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**Key Words:** adolescent, teens, volunteers, development, implications

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*motives are discussed including the concern that strong relationships with facility staff may dilute the ombudsman's watchdog/reformist role. Findings suggest that former volunteers may have been encouraged to remain in service by improved program factors, especially better staff support. Implications and recommendations regarding training, retention, and enhanced long-distance management techniques are presented including the need for web and video based applications to improve volunteer work role socialization and retention.*

**Key Words:** ombudsmen, motivation, retention, volunteer, advocate

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**Keywords:** volunteers, satisfaction, commitment, retention

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**Key Words:** volunteer management, core competencies, standards of practice, curriculum development

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**Abstract**

*Risk has been defined as the exposure to the possibility of loss, injury, or other adverse or unwelcome circumstance. Risks are inherent in most activities and programs delivered by volunteer-based organizations and can take many forms. These forms of risk include the risk to people, property, financial solvency and reputation. Given that risk exists, volunteer-based organizations must manage risk. Risk management involves a process of identification, analysis and either acceptance or mitigation of uncertainty involved in making a decision. Incorporating risk management into a volunteer-based organization involves several processes. These include risk analysis, risk response, and risk review. To protect the safety of participants, sponsors, property, finances, and the goodwill/reputation of the organization's name a systematic approach to risk management is recommended. The pre-event planning guide and matrix has been created to aid volunteer resource managers, volunteer program directors, staff, volunteers, and participants to assess, plan, and minimize the risk involved with the activities of a volunteer-based organization.*

**Key Words:** risk, risk management, volunteers, volunteer-based organizations

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**Key Words:** volunteers, management, recruitment, Google Docs

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*Volunteer resource management is becoming more and more visible as a profession. Colleges and Universities are now offering specific courses in volunteer resource management instead of simply building the subject matter into a human resource or program administration course for nonprofit degrees. Additionally, increased emphasis is being placed on practitioners obtaining professional credentials in the field, and professional associations are working towards developing occupational standards. As a supplement to the efforts of formalizing the training for volunteer resource managers, strategic thinking should be recognized as a skill worth promoting and developing amongst professionals in the field. Strategic thinking was instrumental in all the major advancements of the past few centuries and can be critical to successfully managing and administering volunteer programs and elevating the profession.*

**Key Words:** strategic, credentialing, professionalizing, decision-making

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**Competencies Comprising Contemporary Volunteer Administration: An Empirical Model Bridging Theory with Professional Best Practice**.....52

R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D., Ryan J. Schmiesing, Ph.D., Joseph A. Gliem, Ph.D., & Rosemary R. Gliem, Ph.D.

**Abstract**

*The researchers used a mailed questionnaire to collect data from International Association for Volunteer Administration members investigating their perceptions of the importance of respective contemporary volunteer management and administration competencies. Principle component statistical analysis resulted in the identification of seven unique components, including: (1) Volunteer Recruitment and Selection; (2) Volunteer Administrator Professional Development; (3) Volunteer Orientation and Training; (4) Volunteer Program Advocacy; (5) Volunteer Program Maintenance; (6) Volunteer Recognition; and (7) Volunteer Program Resource Development. Based upon the research findings, the authors propose a modified version of Safrit and Schmiesing's (2004) original P.E.P. model for volunteer administration comprised of three overarching professional domains of (Professional) Preparation, (Volunteer) Engagement, and (Program) Perpetuation encompassing seven volunteer administration topic areas consisting of 62 specific competencies.*

**Key Words:** volunteer administration, professional, competencies, model

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this article and of the workshop on this subject presented at the 1989 International Conference on Volunteer Administration is to inform Directors of Volunteers of a new approach to burnout prevention which can directly impact occurrences among themselves and their co-workers. We in volunteer administration are not immune; our burnout rates average 3 1/2 years. This situation, left unchecked, poses a threat to the long term effectiveness of our organizations.

**Key Words:** burnout, volunteer managers

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**Key Words:** volunteer, recruitment, retention, mission, training, recognition, written job descriptions

**In This Issue:  
Volunteers Supporting Volunteer Resource Managers:  
Thank You One and All**

This time of year is very special, and emotional, in many ways and on many levels. One tends to strongly reflect upon the true meanings of the season and understand even more clearly how important family and friends are in our daily lives. In light of the fact that this issue of *The IJOVA* is my final as Editor, its preparation has been a very emotional experience for me and I have reflected greatly upon the enormous contributions of so many individuals, professionals each and every one yet in terms of their work with *The Journal*, actual volunteers supporting volunteer resource managers.

Yes...I have been truly honored and blessed during the past five years, and even for the four years prior to that, to have had the opportunity to volunteer with an expanded circle of professional friends (many of whom have become almost like family) in greater support of volunteer resource management around the world. My special thanks go to three individuals who have been with me on my journey as Editor from its very beginning...Associate Editor Ryan Schmiesing, and Board members Pamela Robinson and Harriett Edwards...for their unwavering support, advice, and insights. They truly are my "family" in so many ways. I thank the other past and present Board members who have also worked so diligently to keep *The IJOVA* in existence in its early years and help it grown in recent years...Tere Alfaro, Erin Barnhart, Martin Cowling, Femida Handy, Melissa Heinlein, Mary Kay Hood, Ruth McKenzie, Nancy Macduff, Lucas Meijs, and Bill Woodrum. It has been an honor to have served with you.

A very heartfelt and special thanks goes to all the Editorial Reviewers who have served throughout my term as Editor, many of whom I have never met in person, but only through a constant flow of emails as they served as virtual volunteers. These selfless individuals include Liz Adamshick, Lynne Borden, Mark Brennan, Rosemary Gliem, Lori Gotlieb, Linda Graff, Renee Johnson, Ann Merrill, Connie Pirtle, Marti Sowka, Joanna Stuart, Gina Taylor, Richard Waters, Barb Wentworth, and Daphne Wright. You, my friends, are the backbone of *The IJOVA*.

So it is indeed my privilege and honor to introduce to you, our readers, this final issue of Volume 28, and my final as Editor. The issue opens with three excellent, original Feature Articles. Kim Allen helps us better understand working with youth as volunteers and concludes, "Volunteer resource managers that engage youth in ways that are meaningful to both the organization and the youth are likely to see great success with young volunteers". Wayne Nelson, Ellen Netting, Kevin Borders, Ruth Huber, and Daniel Agle explore factors cited by volunteer ombudsman in Oregon as being most meaningful to them in their volunteer efforts. Their findings suggest that former volunteers may have been encouraged to remain in service by improved program factors, especially better staff support. Simon Rice and Barry Fallon discuss volunteer satisfaction and retention within an emergency services organization and conclude that three organizational care variables are most important: volunteer recognition, respect, and welfare.

The issue continues with five Tools of the Trade designed to better assist and support volunteer resource managers in their day-to-day work. Janet Fox presents a review of the newly published

book, *The Volunteer Management Handbook* (Second Edition, 2012, Tracy D. Connors, Editor). Katherine Campbell discusses the core competencies and performance expectations which define sound practice for those who lead and manage volunteer engagement. Dale Pracht, Bryan Terry, and Kate Fogarty describe an excellent tool they developed to help volunteer resource managers in managing risks in volunteer programs. Rachel Rudd and Stacey MacArthur describe how to better use Google Docs and the Internet to manage and recruit volunteers, and Jeanette Savage and Jill Fowler describe how strategic thinking is a critical skill for contemporary volunteer resource managers.

The issue closes with three *From the Annals* published previously in *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, all relating directly to the current issue's focus. "Competencies Comprising Contemporary Volunteer Administration: An Empirical Model Bridging Theory with Professional best Practice" by Dale Safrit, Ryan Schmiesing, Joseph Gliem, and Rosemary Gliem was first published in 2005. "Preventing Burnout: Taking the Stress Out of the Job" by Marcia Kessler was first published in 1991, while "Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers in Florida: results from a Practitioner Survey" by Jacqueline Flynn and Mary Ann Feldheim was first published in 2003.

So as an important phase of my professional life comes to a close, for one final time I join the entire Editorial Board and Reviewers of *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration* in sharing this issue addressing important aspects of the management and administration of volunteer programs. Best wishes for the future, and may the spirit of volunteerism fill us all now and throughout the new year.



R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D.  
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**Understanding Youth as Volunteers:  
Implications for Volunteer Resource Managers**

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**Abstract**

*With the increased need for volunteers, volunteer resource managers are becoming more creative about recruitment. As such, there has been a marked increase in youth volunteers during the past two decades (Cooperation for National and Community Service, 2005). Working with youth as volunteers brings unique opportunities and challenges. This article provides information for volunteer resource managers to better understand the developmental and generational norms of adolescents and provides insights and tips for working with youth volunteers.*

**Key Words:** adolescent, teens, volunteers, development, implications

**Working with Youth Volunteers**

Finding and keeping volunteers is a critical task for volunteer resource managers. Perhaps that is one reason why volunteer administrators are increasingly utilizing youth as volunteers. Nation wide, over 15 million youth ages 12-18 volunteer (Cooperation for National and Community Service, 2005). That is over 55% of all youth, and that number is on the rise. Volunteer rates for older youth, ages 16-19 have doubled over the past two decades (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2006) and the impact of youth volunteerism is valued at \$170 million.

Employing youth volunteers can be a win-win situation. For an organization, youth bring a fresh perspective, energy and potential for life long service. For youth, volunteering leads to positive effects on social, emotional and cognitive development.

In fact, a new line of research suggests that volunteerism improves wellbeing, including self-esteem, self-acceptance, and moral development (Primavera, 1999 & Yates and Youniss, 1999).

When working with youth volunteers, it is valuable for an organization to have a clear understanding of the unique talents, motivators and characteristics of youth. Ideally, volunteer resource managers would be able to know the individual characteristics of each volunteer and cater training and resources to each person. Realistically, however, resource managers often lack the time or resources to evaluate each individual volunteer. Thus, managers might benefit from a framework for recruiting and supporting volunteers according to developmental and generational stages. Understanding human seasons of service can be helpful when recruiting and supporting volunteers (Edwards, Safrit

and Allen, 2011). For example, understanding a youth volunteer's stage of development and their generational cohort may provide enough information to the guide managers' decisions on recruitment and supporting activities.

#### Youth Development and Generational Cohorts

According to Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (1986), youth are greatly impacted by various systems in their lives. Most people understand the three dominant domains of youth development-- physical, social/emotional and cognitive development. As former teenagers, most adults recognize that adolescence is a time of physical growth, emotional ups and downs, and a time when learning is a critical task. It is important for volunteer resource managers to also understand the impact of various social systems on youth behaviors, including the influence of family, peers, community and society.

Adolescence is time of maturation and growth, and a crucial period for prosocial development (Erikson, 1963) and teens tend to think about the impact of real world issues on themselves and their society (Piaget, 1964). Developmentally, teens tend gravitate towards idealism, and dream about creating a better world (Crain, 2011). Adolescent behaviors focus on social interaction and interpersonal relationships; their lives revolve around peer groups and identity development. In adolescence, cognitive abilities become highly operational; adolescents are able to think logically and systematically so long as their thoughts are connected to a real activity or object (Piaget, 1964). This means that youth can be given a task that requires them to be critical thinkers, but they still need

specific guidance and context from the adults in their lives.

The research on social learning is clear; youth learn by watching others (Bandura, 1977). This means that volunteer resource managers can model desired behaviors to youth. Positive reinforcement of desired behaviors is key for retention and forward growth. When working with adolescents, volunteer resource managers will get the best results if they allow youth to observe a behavior, try the behavior themselves, and then offer positive feedback.

In addition to individual youth development, it is useful to understand the impact of generational cohorts on adolescent social development. Generation Y, also known as Millennials, were born between 1983 and 2000. Born during a technical revolution, these youth have spent their whole lives connected to technology. As such, they would be excellent resources for technological volunteer opportunities. These youth have very busy lives and want to serve with projects that are enjoyable and flexible (Kehl, 2010).

Soon it will be time for generation Z, otherwise known as the Internet Generation, to become volunteers. In fact, many Gen Z's have already began to volunteer. Like Generation Y youth, the youth born after the year 2000 are growing up with unlimited access to technology and they are growing up in times of war and economic difficulties. These youth see technology as an integral part of their lives and often prefer to be online rather than engaged in face-to-face activities (Posnick-Goodwin, 2010). Although we still have much to learn about this Generation Z, it appears that they will be collaborative



and creative in their approach to problem solving.

### **Motivation**

To increase volunteer retention and productivity, volunteer resource managers must understand what motivates teens to become and remain volunteers. Youth motivation to volunteer has many similarities with adult motivation, including the joy experienced when helping others, social interaction, and recognition (Fitch, 1987). Two common motivational themes for youth volunteers are social interest and a need for affirmation (Schondel & Boehm, 2000). Social interest and responsibility has been long identified in the field as a motivation for volunteerism (Trudeau & Devlin, 1996). A need for affirmation is also directly related to the developmental needs of youth.

These motivational factors are compatible with the developmental processes of adolescence. Developmentally, adolescents are working on identity formation (Erickson, 1963), moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1984) and teens have an innate need for social interest (Adler, 1959). Social interest is defined as an aptitude, attitude and ability for cooperation; a need to belong and contribute (Ansbacher, 1991). People who exhibit social interest tend to do better in life; they feel better, have a higher sense of self-efficacy, and they volunteer more often than people who do not exhibit social interest (Bass, Curlette, Kern, McWilliams, 2002).

Developmentally, adolescents are transitioning from a state of egocentrism and are developing a keen interest in connection to others through positive social behaviors (Bar-Tal, 1982). New research suggests that adolescents with

high levels of social interest, like those willing to volunteer, reap many physical and emotional rewards. Gilman (2001), for example, determined that youth who view themselves as socially interested identified that they have much higher life satisfaction rates, and have higher satisfaction with friends and family members than youth who did not view themselves as socially interested.

The need for affirmation or social approval, a motivational theme identified in the work of Schondel & Boehm (2000), provides youth with positive reinforcement for helping others. Many youth report that they like the feeling that comes from helping others; that it feels good to give back because it makes others feel good. Among youth surveyed, 73% reported that their efforts positively impact their communities and volunteering is one of the top 3 activities teens identify as cool (Dosomething.org, 1998). Youth want to make a contribution; they want to set an example for others and be recognized for their contribution (Barnett & Brennan, 2008).

Providing tangible rewards, such as financial incentives or exchange for extra credit, is another motivation that attracts youth to volunteerism (Suden & Raskoff, 2000). Some youth say that in addition to meeting school requirements, they want volunteer experiences that prepare them for future careers and allow them to develop leadership skills (Safrit, Gliem, & Gliem, 2004).

To put theory into practice, volunteer resource managers need to know that developmentally, teens prefer mixed gender groups that allow personal responsibility and decision-making opportunities. Youth perform best in volunteer positions which provide direct interaction with people and provide

opportunities to learn, explore and grow (Nassar & Talaat, 2009). Bringing youth together around a common goal that includes opportunities to socialize matches well with their developmental abilities and needs as well with the generational cohort.

### **Recruitment**

Volunteer resource managers that want to engage youth as volunteers must actively recruit youth. Clearly, youth want to be involved and over half of them already are involved in volunteer efforts. Youth are likely to become involved in volunteering in response to external encouragement from a significant adult in their lives, such as a role model that volunteers or a teacher that recommends volunteering (Schondel & Boehm, 2000). In a study by Suden & Raskoff, (2000), it was discovered that 40% of youth begin to volunteer simply because someone asked them. However, that same study revealed that non-volunteer youth overwhelmingly reported that no one asked them to volunteer. Most often, friends, families and teachers are the ones asking. In fact, the same study showed that 34% of youth had someone they knew already involved in the volunteering project, either as a recipient of services or as a fellow volunteer and 32% volunteered as part of an organization.

Schools, faith based groups and youth development organizations such as 4-H are among the top recruitment locations. In fact, many youth organizations, such as public schools and youth development programs require volunteer participation. Nearly 25% of school personnel view service learning and volunteerism as an important part of education and 35% of all high schools require service learning for graduation

(Spring, Grimm, & Dietz, 2009). Volunteer resource managers might do well to contact local school districts or youth development programs when they need volunteers.

There are barriers to volunteerism for some youth, such as a lack of transportation, time, and limited access to opportunities for volunteerism. Most often, youth volunteers come from networks through which youth are invited to participate. Many youth, particularly youth from lower resource groups, lack access to volunteerism opportunities or networks of support to guide them toward volunteer opportunities (Suden & Raskoff, 2000). These teens often do not know how to be involved or do not have the resources such as transportation to become involved. This puts under resourced youth at a major disadvantage to all the benefits of volunteerism. Volunteer resource managers could make a critical change in this pattern by seeking out youth volunteers from vulnerable populations.

One example of a way to utilize low-recourse volunteers is through virtual volunteering. Most youth have access to technology, either through their school, the public library or in their home. These youth could become volunteers by engaging electronically. For example, the North Carolina Youth and Families with Promise program works with under-resourced Latino middle school youth in two rural counties. These youth are paired with youth mentors that are in high school or early college. The mentor youth, many of whom are also from low resource families from neighboring communities, spend about half of their time doing virtual mentoring. Students can log onto their computers at their individual school

libraries and communicate. All youth were asked to participate in the program by partnership with community groups (4-H) and local schools (middle, senior and early colleges).

### **Developmentally Appropriate Volunteer Opportunities**

Although there is an endless array of volunteer opportunities that are appropriate for youth, finding the right position is key for recruitment and retention. Volunteer resource administrators can think about the developmental and generational abilities of youth when planning volunteer activities. For example, activities appropriate for youth need to include opportunities for social connections. Activities need to be interesting for youth to volunteer, should provide the youth with a sense of making the world a better place, and should improve the youth's life. Activities could include delivery services, planning and completing a community cleanup day, or organizing a voter registration drive. The literature tends to document peer education and service learning as two highly effective volunteer arenas, perhaps because they meet the developmental and generational needs of youth.

### **Service Learning**

The philosophy of service learning is based on John Dewey's work and his emphasis on an applied learning approach to education. Dewey (1938) created a theoretical model in which experience was a critical element of education including principles of experience, inquiry, and reflection as critical to service learning. He also suggested that project-based learning must be interesting and worthwhile to

the learner, must increase the learner's curiosity and must include time for the learner to mentally process the work being done (Dewey, 1933). Dewey's original work also focused on the importance of community and citizenship, which led to the concept of service learning (Giles & Eyler, 1994).

Modern day service learning philosophy suggests that "young people are contributors who bring assets to any learning situation; they have the right to contribute to the improvement of society, to make this world a more fraternal and more habitable place" (Battle, 2009, p 2). This philosophy implies that volunteerism in youth is ideal; that both community and the child mutually benefit from each other (Kielsmeier, 2011).

It is clear to see how volunteer resource managers can benefit from the philosophy of service learning. Administrators who view youth as contributors find that working with youth provides a win-win situation with the assets that youth bring to the table providing strength and support in service-learning activities and adults providing mentorship. Service learning activities are embraced by school administrators around the world. Approximately 30% of classroom teachers and many youth serving organizations utilize service learning (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2005). Schools and youth groups need projects; projects need volunteers; a perfect match.

### **Peer Education**

Teens Reaching Youth is a peer education model that provides older youth with skills and training to teach younger youth. Peer education is similar to service learning in that youth perform

a service as part of an educational experience. However, peer education focuses specifically on teens as teachers. Peer education has grown in popularity and use over the past few decades. Perhaps one reason for the increase in peer education is its natural fit with the developmental and generational needs of youth. In order to effectively implement a peer education model, however, there must be an intensive training program as well as a strong youth-adult partnership (Orme & Starkey, 1999).

In peer education, adults are responsible for not only training the youth, but also to be available as youth implement the program. Research shows the critical importance of the quality of youth-adult partnerships in youth engagement (Orme & Starkey, 1999). Furthermore, youth engagement, or having youth involved in decision making on projects that truly impact the community, is built on the premise of mutually respectful relationships between the adults and youth. Safrit, (2002) identified four essential elements of youth-adult partnerships; the 4-E's of youth-adult partnerships are empathy, engagement, empowerment and enrichment.

Adolescents possess the capacity to empathize and see the world from another's point of view. Adult partners must also make every effort to empathize with youth volunteers in order to understand their experiences and decisions. Developmentally, teens have goals to make the world a better place and adult partners must engage youth in activities to help them feel that they will attain those goals.

Empowerment, or giving youth the opportunity to be responsible, is not always natural or easy for volunteer administrators. However, adults must

challenge themselves to allow the youth to make decisions—and possibly even make mistakes. As a result, their lives will be enriched; will be improved. This is where learning happens, and where youth find an identity of contribution that can last a lifetime.

### **Conclusion**

Volunteer resource managers that engage youth in ways that are meaningful to both the organization and the youth are likely to see great success with young volunteers. Once again, reciprocity is at play, creating a win/win situation for all. The organization has extra help reaching its mission and youth gain skills and developmental benefits. Furthermore, when youth know they will be actively engaged, they are more likely to be actively involved with an organization (Barnett & Brennan, 2008). The key to success is to have an understanding of the developmental and generational norms of youth, and use that knowledge when recruiting and placing your in volunteer positions.

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**Former Volunteers Report on the Most Meaningful Factors Affecting their Service with the  
Oregon Long Term Care Ombudsman Program**

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### Abstract

*Retaining the nation's current force of about 8,700 volunteer ombudsmen is a top priority for America's ombudsman program leaders. As part of a larger study on volunteer ombudsman attrition, 147 former ombudsmen were asked about the most meaningful aspects of their volunteer work. Among the 298 responses, three thematic domains emerged, each containing several subcategories: (a) power issues (45% e.g., resolving problems/helping residents), (b) affiliation issues (41%, e.g., positive social contacts), and (c) program issues (5%, e.g., staff support and training). Former ombudsmen were also asked what would have encouraged them to remain on the job. This resulted in 251 replies categorized in five distinct domains: (a) program issues (53%, e.g., better staff support), (b) personal issues (14%, e.g., better health), (c) power issues (14%, e.g., success in causing change), (d) system adversity issues (9% e.g., better enforcement), and (e) boredom items (1%, e.g., need more to do). This study suggests that volunteer ombudsmen's meaningful work motives included the altruistic power drive of resolving problems to help residents and the desire for positive work relationships. Implications for these motives are discussed including the concern that strong relationships with facility staff may dilute the ombudsman's watchdog/reformist role. Findings suggest that former volunteers may have been encouraged to remain in service by improved program factors, especially better staff support. Implications and recommendations regarding training, retention, and enhanced long-distance management techniques are presented including the need for web and video based applications to improve volunteer work role socialization and retention.*

**Key Words:** ombudsmen, motivation, retention, volunteer, advocate

Since the grass roots based Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) was mandated by the Older Americans Act in 1978, state and local LTCOP leaders have struggled to recruit, train, and sustain enough volunteers to investigate and resolve complaints, defend patients' rights, and advocate changes to improve resident care and quality of life (Netting, Borders, Nelson, & Huber, 2010).

Throughout this paper we use the term volunteer to exclusively refer to the 8,688 investigatory non-paid ombudsmen who represent the great majority of the LTCOP staff nationally (Netting, et al., 2010). This number has never been sufficient to cover the nation's long-term care facilities and will fall far short of meeting tomorrow's looming baby boomer advocacy needs. To help LTCOP leaders meet this recruiting challenge, in this study we report what former volunteers in one

state identified as the most psychologically meaningful aspects of their work and what would have encouraged them to stay. We begin with a review of literature on ombudsman work motives followed by study results, discussion, and implications.

### Volunteers in Ombudsman Programs

Research on volunteer ombudsman morale and motivation found that volunteers who share their parent program's advocacy values were more satisfied with their jobs, were more productive, and stayed with the program longer (Nelson, Hooker, DeHart, Edwards, & Lanning, 2004). Researchers have also linked the fulfillment of altruistic work motives and positive work relationships to both organizational loyalty and to higher productivity (Nelson, Netting, Huber, & Borders, 2004). Conversely, sources of dissatisfaction and attrition include the volunteer role's complexity,



isolation from other ombudsmen, the nursing home's bleak environment, inadequate training, excessive conflict, discomfort with program leadership, and weak regulatory enforcement (Litwin & Monk, 1984; Nelson, Netting, Borders, & Huber, 2004).

### **Study Methods**

The chief investigator (then the Oregon program's Deputy Director), assisted by paid staff, selected four veteran volunteer chairs from among the program's 13 citizen recruitment and screening committees and trained them in phone survey techniques. During the summer of 1996 these callers contacted 170 former ombudsman volunteers from a pool of about 350 who had previously resigned from the program.

As part of a larger, quantitative study, the researchers decided to more deeply probe volunteer sentiments about work supports and hindrances by asking them to provide at least two responses to four open ended questions. Responses to two of these questions probed the volunteers' perceptions of discouraging influences and reasons for leaving. These responses were reported earlier (Nelson, Netting, Borders, et al., 2004). The two remaining open ended questions regarding the former volunteers' feelings about the most meaningful facets of their jobs and what would have encouraged them to stay with the program are reported here for the first time.

The principle investigator and the agency's volunteer resource manager independently reviewed (with assistance from the caller-recorders) each of the 549 responses to the two questions about meaningful and encouraging work influences. Using a minimum of two coders who are familiar with the program is considered acceptable and can reduce

problems of coder misinterpretation and unreliability (Fitzgerald, 1996; School of Psychology University of New England, 2000). Content based coding was used to group responses according to key words and obvious meanings. A relatively small number of distinct yet comprehensive domains emerged. These, in turn, subsumed thematically related, yet implicationally different sub-categories. Many of the respondents gave more than two answers per question or made statements with more than one distinct meaning resulting in a larger than expected number of statements. Nevertheless, when the two separately ranked response lists were jointly compared only a few adjustments were needed to combine them into a single master list. This process suggests good interrater reliability.

### **Results**

#### Sample Demographics

Of the 170 volunteers contacted, 147 (85%) responded. These former volunteers were largely retired with an average age of 64 years. There were twice as many women as men. Respondents were more highly educated than their age cohort peers in the general population. Nearly half held college degrees and almost a quarter had completed some graduate work.

#### Research Questions and Answers

The first question about the most meaningful aspect of the volunteer work yielded 298 responses falling into three domains: power issues, affiliation issues, and program issues. Each domain contained several subcategories. The three domains could have been predicted from previous ombudsman research (Keith, 2001; Litwin & Monk, 1984; Nelson, Hooker, et al., 2004).

The dominant power domain involved the former volunteers' sense of exercising influence through their resident advocacy (159 responses, or 54%). The single most meaningful power subcategory

was resolving problems/helping residents (134 responses, 45%). This reflects the core function of the investigative ombudsman: complaint resolution.

The second ranked affiliation domain involved the volunteers' perceptions of having meaningful work related social interactions, accounting for 123 responses (41% of all answers). The affiliation subcategory of visiting with residents accounted for 33% of the affiliation drive (99 responses), followed by relationships to facility staff (20 responses) which accounted for 7% of the affiliation motive. Distantly trailing were two subcategories in the program domain pertaining to staff support and training. These accounted for only 5% of all identified most meaningful factors.

The second question asked the former volunteers: What would have encouraged you to remain in service? There were 251 responses to this question resulting in five domains with multiple subcategories: (a) program issues, (b) personal issues, (c) power issues, (d) system adversity issues, and e) boredom issues (Table 2).

The 13 sub-categories in the dominant program domain appeared to have the greatest potential for encouraging continued service (132 responses, 53%). The leading subcategory for this domain was the need for better staff support (42 responses, 17%). The third ranked power domain's top subcategory, success in effecting change, was mentioned by 29 former volunteers (12%), followed by the personal domain's subcategory of better health (20 responses, 8%). The fourth and fifth ranked system adversity and boredom domains accounted for only 10% of the total responses (26 answers) for question two.

### **Discussion and Implications**

This study is one of a very few that have attempted to more precisely identify the factors what were seen by former

volunteer ombudsmen as contributing to meaningful volunteer experiences and that, by presumptive extension, may have encouraged continued work involvement had they been experienced more strongly. Previous analyses focused on the reverse of these data – what factors discouraged volunteer participation (Nelson, Netting, Borders, et al., 2004) and explored how current and former volunteers differed with respect to organizational commitment, role conflict and ambiguity, and other select variables (Nelson, Netting, Huber, et al., 2004). In this analysis, power and affiliation issues emerged as major motivators for many former volunteers while some reported that they would have been encouraged to stay longer by better support, different work requirements, and changed leadership.

Given the meaningfulness of helping residents by wielding power to influence the resolution of problems appears to be a considerable psychological incentive which logically, increases the volunteers' commitment to the LTCOP—the source of this gratifying opportunity (Nelson, Pratt, et al., 1995). At a theoretical level the power to help residents broaches the fundamental question of the importance of altruism to volunteer motivation. Like many before and since, Flashman and Quick (1985) argued that altruism is absolutely essential to sustaining effective volunteer service (1985)—a fact confirmed by other research on Oregon volunteers showing that they valued altruism over affiliation or other important motives (Nelson, Hooker, et. al., 2004).

Still, affiliation may be meaningful to volunteers in ways that are not always complementary to their roles. For instance, the second most commonly reported meaningfulness response, visiting with residents (99 responses, 33%) is desirable if volunteers visit residents to build trust and

gain insight into resident needs as a platform for advocacy. However, if friendly visiting is pursued out of a sheer longing for sociability it may temper or even supplant the ombudsman's watchdog and reform focus. That this is a major problem is reflected by research showing that 53% of 745 volunteer ombudsmen in several states preferred straight up visiting to resident advocacy (Keith, 2000).

Far more troublesome is a problem suggested by the affiliation subcategory of relationships with facility staff (Table 1). This was cited as most meaningful by 7% of the former volunteers in this study. The danger here is that these staff friendly ombudsmen may become more sensitive to providers' needs than to residents' needs, representing a values based conflict of interest that potentially undermines the volunteer's duty to promote residents' interests over facility interests (Nelson, 2003).

Management attempts to realign misguided affiliation values with incompatible expectations for partisan advocacy can strain the volunteer's mental bond with the program. This can lead to disaffection with the program that may be suggested by this study's findings that some former volunteers preferred better staff support, different policies, different paid staff, and different volunteer roles.

Fortunately, any dysfunction driven by an inappropriate affiliation impulse seems to be outweighed by the former volunteers' stated preferences for resolving problems and helping residents. This suggests that pure friendly visiting and facility over-coziness are less widespread in Oregon than elsewhere (Keith, 2000). In fact, the combined meaningfulness subcategories of visiting with residents and resolving problems (78%) may actually indicate mutually complementary roles that combine problem solving with much needed

human interaction that benefits the residents' needs for human connections and social contact.

### **Limitations**

It is important to note that this study focused on only one state and that the data were collected in 1996. However, the current Oregon Deputy State Ombudsman Fade, who was with the program when these data were collected, confirms that nothing about the volunteer job, program structure, training, volunteer demographics or patterns of participation, or, even the agency's directorship (until July 2009) have markedly changed since then (Personal Communication, April 26, 2010). In fact, volunteer recruiting and training protocols and policies have been relatively stable for the last 15 years. The agency's 150 plus volunteers are still expected to spend an average of four hours in their assigned facilities and complete at least eight hours of continuing education per year. Monthly local volunteer support group meetings are provided by six paid regional staff who work out of an office in the state capitol, which limits their contact with volunteers primarily to phone calls and emails (A. Fade, Personal Communication, April 26, 2010). The director of the National Long Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC) concurs that these data are still relevant and provide insights obtained from former volunteers, adding that inadequate training, weak support, sub-optimal recruiting efforts, and the conflict prone nature of the job remain perennial problems (L. Smetanka, Personal Communication, September, 21, 2010).

### **Implications and Recommendations**

The Oregon volunteers' apparent penchant for the *power* motive of *resolving resident problems* may be the fruit of the program's values-based recruiting,

screening, and selection procedures. It must be accepted that instilling program values and role appropriate behaviors will be especially difficult if the right volunteers are not attracted in the first place. To help ensure this, recruiting materials, position descriptions, public service announcements, membership brochures, and probing yet informative screening processes must strongly signal the program's reform orientation to prospective recruits (Nelson, Netting, Borders, et al., 2004).

Even then some ill-matched people will slip through the firewalls. Consequently, initial training should be designed as a backup filter that flushes out lingering role misapprehensions. Trainers need to recognize that much of the broader gerontological, health, and macro policy content that is common in many volunteer training programs may need to be scaled back in the beginning, providing time to focus on the development of foundational practice skills first. The broader educational content can then be provided for seasoned veterans, who have already mastered many of the practical challenges faced by new volunteers. New volunteers must learn to solve hitherto unfamiliar nursing home problems by arguing claims with decision makers who often have differing views and priorities (Nelson, 2003). Academically oriented trainers, especially, must keep in mind that the volunteers in training may not be researchers who enjoy the Gerontological Society of America annual meetings or even the more practice oriented American Society on Aging—they are training very caring lay people to identify problems and advocate for those who may not be able to advocate for themselves.

To set new volunteers on the right course and to minimize role confusion, trainers might adapt Litwin's (1982) *Ombudsman Role Perception Research Scale* as a self-assessment instrument that

can provide volunteers valuable feedback about their own penchant for issue advocacy, problem solving, friendly visiting, resource brokering, resident education, and so forth. Trainees should also take one of the widely available conflict self-assessment measures such as the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (2007). This can help volunteers assess their own tendencies to over-rely on any one of the five basic conflict tactics: avoidance, accommodation, compromise, collaboration, and forcing. It can also help trainers drive home how in heavily regulated nursing facilities, advocates must often politely and professionally assert evidenced backed arguments to compel, as opposed to negotiate, statutory compliance and to exact change when resident needs are urgent or resistance is disingenuous, errant, or entrenched (Nelson, et al. 2001)

Modeling flexible and stylistically appropriate conflict skills can be challenging in the classroom. Fortunately, many conflict management DVDs are available and some programs have developed them internally. The Kentucky Ombudsman program, for example, recently unfurled a YouTube channel showcasing friendly visiting as a means to gain trust as a gateway to advocacy (National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center [NORC], 2011). As valuable as video modeling can be, it must be augmented with plenty of practice opportunities. Case studies, and semi-scripted small group roleplays allow volunteers to vicariously, but safely, experience novel and possibly threatening situations.

Later, in the field, new volunteers must continuously hone these skills while actively reflecting on whether their actions are consistent with program purposes. To support this, managers must structurally reinforce program roles, values, and goals by translating them in performance

contracts, newsletters, recognition events, support group meetings, continuing education workshops, conferences, and annual work evaluations (Nelson, Netting, Borders, et al., 2004).

All this will only go so far if the program does not hire paid staff who can motivate volunteers and keep them attached to the LTCOP's ideals and standards. Finding the right people can be challenging because paid staff in many of the nearly 700 sub-state LTCOPs not only carry their own case loads, but must collect program complaint data, interpret laws and regulations, as well as promote ongoing recruitment and training initiatives among other sometimes erratic and diverse administrative responsibilities. Improving staff support may be even more difficult in a state level centralized program like Oregon's, especially given impending budget cuts (R. Savitt, Certified Volunteer Ombudsman, personal communication, May 30, 2010).

Nevertheless, supervisory burdens can be reduced by honing long-distance management techniques involving routine phone and email contacts with volunteers, and by expanding online-volunteer management applications. The latter can help ombudsmen supervisors maintain skill banks, track service hours and special complaint assignments, and tally award criteria. Of course, the need for phone and email support will not diminish, but actual field visits by paid staff will have to be carefully allocated based on case urgency.

Programs should also support their increasingly Web savvy volunteers in tapping into online ombudsman resources including special topic legal analyses and highly detailed facility specific quality rankings (Medicare.gov, 20110), topical Ombudsmen job aid checklists (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2007), webinars and audio listening forums, all of

which can be easily accessed from home (cited in NORC, 2011). Volunteers may appreciate the encouragement to surf the web and be current on longterm care problems nationwide.

Reducing the ill-effects of system adversity will be difficult at best as these involve structural factors that are largely outside the LTCOP's control. Still, many of the hindrances mentioned in the system adversity domain, including poor enforcement, excessive bureaucracy, poor facility cooperation, and the unending pressure of serious and often urgent resident problems can be partly mitigated by creating realistic expectations during training, by improving supportive staff and volunteer contacts through long-distance management techniques mentioned above, and by promoting peer affiliation. These can be accomplished by fully exploiting participative social media by using social networking sites, having volunteers post personal photos and profiles on program web-pages, promoting a State Ombudsman blog, and by sponsoring regularly scheduled chat rooms moderated by experienced volunteers.

Certainly, face-to-face role socialization opportunities should not be neglected. Proven veteran ombudsmen should be encouraged to help mentor local area volunteers by modeling successful behaviors, and providing emotional support during trying cases. Peer-to-peer job shadowing may also help cement the new volunteer's (or a wavering veteran's) appropriate role orientation in the face of various affiliation needs based temptations.

## **Conclusion**

The current recession and impending budget cuts will certainly strain the program's capacity to increase the quality and quantity of much needed volunteer advocates. This study provides some

direction to improve organizational supports in the quest to enhance volunteer loyalty, confidence, and competence in the face of rapidly growing system demands. It also stresses the centrality of altruism in fueling the drive to meet these challenges by providing volunteers with meaningful opportunities to protect residents from “unnecessary suffering” (Flashman & Quick, 1985, p. 167).

Attracting and keeping quality volunteers demands that LTCOP leaders impart effective resident-centered messages throughout all program activities that inspire peoples’ basic, helping instincts while recognizing that affiliation drives and numerous peripheral needs are also at play and mitigated by personal and other program factors. Thus, supervision and oversight of volunteers is multidimensional and complex, as is the training and education of volunteers. In the face looming challenges this study provides guidance on how to develop values driven recruitment, training, and other management practices that can help sustain increasingly valuable volunteers who are fundamental to the success of the LTCOP. It also emphasizes the importance of peer mentorship and support in helping volunteers address the challenging mission of mercy and care.

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Table 1  
*Most Meaningful Aspects of the Ombudsman's Job*

	Response	n	%
<b>1. Power Domain, n = 159, 53%</b>			
1.1	Resolving problems/helping residents	134	45
1.2	Sense of personal accomplishment	13	5
1.3	Importance of work	12	4
<b>2. Affiliation Domain, n = 123, 41%</b>			
2.1	Visiting with residents	99	33
2.2	Relationships with facility staff	20	7
2.3	Relations to people	4	1
<b>3. Program Domain, n = 16, 5%</b>			
3.1	Support from staff	9	3
3.2	Training	7	2
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100</b>



Table 2  
*What Would Have Encouraged Continued Service*

	Response	n	%
<b>1. Program Domain, n = 132, 53%</b>			
1.1	Better staff support	42	17
1.2	Different program policies	18	7
1.3	Having a buddy system	15	6
1.4	Different paid staff	11	4
1.5	Better training	10	4
1.6	Need to change facility assignments	9	4
1.7	Less conflict between volunteers	7	3
1.8	Different volunteer roles	6	2
1.9	Change reporting requirements	4	2
1.10	Continued good central staff support	4	2
1.11	Increased local support	4	2
1.12	Less legislative involvement	1	0
1.13	Fewer meetings	1	0
<b>2. Personal Domain, n = 58, 23%</b>			
2.1	Better health	20	8
2.2	Change personal circumstances	16	6
2.3	More time	13	5
2.4	Transportation	8	3
2.5	Less stress	1	0
<b>3. Power Domain, n = 35, 14%</b>			
3.1	Success in effecting change	29	12
3.2	Less adversarial	5	2
3.3	More authority	1	0
<b>4. System Adversity Domain, n = 22, 9%</b>			
4.1	Increased system enforcement	12	5
4.2	Fewer problems with residents	4	2
4.3	Reduce system bureaucracy	4	2
4.4	More support from facility	2	1
<b>5. Boredom Domain, n = 4, 1%</b>			
5.1	More difficult challenge	2	1
5.2	If role was actually needed	1	0
5.3	More to do	1	0
<b>Totals</b>		<b>251</b>	<b>100</b>

**Factors Promoting Perceived Organizational Care:  
Implications for Volunteer Satisfaction and Turnover Intention**

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**Abstract**

*Turnover is costly for any organization regardless whether it is paid staff or volunteers who leave. Policies and retention strategies that promote satisfaction and ongoing commitment to the organization are essential for maintaining an effective and skilled volunteer workforce. This study draws comparisons between the satisfaction and intention to stay of volunteers (n = 2,306) and paid employees (n = 274) within an emergency services organization on variables that reflect organizational care for the individual. Results indicate that 52% of volunteer satisfaction and 20% of volunteer intention to stay is explained by the three organizational care variables studied: recognition, respect, and welfare. Consistent with prediction, in each case the organizational care variables explained greater variance for volunteers compared to paid employees. Findings highlight the importance of organizational policies promoting positive relatedness amongst volunteers in prompting ongoing volunteer commitment and satisfaction.*

**Keywords:** volunteers, satisfaction, commitment, retention.

Volunteer organizations provide essential services to the community that private and public sectors cannot, or will not provide (Mathieson, 2007). Recent economic trends have resulted in reductions to charitable giving, corresponding to an increase in the need for services provided by nonprofit organizations utilizing volunteers (National Council of Nonprofits, 2010). Evidence from Australia suggests a reduction in both volunteer time commitments and numbers of actual volunteers (Baxter-Tomkins & Wallace, 2006), and that recruitment of volunteers within specific sectors such as the

emergency services is becoming increasingly difficult (Parkin, 2008).

Should volunteer contributions significantly decrease in the longer term then governments will presumably need to provide replacement services at significant cost (Ganewatte & Handmer, 2009). Volunteer turnover also is expensive for organizations given the administrative, recruitment, training, and supervision costs necessary to recruit and maintain a volunteer workforce (Brudney & Duncombe, 1992). In minimising volunteer turnover, it is prudent for volunteer resource managers to be mindful of volunteer satisfaction, and the ways in which satisfaction contributes to

volunteer's perception of, and commitment to the organization (Starnes, 2007). One commonsense approach to maintaining volunteer numbers is to minimise workforce attrition through retention practices that increase morale and engagement, and provide personal benefit to volunteers (Hager & Brudney, 2004; McLennan & Bertoldi, 2004).

Volunteers are more likely to remain committed to an organization in instances where their service to others is accompanied by rewards of social interaction and praiseworthy work (Pearce, 1983). Research suggests that lack of organizational support (Nelson, Netting, Borders, & Huiber, 2007), workgroup conflict and dysfunction (Baxter-Tomkins & Wallace, 2009), exclusion and bullying (McLennan, Birch, Cowlishaw, & Hayes, 2009), and lack of recognition (Howard, 2003) each contribute to volunteer turnover. Research also indicates that volunteers primarily derive their satisfaction and commitment to the agency from relatedness needs (e.g. the maintenance and development of respectful and secure relationship with others), while paid employees derive their job satisfaction and intent to remain from autonomy needs such as having choice and self-control in one's work related actions (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2009). These differences between paid employees and volunteers indicate that it is important to specifically study the attitudes of volunteers rather than generalising from research conducted among paid employees (e.g. Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007).

The current study was designed to explore the relationship between aspects of organizational care perceived by volunteers and paid employees, and the way in which organizational care relates to intention to stay with the organization. Key differences were to be explored in management practices for volunteers and paid employees. As the research was conducted within the

one organization, many other factors, e.g. organization culture, which would have an impact on the outcome variables being investigated, were held constant.

Volunteers comprise a distinct group in any organization as they do not receive remuneration in return for their labour. Given that pay, financial security, and advancement opportunities do not apply to volunteers in the same way as they do to paid employees (Brief, 1998), it was predicted that perception of organizational care for the individual (e.g. informal recognition, the organization's concern for volunteer welfare, and respect amongst members within the organization) would explain greater variance in satisfaction and ongoing commitment for volunteers compared to paid staff.

### **Methods**

Data were collected from paid and volunteer members of a state wide emergency service provider within Australia. Surveys were returned by 2839 members of the organization. Of these 2580 were complete without any missing data. These surveys form the basis of the present research. There were 2306 volunteers, of which 246 were female, and, 274 paid employees, of which 70 were female. Of the paid employees, 226 were full time, 9 were part time and 39 were casual. For the paid employees in terms of position within the organization, 212 indicated they were general staff, 52 were management, and 10 were executive. The sample of usable data represents a response rate of approximately 26% for the paid employees and 4% for the volunteer members. While these response rates are not ideal, comparison of the demographic and geographic variables between the respondents and all possible members of the organization did not differ markedly.

Participants completed a large questionnaire package designed to assess organizational climate. A subset of the measures assessing the five variables of interest were utilised for the current study. All questionnaire items were presented to participants on a seven point scale where 1 = *Strongly Disagree*; 7 = *Strongly Agree*. The five variables of interest in the present study were as follows: Intention to Stay (three items for taken from Colarelli (1984) e.g. *'I intend to be a member of my organisation for at least the next 12 months'*); Satisfaction (five items adapted from Price and Mueller's (1986) measure of job satisfaction, e.g. *'I am satisfied with my role'*); Recognition (three items taken from Martin and Bush (2006) e.g. *'Members can count on a pat on the back from the organization when they perform well'*); Welfare (three items taken from Patterson et al. (2005) e.g. *'My organization tries to look after its members'*); and, Respect Amongst Members (five items developed by the authors for the present research e.g. *'Members of my organization treat each other with respect'*). In all instances, reliability of the measures was satisfactory (see Table 1 for Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients).

Participants were made aware of the research project via a promotional campaign where notices were placed in the organizations publications and posters were displayed at local depots and offices. Members of the organization in positions of leadership were encouraged to notify their respective units of the project and encourage participation. All members of the organization were sent copies of the questionnaire as an insert within the organisations quarterly magazine. The survey insert included a reply paid envelope addressed to the researchers. Email reminders were sent to members of the organization throughout the data collection

period. Ethical approval for the project was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University.

## Results

To assess the validity of the underlying factor structure of the five items developed to assess respect amongst members, principal components analysis was undertaken separately for volunteers and paid employees. As each analysis revealed a uni-dimensional factor structure with all factor loadings > .6 (for volunteers KMO = .816, Bartlett's test of sphericity  $p < .001$ , variance explained = 57.57%; for paid employees KMO = .805, Bartlett's test of sphericity  $p < .001$ , variance explained = 56.85%) there was confidence that the five items made for a meaningful scale.

Means, SD's, correlations and reliability coefficients were calculated for the five scales of intention to stay, satisfaction, recognition, welfare, and concern for members for both samples (see Table 1). To compare the set of means of the volunteers with the set of means of the paid staff, a multivariate analysis of variance was used. The analysis indicated that volunteers reported significantly higher ratings for the five scales in comparison to paid employees,  $\Lambda = .946$ ,  $F(1, 2574) = 29.11$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .054$ . The same pattern also followed for each variable at the univariate level (see Table 1 for  $p$  values).

Correlation coefficients for volunteers and paid staff are displayed in Table 2. All observed correlations were significant, within the weak to moderate range. Five of the correlation coefficients were higher for the Volunteers than the Paid Staff, while two were the same and three were lower for the Volunteers.

To test the study hypothesis that personal aspects of the work experience would explain greater variance in

satisfaction and intention to stay for volunteers compared to paid staff, a series of multiple regression analyses were undertaken. Satisfaction and intention to stay were used as outcome variables, and recognition, respect and welfare were entered as predictors (see Table 3). In support of the study's hypothesis the regression equations explained significantly more variance in volunteers' satisfaction ( $R^2 = .52$ ), and intention to stay ( $R^2 = .39$ ) in comparison to paid employees ( $R^2 = .20$  for satisfaction and  $R^2 = .11$  for intention to stay). Table 3 indicates that for volunteers, recognition, respect, and welfare significantly predicted both outcome variables. In contrast, while all three variables predicted satisfaction for the paid employees, recognition and welfare failed to predict paid employees intention to stay. Highlighting the importance of organizational culture, inspection of the standardised beta coefficients indicated that the variable assessing respect amongst members was the strongest predictor of satisfaction and intention to stay for both volunteer and paid employees.

### **Discussion and Implications**

The present study draws noteworthy comparisons between volunteers and paid employees within the one organization, and provides important data to assist with the retention and engagement of the volunteer workforce. Results indicate that the present sample of volunteers rated all five of the organizational variables more favourably (e.g. higher ratings) compared to the paid employees. This suggests that in comparison to paid employees, the volunteers perceived their involvement with the organization as more satisfying, involving better recognition processes, generating greater respect amongst colleagues, and embodying greater concern demonstrated toward the volunteer population. It is therefore unsurprising that

in comparison to paid employees, volunteers indicated they were significantly more likely to remain committed to the organization within the short to medium term. This finding also demonstrates that volunteers experience the organization in different terms than do paid employees, highlighting the need for further specific research into the factors that contribute to the experience of being a volunteer (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007).

Consistent with previous research indicating that the satisfaction of volunteers is primarily determined by positive relationships with colleagues (e.g. Baxter-Tomkins & Wallace, 2009; Boezeman & Ellemers, 2009; McLennan, Birch, Cowlshaw, & Hayes, 2009), the current study reported that organizational care variables (reflected in items assessing recognition, respect amongst members and concern for volunteer welfare) significantly predicted volunteer satisfaction and intention to stay. Of note, the three predictor variables explained 52% of variance in volunteer satisfaction and 20% of variance in volunteer intention to stay. By any standards, these are large adjusted  $R^2$  values, giving volunteer resource managers and volunteer program managers valuable clues into the determinants of what volunteers enjoy about their involvement, and what keeps volunteers committed to the organization in the longer term.

Research from paid employees indicates that job satisfaction predicts turnover intention, and that turnover intention is the strongest predictor of actual turnover (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Given the moderate positive correlations observed in the current study between satisfaction and intention to stay, a similar pattern appeared within the present sample. Hence, findings highlight the importance of volunteer organizations ensuring they attend to recognition, respect amongst members, and

concern for members welfare in ensuring ongoing commitment to the organization.

Correlations between recognition, respect and welfare and both satisfaction and intention to stay were consistently higher for volunteers compared to paid employees. As volunteers do not receive the same financial incentives from the organization that paid employees receive (Brief, 1998), the attitudes of volunteers are based more heavily on the interpersonal aspects of their involvement. So what can volunteer organizations do to maximise the sense of organizational care experienced by their volunteer workforce? Previous research provides some suggestions. Increasing volunteer recognition and acknowledgement can be achieved through sponsoring attendance at professional development activities (e.g. Hagar & Brudney, 2004), offering scholarships or study awards (e.g. Aitken, 2000), or hosting volunteer appreciation functions. Increasing respect amongst volunteer members may require the development of organizational policies that promote equal opportunity, tolerance and diversity (for a discussion of inclusion practices for volunteers with diverse abilities see Miller, Scoglio and Schleien, 2010). Organizational practices that increase volunteer's sense of organizational welfare may include increasing program support including the provision of well defined and communicated tasks, and suitable training at a professional standard e.g. (Nelson, Netting, Borders, & Huiber, 2007). Given that volunteers typically report feelings of camaraderie and connection to colleagues as a key benefit to their volunteering, volunteer organizations should seek to foster a strong sense of "we", by encouraging positive activities that promote a social identity (Baxter-Tomkins & Wallace, 2009). Further, volunteer organizations should give proper attention to scheduling and rostering volunteers and adjust schedules to meet the

constraints of volunteers (e.g. Miller, Powell & Seltzer, 1990).

Given the high rating for volunteers' intention to stay (the mean was 6.13, rated on a seven point scale), the present cohort of volunteers appear highly committed to ongoing service with the organization. Future research may benefit from exploring volunteer samples with lower rates of ongoing commitment, and exploring whether perceived organizational care can be identified as predicting lower rates of volunteer commitment.

In summary, this study highlights that volunteer ratings of satisfaction and intention to stay are contingent on aspects of perceived organizational care, and that these aspects are more important to volunteers than paid employees. Findings imply that those volunteer organizations able to maximise positive relatedness factors (e.g. recognition and appreciation of volunteers, care and welfare for volunteers, positive relationships amongst volunteers) are likely to benefit from higher retention rates. While this may require initial investment in policy and program development within the volunteer organization, longer term benefits could be expected from reduced costs associated with volunteer recruitment, training, administration and supervision.

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### **Appendix: Respect Amongst Members Scale**

The following questions refer to respect amongst the members of your organisation. Please respond where 1 = *Strongly Disagree*; 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

1. Members of my organization treat each other with respect.
2. Members of my organization readily take action when others are not being treated with respect.
3. Bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination are not tolerated at my organization.
4. My organization respects work life balance with respect to my family, personal, religious and lifestyle preferences.
5. My organization attracts members from diverse cultural, social and religious backgrounds.



**Table 1**

*Reliability Coefficients, Means, SD's, and F-test Results for Volunteers and Paid Employees*

	Volunteers (N = 2306)		Paid Employees (N = 274)		F	p	$\eta^2$
	$\alpha$	M (SD)	$\alpha$	M (SD)			
Intention to Stay	.79	6.13 (1.35)	.83	5.73 (1.53)	20.48	<.001	.008
Satisfaction	.90	5.32 (1.36)	.90	4.90 (1.40)	24.27	<.001	.009
Recognition	.87	4.42 (1.53)	.89	3.71 (1.48)	53.58	<.001	.020
Respect	.81	5.04 (1.31)	.81	4.15 (1.31)	113.11	<.001	.042
Welfare	.69	4.78 (1.31)	.73	4.60 (1.34)	5.00	.025	.002

*Note.* Df = 1, 2578 for the univariate tests.

**Table 2**

*Intercorrelations for Volunteers and Paid Employees*

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. Intention to Stay	-	.55**	.36**	.40**	.38**
2. Satisfaction	.66**	-	.65**	.66**	.50**
3. Recognition	.26**	.54**	-	.65**	.57**
4. Respect	.33**	.57**	.67**	-	.53**
5. Welfare	.27**	.50**	.57**	.56**	-

*Note.* Volunteers correlations above diagonal, Paid Employee correlations below diagonal, \*\* denotes  $p < .01$

**Table 3**

*Predictors of Satisfaction and Intention to Stay for Volunteers and Paid Employees*

Outcome Variable	Predictor Variable	Volunteers		Paid Employees	
		<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>
Satisfaction	Recognition	.33	16.30***	.21	3.18**
	Respect	.40	20.26***	.32	4.80***
	Welfare	.10	5.63***	.20	3.33**
		Adj $R^2 = .52$		Adj $R^2 = .39$	
		$F = 850.93***$		$F = 59.21***$	
Intention to Stay	Recognition	.10	3.62***	.01	.17
	Respect	.23	9.06***	.25	3.18**
	Welfare	.20	8.48***	.13	1.73
		Adj $R^2 = .20$		Adj $R^2 = .11$	
		$F = 192.27***$		$F = 12.58***$	

*Note.* \*\* denotes  $p < .01$ , \*\*\* denotes  $p < .001$

***The Volunteer Management Handbook: Leadership Strategies for Success (Second Edition)***

Edited by Tracy D. Conners, Wiley (436 pages.) ISBN -  
Reviewed by Janet E. Fox, Ph.D.

In an era where volunteers are a progressively significant part of non-profit agencies, the second edition of *The Volunteer Management Handbook* is an invaluable reference manual providing a plethora of research-based, practical information on volunteer resource management. Contributions are featured from visionary non-profit professionals providing a wide scope of present and futurist trends and topics that help guide and position the volunteer resource manager. Covering all aspects of administering volunteer programs, *The Volunteer Management Handbook* includes the latest in organizational assessment and planning; program management; operational assessment and planning; strategic deployment and implementation accession; training; communications; program management; results and evaluation; and applied management practice. The book is organized into four major parts: (1) volunteer resource program assessment, (2) analysis and planning; (3) strategic deployment and implementation accession; and (4) results, and evaluation and applied management practice.

The first part of the book focuses on volunteer resource program assessment, analysis, and planning targeting organizational assessment and planning and operational assessment and planning. Chapter one provides a thorough foundation regarding historical and contemporary volunteer management models. Chapter two discusses volunteer demographics as well as service across the life span, connecting

human development to volunteerism and generational cohorts. In Chapter three, preparing the organization for volunteers, the author shares preparing the organization for volunteers by setting reasonable expectations for volunteers, establishing the rationale and goals for the volunteer program, and integrating volunteer participation into the organization. Chapter three also offers guidance on creating positions of program leadership, developing written volunteer job descriptions, and designing systems that support and manage volunteer involvement. In chapter four, the author discusses shaping an organizational culture of employee and volunteer commitment. This section of the book provides a wide range of research-based information, guidelines, and tools to support an organizational culture that promotes a growth-filled environment for volunteers and staff. In discussing maximizing volunteer engagement, chapter five provides an overview of the volunteer involvement framework and provides dialogue around managing the volunteer investment. Chapter six, policy development for volunteer involvement, shares vital information about the benefits and challenges of having a volunteer program. The chapter provides information on job analysis looking at and providing tools for comparing volunteer role descriptions and role specifications. Wrapping up part one of the book, chapter seven shares vital information regarding policy development for volunteer involvement taking the discussion from distinguishing between policies and

procedures, the importance of policies and the link between policy and risk management. In the discussion around where are policies needed, the book covers the functions of policies providing examples of published policies as well as providing tools for developing policies.

With the groundwork laid in the first part of the book, the second part of the book focuses on strategic deployment and implementation access, training, communications, and program management. Chapter eight examines the latest approach to volunteer recruitment: competency-competence pathways and volunteer management systems. Chapter nine, orientation, provides a foundation for how to welcome new volunteers into the organization by providing examples of potential agenda components, formats for delivery, and the timing of orientation. In focusing on training, chapter ten provides a thorough background for training volunteers. In this chapter, several visual representations are used to convey information related to training. Chapters eleven and twelve focus on communications in targeting volunteer and staff. Chapter eleven, which focuses on volunteer and staff relations, shares insights on putting together and managing effective volunteer-staff teams. Chapter twelve covers the area of communicating with volunteers and staff: which includes information on the communication process, theories of communication, communication campaign, and potential pitfalls of internal communication.

In the program management section of the book, chapter thirteen discusses volunteer performance management, and takes the reader on a step-by-step process through the impact wheel, which focuses on purpose, priority, path and performance. This chapter is easy to read with plenty of graphs and tools for assessing volunteer

performance. In chapter fourteen, the author explores risk management in volunteer involvement by providing a firm foundation for understanding risk management. Bullet lists, step-by-step procedures, models, and other exhibits provide support for managing people, property, income, goodwill, and liability risks in volunteer programs.

Part three focuses on results and evaluation. Chapter fifteen provides the context and models for evaluating volunteer programs while chapter sixteen discusses evaluating the impact of volunteer programs. In chapter fifteen, a purpose-based evaluation framework for valuing volunteers serves as the underpinning for endorsing the value of volunteering to volunteers and to clients. In chapter sixteen, the author provides a thorough background on the relationship between evaluation, impact, and accountability. The author explains four foundational questions in volunteer program impact including: (1) Why do I need to evaluate the volunteer program?; (2) How will I collect the required impact evaluation data?; (3) Who wants or needs to know about the evaluation findings?; and, (4) How do I communicate the evaluation findings?

The second edition of *The Volunteer Management Handbook* is unique in that it is available both as an online and print publication. The final part of the book offers 17 additional chapters focusing on applied management practices. It provides a wide variety of digital files for support ranging from mission fulfillment during challenging times to professional ethics of volunteers to professionalism and credentialing in the field to international volunteer management. Not only are the advanced technologies available in the final chapters, but the online resource files also provide vital supplemental material at every stage of the volunteer resource management process.

The book's editor, Tracy D. Conners, has published eight nonprofit management handbooks, an unsurpassed publication record in the field of non-profit management. Now, he has put together another valuable resource. The book provides an excellent reference guide for the

volunteer resource manager, non-profit administrator, or university professor has everything the reader could want to know about volunteer resource management...and more! It is well worth the investment to add this outstanding "must have" resource to your volunteer management library.

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### **About the Reviewer**

Janet E. Fox, Ph.D., is a Professor and Associate Department Head for 4-H Youth and Family Development Department at the Louisiana State University AgCenter. Prior to her current position, Janet was the Volunteer and Leadership Development Specialist at LSU AgCenter and a 4-H Youth Development Specialist for the University of Nebraska Southeast Research and Extension Center. As a 4-H Youth Development Specialist, Janet supported volunteer and leadership development programs, and community service programs. Two different Nebraska governors appointed Janet to the Volunteer Service Commission in which she served for four years on the Executive Committee. Janet received her bachelors and masters degrees from Mississippi State University and her Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska.

## **A Body of Knowledge for the Practice of Volunteer Administration**

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### **Abstract:**

*The authors describes the core competencies and performance expectations which define sound practice for those who lead and manage volunteer engagement. The Body of Knowledge document is a valuable resource for practitioners, agency executives and educators.*

**Key Words:** volunteer management, core competencies, standards of practice, curriculum development

Acts of volunteering can be found in almost every corner of society. Volunteers deliver and extend services in virtually every type of community setting -- arts and cultural organizations, prisons, places of worship, recreation centers, political parties, immigrant settlement houses, senior daycare facilities, parks and botanical gardens, police and fire departments, self-help groups, neighborhood clubs, and emergency response agencies, to name just a few.

Furthermore, volunteers are active in the full range of policy-making, direct service and advocacy roles – for example, the board room, the office, working one-to-one with the client, advocating in a court room, or making soup in a homeless shelter. They can be found in organizations with large numbers of paid staff, with a mix of volunteers and paid staff, and in organizations which are entirely comprised of volunteers with no paid workers.

Similarly, the practice of volunteer administration is inherently complex and diverse.

Individuals who manage volunteer engagement come from very different backgrounds and careers, and may or may not have received formal or professional preparation for their specific role of leading volunteers. They may be paid, or be volunteers themselves. They may do it as their full-time responsibility, on a part-time basis, or as one of several “hats” they wear.

Managers of volunteers are found at the local, regional, state/provincial, national/federal, and international levels, and use a wide variety of job titles – volunteer coordinator, manager of volunteers, volunteer resource manager, community outreach coordinator, team leader, chairperson, coach, board member, project manager, event coordinator, etc.

Yet despite this extensive variety, breadth and depth of activity, there is a set of common elements and core competencies (a “body of knowledge”) which forms the foundation for sound practice, as defined by the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration (CCVA). As with other professions, this Body of Knowledge (BOK)

speaks to the full scope of practice and provides a universal framework for courses, training, and certification.

The CCVA Body of Knowledge was developed in 2008 by a task force of practitioners with significant experience in mobilizing and managing volunteer engagement, and validated by a Job Analysis Survey of the larger field. At the heart of this BOK are five core competencies which have been identified as critical to the effective leadership and management of volunteer involvement regardless of where or how it is practiced. These core competencies are listed below, along with the key elements included in each:

**Ethics:** the ability to act in accordance with professional principles. This competency includes knowledge about the difference between professional, organizational, and personal ethics, an understanding of the ethical principles related to working with volunteers, and skill in ethical decision making.

**Organizational Management:** the ability to design and implement policies, processes and structures to align volunteer involvement with the mission and vision of the organization. This competency includes knowledge and skills in strategic planning, change management, policies and procedure development, and project management.

**Human Resource Management:** the ability to successfully engage, train and support volunteers in a systematic and intentional way. This competency includes activity related to volunteer staffing, such as role design, marketing, recruitment, placement, orientation, and training. It also includes activity which supports volunteers once they are on board, such as supervision, corrective action, conflict management, team building, recognition, sustaining involvement, and meeting management.

**Accountability:** the ability to collect relevant data and to engage in meaningful monitoring, evaluation and reporting to stakeholders. This competency includes knowledge and skills in fiscal management, data management, evaluation and outcome measurement, risk management, and quality improvement.

**Leadership and Advocacy:** the investment of personal integrity, skills and attitudes to advance individual, organizational and community goals advocating for effective volunteer involvement inside of the organization and in the broader community it serves. This competency includes activity related to leadership development, diversity and inclusion, community collaboration, and advocacy (both internal and external).

Within each of these core competencies there are also a number of specific performance expectations which detail how individual practitioners will exhibit their knowledge and ability.

The CCVA Body of Knowledge can be used in a variety of ways to build the capacity of both individuals and organizations. For those who suddenly find themselves responsible for leading volunteers with little or no prior training in how to do so, this role can be overwhelming and daunting. New practitioners will find the BOK to be a helpful roadmap as they seek to understand the complexity of their management and leadership role. More experienced practitioners can use the BOK to guide their own professional development. By assessing their personal level of knowledge and skill in each competency area they can identify specific topics for future training and learning.

Organizational executives and top managers can use the BOK when hiring staff to oversee volunteer engagement. Using these competencies as a framework for

crafting job announcements and selection criteria will ensure that those who work with volunteers are equipped to help the organization strategically maximize this resource.

The BOK is a tool for educators as well. It provides a valid content outline for developing course curricula and structuring student assignments consistent with real-world practice. An added benefit is that it clearly demonstrates the interconnectivity between volunteer administration and other disciplines such as human resource management and nonprofit management.

Despite the dynamic nature and demographics of service activity, there is widespread agreement that volunteers

continue to be a unique and critical human resource for accomplishing organizational missions, healthy communities, and social innovation. As the current emphasis on capacity-building continues, resources such as the CCVA Body of Knowledge are timely and valuable. Skilled and competent leadership based on these competencies and performance standards ensures that the desired results are achieved, and that the spirit of volunteering is sustained.

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### About the Author

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**Risk Management for Volunteer Resource Managers: Pre-Event Planning Matrix**

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**Abstract**

*Risk has been defined as the exposure to the possibility of loss, injury, or other adverse or unwelcome circumstance. Risks are inherent in most activities and programs delivered by volunteer-based organizations and can take many forms. These forms of risk include the risk to people, property, financial solvency and reputation. Given that risk exists, volunteer-based organizations must manage risk. Risk management involves a process of identification, analysis and either acceptance or mitigation of uncertainty involved in making a decision. Incorporating risk management into a volunteer-based organization involves several processes. These include risk analysis, risk response, and risk review. To protect the safety of participants, sponsors, property, finances, and the goodwill/reputation of the organization's name a systematic approach to risk management is recommended. The pre-event planning guide and matrix has been created to aid volunteer resource managers, volunteer program directors, staff, volunteers, and participants to assess, plan, and minimize the risk involved with the activities of a volunteer-based organization.*

**Key Words:** risk, risk management, volunteers, volunteer-based organizations

Crisis has often been a motivating factor for change. In the fall of 1999, twelve Texas A&M University students were tragically killed while building a bonfire on the campus prior to a fall football game. Consequently, risk management became an important topic at Texas A&M. The Texas A&M Student Affairs Risk Management Team met and developed a risk management report following the incident. Included in the report was a Risk Management Matrix tool (Texas A & M Student Affairs Risk Management Team, 2001). The assessment tool was proven to be effective when used by volunteers, students, and advisors.

Later, a team of University of Florida faculty was asked to develop a risk management plan for a university volunteer program. This plan adapted the Risk Management Matrix developed at Texas A&M. This Pre-Event Planning Guide and Matrix can be found at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/4h299> by selecting the PDF link located at the end of the document. Using the Pre-Event Planning Guide and Matrix will help volunteer resource managers and volunteer program administrators identify and analyze risk and develop risk management strategies to protect the people, finances, and reputation of a volunteer-based organization.

### **Risk and Risk Management**

Daily, there is a chance that something unexpected, unwanted, or dangerous could happen. Risk has been defined as the exposure to the possibility of loss, injury, or other adverse or unwelcome circumstance (Hubbard, 2009). For volunteer-based organizations, risk is the uncertainty about a future event that threatens the organization's ability to accomplish its mission and the many unexpected things that can happen

such as unforeseen: effects on participants; impacts on an organization's reputation; participants' or spectators' reactions; and financial costs to the organization.

Risk management, on the other hand, involves a process of identification, analysis and either acceptance or mitigation of uncertainty involved in making a decision (Alexander & Sheedy, 2005). Risk management is a proactive method, as opposed to a reactive method, in dealing with situations that could put an individual, group, or organization at risk. Practicing risk management means being prepared to deal with any dangers that develop. In volunteer-based organizations, risk management: ensures that program participants are protected from unwanted consequences and safety concerns; helps to evaluate allocation of resources; and centers on prevention in order to focus on achieving the mission and objectives of a volunteer-based organization. Generally by practicing risk management, potential difficulties can be identified and dealt with before they can cause problems. Risks may take a variety of forms for the organization including people, property, financial and goodwill/reputation. The people affected by risks are youth volunteers, employees, clients, donors, board members and the public. Risk to property loss includes buildings, facilities, equipment, materials, copyrights and trademarks. There is a risk to financial assets including sales, grants and contributions. Additionally, a loss of status in the community can impact the goodwill and reputation of a volunteer-based organization.

### **Incorporating Risk Management into an Organization**

Incorporating risk management into a volunteer-based organization involves several processes. These include risk analysis, risk response, and risk review. Each of these is described below.

#### **Risk Analysis**

Risk analysis requires identifying and analyzing the potential for harm or negative impact on an event or activity. Volunteer resource managers often search for potential risk from two distinct perspectives: source analysis and problem analysis. Source analysis seeks to look at the potential sources of risk whereas problem analysis looks at specific individual problems that could arise. When planning a program or activity the planners should review the activity to identify potential hazards, clarify the severity and frequency of the risk, and decide if the hazards can be reduced or eliminated, and, if not, the event should not be planned.

#### **Risk Response**

Risk response refers to the steps or actions that a volunteer-based organization takes when a risk is identified. There are four risk management approaches: reduction, avoidance, transfer, and acceptance (Vose, 2008). The major focus of risk management is to reduce risk by reviewing the activity and then implementing policies and procedures that minimize the risks. For example, in a camp setting safety, health, and adult readiness are issues that should be evaluated and steps should be taken to avoid or reduce problems. Contingency plans should be formed and the activity or conditions should be altered as

necessary to decrease the likelihood that a loss will occur.

Risk avoidance means entirely avoiding activities if the risks are too severe or the possibility of injury is too great. An example of avoiding risks is placing an age requirement on youth working with large animals (e.g., riding horseback in a competition). Proposing an event, for example, in which 6 year-old children show steers at a fair for auction, presents a severe risk to participants and spectators. The risk identified here is that youth this age may not have the physical strength, emotional maturity or experience needed to manage a large-animal in a safe manner.

Transferring the risk includes involving a third-party participant to share the risks and liability. Dealing with risk management is a big responsibility and one person or organization may not want to deal with it alone. Having adequate insurance for events and activities is an example of transferring risk. Another example of when to transfer risk might be when coordinating transportation for volunteers. Rather than a volunteer-based organization providing transportation for volunteers, a contract with a professional transportation provider would transfer some of the risk from the volunteer-based organization to the transportation provider.

The process of acceptance means recognizing there are risks involved and making the decision as a volunteer-based organization to accept certain risks. Identifying dangers and knowing the potential risks involved can help everyone involved to be more attentive and prepared to deal with these risks. For example, hosting a fundraiser “mud run” for adults to run through a muddy obstacle course is full of risks. Identifying the risks involved and

helping organizational staff and volunteers as well as participants acknowledge the possible dangers can help all involved to be more alert and careful in their activities.

### **Risk Review**

Risk review is the process of monitoring the risk management plan and communicating the information to all members of the volunteer-based organization, including participants to some degree. Part of this process is evaluating the risk management plan and making changes to reduce, avoid, transfer and/or assume risk. The pre-event planning guide and matrix has been created to aid volunteer resource managers, volunteer program directors, staff, volunteers, and participants as they engage in the risk review process.

### **Responsibility for Risk Management**

Whether an activity hosted by an organization is geared towards youth or adults, risks are inherent. Managing risk is an important function for all members of a volunteer-based organization. All volunteer program administrators, volunteer resource managers, staff, volunteers and participants, are responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating good risk management

practices. Risk will never go away; therefore risk management will always be something that should be included in every program plan. When working with volunteers, volunteer resource managers should communicate potential risks and how to manage risk to volunteers and participants. The risk management matrix is an invaluable tool when performing risk analysis and planning a volunteer-based organization's events and activities.

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## Using Google Docs and the Web to Manage and Recruit Volunteers

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### Abstract

*Recruiting and managing volunteers in programs can be difficult and time consuming. Using Google Docs can be an effective way to reach a more diverse volunteer base, to direct volunteer opportunities, and to manage volunteer data. The purpose of this article is to walk the reader through the process of using Google Docs and the related applications in coordination with the internet to save time and to facilitate successful volunteer recruitment and management.*

**Key Words:** volunteers, management, recruitment, Google Docs

### Introduction

Volunteers can be invaluable to any successful program. However, management and recruitment are two of the most difficult aspects in the world of volunteers (Sinasky & Bruce, 2007; Smith & Finley, 2004). Many times managing volunteers takes so much time that in the end having volunteers at your event may cost too much time and effort to seem worth it. In addition, volunteers are feeling time pressures related to volunteering that may limit their participation (Merrill, 2006). Previous research has shown that using tools can increase volunteer success and reduce the need for time-consuming practices (see Culp

et al., 2009). One solution may be to use readily available and affordable technology to reach a large and diverse audience of volunteers in the recruitment process which can also help us become more efficient in how we utilize the valuable time of both volunteers and paid personnel. The purpose of this article is to outline the use of Google Docs in coordination with organizational websites to save time and to facilitate successful volunteer recruitment and management. Having information available at their fingertips makes it more likely that volunteers are informed about your programs and volunteer opportunities. They

can easily see where they can help and can sign up in a matter of minutes.

### **Google Docs**

Google Docs (short for documents) is a free online service offered by Google. This application allows a person to post a document that others can view in real time. With a little knowledge of how the application works, it can be an invaluable for recruiting and managing volunteers. It allows volunteers to see the volunteer opportunities that are available. In the following example, we will use Google Forms, one of many applications available through Google Docs.

### Google Form

A Google Form is basically an electronic survey that allows for viewing or sharing with others. As a result, a document created by a supervisor to collect contact information from volunteers can be shared with a secretary who can use the information to remind them of upcoming events. The survey or Form is something that you can create with your own questions which then populates to a spreadsheet. The following example will outline how to use a Google Form to collect volunteer information for specific events. Creating a Google Form is done by going to the Google Docs home page and creating a new Form (see Figure 1). There are three screens related to any Form. The editing screen (available to you), the survey screen (available to volunteers), and the excel screen (available to you).

### Editing Screen

The editing screen is where you create your electronic survey. You can create questions that have many types of response choices (e.g., text, choose from a list, scale, paragraph, etc.).

There is a place on this screen to title your survey, name your questions, and choose answer types (see Figure 2). The name of the questions (e.g., First Name) becomes the column name (e.g., First Name) on your Excel sheet, so pick titles that will help you know what information you are collecting. As a note, the questions will appear in the order you enter them on this screen. The editing screen is fairly user friendly in letting you move or delete questions; however, this does not always change the questions to the same order on the Excel sheet.

At the very bottom of the editing screen is the link you will use to give out people to access the Form. The link can then be easily included in emails you send out to existing volunteer lists, or embedded into a volunteer website that anyone can visit to see all the volunteer opportunities available with your organization.

### Survey Screen

When people click on your link they are taken to the survey. This view allows them to enter their data and submit it. There is an option within the editing screen that allows you to change the “theme” of the Form. You can pick different templates done by Google to change the colors, font, and appearance of the Form that people see.

### Excel Screen

When someone fills out and submits information on your Form, the spreadsheet will automatically populate. It is helpful to test your whole Form by entering in sample data to see if information is populating to the spreadsheet correctly.

Once you have finished gathering data or if you need to deactivate the form, you can do so by clicking on “accepting responses”. The default for this feature is that it is on until turned off. You can access

the editing screen again if you need to adjust questions.

The Form automatically saves every few seconds, but you can also manually save it under the file menu. In addition, you can download the spreadsheet into a couple of different formats, including Excel. This feature is useful if you have gathered data and would like to save it on a desk top or flash drive, but would like to clean out the online version so it is easier to read and manage. You can also print the Form from here as well. There are several places that have the “share” option to give others access to viewing and editing the Form, this screen is one place it is found.

### **Implementation**

Our society is moving more and more towards one-stop-shopping and we need to have the management of volunteers move with it. Programs and resources that are not utilizing a website are often left by the way side. Implementing Google Forms is easily done on an organization website.

Strive to give potential volunteers as much information as possible through this tool. Volunteers are more comfortable when they know what they are committing to. This also gives them more freedom of choice. Figure 7 is an example of a website that shows all the volunteer opportunities with updated availability and needs. It is useful for both volunteers and staff to see current needs.

### **Limitations**

There are some limitations related to using this tool. First, in order to access these free applications you need to have a GMail account. However, those filling out the form do not, they simply need internet access. Next, the online version of the spreadsheet

has some differences in formatting and features from the desktop versions of Excel. If this is bothersome, you can download the data to the desktop version.

### **Conclusion**

Google Forms is an excellent way to recruit and manage volunteers and connect them with event opportunities. It can be used to quickly gather information from volunteers and fill volunteer needs with efficient use of time, while managing the information in a spreadsheet or Excel. This tool has easy access via a link given to volunteers through email or an organizational website dedicated to volunteers. The efficiency of managing volunteers in this way saves valuable time and money, which are things we all need.

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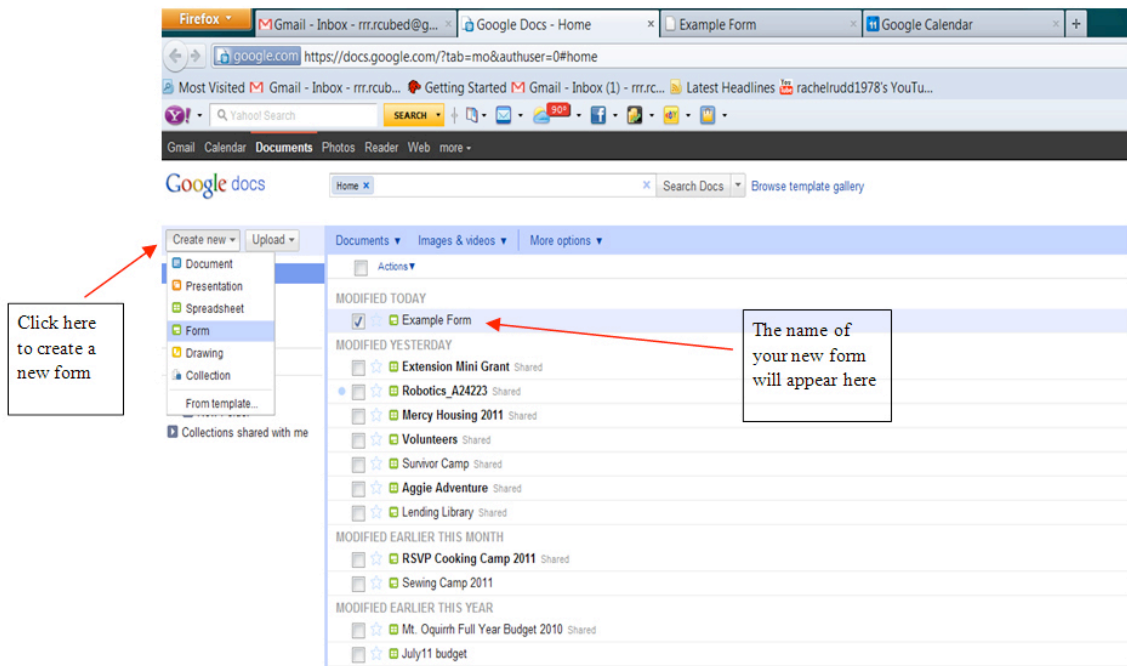


Figure 1. Creating a Google Form from Google Docs.

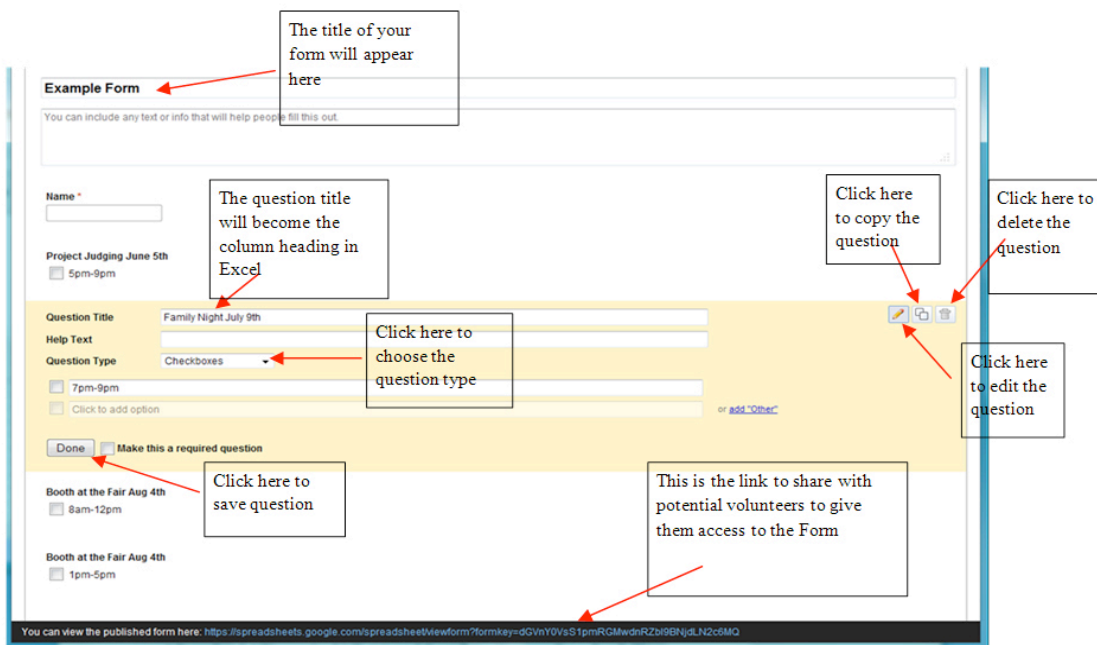


Figure 2. The editing screen.

The image shows a screenshot of a Google Form titled "Example Form". The form includes a "Name" field with an asterisk indicating it is required. Below this are four radio button options for different activities: "Project Judging June 5th" (5pm-9pm), "Family Night July 9th" (7pm-9pm), "Booth at the Fair Aug 4th" (8am-12pm), and "Booth at the Fair Aug 4th" (1pm-5pm). A "Submit" button is at the bottom. The form is powered by Google Docs and includes links for "Report Abuse", "Terms of Service", and "Additional Terms".

Callout boxes provide additional information:

- A box at the top right points to the title "Example Form" with the text: "The title you chose for the Form".
- A box on the right side points to the radio button options with the text: "Different options for volunteers to choose, based on the questions you made.".
- A box on the left side points to the "Submit" button with the text: "Participants then click submit and their data is sent to your excel file in Google Docs".

Figure 3. The survey screen: What the volunteer actually sees.

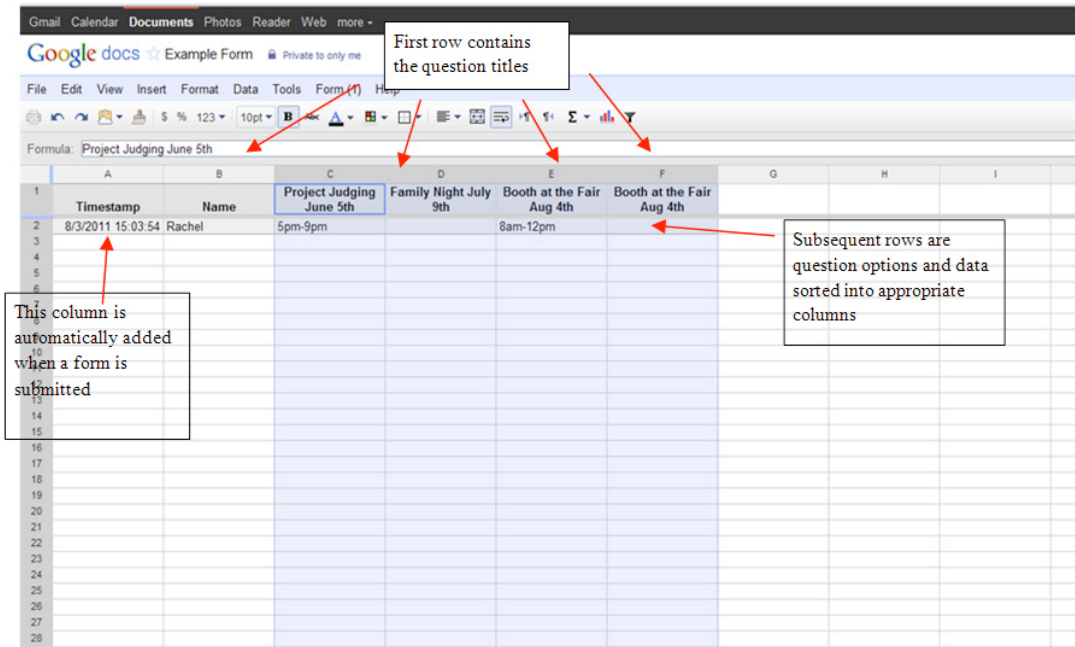


Figure 4. The Excel screen: Viewed within Google Docs.

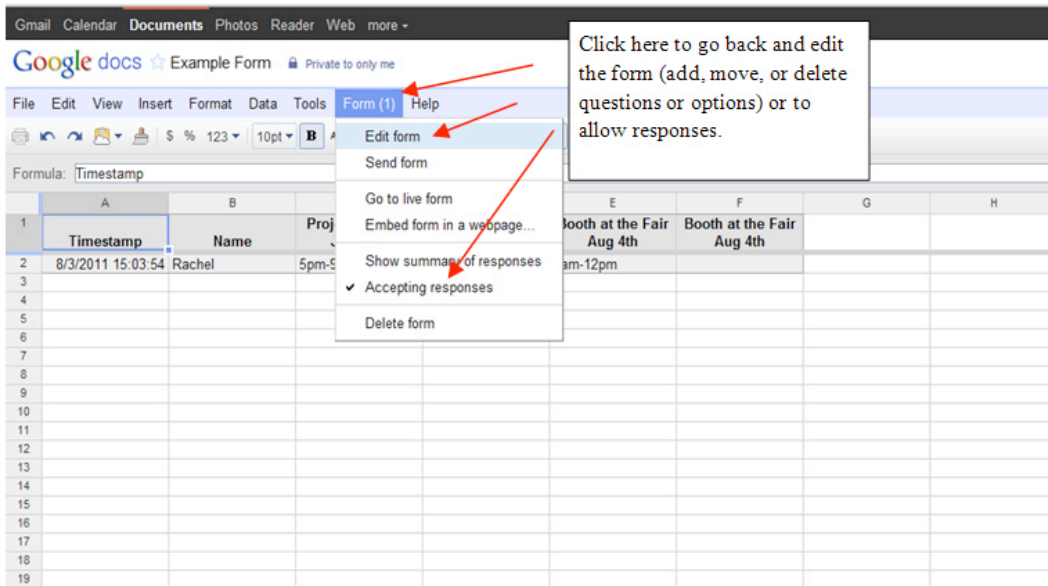


Figure 5. Editing the Google Form and accepting responses.

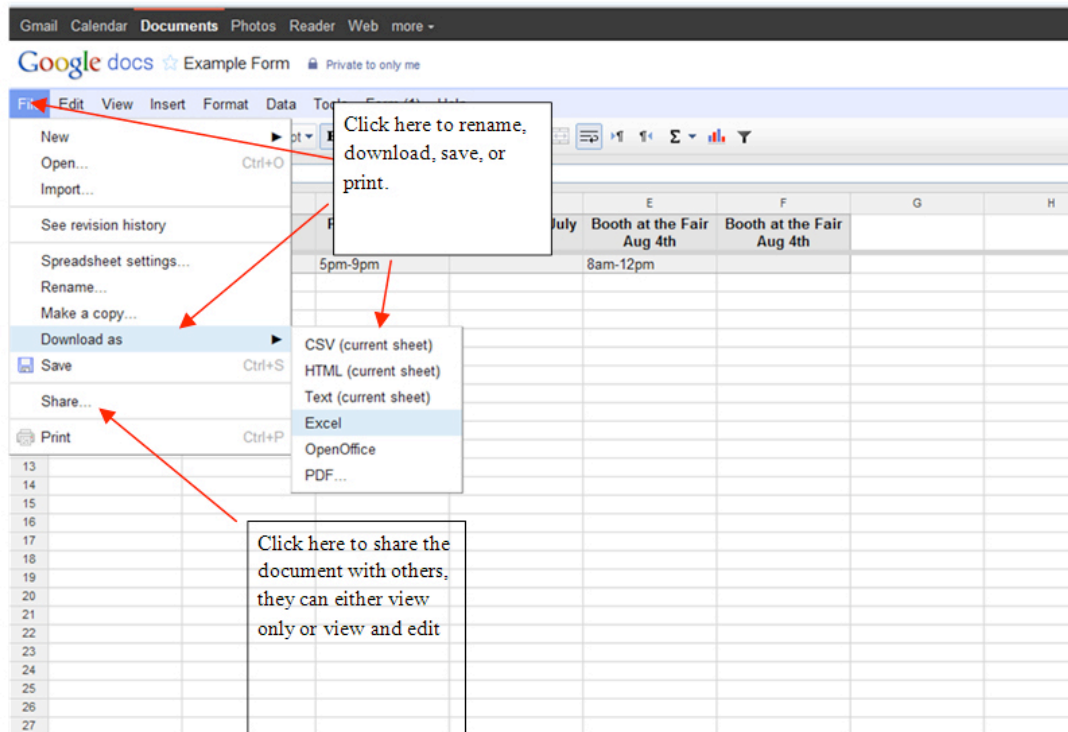


Figure 6. Saving, downloading, and sharing.

The screenshot shows a website for a University Cooperative Extension. The header includes navigation links like 'Home', '4-H & Youth', 'Finance', 'Food & Health', 'Home & Family', 'Gardening', 'Ag', 'Natural Resources', and 'Business & Community'. A search bar is present. The main content area is titled 'Volunteers' and contains a paragraph about summer opportunities, a sign-up link, and a table for 'Survivor Camp'. The table shows the number of volunteers needed (5) and the number of people signed up for each time slot (2).

Survivor Camp	
Volunteers will help with various activities including: Paintball, outdoor cooking, leadership games, hiking, and mostly FUN!!!	
July 19	(Need 5) How Many Signed up
5pm	2
6pm	2
7pm	2
8pm	2

Figure 7. One-stop-shop of volunteer opportunities.

## **Strategic Thinking: A Novel Approach to Professionalizing the Profession**

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### **Abstract**

*Volunteer resource management is becoming more and more visible as a profession. Colleges and Universities are now offering specific courses in volunteer resource management instead of simply building the subject matter into a human resource or program administration course for nonprofit degrees. Additionally, increased emphasis is being placed on practitioners obtaining professional credentials in the field, and professional associations are working towards developing occupational standards. As a supplement to the efforts of formalizing the training for volunteer resource managers, strategic thinking should be recognized as a skill worth promoting and developing amongst professionals in the field. Strategic thinking was instrumental in all the major advancements of the past few centuries and can be critical to successfully managing and administering volunteer programs and elevating the profession.*

**Key Words:** strategic, credentialing, professionalizing, decision-making

The movement to formalize volunteer resource management as a profession continues to gain ground as colleges offer courses and certificates in volunteer administration, international credentialing increases in popularity, and occupational standards for the profession begin to be developed. In addition to formal training for a position as a professional administrator of volunteer resources, the profession would be greatly served if current professionals in the field increased their use of strategic thinking when making routine and critical programmatic decisions.

### **Strategic Thinking Defined**

Early in the twenty-first century the idea of strategic thinking was a relatively

new concept. It emerged out of the resurgence of strategic planning in the 1990's. Researchers found that only about 4% of the U.S. organizational population was highly competent in strategic thinking (Linkow, 1999). The *2009/2010 Trends in Executive Development* study revealed that the number of strategic thinkers probably hasn't increased much in the last decade. The study expressed great concern regarding the ability of the next generation of leaders to successfully manage in today's turbulent business environment-- specifically because they lack strategic thinking skills (Gaber & Wolfe, 2009).

Strategic thinking is the ability to identify and consider all relevant information in order to determine the most

advantageous course of action (*Guide to Developing*, 2011). It is considered an advanced decision-making skill and “involves recognizing trends and challenging assumptions while maintaining a global view of situations” (Fowler & Savage, 2011, p.85) as well as embracing change. It requires appreciating current situations while researching ways to take advantage of on new opportunities (Fowler & Savage, 2011). Strategic thinkers first ask “what” and not “how”, as in questioning what can and will be done to move forward, not how something will be executed.

### **Strategic Thinking and the Profession**

Noticing the increased visibility of volunteer resource management as a profession Jeanette Savage conducted an online survey of current and previous volunteer resource managers in July 2011 to explore whether or not these professionals share a predominant thinking style. She asked members of two LinkedIn groups, Forum for Volunteer Administrators and Volunteer Coordinators, with profiles indicating they have experience managing volunteer resources to complete the survey. Five hundred thirty-nine professionals received the hyperlink to the survey and one hundred forty-nine people completed it. The initial review of the results found, similar to the aforementioned research findings, that six percent of respondents were exceptional strategic thinkers. There is certainly room for growth and increasing the number of volunteer resource managers with exceptional strategic thinking skills is important for individual professional growth, overall organizational success, and can lead to increased recognition of the profession as an actual profession.

Consider volunteer positions perceived as less than beneficial: volunteer resource managers utilizing strategic thinking, instead of acting on information void of relevant

trends, will explore all consequences and be able to clearly communicate the reason their decision is the most advantageous course of action. They will become appreciated as the foundation for organizational efficiency, and make their department more successful in the long-term (*Guide to Developing*, 2011). Organizations employing volunteer resource managers highly competent in strategic thinking benefit because these professionals tend to have more targeted focus and scope leading to increased differentiation and purposeful activity, a greater understanding of what’s needed to move the organization forward, and the ability to respond quickly to challenges and capitalize on opportunities (Fowler & Savage, 2011). As efforts to professionalize the profession continue; strategic thinking should be recognized as a skill worth promoting and developing amongst professionals in the field of volunteer administration.

### **Developing Strategic Thinking Skills**

The findings of researchers at the turn of the century, the observations revealed in the *2009/2010 Trends in Executive Development* study, and the results of the survey of professionals in the field conducted summer 2011, all clearly demonstrate how underdeveloped and underutilized strategic thinking really is. Fortunately, there are two things professionals in volunteer resource management can do immediately to begin to build this high-level decision making process: make time for trends and ask the right questions first.

The way a problem, or opportunity, is framed at the onset will determine whether or not the decisions made regarding the situation will be truly strategic. The first questions strategic thinkers ask focus on “what” and not “how.” Volunteer resource managers should practice first asking questions like “what must be done to align

volunteer needs for episodic and short term opportunities with the organization's new goals" and "what will the organization's new policy regarding teens mean for the future of the teen volunteer program." These types of questions should be asked before asking questions about how many websites to use in order to post the new information, or how many different colors should be used for the announcement flyer. Our thinking automatically becomes more strategic as we focus on the larger picture (Fowler & Savage, 2011).

A focus on the larger picture will only take an aspiring strategic thinker so far. To be a competent strategic thinker a person needs to be able to move beyond their anchor thoughts – gut feelings/actions - and base their decisions on all relevant information. They can do this by making sure they regularly follow, contemplate, and/or research the trends emerging within and affecting volunteerism. Volunteer resource managers who have ignored that many of their boomer aged volunteers are working at least part-time, due to the economy, are missing an opportunity to re-design volunteer positions to be mutually beneficial for the organization and the volunteer. It's imperative for volunteer resource managers to take the time to actually read and review their professional association's newsletters, the materials and notes they gather after attending conferences and workshops, the topics discussed on the professional listserv, and the trade journals they subscribe to. Professionals who are informed about the external environment are better-equipped to respond to the internal work environment (Savage & Fowler, 2011).

Additionally, professionals in the field of volunteer resource management can reexamine past decisions in order to develop their strategic thinking skills. "Ask 'What,' Not 'How'" (2011) encourages readers to

consider ten ways a situation could be approached differently and the various alternate outcomes that would have resulted. Volunteer resource managers can consider a time when they created a volunteer position to meet a new organizational need and the different ways the position could have been designed. Those struggling to identify ten alternatives should determine the additional information needed, find that information and start the exercise again (Fowler & Savage, 2011). This exercise, along with focusing on the big picture, and making time for trends are all realistic ways for professional volunteer resource managers to develop their strategic thinking skills.

### **Practical Applications for Strategic Thinking**

At a recent strategic thinking workshop, an entry level volunteer resource manager expressed having just enough time in her work day to concentrate on "how" to implement the tactics associated with achieving goals for the volunteer program at her organization. She and workshop attendees viewed strategic thinking as a luxury reserved for those in management positions. These professionals were concerned with finding the time to consider all relevant information and determine the most advantageous course of action.

The truth of the matter is, nowadays, everyone strives to accomplish more with less. Professional volunteer resource managers, regardless of whether they work in a one-person or multi-person department within their organization will benefit from incorporating the use of strategic thinking as they address programmatic opportunities and threats, as well how they approach their own personal career objectives. Here are a few situations in which strategic thinking proves especially valuable (*Guide to Developing*, 2011):



- When developing staffing plans for departments – number of employees vs volunteers
- During strategic planning activities
- When competitively positioning your programs and services
- When leveraging your skills in preparation for future opportunities
- When determining which associations will maximize your networking experiences

This list reinforces the idea that developing and maintaining strategic thinking skills is very important and should serve as encouragement for more professionals in volunteer administration to integrate strategic thinking into their daily lives.

### Conclusion

Successful management and administration of volunteer programs requires volunteer resource managers to keep up with current trends, seek feedback and new information, and challenge personal and organizational assumptions. Quite simply, they need to perfect their strategic thinking skills. As more volunteer resource managers improve their strategic thinking

skills the industry will notice that these professionals are well-positioned to strategically identify and capitalize on professional, programmatic, and organizational opportunities. Increasing strategic thinking amongst current professional volunteer administrators is an obvious compliment to the efforts focused on formalized training for the profession. Both efforts work together to elevate the profession.

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**Competencies for Contemporary Volunteer Administration:  
An Empirical Model Bridging Theory with Professional Best Practice**

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**Abstract**

*The researchers used a mailed questionnaire to collect data from International Association for Volunteer Administration members investigating their perceptions of the importance of respective contemporary volunteer management and administration competencies. Principle component statistical analysis resulted in the identification of seven unique components, including: (1) Volunteer Recruitment and Selection; (2) Volunteer Administrator Professional Development; (3) Volunteer Orientation and Training; (4) Volunteer Program Advocacy; (5) Volunteer Program Maintenance; (6) Volunteer Recognition; and (7) Volunteer Program Resource Development. Based upon the research findings, the authors propose a modified version of Safrit and Schmiesing's (2004) original P.E.P. model for volunteer administration comprised of three overarching professional domains of (Professional) Preparation, (Volunteer) Engagement, and (Program) Perpetuation encompassing seven volunteer administration topic areas consisting of 62 specific competencies.*

**Key Words:** volunteer administration, professional competencies, volunteer management

**Introduction**

For more than three decades, authors, researchers, and practitioners have strived optimistically toward a vision of expanded volunteer engagement in community programs in both the United States (Boyd, 2004; Collins, 2001; Hange, SeEVERS & VanLeeuwen, 2002; King & Safrit, 1998; Kwarteng, Smith, & Miller, 1988; Safrit, Smith & Cutler, 1994) and other nations (Chizari, Lindner, & Karjoyan, 1999; Shahbazi, 1993; Stedman & Place, 2004). Chizari, Lindner and Karjoyan

(1999) suggested that the absence of volunteerism was a critical factor between successful and unsuccessful educational organizations in non-Western nations. Jackson, Kirkwood, Asante-Ntiamoah, and Armstrong (2002) concluded that the availability and mobilization of volunteers should be considered by community-based organizations developing international educational programs. Stedman and Place (2004) concluded that "In order to more efficiently, more effectively utilize volunteers in international . . . development

we must develop an understanding of how organizations use, train, and perceive volunteers in their organizations (p. 147) . . . The concept of globalization intends that we make attempts to provide global experiences for all: faculty, students, extension agents, and volunteers” (p. 148). However, little empirical research investigating volunteer management competencies among volunteer administrator populations exists.

As a larger profession encompassing numerous discipline areas, housed in diverse community-based organizations, and addressing a myriad of social needs and issues, volunteer administration has evolved dramatically as communities and societies have continued to change. This evolution, by necessity, requires the ongoing identification and application of new and modified volunteer management and leadership strategies to meet the emerging needs of people in communities around the world. As the volunteer administration profession has evolved, so have interests in ensuring that managers of volunteers have the necessary updated management and technical skills to be successful in their positions (Fisher & Cole, 1993).

A variety of volunteer management models have been proposed that suggest core competencies necessary for managers to successfully design and implement volunteer delivered community-based educational programs. Arguably, the very first comprehensive model of volunteer management in the United States (U.S.) was presented by Boyce (1971) for use in the Cooperative Extension Service. He identified seven constructs inherent in effective volunteer management comprising the I.S.O.T.U.R.E. model: identification, selection, orientation, training, utilization, recognition, and evaluation. Shortly after Boyce’s proposed model, others began writing about the role of the salaried volunteer manager, and more specifically

their role in motivating volunteers; establishing a positive organizational climate for volunteerism, planning, implementing and evaluating volunteer programs, and communications (Wilson, 1976).

Beginning in the 1980’s, several individuals proposed expanded administrative approaches to volunteer management. Brudney (1990) capitalized on the necessity for public agencies to implement a consistent volunteer management model in order to mobilize volunteers for public service in local communities. Much of what Navarre (1989), Ellis (1996), and Stepputat (1995) proposed is still prevalent to current practices by managers of volunteers, including developing written job descriptions; recruiting, interviewing, screening, orienting, and training new volunteers; volunteer supervision, evaluation, recognition, retention, record keeping, and motivation; and professional advocacy and development for managers of volunteers.

Several volunteer management models have been implemented within the context of extension organizations that are widely known for their extensive network of volunteers. Using Boyce’s (1971) conceptual model, Safrit, Smith and Cutler (1994) developed “B.L.A.S.T.: Building Leadership and Skills Together”, an applied volunteer management curriculum that is now used in more than 21 4-H Youth Development programs and numerous non-profit organizations across the country as well as in several non-U.S. 4-H programs. Conceptual components of volunteer administration identified by Kwarteng, Smith and Miller (1988) included planning volunteer programs; clarifying volunteer tasks; and the recruitment, orientation, training, support, maintenance, recognition and evaluation of volunteers. The L.O.O.P. model (Penrod, 1991) included four

overarching components of volunteer management: locating and orientating volunteers, operating volunteer programs, and perpetuating volunteer involvement. Culp, Deppe, Castillo and Wells' G.E.M.S. model (1998) built upon and reorganized the earlier works of Penrod, Kwarteng et al., and MacKenzie and Moore (1993) by organizing components of volunteer administration into four primary categories: generate, educate, mobilize, and sustain volunteers.

Numerous applied researchers have sought to further clarify the necessary competencies for today's managers of volunteers, focused primarily upon U.S. contexts. Recognizing the importance of volunteerism in today's public classrooms, Harshfield (1995) investigated the perceived importance of selected volunteer management components in western U.S. schools. King and Safrit (1998) investigated the importance and competence of selected volunteer management components for Ohio 4-H Youth Development agents. Based upon King and Safrit's study, Collins (2001) explored Michigan 4-H Youth Development agents' perceptions of the importance of and competence with selected volunteer management components. Hange (2002) studied U.S. 4-H agents' perceptions and attitudes towards their competency levels with selected volunteer management functions. In a qualitative Delphi study of Cooperative Extension administrators and volunteerism specialists across the country, Boyd (2004) identified competencies that will be required by volunteer administrators as they lead organizations over the next decade.

Most recently, Safrit and Schmiesing (2004) utilized a qualitative methodology with volunteer consultants and practitioners in the United States to develop the P.E.P. model for volunteer administration. P.E.P. included three overall categories within volunteer administration encompassing nine

components: Category I: (Personal) Preparation (three components): 1. Personal and Professional Development (one theme), 2. Serving as an Internal Consultant (ten themes), and 3. Program Planning (six themes); Category II: (Volunteer) Engagement (four components): 4. Recruitment (three themes), 5. Selection (three themes), 6. Orientation and Training (three themes), and 7. Coaching and Supervision (three themes); and Category III: (Program) Perpetuation (two components): 8. Recognition (two themes), and 9. Program Evaluation, Impact and Accountability (six themes). Based upon P.E.P., Safrit and Schmiesing (2005) subsequently described self-reported current levels of importance and competence by Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) members internationally for the specific volunteer management competencies identified in their earlier qualitative research.

Jedlicka (1990) concluded that "Volunteerism also satisfies an essential element for world development. . . It is not unreasonable to think of developing organizations that can carry out a volunteer world development. . . Dare we be optimistic?" (pp. 54, 99). Thus, while each of the previously identified volunteer management models and studies has been extremely important to the evolution of volunteer administration as a recognized profession, valid and reliable empirical data is needed in order to develop a contemporary perspective of volunteer administration in community-based volunteer programs. Such data could serve as the initial foundation for further research, as well as the development and standardization of a holistic model for volunteer administration that unites our profession regardless of nationality, geographic location, program focus, or organizational context.

### **Purpose, Objectives, and Methods**

The purpose of this research was to investigate management and administrative factors comprising contemporary volunteer administration. Specific objectives included to (1) identify factors pertaining to the contemporary management of volunteers, and (2) identify specific volunteer management and administration competencies based upon the factors identified.

The population for the study was the 2,057 individual members of the Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) as of July 1, 2004. The population included 1,889 AVA members from the United States; 98 from Canada; and 70 from other countries. The researchers used a quantitative methodology approach consisting of a mailed questionnaire utilizing a census. A research instrument consisting of 140 individual volunteer management competencies was developed based upon Safrit and Schmiesing (2004). The questionnaire was organized into two sections. Section I investigated respondents' perceptions of the importance of and their current level of competence with each competency. Section II collected respondents' selected personal data. A pilot test provided Cronbach's alpha reliabilities for individual constructs that ranged from .73 to .93. Since all values were greater than .70, the researchers determined the responses to be reliable (Stevens, 1992.).

A cover letter, the questionnaire, and a self-addressed return envelope were mailed to participants on August 10, 2004, with a requested return date of September 1, 2004. A follow-up email reminder was sent one week later by the AVA office staff. The researchers emailed a final, personalized reminder to all members on September 10, 2004.

As of the September 15, 2004,

deadline, 538 questionnaires had been returned with 522 usable responses, resulting in a final response rate of 25% (Wiseman, 2003.) The researchers followed-up with 150 randomly selected non-respondents (Linder & Wingenbach, 2002; Miller & Smith, 1983) and found no significant differences between respondents and non-respondents. The researchers analyzed the data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 12.0, calculating appropriate descriptive statistics to satisfy the research objectives (Norusis, 2003).

To determine if the data were appropriate for factor analysis using the principle component analysis technique, a correlation matrix of volunteer management competencies was reviewed for intercorrelations greater than  $|0.30|$ , and two statistics were computed. Bartlett's test of sphericity resulted in rejecting the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix was an identity matrix (Chi-Square 25,988;  $df = 9,730$ ;  $p < .001$ ), while the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.87. Based upon the correlation matrix and the statistics calculated, the researchers concluded that the data were appropriate for component analysis.

Two criteria were used to initially determine the number of components to be extracted. First, only components with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were considered for the analysis. Second, a scree plot of the component eigenvalues was used to identify breaks or discontinuity in determining the number of major components. After initial extraction, a third criterion for the determination of the number of components to extract was whether they possessed meaningful interpretation (simple structure and conceptual sense). The extraction procedure resulted in the identification of seven components underlying the conceptual constructs of volunteer management

competencies. The components were rotated using a varimax rotation method with Kaiser Normalization to aid in interpretation. A maximum likelihood factor extraction procedure was also used to observe the stability of the components identified in the principle component analysis. This second technique resulted in the delineation of identical factors with similar loadings as the principle components analysis, reflecting stability in the results.

The component loadings in the rotated component matrix were examined to understand and interpret the nature of the seven components. To assist in the interpretation, and reduce subjectivity and the likelihood of non-significant items loading on the components, only items with component loadings of |0.40| and higher were considered for naming the seven components (Stevens, 1992). The researchers utilized a qualitative triangulation methodology (Cohen & Mannion, 1985) with themselves and three nationally recognized experts in volunteer management and administration to name the components identified.

### **Findings/Results**

The researchers identified seven components comprising contemporary volunteer administration (Table 1) based upon respondents' perceptions regarding selected individual volunteer management competencies. They included: Component 1) Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (18 items); Component 2) Volunteer Administrator Professional Development (16 items); Component 3) Volunteer Orientation and Training (16 items); Component 4) Volunteer Program Advocacy (13 items); Component 5) Volunteer Program Maintenance (8 items); Component 6) Volunteer Recognition (9 items); and, Component 7) Volunteer Program Resource Development (9 items). Together, the seven

components accounted for 39.2% of the total variance. (See Table 2, p. 12-13)

### **Conclusions and Implications**

The seven components identified in this study emphasize practically all of the volunteer management competencies identified during the previous 35 years by authors and professional leaders in the field (Figure 1). The four components of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection, Volunteer Orientation and Training, Volunteer Program Maintenance, and Volunteer Recognition address the large majority of volunteer management concepts that have been identified traditionally for volunteer organizations and programs holistically (Boyce, 1971; Wilson, 1976; Navarre, 1989; Brudney, 1990; Penrod, 1991; Fisher & Cole, 1993; Stepputat, 1995; Ellis, 1996; Culp et al., 1998).

The seven components identified in this study also parallel closely the five Core Competencies identified by AVA (1999) in its Certified Volunteer Administrator (CVA) credentialing process. The component of "Volunteer Administrator Professional Development" addresses many of the certification topics included under "Professional Principles." The components of "Volunteer Recruitment and Selection", "Volunteer Orientation and Training", and "Volunteer Recognition" provide more focused detail to the topics included in the certification category of "Human Resources Management." The component of "Volunteer Program Maintenance" includes topics listed under the certification category of "Management", while the component of "Volunteer Program Advocacy" combines topics listed under the certification categories of "Leadership" and "Planning."

However, of the seven components identified, three are relatively new foci of volunteer management and administration and are reflected in only the most current of

published academic literature. However, these three components support strongly AVA's (2004) most current Certified Volunteer Administrator (CVA) credentialing Core Competencies and Content Outline. The component of "Volunteer Administrator Professional Development" and its respective competencies reinforce AVA's focus upon "Professional Development", "Leadership", and "Accountability" while also emphasizing more contemporary competencies that are becoming increasingly critical to volunteer programs, such as self-assessing professional knowledge, skills, and abilities; balancing personal and professional responsibilities; calculating the cost-effectiveness of volunteer programs; and managing personal stress. The component of "Volunteer Program Advocacy" is directly comparable to AVA's "Advocacy" focus while also emphasizing the concept of a shared leadership team for a volunteer program; engaging volunteers to teach other volunteers and paid staff; and educating other paid and volunteer staff regarding program evaluation and its expanded usage. "Volunteer Program Resource Development" identified in this study addresses in much more detail the effective and responsible stewardship of public and private funds used in volunteer programs than is addressed in AVA's "Fund Development", "Budgetary", "Financial Resources", and "Reporting" emphasis areas distributed throughout the CVA Content Outline.

Most importantly, the components identified in this study better reduce and focus the AVA constructs into basic management and administration competencies that are more easily considered and assessed. The authors suggest that while Safrit and Schmiesing's (2004) P.E.P. model remains valid for use in educating new managers of volunteers in the

United States, Canada, and other countries regarding fundamental competencies involved in volunteer administration, the P.E.P. model proposed originally should be modified slightly, still focusing upon the three holistic professional competency domains of Personal Preparation, Volunteer Engagement, and Program Perpetuation (see Table 4). Subsequently, the three domains would encompass seven focused professional topic areas of (1) Personal Preparation: Professional Development; (2) Volunteer Engagement: Volunteer Recruitment and Selection, Volunteer Orientation and Training, Volunteer Recognition, and (3) Program Maintenance; and, Program Perpetuation: Resource Development and Program Advocacy. Ultimately, each domain topic area encompasses specific professional competencies based upon fundamental knowledge, skills and attitudes that are the fundamental foundation of effective contemporary volunteer administration.

The authors suggest that this revised P.E.P. model would serve as a unifying, holistic foundation (based upon empirical data from AVA members internationally) for a unified, consistent basic and continuing professional education, training, and certification curriculum for all managers of volunteers. The revised P.E.P. model provides an easy-to-grasp (and remember!) overall conceptual framework for volunteer administration (i.e., "Personal Preparation", "Volunteer Engagement", and "Program Perpetuation") even for a relatively short tenured manager of volunteers to comprehend as s/he considers the fundamental aspects of the volunteer administration profession. Secondly, the P.E.P. model's more narrow focus upon only seven domain topic areas allows an individual manager of volunteers of any tenure to reflect upon and self-assess their current levels of professional competence in

an manageable number of critical focused aspects of our profession. Ultimately, the 62 individual and unique specific competencies comprising the seven domain topic areas provides for an extremely focused and intense personal assessment of the core knowledge, skills and attitudes that are fundamental to the effective management of volunteers and administration of volunteer programs.

While this study investigated perceptions of AVA members, further research is needed to explore the components identified in this study in greater depth with paid and volunteer managers of volunteers working in specific targeted areas of service (e.g., health services, human services, youth programs) as well as focused contexts (e.g., other nations, identifiable ethnic groups, etc.). Such research would strengthen the P.E.P. model's content and construct validities and link the international profession of volunteer administration to its implementation in specific contexts of volunteer programs delivered by grassroots volunteers. According to Jedlicka (1990), "We as individual citizens operating in [international] development groups and organizations will largely have to create the pathway to a new world on our own. . . To make that change ourselves, we will need a newly educated citizenry that understands its place in global society and will do its duty in helping others" (p. 169).

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**Table 1**

A Summary of Competencies Suggested by Selected publishes Volunteer Management Models

<b>Boyce (1971)</b>	<b>Wilson (1976)</b>	<b>Navarre (1989)</b>	<b>Brudney (1990)</b>	<b>Penrod (1991)</b>	<b>Fisher &amp; Cole (1993)</b>	<b>Stepputat (1995)</b>	<b>Ellis (1996)</b>	<b>Culp et al. (1998)</b>
			Importance of volunteer management		Professional- ism	Education		
Identification Selection	Establishing positive organizational climate Volunteer job descriptions Volunteer motivation, recruitment, interviewing & placement	Volunteer job descriptions Recruiting Screening	Designing & organizing programs Attracting & retaining able volunteers	Locating	Developing volunteer roles Establishing organizational climate Recruiting	Recruitment Screening Placement	Planning Staffing	Generating
Orientation Training		Orienting Training		Orienting	Training & development	Orientation & training	Legal issues	Educating
Recognition						Recognition		
Utilization	Planning Communi- cations	Supervising	Planning & managing volunteer programs	Operating	Supervising	Supervision Record keeping	Volunteer/ employee relationships Team-work Legal Issues	Mobilizing
			Evaluating cost effectiveness				Budgeting & allocating resources	
Evaluation	Evaluating	Evaluating	Improving service quality & impact Encouraging volunteer involvement	Perpetuating	Evaluating	Evaluation Retention Advocacy	Evaluation of impact The dollar value of volunteers	Sustaining

**Table 2**

*Rotated Component Matrix of Selected Volunteer Management Competencies*

Item	Component Loadings							Comm unity
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<u>Factor 1: Volunteer Recruitment and Selection</u>								
Assess needed skills and abilities for specific volunteer positions	.554							.486
Assess organizational climate for readiness of new volunteers	.541							.414
Identify indicators of a successful program	.541							.446
Assess skills/interests of potential volunteers for other positions	.490							.434
Analyze data collected from the evaluation process for volunteers	.487							.438
Conduct targeted recruitment of volunteers	.480							.386
Re-assign volunteers when they are unsuccessful in current positions	.478							.474
Communicate the results of the evaluation with stakeholders	.476							.444
Promote diversity in volunteer recruitment	.476							.346
Match potential volunteers with positions based on skills, abilities, & interests	.475							.508
Assess organizational needs for volunteers	.460							.397
Develop selection process consistent with position responsibilities	.435							.411
Develop a comprehensive evaluation process	.429							.526
Include other stakeholders in the volunteer selection process	.428							.294
Develop individualized plans of action with volunteers.	.420							.256
Utilize principles of adult education in training volunteers	.412							.382
Design recruiting strategies with boards & administrators	.408							.364
Evaluate selection process against best-practices	.407							.334
<u>Factor 2: Volunteer Administrator Professional Development</u>								
Participate in national professional organizations		.679						.534
Read newsletters, list-serves, & professional journals		.629						.501
Pursue sources of professional development		.617						.545
Seek out educational opportunities to enhance professional skills		.599						.466
Assess my professional knowledge, skills, and abilities		.563						.488
Participate in local professional organization		.557						.371
Communicate my professional development needs to supervisors		.478						.406
Attend professional conferences related to volunteer management		.467						.320
Develop a filing system to manage paperwork		.457						.408
Develop a personal philosophy of volunteer management		.448						.332
Calculate the cost-effectiveness of the volunteer program		.427						.444
Develop personal philosophy of volunteer involvement		.426						.354

Item	Component Loadings							Comm unality
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Balance personal and professional responsibilities		.415						.340
Regularly update stakeholders on the results of evaluations		.409						.441
Manage personal stress resulting from professional responsibilities		.402						.329
Develop system for processing paperwork		.402						.300
<b>Factor 3: Volunteer Orientation and Training</b>								
Design training specific to volunteer responsibilities			.627					.484
Communicate orientation & training requirements to volunteers			.613					.479
Conduct on-going training for volunteers			.580					.444
Identify teaching materials for volunteer training			.569					.514
Document volunteer training completed			.557					.506
Develop on-going training for volunteers			.555					.556
Assess & manage risks associated with volunteer positions			.534					.477
Identify objectives for orientation & training			.525					.470
Design orientation program			.520					.418
Conduct performance evaluation of volunteers			.472					.438
Conduct organizational orientation for all new volunteers			.466					.299
Evaluate training/orientation program			.453					.515
Reject potential volunteers not meeting minimum standards/qualifications			.423					.394
Develop policies to manage volunteer risks			.421					.362
Meet legal obligations related to volunteer selection			.416					.406
Conduct individual evaluations of volunteer performance			.414					.393
<b>Factor 4: Volunteer Program Advocacy</b>								
Promote leadership opportunities to potential volunteers				.575				.536
Provide additional leadership opportunities for volunteers				.559				.503
Engage volunteers to teach components of the orientation & training process				.539				.351
Develop on-going training needs assessment for paid staff				.514				.466
Train staff to select volunteers using acceptable procedures				.480				.423
Identify future uses of volunteer program evaluation results				.447				.459
Conduct performance evaluation for those assigned to supervise volunteers				.443				.404
Identify leadership team for the volunteer program				.422				.442
Develop on-going training needs assessment for volunteers				.421				.364
Educate others on how to evaluate components of the volunteer program				.420				.474
Conduct focus groups to identify program needs				.413				.436
Share progress towards goals with current volunteers				.405				.446
Represent volunteer interest in program development				.405				.358

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Item	Component Loadings							Comm unality
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Factor 5: Volunteer Program Maintenance</b>								
Resolve conflicts between volunteers & paid staff					.745			.629
Support paid staff when working with volunteers					.701			.634
Support paid staff as they work with volunteers					.686			.598
Resolve conflicts between volunteers and paid staff					.635			.513
Recognize paid staff for participating & supporting the volunteer program					.610			.441
Educate new paid staff on volunteer management					.608			.553
Train & educate current staff to work with volunteers					.591			.545
Involve paid staff in the recognition of volunteers					.486			.470
<b>Factor 6: Volunteer Recognition</b>								
Identify volunteers who should be recognized						.645		.544
Plan and implement formal volunteer recognition						.615		.431
Implement on-going recognition of volunteers						.549		.459
Determine how volunteers will be recognized						.530		.444
Keep records of those recognized						.520		.305
Support volunteers during challenging situations						.517		.418
Offer a wide range of opportunities for potential volunteers						.485		.402
Offer alternative opportunities to volunteers other than what they apply for						.453		.411
Resolve conflicts between volunteers						.401		.404
<b>Factor 7: Volunteer Program Resource Development</b>								
Identify fundraising needs							.760	.640
Develop fundraising plans							.745	.634
Solicit funds from prospective supporters							.713	.618
Build positive relationships with donors							.556	.426
Establish marketing plan for volunteer recruitment							.516	.427
Develop marketing tools for volunteer recruitment							.471	.425
Utilize a variety of media to recruit volunteers							.459	.326
Implement an on-going recruitment plan							.430	.376
Research market for potential volunteers							.424	.273
Eigenvalues	9.6	9.2	8.9	7.4	7.3	6.5	6.0	
% Trace	17.6	16.8	16.1	13.5	13.2	11.9	10.9	

**Table 3**

*A Comparison of the Selected Volunteer Management Competencies Identified in this Research with Selected Previously Published Volunteer Management Models*

Safrit et al. (2005)	Boyce (1971)	Wilson (1976)	Navarre (1989)	Brudney (1990)	Penrod (1991)	Fisher & Cole (1993)	Stepputat (1995)	Ellis (1996)	Culp et al. (1998)
Professional development				Importance of volunteer management		Professionalism	Education		
Volunteer recruitment & selection	Identification Selection	Establishing positive organizational climate Volunteer job descriptions Volunteer motivation, recruitment, interviewing & placement	Volunteer job descriptions Recruiting Screening	Designing & organizing programs Attracting & retaining able volunteers	Locating	Developing volunteer roles Establishing organizational climate Recruiting	Recruitment Screening Placement	Planning Staffing	Generating
Volunteer orientation & training	Orientation Training		Orienting Training		Orienting	Training & development	Orientation & training	Legal issues	Educating
Volunteer recognition	Recognition						Recognition		
Program maintenance	Utilization	Planning Communications	Supervising	Planning & managing volunteer programs	Operating	Supervising	Supervision Record keeping	Volunteer/employee relationships Team-work Legal Issues	Mobilizing
Resource development				Evaluating cost effectiveness				Budgeting & allocating resources	
Program advocacy	Evaluation	Evaluating	Evaluating	Improving service quality & impact Encouraging volunteer involvement	Perpetuating	Evaluating	Evaluation Retention Advocacy	Evaluation of impact The dollar value of volunteers	Sustaining

**Table 4**

*The P.E.P. (Preparation, Engagement, and Perpetuation) model for contemporary volunteer administration*

<b>Professional Domain</b>	<b>Domain Topic Area(s)</b>	<b>Domain Topic Area Competencies</b>
(Personal) Preparation	Professional Development	Self-assess professional knowledge, skills, and abilities; Communicate professional development needs to supervisors; Participate in local & national professional organizations & conferences; Read newsletters, list-serves, & professional journals; Seek out formal educational opportunities to enhance professional skills; Develop a personal philosophy of volunteer management & involvement; Calculate the cost-effectiveness of volunteer programs; Balance personal and professional responsibilities; Manage personal stress resulting from professional responsibilities; Develop system for processing paperwork & maintaining files; Regularly update stakeholders on the results of evaluations
(Volunteer) Engagement	Volunteer Recruitment and Selection	Assess organizational climate for readiness of new volunteers; Assess organizational needs for volunteers; Assess needed skills and abilities for specific volunteer positions; Develop selection process consistent with position responsibilities; Conduct targeted recruitment of volunteers; Match potential volunteers with positions based on skills, abilities, & interests; Assess skills/interests of potential volunteers for other positions; Re-assign volunteers when they are unsuccessful in current positions; Promote diversity in volunteer recruitment; Include other stakeholders in the volunteer selection process; Design recruiting strategies with boards & administrators; Evaluate selection process against best-practices
	Volunteer Orientation and Training	Identify objectives for orientation & training; Communicate orientation & training requirements to volunteers; Design & conduct on-going orientation & training for volunteers; Design training specific to volunteer responsibilities; Identify teaching materials for volunteer training; Document volunteer training completed; Assess & manage risks associated with volunteer positions; Evaluate training/orientation program; Develop policies to manage volunteer risks
	Volunteer Recognition	Implement on-going recognition of volunteers; Identify volunteers who should be recognized; Determine how volunteers will be recognized; Plan and implement formal volunteer recognition; Keep records of those recognized
	Program Maintenance	Resolve conflicts between volunteers & paid staff; Support paid staff when working with volunteers; Train & educate current staff to work with volunteers; Educate new paid staff on volunteer management; Recognize paid staff for participating & supporting the volunteer program; Involve paid staff in the recognition of volunteers
(Program ) Perpetuation	Resource Development	Identify fundraising needs; Develop fundraising plans; Solicit funds from prospective supporters; Build positive relationships with donors; Research market for potential volunteers; Establish marketing plan & tools for volunteer recruitment; Utilize a variety of media to recruit volunteers; Implement an on-going recruitment plan
	Program Advocacy	Identify a leadership team for the volunteer program; Conduct focus groups to identify program needs; Represent volunteer interest in program



<b>Professional Domain</b>	<b>Domain Topic Area(s)</b>	<b>Domain Topic Area Competencies</b>
		development; Promote & provide additional leadership opportunities to potential volunteers; Engage volunteers to teach components of the orientation & training process; Develop on-going training needs assessment for paid staff; Train staff to select volunteers using acceptable procedures; Identify future uses of volunteer program evaluation results; Conduct performance evaluation for those assigned to supervise volunteers; Develop on-going training needs assessment for volunteers; Educate others on how to evaluate components of the volunteer program; Share progress towards goals with current volunteers

Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted (with updated format editions) from The Journal of Volunteer Administration (1991), pp 15-20.

### **Preventing Burnout: Taking the Stress Out of the Job**

Marcia Kessler, M.S.

#### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this article and of the workshop on this subject presented at the 1989 International Conference on Volunteer Administration is to inform Directors of Volunteers of a new approach to burnout prevention which can directly impact occurrences among themselves and their co-workers. We in volunteer administration are not immune; our burnout rates average 3 1/2 years. This situation, left unchecked, poses a threat to the long term effectiveness of our organizations.*

**(Editor -generated) Key Words:** burnout, volunteer managers

Burnout is taking a toll on an increasing number of people and is one of the most challenging issues confronting organizations today. Traditionally, most approaches to burnout prevention come from an individual perspective that teaches stress reduction, time management, relaxation exercises and various other coping skills. This is the "blame the victim" approach which supports the notion that preventing burnout is purely the responsibility of the individual worker (staff or volunteer). These techniques and strategies are needed and important, but if we stop there, we are looking at only part of the problem and thus only part of the solution. We need to look beyond the individual for the causes of and solutions to burnout.

A newer and wider approach to burnout, supported by the work of social psychologists Christine Maslach and Ayala Pines, is utilized today. This new approach examines the ways in which organizations

contribute to burnout and seeks to bring the organization into partnership with the individual worker in dealing with it, "Rather than indentifying 'bad people' as the cause, we need to be looking at the 'bad situations' in which good people function" (Maslach, 1982).

Research supports the fact that organizational characteristics play a larger role in burnout than individual vulnerabilities (Pines, 1982). While it may be quicker and easier for individual to learn coping techniques, making improvements in the workplace has a far more pervasive and longer lasting impact on burnout rates. It is far more effective to try to change the organization in order to create a less stressful, more productive environment for all. Why not take the stress out of the job?

#### **What is Burnout?**

When asked to define burnout, the response given most often by people is, "I know it when I feel it." Maslach defines

burnout as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among those who do "people work" of some kind. She sees it as a response to the chronic emotional strain of dealing extensively with other people, especially when they are having problems or are in trouble (Maslach, 1982).

Burnout has also been characterized as a withdrawal of energy resulting from the fatigue and frustration brought about by dedication to a job, a cause, a way of life, or even a relationship which ceases to bring the expected rewards. This is being "OVER" -- over-loaded, over-whelmed, over-involved and over-extended by the emotional demands of others. Too much energy is going out, and not enough is coming back in. As a result, there is a breakdown caused over time by daily struggles and / or chronic stress. It is not so much that the situation changes, it is more that one's ability to cope with and tolerate the situation changes.

The definition of burnout spells trouble for volunteer programs and becomes a major contributor to turnover among Directors of Volunteers and volunteers alike. The large amount of "people work" in the field makes burnout a common occupational hazard.

In recognizing burnout, it is important to remember that a certain amount of stress in an organization is healthy and can actually be helpful. A level of stress and pressure can be important factors in creating effectiveness, excitement and achievement. However, there is a line for each person and organization beyond which a challenge becomes a burden, and excitement becomes fear. The key is that one environment is not for everyone and the task for each person and organization is to discover the optimal level.

### **Effects on the Organization**

It is essential that organizations acknowledge their parts in burnout, and there is growing interest among them to better understand and more effectively combat it. This newborn interest comes as the result of realizing that the organization is as affected by burnout as the workers within the organization. Effects of burnout on the organizations, as reported by workshop participants, manifest themselves through low morale, poor performance, high absenteeism, high turnover, accidents, poor relationships and increased health care utilization. These effects directly impact the healthy functioning of an organization by disrupting the continuity of work. This results in on-going staff and volunteer training, high health care and training costs, lost days at work and negative client/consumer care. Consequent reactions from the community can damage the reputation and credibility of the organization itself.

It is easy to see that recognizing burnout as a legitimate organizational problem is in the best interest of all and needs to be dealt with on the level. "Imagine investigating the personality of cucumbers to discover why they had turned into sour pickles without analyzing the vinegar barrel in which they'd been submerged" (Maslach, 1982).

### **Organizational Variables**

Workers are quick to blame themselves for inadequacies rather than looking to features in the organization and the job which promote burnout. Such a focus allows for the possibility that the "Nature of the Job" may precipitate burnout, not just the "Nature of the Person" doing the job (Maslach, 1982). Rather than looking for defective people, one focuses on the situation people are in. What sort of tasks

do they do and why? In what settings do activities take place? What limits or constraints exist? What rules, regulations, standard operating procedures, management styles and levels of support are there?

Four variables in the organizational environment have been identified as important components in promoting or preventing burnout (Pines, 1982).

#### *Psychological Component*

Included are features that can be both emotional and cognitive in nature:

- Emotional  
The worker's sense of significance and self-actualization in the workplace. Are the goals those which workers can relate to? What levels of creativity and initiative are provided? What opportunities for growth are there? What is the worker's sense of acceptance? How does it feel to work there?
- Cognitive  
What is the variety and frequency of overload and is the burden more than the person's ability to handle it? What demands are made on the workers? What is the sense of accomplishment, power and control over the work? Is there a level of boredom?

#### *Physical Component*

Included are fixed features such as space, architectural structure, noise, lighting, crowding, ventilation, phones and privacy.

What amount of flexibility is there to change those features to make them more suited to individual taste, comfort and efficiency?

#### *Social Component*

Included are all of the people coming in direct contact with the individual worker:

- Clients  
The number and severity of their problems.
- Co-workers

The quality of work relationships and personal relationships. The level of support, relief, work share, trust and fun available.

- Volunteers  
The number of volunteers. The intensity of the job, personal and work relationships, emotional needs, support, problems and available resources.
- Supervisor/Administrators  
What is the quality of feedback, support and challenge provided? What resources are available? Level of trust, accessibility and management style?

#### *Organizational Component*

Included bureaucratic hassles like red tape, paperwork, rules, regulations, communication patterns, decision-making, the role of the individual in the organization, back up, autonomy and control of the work.

#### **Organizational assessment**

These organizational variants become the basis for individual worker's assessment of the work environment to see where each experiences stress in the job. Attention can then be focused on the most stressful aspects of the job and the workplace in general. Once those aspects of the job which contribute to burnout are identified, they can be dealt with effectively.

The guiding rule is to "change what you can and support what you can't." A useful strategy at this point is to have workers brainstorm possible remedies to common stressors, including all ideas whether feasible or not. Out of this process many alternatives will arise from which to choose. Creativity, ownership and fun can flourish here. When this process was implemented at the workshop, some of the alternatives generated were: job redesign, improved and/or additional training, role clarification, different patterns of work division, job rotation, support teams,

improved supervisory feedback, more staff, more effective and new involvement of volunteers, sports teams, parties, maximized ratio of staff to clients, feelings meetings, rearranged workspace, flexible leave time, changed organizational policy, redesigned forms, soundproofed space and redesigned phone systems. It is from this list of alternatives that realistic, feasible and affordable remedies can be chosen and then implemented to impact burnout in the organization.

### **Volunteer Program and Burnout**

One advantage to involving volunteers is that their time commitment is usually less than that of staff so they may be less prone to burnout. Volunteers can have a positive effect on staff burnout rates by helping to offset the workload through sharing responsibilities and by taking over during needed “times out”. Volunteers bring to the organization fresh ideas, energy and new perspectives which can revitalize staff. This can counter the danger of staff burnout “rubbing off” on volunteers. Good staff and volunteer relations can be created by this interplay which offers support to both groups.

The downside is that volunteers are just as susceptible to burnout as staff, although it may take them longer to get there. The same features in the organization that promote burnout in staff can have similar effects on volunteers. The enthusiasm and zeal volunteers bring to their work, combined with demands and conditions in the organization, can set volunteers up to experience burnout. Teaching volunteers about burnout—how to set and respect limits and how to say NO—needs to become an integral part of the initial training. Including volunteers in the organizational burnout assessment process is highly recommended.

Directors of volunteers are highly susceptible to burnout because of their unique positions in most organization. Balancing the needs and demands of volunteers along with those of staff can put directors of volunteers in stressful situations which, over time, can contribute to burnout. Working with large groups and a wide variety of people; dealing with negative attitudes about volunteers, sudden resignations, and lack of follow-through; and supporting the emotional needs of their volunteers only scratch the surface of the particular stresses directors of volunteers face every day. A healthy work environment for all is the goal.

### **Prevention Strategy**

Even with the best of efforts from all concerned, most staff and volunteers will feel discouraged from time to time. This is the natural ebb and flow of “people” work. The key to preventing burnout is the response of both the organization and the individual and the timeliness at which it is caught. An ounce of prevention equals a pound of care. The best way to beat burnout is to keep it from happening in the first place. Take action before everyone is feeling burned out.

### *Education*

Reframing burnout prevention as a dual responsibility of the organization and the individual is essential. Conducting educational programs around the issue of burnout will let workers know it is an important area of concern in the organization.

### *Catch Early*

Everyone should learn the first signs of burnout since it is easier to deal with in the earlier stages. Individuals tend to see signs in others before seeing them in themselves,

so good communication can allow workers to help each other. An atmosphere of trust and support which impacts the organization's social and psychological components contributes to concern for others.

#### *Standard Review/Pre-Burnout Check-Ups*

Regular reviews of the work environment are essential for a healthy organization. By identifying aspects of the job most clearly linked with burnout, the organization can institute changes which will impact the job setting and forestall future problems. Pre-burnout checkup with peers and/or supervisors can be especially helpful to maintain an atmosphere of caring, concern, support and attention to burnout. These highlight the importance of the issue in the organization and communicate that it will be directly addressed.

#### *Forewarned of Job Stress*

Letting people know ahead of time of the stressors and emotional demands of a job can allow expectations to match reality. When high ideals, high expectations and reality do not match, burnout becomes more likely. Forewarning workers may help avoid feelings of mistrust, anger, frustration and disillusionment. This is especially necessary when recruiting volunteers for such high intensity job placements as dealing with domestic violence, crisis hotlines, rape, hospice, homelessness, mental illness, chronic illness and child abuse.

#### *Be Prepared*

Know oneself, the organization and the workers. Build in the flexibility to suit the workers at any given time. Conduct yearly assessments. Conduct workshops to teach and/or practice interpersonal skills, communication skills, signs and symptoms

of burnout and discuss individual coping strategies. Remember, it is the chronic, day-to-day emotional stresses that are more associated with burnout than the occasional crises.

#### **Conclusion**

Learning this new approach to burnout was very helpful and enlightening for workshop participants. When asked at the end of the workshop for feedback, some common responses were: "I felt let off the hook, that burnout wasn't all my fault or responsibility." "It opened my eyes to a new way of viewing burnout, one that seems more manageable." "Allows me to look at my organization in a new way." "I can't wait to get home and share these ideas with people, I feel empowered around burnout."

Is burnout inevitable? Some people think so:

"While individual differences may determine how soon one will burn out, how extreme the experience and what the consequences will be, the work environment determines the likelihood that burnout will occur across the board" (Maslach, 1982). Staff--both paid and volunteer--want to join together to maximize the positive and minimize the negative. If unhealthy stress can be taken out of the job from the beginning, the whole experience will be physically and emotionally less stressful. When organizational remedies, along with individual techniques, are well practiced parts of the coping styles for burnout, workers will be better able to handle problems later.

Again, burnout is not a function of "bad" people, it is more the result of the "bad" situations in which good people function. Understanding this concept in relation to burnout will keep workers motivated and alert to ways they can work

together to provide the healthiest environment possible and allow workers in the organization to feel cared for. The more stress removed from the job the better.

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### About the Author

*(At the time this was originally published...)*

Marcia Kessler, President of Marcia Kessler Consulting and Training, Eugene, Oregon, worked extensively in the fields of Volunteer Administration and Crisis Intervention. She was an active program consultant and had presented Volunteer Management workshops at national and international conferences. Since 1987, she had been the primary trainer in Volunteer Administration for the Voluntary Action Center of Eugene. Prior to this, Ms. Kessler administered the volunteer program for Womenspace, an Oregon shelter for victims of domestic violence, and was Director of "Together," the crisis intervention hotline at the Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland. She maintained a private mental health counseling practice, was a graduate of the University of Cincinnati and earned a Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology at the University of Oregon.

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**Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers in Florida:  
Results From a Practitioner Survey**

Jacqueline Flynn and Mary Ann Feldheim

**(Editor-generated) Abstract**

*The authors examine volunteer recruitment and retention practices of nonprofit organizations in Florida. A self-administered questionnaire was sent to the total population of 485 volunteer administrators with a 33% completion rate. Findings suggest that person-to-person volunteer recruitment was most effective, followed by targeted recruitment. Mission-related volunteer roles, volunteer training, volunteer recognition practices, and written volunteer job descriptions were found to be important retention practices employed by the responding nonprofits.*

**(Editor-generated) Key Words:**

volunteer, recruitment, retention, mission, training, recognition, written job descriptions

Professionalization in the field of volunteer administration is growing rapidly. As a result of this trend, specialists in volunteer management by participating in research studies have assisted other volunteer managers in their daily responsibilities (Fisher and Cole, 1993). This paper builds on these works, and advances the profession of volunteer administration by sharing the results of an exploratory study performed in December 201 that examined the volunteer recruitment and retention practices of nonprofit organizations in the state of Florida.

To begin, an overview of the literature on volunteer recruitment and retention will be presented. Then the methodology of the study will be presented. The article concludes with a discussion of the significant findings and the importance of these to the profession of volunteer management.

**Volunteer Recruitment and Retention**

Attracting and retaining valuable volunteers for an organization requires a strategic approach, careful planning, and the ability to tap into, and capitalize on the strengths, skills, and experience of those most willing to commit time and energy to help an organization reach its goals (Walker, 2001).

Establishing a structure for the recruitment and retention of volunteers is a fundamental element in managing a volunteer program (Hansen, 2000), and effective recruitment and retention practices are essential in an organization that utilizes volunteers (Bradner, 1999). Further knowledge in this area can improve the volunteers recruitment and retention practices of volunteers within the field.

**Recruitment**

It is difficult to isolate the topic of recruitment, because its ultimate success is intertwined with the development of high-quality volunteer assignments, and with having an organization prepared to utilize



volunteers' time and talents effectively when they arrive (Stallings, 2001). However, four specific types of recruitment have been identified and discussed in the literature.

The four recruitment methods are warm body recruitment, targeted recruitment, concentric circles and ambient recruitment. First, warm body recruitment seeks to recruit large numbers of volunteers without specific skills, but who will do the activity required by the organization. This has worked well for environmental groups that pick up litter or clean the beaches. Second, targeted recruitment requires a specific skill or talent, and the organization must seek out the limited individuals who have those skills. Third, concentric circles recruitment relies on word-of-mouth from other volunteers in the organization. Satisfied volunteers recruit friends and family to volunteer with the organization. The last type of recruitment is ambient recruitment, which refers to recruiting volunteers within a closed system, such as a corporation or a church congregation. Recruitment is done by the other organization, but the nonprofit must establish and maintain the relationship with the closed system organization (McCurley, 1995).

Recruitment techniques must to be matched to the challenges, complexities, and risks of the job (Bradner, 1999). Before the recruitment campaign is launched, it is beneficial for an organization to develop a strong and compelling mission statement, conduct a needs assessment, create a climate of agency readiness for volunteers, and develop written job descriptions for the volunteer positions (Bradner, 1999). Organizations should also determine why they want volunteers and design valuable work assignment (Ellis, 1994). The mission statement should be used as a baseline from

which goals are created, and strategic objectives are reached (Glasrud, 2001).

An important key to recruitment is understanding why people volunteer and finding ways to meet those needs. Volunteer managers need an understanding of what motivates people to commit their personal resources, emotional energy, and time to volunteering (Meneghetti, 1999). Having insight into the reasons why people volunteer helps the volunteer administrator attempt to fulfill these needs, resulting in a higher volunteer retention rate.

### **Retention**

Retention of the volunteer staff is an important part of guaranteeing the success of a program. Written job descriptions clearly inform the volunteer of duties and organizational expectations, and provide ways to incorporate the unique talents of the people contributing their time (Masaoka, 2001). These job descriptions help to recruit, screen, place, and manage the volunteer workforce (Bradshaw, 1996). Without a quality job description, the chance of an uncompleted job or a possible misunderstanding of the job increases (Piper, 2000).

In addition, the training, education and development of a volunteer workforce can have a remarkable effect on improving the retention rate of volunteers. Volunteer managers must take steps to help their volunteers grow, learn, and build self-esteem to maintain their interests in the program (Bradner, 1999). Training is also important in risk management. Risks to the organization are minimized when volunteers are prepared for the tasks they are assigned to accomplish. (Ott and Nelson, 2001). Simply acknowledging the efforts of the volunteer can also raise the rate of retention. This can be achieved by a smile and a greeting, a thank you note, a phone call, or

through a formal volunteer recognition program (Yoho, 2001).

The literature review found that a limited amount of research has been conducted on volunteer recruitment and retention strategies, and the findings of this study are intended to advance the field.

### **Methodology**

This exploratory study was sponsored by the Burnett Honors College at the University of Central Florida, as an Honor in the Major thesis. Data were collected in the fall of 2001. A self-administered questionnaire was sent to the total population of 485 volunteer administrators of non-profit agencies in the state of Florida, as identified by the GuideStar and Philanthropic Incorporated database. Collection methods included self-administered questionnaires, followed by telephone calls and emails to increase the completion rate to 33% after accounting for undeliverable questionnaires.

The data collected from the surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics, a medium for describing data in a manageable form (Babbie, 1990; Meier and Brudney, 1997). The majority of the data is presented using percentages, with the application of cross tabulations to compare possible relationships between two variables (Parker & Rea, 1997).

### **Findings And Implications**

Attracting and retaining the best volunteers for an organization requires a strategic approach, careful planning, and the ability to tap into and capitalize on the strengths, skills, and experience of those most willing to commit time and energy to help the organization reach its goals (Walker, 2001). Many factors are incorporated into the volunteer recruitment and retention process. Organizations must

deliberately plan to attract and keep the type of volunteers needed to fulfill their mission.

In table 1 types of volunteer recruitment methods used Florida nonprofits are presented. Concentric circles recruitment was used most frequently by 87% of respondents (Always 43% and Sometimes 44%). This finding supports the literature, which indicates that organizations have found person-to-person volunteer recruitment to be very successful (Bradner, 1999).

Targeted recruitment was the second most frequently used recruitment method with 76% of respondents using this method, however only 31% of respondents used this method all of the time. The least frequently used form of recruitment was warm body recruitment with 42% indicating they never used this method. To make this information more meaningful, the data were analyzed to determine the degree to which different organizations used the different recruitment strategies on a consistent basis (Table2).

Here the study found three main areas of interest. First, the utilization of concentric circles when dealing with youth (90%) and elder (80%) services recognizes the importance of referral in building a volunteer base for dealing with vulnerable populations. Second, when direct client contact is less, the utilization of warm body recruitment increases as seen in its higher usage by environmental services (38%). Third, the use of target recruitment predominates in educational services (95%) reflecting the need for a skill base to share knowledge.

In addition, to matching the type of recruitment with the specific needs of the organization, volunteer administrators need to be aware of the reasons people volunteer.

Because people volunteer for a variety of reasons the most successful organizations have abandoned the "sign-up sheet" approach to volunteer recruitment and opted

to practice a more strategically planned method (Walker, 2001). By determining the reasons that induce people to donate their time, talents, and experience, an organization is more likely to sustain an effective volunteer workforce. In Table 3 the reasons for volunteering, as perceived by experienced volunteer administrators, are presented.

For survival, many nonprofit organizations are becoming more business-like and embracing the economic model, which focuses on self-interest. In volunteer management it is important not to lose sight of the value of altruism, which is voluntary, intentional behavior that benefits another. Inherent in altruism is the understanding that this behavior is not motivated by the expectation of external rewards or avoidance of externally produced punishments (Chou, 1998). In this study, volunteer motivation was predominately perceived to be altruistic, with 96% of respondents indicating people volunteered to serve the community, and 89% of the respondents indicating that most people volunteer to make the world a better place. On the other side of the scale, only 12% of respondents felt that people volunteered to appease feelings of guilt.

The responses from the Florida survey are comparable to those obtained by the Peter Drucker Foundation, which found a common reason for volunteering was to make a difference in one's community, one's society, one's own country, and beyond (Drucker, 2001).

Personal satisfaction and altruism are compelling reasons to volunteer, but in most cases, people must be assured of additional benefits before they will commit their personal time and energies to a cause (Walker, 2001). The importance of organizational strategies to enhance the volunteer experience cannot be understated. Four areas of organizational strategies were explored: mission-related roles, volunteer

training, volunteer recognition practices, and written job descriptions.

For volunteers to remain with an organization, they must feel that their work has meaning. Roles that support the mission help communicate the importance of the volunteer to the organization, in Florida 93% of respondents indicated that there was consistency between the mission and the roles of volunteers in achieving that mission.

Training can improve the retention of volunteers by developing knowledgeable and skilled volunteers, while protecting the organization from liability (Bradner, 1999; Ott and Nelson, 2001). Here the findings indicate a significant portion of the respondents (78%) provide training for the volunteers.

Volunteer recognition communicates to volunteers that their work makes a difference to the organization, clients and the community. Even if the work itself provides satisfaction, acknowledgement and recognition are important in meeting the needs of the volunteers, if they are to continue with the organization (Ott and Nelson, 2001; Stepputat, 1999). In Florida 69% of respondents stated that their organization had a volunteer recognition program, which indicates a strong awareness of this aspect of volunteer management.

Job descriptions for volunteers are an important part of volunteer management and the risk management program of any non-profit organization. With a well-written job description, the organization delineates what a volunteer will do and the limits of his or her responsibility. The job description also provides the framework for evaluating the work of the volunteer, protecting the organization from liability, and strengthening and improving communication between the board and management (Piper, 2000; Stepputat, 1999). Having volunteer job descriptions reflects an advanced volunteer program, and in Florida

60% of respondents indicated that their organizations had clear job descriptions for each volunteer position. Based on these findings, volunteer management in Florida's nonprofits is moving toward a great level of management sophistication.

The success of retention strategies in Florida nonprofits was indicated when 92% of the respondents replied that volunteers are content and satisfied with the volunteer experience. Volunteers who feel as if they are making a real difference while learning new skills, making important community contacts, or gaining new experiences in the process will be more likely to continue to volunteer for an organization (Walker, 2001).

When asked if the recruiting practices of the organization were successful, only 73% indicated that they were. This may be indicative of the type of recruitment strategies being utilized, or the transient nature of volunteers for most organizations. There did not appear to be a relationship between the type of recruitment, and the level of success indicated by respondents.

The extensive use of specific recruitment and retention strategies speaks to a growing professionalization of volunteer management in Florida. Yet, it is very interesting to note that only 25% of the respondents were in a position with the title of volunteer administrator, and only 39% of respondents indicated they had received any training in volunteer management. These figures reflect the struggle that volunteer administration faces in many organizations with limited resources.

### **Study Limitations**

The Florida study found a very encouraging picture of volunteer recruitment and retention practices, as indicated by volunteer administrators in nonprofit organizations. There were, however, limitations to the study in the form of a time

constraint, limited access to qualified personnel for completion of the questionnaire, a small budget, and questionnaire design errors. Specifically, the questionnaire design errors include, but are not limited to, the tone used in the responses to the management section questions, and a poor choice of response format. Despite the limitations and constraints, supportive and valuable findings were discovered that assist in understanding the field of volunteer management in the state of Florida.

### **Conclusion**

This study explored the recruitment and retention practices of volunteer administrators in the state of Florida. What emerged from the study were indicators of the professionalization of the field of volunteer management. The first indication of professionalization was found in the use of specific recruitment strategies to meet organizational needs. Identification of an organizational need and the development of a recruitment plan to meet the need reflect, sophistication in volunteer management, such as concentric circle recruitment to serve vulnerable populations.

The second indication of professionalization was found in the high percentages of organizations that use volunteer retention strategies. Strategic thinking is demonstrated when the mission becomes the driving force for organization (Bryson, 1995) and the volunteer program. An altruistic mission that provides a volunteer with opportunities to serve the community is an invaluable recruitment and retention tool, meeting the need of most volunteers to do meaningful work. The high percentage of respondents indicating the use of volunteer training is another sign of professionalism, and a way to demonstrate the importance placed on the work provided by volunteers. A formal recognition

program is another professional tool found in a significant number of Florida nonprofit organizations. Lastly, the fact that 60% of Florida nonprofit organizations have clear job descriptions for each volunteer position is very significant. Job descriptions are the basis for performance evaluations and for risk management programs, which are found in the more professional organizations.

These findings provide a picture of a state where volunteer administration is struggling to provide for the needs of the volunteers and the needs of the organization, despite limitations in volunteer management education (61% without education in volunteer management).

To address the issue of education, universities are increasingly offering courses in nonprofit management. This study is the direct result of a student becoming so excited about volunteer management after taking a course, what an honors thesis was developed. Not only are practitioners focusing on the field, students are seeing volunteer management as a professional opportunity. This study of volunteer management in Florida can provide the field with useful information linking the literature and practice, and it can serve as a guide to future students on how to go from the classroom to the field.

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### About the Authors

*(At the time this was originally published...)*

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Mary Ann Feldhiem has extensive volunteer experience as a direct service health care volunteer, as a board member, as the Director of Volunteers at large hospice, and as the creator of a Hospice Volunteer Training Manual that won recognition from the National Hospice Organization. Currently, she is an assistant professor at the University of Central Florida and the coordinator of the nonprofit management certificate program, where she teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in volunteer management.

**TABLE 1**  
Recruitment Methods

<b>Method of Recruitment</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Never</b>
Warm Body Recruitment	14%	25%	19%	42%
Targeted Recruitment	31%	45%	8%	16%
Concentric Circles Recruitment	43%	44%	4%	9%
Ambient Recruitment	18%	36%	19%	26%

**TABLE 2**  
Recruitment Type “Always” Used by Organization Type

<b>Organization Type</b>	<b>Warm Body</b>	<b>Concentric Circles</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Ambient</b>
<b>Public Service</b>				
Fire Services	13%	94%	50%	31%
Educational Services	6%	88%	95%	50%
Environmental Services	38%	62%	60%	62%
<b>Social Services</b>				
Youth Services	9%	90%	78%	63%
Elder Services	10%	80%	70%	50%
Health Services	27%	91%	64%	72%

N=141

**TABLE 3**

Reason for Volunteering

Rank	Most People Volunteer to...	Agree	Disagree	Neutral/ Don't know
<b>1</b>	<b>Help others by serving the community.</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>
2	Make the world a better place	89%	9%	2%
3	Enjoyment from working with the client population.	85%	12%	3%
4	Socialize with other volunteers.	67%	31%	2%
<b>5</b>	<b>Gain career related experiences.</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>6%</b>
6	Repay benefits received	45%	48%	7%
7	Fulfill a requirement.	43%	48%	10%
8	Enhance prestige.	42%	53%	5%
9	Carry out a religious belief	38%	54%	8%
10	Provide an appeasement to guilt.	12%	76%	12%