteers. The second part was a Likert type scale of 25 items identified in the literature as relevant to promoting volunteer and paid staff relationships. Respondents were asked to rank their organization on all items.

The survey was distributed in late summer 2004 to members of the Association for Volunteer Administration and subscribers of the CYBERVPM electronic mailing list for managers of volunteers. An email announced the availability of the survey at the Web site, www.surveymonkey.com.

Five hundred and fifty seven (557) persons responded to the survey, 490 (88%) female managers and 56 (10%) male managers (11 did not indicate gender). Number of years managing volunteer programs ranged from 1-16+, and education ranged from high school to doctorates. The majority (n=260; 46.7%) of respondents indicated bachelor's degrees as their highest education; those with master's degrees were the second largest group (n=150; 27%).

Volunteer programs were primarily located in nonprofit organizations (n=399; 71.6%), following by governmental agencies (n=100;18%), other (n=37; 6.6%); corporations (n=7; 1.3%) and military (n=6; 1.1%). "Other" included organizations such as art museums, faith-based organizations, and educational institutions.

Numbers of volunteers in respondents' programs ranged from 1-501+, with the largest category being over 500 (n=206; 37%). The remaining programs were fairly evenly spread over the other categories. Number of years volunteers had participated in these programs ranged from 1-20+, with the majority of programs having used volunteers over twenty years (n=328; 58.9%)

Respondents were asked to answer nine items designed to assess the volunteer/paid staff climate in their programs. Table 1 lists these items in the order of those receiving the most "yes" answers. Publicly saying "thank you" to volunteers was marked yes by 520 (93.4%) respondents, and "leaders being visible at volunteer association events" came in second with 455 (81.7%) responding "yes." Least evident was "volunteers being asked to give input and assistance in most organizational projects."

After having completed the climate assessment, respondents rated twenty-seven statements as to their applicability to their volunteer programs. These items are based on organizational and individual behaviors identified in the literature as relevant to positive paid staff and volunteer relationship building. Table 2 summarizes these results in the order in which the items are most

likely to happen in these volunteer programs. Table 2 provides an overview of these results.

Discussion and Implications for Practice

The purpose of this study was to ask the experts what actually happens in their programs to influence volunteer and paid staff relationships. The sample represented experienced respondents, the majority of whom manage large-volume programs with more than 300 volunteers.

The highest-rated items on both the climate inventory and the behavioral tool were related to expressions of appreciation. One might call these items the civility of running a program, but it would seem face-to-face interaction is indeed important to healthy volunteer and paid staff relations. Saying thank you, expressing appreciation, officially welcoming people, and being present at association events appear to pay off even though they are time consuming.

In addition, 65% of the respondents indicated that volunteers are almost always or usually informed about the inner workings of the organization as it relates to their work, that position descriptions are readily available, that paid staff are informed about the inner workings of the volunteer program as it relates to their work, that volunteer positions have operating guidelines that spell out duties, and handbooks that spell out expectations. The respondents appear to indicate that standard information about programs and duties need to be given to volunteers and staff alike so that no one is taken by surprise.

Of interest is the fact that items related to more instrumental volunteer and paid

staff interaction do not appear to happen quite as often in all programs. For example, the lowest item on the climate scale is "volunteers are asked to give input and assistance in most organizational projects" and only 44 (7.9%) managers indicate that volunteers almost always or usually participate in training for staff. Similarly, one-third of respondents indicate that volunteers do not say thank you to staff publicly nor are they visible in leadership decision-making committees.

Conclusions

Although much has been surmised about staff resistance to volunteers, it is obvious that program managers in this study are taking a number of actions to welcome volunteers, establish the ground rules, and inform both staff and volunteers about what is happening. Interestingly enough, the behaviors that seem to be particularly evident in these programs focus on paid staff taking the time to be welcoming and to be present and visible in creating a positive climate in which volunteers and paid staff can relate to one another.

Table 1. *Volunteer and Paid Staff Climate*

Category	Yes		No		Not Sure	
Staff say "thank you" to volunteers publicly.	520	(93.4%)	11	(2.0%)	6	(1.1%)
The leaders of the organization (paid staff and/or volunteers) are visible at volunteer association events.	455	(81.7%)	57	(10.1%)	23	(4.13%)
Volunteers & staff both use words like "together, we, our project" when referring to the work they do.	427	(76.7%)	70	(12.6%)	43	(7.72%)
Projects are planned collaboratively between staff and volunteers.	383	(68.8%)	126	(22.7%)	27	(4.85%)
Reports on volunteer activities during paid staff management meetings come from other staff, not just the person responsible for volunteer coordination.	370	(66.4%)	140	(25.1%)	29	(5.21%)
Volunteers and paid staff engage in relating the history of the organization through the telling of stories.	359	(64.5%)	84	(15.1%)	93	(16.7%)
Volunteers are visible in leadership decision-making committees.	329	(59.1%)	190	(34.1%)	20	(3.6%)
Volunteers say "thank you" to staff publicly.	329	(59.1%)	190	(34.1%)	20	(3.6%)
Volunteer are asked to give input and assistance in most organizational projects.	295	(53.0%)	195	(35.0%)	48	(8.62%)

Table 2. *Volunteer/Staff Relations Behavior*

Behavior	Almost Always/ Usually	Sometimes	Not Often/ Rarely	Not Sure/ No Response
Paid staff express appreciation to volunteers regardless of their length of service.	430(77.2%)	63(11.3%)	14 (2.5%)	50(9.0%)
There is an official procedure for welcoming volunteers.	419(75.2%)	43 (7.7%)	33 (5.9%)	62(11.1%)
Volunteers are informed about the inner workings of the organization as it relates to their work.	402(72.2%)	78(14.0%)	25 (4.5%)	52(9.3%)
There are regularly scheduled award recognition events to highlight work by volunteers and paid staff.	394(70.7%)	45 (8.0%)	51 (9.2%)	67(12.0%)
Volunteer position descriptions are readily available to paid staff and volunteers, and describe appropriate roles.	389(69.8%)	64(11.5%)	44 (7.9%)	60(10.8%)
Paid staff are informed about the inner workings of the volunteer program as it relates to their work.	384(68.9%)	90(16.2%)	27 (4.8%)	56(10.1%)
Different types of volunteer positions or projects have operating guidelines that spell out duties.	374(67.1%)	72(13.0%)	47 (8.4%)	64(11.5%)
Volunteers and paid staff have easy access to a handbook that spells out expectations for volunteers related to policies and organizational structure.	370(66.4%)	56(10.1%)	55 (9.9%)	76(13.6%)
The organization is rich with "stories" of the organization's history as it relates to volunteers and paid staff, as well as consumers of services.	346(62.1%)	92(16.5%)	52 (9.3%)	67(12.0%)
Volunteers sign a confidentiality agreement.	324(58.2%)	39 (7.0%)	75 (13.5%)	119(21.4%)
Paid staff members participate in training sessions for volunteers.	317(56.8%)	100(18.0%)	74 (13.3%)	66(11.8%)

Behavior	Almost Always/ Usually	Sometimes	Not Often/ Rarely	Not Sure/ No Response
Volunteers use words like "we, us, together, all of us" when referring to their relationship to paid staff.	307(55.1%)	124(22.3%)	68 (12.2%)	58(10.4%)
There are regular communication mechanisms to keep volunteers and paid staff informed about each other's work.	302(54.2%)	92(16.5%)	97 (17.4%)	66(11.8%)
There are follow-up procedures in place to contact volunteers who have not been seen for a week or two.	298(53.5%)	101(18.1%)	91 (16.3%)	67(12.0%)
Paid staff use words like "we, us, together, all of us" when referring to their relationship with volunteers.	289(51.9%)	140(25.1%)	74 (13.3%)	54(9.7%)
The organization maintains a library of material on the management of volunteers. Books, journals, and periodicals are available to all paid staff.	258(46.3%)	69(12.4%)	133 (23.9%)	97(17.4%)
Changes are made based on recommendations	245(44.0%)	183(32.9%)	59 (10.6 %)	70(12.6%)
There are awards for volunteers who work effectively with staff.	230(41.3%)	91(16.3%)	122 (21.9%)	114 (20.5%)
Paid staff are comfortable discussing confidential matters with volunteers.	226(40.6%)	149(26.8%)	91 (16.3%)	91 (16.3%)
Paid staff attend orientation of new volunteers.	219(39.3%)	88(15.8%)	152 (27.3%)	98 (17.6%)
The organization maintains a "brag board" where news articles about volunteers and paid staff are posted.	211(37.9%)	90(16.2%)	147 (26.4%)	109 (19.6%)
Volunteers do a formal assessment of the training they receive from staff.	189(33.9%)	90(16.2%)	171 (30.7%)	107 (19.2%)
Volunteers and paid staff spend time jointly planning programs that affect them.	178(32.0%)	192(34.5%)	127 (22.8%)	60 (10.8%)
Volunteers and staff attend one another's meetings.	117(21.0%)	162(29.1%)	196 (35.2%)	82 (14.7%)
Minutes from meetings of volunteer committees or staff committees are posted for everyone to see.	95(17.1%)	86(15.4%)	230 (41.3%)	146 (26.2%)
There are awards for paid staff who work effectively with volunteers.	75(13.5%)	61(11.0%)	256 (46.0%)	165 (29.6%)

Behavior	Almost Always/ Usually	Sometimes	Not Often/ Rarely	Not Sure/ No Response
Volunteers participate in training for staff.	44(7.9.%)	104(18.7%)	265 (47.6%)	144 (25.9%)

References

Brudney, J.L. (1990). *Fostering volunteer programs in the public sector.* New York: Jossey-Bass.

Ellis, S. (1986). *From the top down.* Philadelphia, PA: Energize, Inc.

Farmer, S.M., & Fedor, D.B. (1999). Volunteer participation and withdrawal: A psychological contract perspective on the role of expectations and organizational support. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 9,* 349-367.

Liao-Troth, M.A. (2001). Attitude differences between paid workers and volunteers. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 11(*4), 423-442.

Macduff, N. (2001). Volunteer and staff relations. In Tracy Daniel Connors, Ed. *The nonprofit management handbook.* (3rd ed., pp 878-892). New York: Jossey-Bass.

Marin, E. (1999). Volunteer-staff relations. Retrieved August 17, 2004. from www.suitel0l.com/article.cfm/ volunteerism/29410

McCudden, J. (2000). What makes a committed volunteer? Research into the factors affecting the retention of volunteers in Home-Start. *Voluntary Action 2*(2) 59-75.

Nelson, H. W, Netting, F. E., Borders, K., & Huber, R. (in press). Volunteer attrition: Lessons learned from Oregon's long term care ombudsman program. *Journal of Volunteer Administration.*

Netting, F. E., Nelson, H.W., Borders, K., & Huber, R. (2004). Volunteer and paid staff relationships: Implications for social work administration. *Administration in Social Work, 28*(3/4*),* 69-89.

Pearce, J. L. (1983). Job attitude and motivation differences between volunteers and employees from comparable organizations. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 68,* 646-652.

Pearce, J. (1993) *The organizational behavior of unpaid workers.* New York: Routledge.

Van Dyne, L., & Ang, S. (1998). Organizational citizenship behavior of contingent workers in Singapore. *Academy of Management Journal, 41,* 692-703.

Wilson, M. (1973). *The effective management of volunteer programs.* Boulder, CO: Management Associates.

About the Authors

Nancy Macduff is an internationally recognized trainer, consultant, and author on volunteer management and administration. She served 14 years as executive director of a nonprofit agency and nine years as the coordinator of a government volunteer program. Nancy is currently the President of Macduff/Bunt Associates, a training and consulting firm, in Walla Walla, Washington. She is on the faculty at Washington State University, teaching online courses in the management of volunteer programs. Nancy is the author of seven books on volunteer management, chapters on various aspects of volunteer administration in three different college textbooks, and numerous journal and magazine articles on volunteerism. She is senior editor and publisher of the free online newsletter, "Volunteer Today." (http://www.volunteertoday.com)

Dr Netting is a Professor of Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. She teaches courses in macro practice, planning and administration, and policy in the BSW, MSW and PhD programs. Her areas of interest are gerontology and volunteerism.