

**Leading the Way to Successful Volunteer Involvement**

Betty B. Stallings (with Susan J. Ellis). Philadelphia, PA: Energize, Inc. (223 pages.  
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Reviewed by Harriett C. Edwards, Ed.D.

For volunteer administrators who are familiar with Susan Ellis' *From the Top Down*, this book is essentially the tools, forms and resources to put words into action. Betty Stallings (with Susan Ellis) has focused upon developing an immediately useful compendium of materials to help with everything from hiring the right director of volunteer involvement to dealing with risk management planning.

Stallings begins by focusing upon personal and organizational philosophies of volunteering. Several worksheets and samples are provided to support individuals in the development of philosophy statements and action plans based upon those statements. This is followed by a chapter focusing on the process of planning for volunteer engagement. Stallings provides checklists, action planning worksheets and samples to support executives in these leadership processes.

Chapter three deals with budgeting and financial management in volunteer programs covering everything from developing an initial budget to identification of potential donors and supporters. Her practical approach to managing funds and her tools for idea development make this chapter particularly useful.

Chapters four through seven provide critical tools for supporting the screening and placement of volunteer directors and building a management team that will support volunteers in the organization. In these chapters she covers such topics as staffing models,

position descriptions and titles, recruitment of candidates, interview questions, challenges in building a management team, and building a supportive organizational culture for volunteer involvement. There are also materials to help design systems for effectively partnering volunteers with paid staff. Stallings provides additional materials to help design collaboration strategies to insure that volunteers are integrated throughout the organization in appropriate ways. With multiple worksheets and planning tools, these chapters provide valuable resources ready to be put to work for the organization.

Board engagement in the volunteer process is covered in Chapter eight, where Stallings again provides a plethora of valuable tools for board assessment and for self-assessment by the Executive Director to determine success with board engagement. The final two chapters focus upon managing legal and risk issues and upon evaluation and accountability as critical management components.

In typical Stallings style, the author includes a bibliography of additional resources to add to this collection of incredibly useful and practical tools. For anyone interested in putting the concepts in *From the Top Down* to work in a volunteer-driven organization, Stallings has provided the tools in a thoughtful, organized and most useful publication. She even supports the connection between this new publication and *From the Top Down* by

providing references for each chapter to link the tools and resources to the original text. The only thing that would make this publication more useful would be providing a website or digital version of the worksheets and tools to make them easier for individuals to utilize. Even without the digital support, it is

well worth the investment to add this outstanding resource to your volunteer resource management library – I'm certainly glad that I did!

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### **About the Reviewer**

Harriett C. Edwards, Ed.D. is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in Continuing Volunteer Education in the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family & Consumer Sciences at North Carolina State University. Her research is focused upon episodic volunteerism and teens as volunteers.