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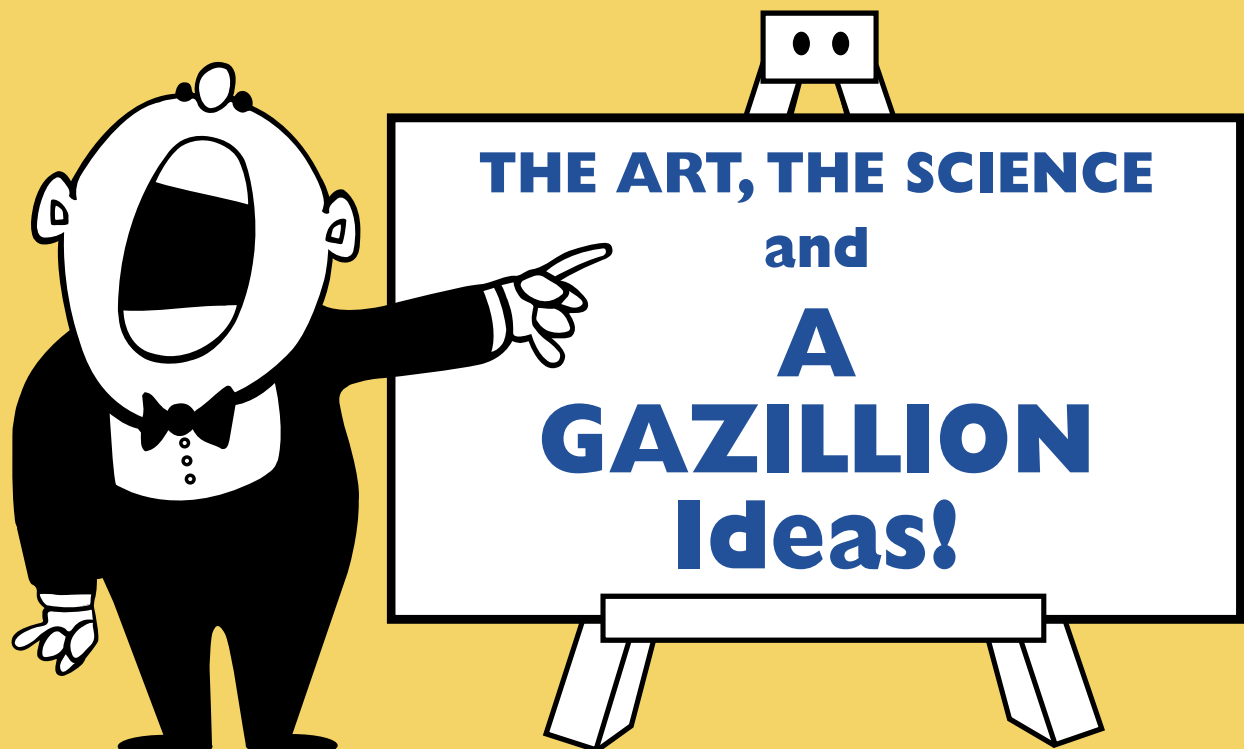
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Recognizing Volunteers & Paid Staff

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by Sue Vineyard

Other books by Author:

Sue has written 25 books, including

- ***Best Practices for Volunteer Programs**
- ***New Competencies for Volunteer Administrators**
- ***Handling Problem Volunteers**
- ***The Great Trainers Guide: How to Train (almost) Anyone to Do (almost) Anything!**
- ***Secrets of Leadership**
- ***How to Take Care of YOU, So You Can Take Care of Others!**
- ***Megatrends in Volunteerism**

Sue is also the Founding Editor of
“GRAPEVINE: the Volunteer Manager’s Newsletter”
Six issues annually. Call 1-800-272-8306.



A Note from the Author:

. . . In 1982, over a long weekend, I wrote a small booklet entitled “Beyond Banquets, Plaques & Pins: Creative Ways to Recognize Volunteers”. In the years since it has remained at the top of the best seller lists in the field of volunteer management. That standing reflects our continuing need to find new, creative ways to recognize and reward the folks who work so hard to achieve our missions more than it does any writing skill of mine.

The principles of good recognition, for both volunteers and paid staff, remain the same today as they did in 1982, but times, tempos and life-patterns changed with the dawn of a new century, requiring a new look at how, why and when we need to recognize others.

Here, therefore, is a new look at an old friend, complete with a modernization demanded by the 2000’s, yet still remaining true to the core principle of recognition: . . . saying “Thank You!”

And in that vein, let me say “Thank you” to Mary and Greg Conners for their editing skills and to Scott Hoffman for creating the cover design for the hard copy version of this book as well as translating its copy into the mysterious world of pdf files.

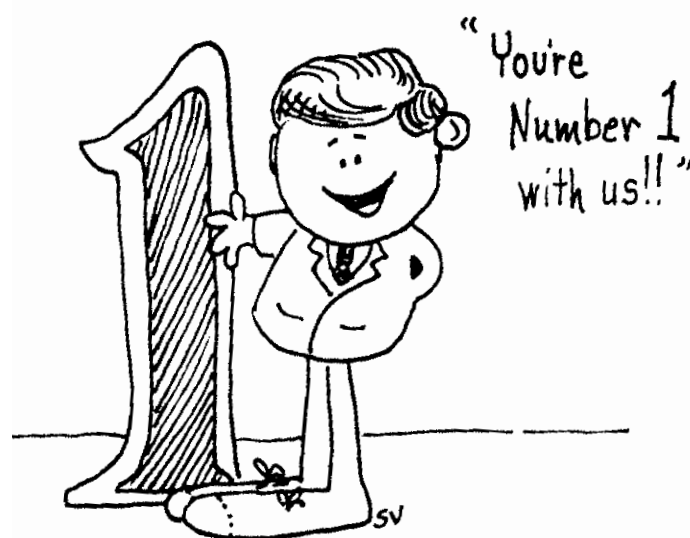
. . . and ***Thank YOU*** for joining me on these pages!

Sue Vineyard



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Introduction

We live in a very verbal age of global information, complete with an expanding vocabulary that can confuse and challenge our ability to communicate. Amidst all the words, however, there are those that remain incredibly powerful in every language:

*“Thank you” “What a great idea!” “Wow!”
“We appreciate you.” “We wish to honor you!”*

Whatever words we choose, however formally or informally we reward others, the intent is the same: to meaningfully recognize the folks that make our missions come to life... those volunteers and paid staffers who give of their time, talent, resources and energies.

As we examine the bridge that takes us from our dreams to their realization, we see that RECOGNITION is the underpinning which supports the components of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and assessing the people and programs under our care.

This leads us to the basic understanding we must have regarding recognition:

Recognition is not simply an event, gift or award. It is an on-going process that must be inherent in all we do to attract, direct, inspire, retain and lead others.

Without that understanding our efforts lack credibility, and without credibility people feel a lack of the respect, empowerment and appreciation they deserve. The result?..they often leave.

This small book offers hundreds of ideas gleaned from 20+ years “on the road”, interacting with hundreds of program leaders who offer creative recognition. It’s true value is, however, a clearer understanding of the art and science of reward, which will allow readers to continue to create new ways to say “thank you”.



Ten Keys in Recognizing Workers

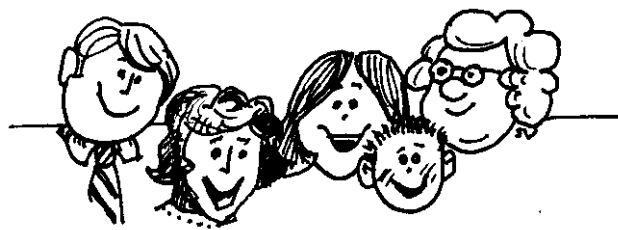
There are ten key principles that help us understand good recognition. Each must be present in effective program management regardless of the number of volunteers and/or paid staff involved, the mission of your efforts or how you make them unique to your program. The ten key principles are:

- #1: Recognition is USER-oriented and is geared to the individual.
- #2: Recognition must be continuous, in subtle as well as overt ways. It must be part of the effective management of your program.
- #3: Recognition must be sincere and honest.
- #4: Recognition must be timely.
- #5: Recognition must understand human motivation.
- #6: Recognition must understand the changing world surrounding volunteers and staff.



- #7: Recognition must embrace diversity.
- #8: Recognition must be shared with others who are important to those being honored.
- #9: Recognition must be creative, not rote or stale, while still respecting traditions.
- #10: Recognition must be an integral part of the organizational climate of the program and agency.

In the final analysis, recognition must be evident in all aspects of managing others and directing them toward the attainment of your mission and specific goals.



#1: Recognition is USER-oriented.

I have sat through too many volunteer recognition banquets where a Board member or too-detached CEO basically thanked everyone before him with vague phrases that added up to “whoever you are, whatever you did, thanksalot.”

In understanding effective recognition, realize that vague turns people off, specific turns people on!

There is an enormous difference between “Thanks for all you do, Paul” and “Paul, we want to publicly thank you for driving over 78 cancer victims to and from their therapy appointments this year. You have helped each of them in their fight for life. Thank you on their behalf and ours.”

Be specific in thanking folks. Document what they do throughout the year. Stop them in the hall and mention a recent effort. Put a note about a specific effort in your newsletters. Ask the CEO or a Board member to drop the person a note...give them the facts so THEY can be specific in their communiqué.

#2: Recognition Must Come Continuously and Be Seen as a Critical Component of Management.

Having a banquet at the end of the year does not constitute a “Recognition Program” for your paid or non-paid staff.

Recognition must be an attitude that permeates the entire planning and implementation efforts through-out the year. It is far more than pins, plaques and certificates, although they are typically part of an overall recognition effort.

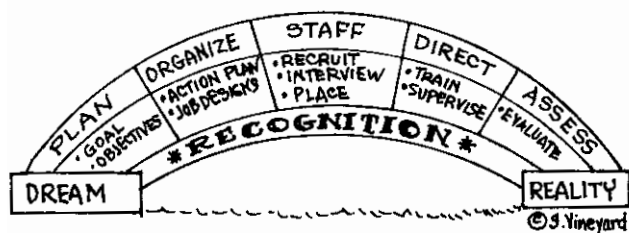
Recognition comes through calling people by their name, offering a welcome and smile when they come to work, having a place for them to call their own that often gives them a space to hang their coat, store their purse, have a cup of coffee, etc. Good recognition

finds ways to constantly say, “You are valuable and we care about you.”

This may mean that you make sure that volunteers and staff have a convenient and safe place to park their car, access the building and work unencumbered. It will mean that you have clear job designs, realistic goals, good training that equips people for success, fair evaluation, and helpful supervision.

Keep a record of how and when you or others specifically recognize each of your workers. If your plate is already too full, delegate this responsibility to others, so that you can quickly scan your records to insure that individuals do not “fall between the cracks” or become overlooked throughout the year. Nothing will drive a volunteer (or staff person) away more quickly than having their efforts ignored!

Recognition is often more informal than formal, and you may wish to look over the informal recognition ideas listed in the sections at the back of this booklet. Add your own, unique ways to say “thank you” continually!



To truly integrate recognition throughout your whole organization, it must be seen as an essential component of all of the functions of management.

For years I have used the image of an arched bridge to demonstrate the functions and components of good management, which takes us from our dreams to the reality of those dreams.

In it, I have shown recognition as the underpinning and support of each of the five management functions . . . Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Supervising and Evaluating. I placed it there when devising this visual to underscore my belief that it must be part of everything we do.

It is critical to understand that you reward people when you:

- State your mission clearly.
- Relate all activities to the mission.
- Set realistic goals.
- Speak plainly when listing objectives.
- Make objectives specific, measurable, achievable and compatible with the mission.
- Create specific plans of action for each objective.
- Write clear job designs, telling candidates the specifics of the job such as time demands, training, supervision, evaluation, compensation, support, title, parameters, history, etc.
- Place people in jobs that match their skill-level and experiences as well as their needs and motivations.
- Train them for success.
- Supervise them effectively, empowering them to accomplish set goals.
- Evaluate their work (not them) fairly and specifically.
- Avoid “negative you” statements that will feel like personal attacks.
- Keep people informed as to what is going on.
- Give them the authority that will match their responsibility.
- Involve them in decisions which impact them.

and of course...

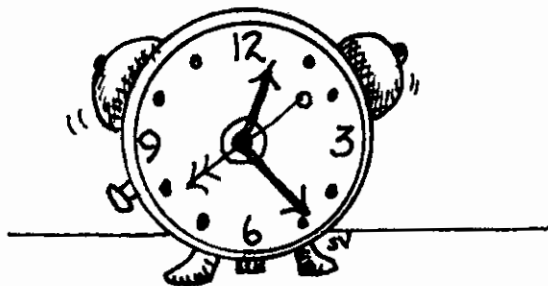
. . . Recognize and reward them appropriately.

#3: Recognition Must Be Sincere & Honest.

Nothing is more insulting than insincere thanks. It is critical that when you thank someone for their work, you do so because it is deserved and truly appreciated. Keeping this in mind will help you avoid the pit-fall of giving dishonest praise.

Mature, stable (note the caveat!) folks know when they deserve praise and when they don't. Piling on slippy, insincere and even dishonest praise that credits people improperly, typically turns them off as they are left with feelings of inadequacy and mistrust of the “praiser.” It also is a turn off to those around them who see folks who did not earn such recognition getting it anyway.

Keep in mind that we are in a highly competitive business and that volunteer opportunities abound. Good recognition is a critical part of retention of volunteers, and thus avoiding insincere rewards becomes an investment in program stability.



#4: Recognition Must Be Timely.

Saying thank you to volunteers or staff at a June banquet for something they did in September of the previous year is very hollow if their efforts were never openly appreciated at the time.

The closer to an effort you offer praise or reward, the more meaningful it becomes. Without such timeliness, volunteers and staff can truly wonder if their efforts are being noted.

Create a master calendar that shows specific efforts and note as they are planned and executed, who does what. This will give you the information you need to say thank you specifically as people contribute to the effort. (Keep in mind that when I say, “you”, I mean a “managerial YOU”, defined as an effort you may delegate to others rather than doing yourself. Be careful in such delegation, however, to avoid never offering thanks to folks, as praise from a leader is almost always very meaningful.)

#5: Recognition Must Understand Motivation.

It cannot come as a surprise that as individuals we all have different things that turn us “on” or “off.” What one of us might find meaningful another sloughs off as irrelevant. Why? Several behavioral experts offer us clues to understanding these variances. Let’s put on our student beanies and see what we can learn from their studies and conclusions.

A word of warning before we look at each: People are unique and change regularly. “Branding” anyone as one or the other designation may be hazardous to the health of your program. The newcomer in a town may start out as someone hungry for new relationships, but after a year of making many friends, may move on to deeper needs for achievement. Folks who have needs for security may evolve to needs for esteem or ways to use their God-given gifts. Be careful, however, as we can never know everything that motivates others. People give us CLUES as to their motivations. We are only an expert on ourselves, and even THAT comes into question occasionally!

The McClelland Motivational Classifications:

David McClelland gives us three distinct categories of motivation that he believed all of us share in different proportion: Achievement, Affiliation and Power (or as I prefer to call it: “Empowerment.”)

All of us have all three motivations within us, but in different aspects of our lives, one is more dominant than the other two. Knowing the characteristics of each helps us find appropriate recognition as well as placement, interaction and supervision avenues.

Achievers are motivated by goal attainment and measurable results. They need to have a clear mission and direction in how to achieve it. They love to solve problems that clear the path toward success, which can be documented for their own record or as an example to others.

They are excellent fund raisers, event chairs, recruiters, record keepers, project managers, system designers, etc. They appreciate documented recognition, such as letters to their personnel file at work or other groups to which they belong, showing specific numbers or results.

They like plaques and awards which detail specific efforts and their involvement. Older volunteers often like uniforms or some visible sign of their status as well as titles and badges which show the number of years in service.

They love making lists and checking off items. They can work alone or with others, but always keep their eye on the end result and goal, measuring their



progress as they go. They like to be supervised by people who are organized and can check their work to make sure it's "on target."

In the negative, they can become obsessed with the goal and sacrifice people's feelings along the way. They can drive affiliators crazy by running meetings that do not allow personal interaction and are bound by fixed, "no-deviation" rules, plans and agenda!



An example of a true Achiever would be the person who takes flying lessons so they can enter (and win!) flying contests.

Affiliators are people who measure success and make decisions based on relationships. They are motivated by interaction with others and tend to choose jobs based on how much they will be able to work directly with people, either strangers they wish to know better (such as clients) or significant others whose company they most enjoy.

Affiliators love to work on committees and really do not like isolated assignments that the Achiever might adore. They are excellent greeters at church, recruiters who make direct appeals to others, social event planners, client advocates, hands-on workers with clients or families, docents, etc..

They most appreciate supervisors who will allow a personal relationship, remembering birthdays, names of children or grandchildren, hobbies, etc. and who can be counted on to keep confidences.

In the negative, Affiliators will sacrifice stated goals so that people "feel good" and are "happy." Such a stance can drive achievers up the wall, so be careful in how you design work groups.

They appreciate recognition which allows others to see what they have done and/or allows them to be with others at recognition times such as banquets. Affiliators love letters of thanks and praise from clients and their families. They tend to like uniforms that

designate their affiliation with the program, especially if they are above 50. (Younger volunteers or staff are not quite as enamored with uniforms.)

They appreciate letters to their significant others, such as parents, spouse, children or members of other groups to which they belong, which detail how they have helped clients. Can you imagine how a parent or grandparent must feel when a letter comes from a program executive extolling the good works of their teenager? Not only does the teenager feel good about their efforts, but the parents have real bragging rights! The same principle applies when you send a letter to a house of faith to which your adult volunteer or staff worker belongs. It's "feel good" all around, and especially meaningful to Affiliators.

These are the folks who take flying lessons so they can take friends for a ride!



Empowerers are those volunteers or paid staff folks who are most motivated by having assignments that allow them to have an impact or make a difference. They love to influence others and are therefore, great recruiters, publicity managers, project leaders, organizational officers, etc.

They are often excellent event chairs as they will tend to the goals as well as the feelings of those they lead. They seem to understand that it takes good organization (goals, measurement, plans, etc.) AND happy people to achieve effective results.

They can work alone or with others, as long as they see that they are making a difference. They appreciate recognition which "uses" them as leverage to tell the story of the organization or highlight the plight and needs of those the program serves.

In this vein, they tolerate banquets to which the press is invited so that any awards given them can be part of a story which tells the public about the group and its

mission. They enjoy public speaking, writing news articles and even going one-on-one with others to overcome resistance to efforts which would benefit their agency or clients. They are rather self-assured and as such, can cower Affiliators who just want to feel good and have hugs all around. They can also frighten Achievers who are never quite sure they are “on task” because they devise innovative and uncharted ways to accomplish goals.

They believe in empowering others so that they carry out the work assignment, and as such are excellent trainers, coaches, motivators and “cheerleaders.”

In the negative, they can desire personal rather than social power which is defined as empowerment of others. If they have a hidden agenda of being “King of the Hill” or not-so-benevolent Dictators, you will have your hands full keeping them under control.

Positive Empowerers appreciate supervisors who are available on-call rather than ones who check on them constantly. They love assignments that others think are impossible, want clear guidelines and information that they can use as they work, and then basically want to be left to their own devices.

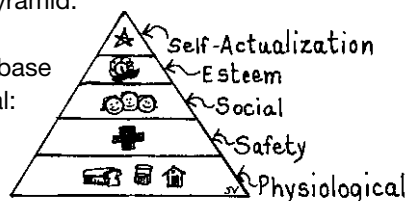
As pilots, they take flying lessons so they can teach others to fly or excite folks about the history or possibilities of flight!



Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

In addition to understanding motivations, we have to have at least a rudimentary acquaintance with the needs people bring to their work, either volunteer or paid. In this arena, the most widely-read scientist is Abraham Maslow, PhD., whose theory can be visualized using a pyramid.

In this pyramid, the base need is Physiological: food, water, air, etc.



Next, climbing the pyramid, we find Safety: being free from fear; next we encounter needs that are Social and allow us interaction with others. The next step up our pyramid is Esteem, the need to be appreciated and at the very top, we find Self-Actualization, the need to use our gifts and be all that we can be as the Army television ad says.

If all this seems a bit too academic for a quick study on recognizing volunteers and paid staff, we need to realize that Dr. Maslow has a lot to tell us. To me, the most important learning I gleaned from his work was that:

Unmet needs motivate us to action; met needs do not. Translation: When your most motivated self-actualizer suddenly becomes sluggish and ineffective, it typically means a lower level of need has taken over, such as a health crisis (physiological) or the prospect of losing a paid job elsewhere (safety) or a possible divorce (esteem and relational aka: social).

In another example, you may have kept a volunteer in a job that allows them to meet others due to their initial need for socialization, yet suddenly they do not seem interested or effective. It is likely that their social calendar is filled to over-flowing and they should be assigned work that might satisfy their newer need for esteem or self-actualization.

Maslow can help us understand our workers, not only allowing us to place them more appropriately, but also to reward them effectively. It must be obvious that people with strong Esteem needs will be most receptive to recognition which offers them prestige and visible signs of their success; Social need folks want recognition which allows them interaction and acclaim involving significant others, etc.

You can even tap into volunteers with Physiological needs by offering them cafeteria privileges!

The Theory of Significance

On an entirely different level, we have some wisdom which comes from a Dr. Inamura of Japan:

His Theory of Significance comes from his work as a Suicideologist. It documents the fact that when people commit suicide, it is often because they feel they are no longer “significant” (the artist can’t paint, the writer can’t write, the photographer can’t see, etc.).

This translates at a less drastic level to what I call the “Founder syndrome.” I have labeled it as such because I have been asked to help so many groups experiencing angst and DE-motivation. Most frequently, I have found that the core problem was a Founder who feels their control over the group is fading. Their unhealthy response to such fading is to try to impose stronger, dictatorial control, get rid of those who defy or challenge their authority or simply “make trouble” all around.

If this definition just set off bells in your head, you probably have run into such a person. They once had power and control and typically adoration from followers because of the agency, effort, program or event they founded. Now others are challenging them through change, competition or the drawing away of followers.

Why mention all this in a booklet about reward and recognition? Because I want you to be prepared if you run into someone in your program who fits this category. If you do, understand that to help them accept changes they feel threaten their significance, you may have to devise very public ways to recognize their contributions.

Such recognition must be deserved, appropriate and heartfelt as well as specific to the significance they hold so dear. If a founder of a holiday musical program is causing problems because a new whipper-snapper of a musical director wants to change the public event from her traditional Bach program to Jerome Kern and the Beatles, you might consider re-naming the event in the founder’s name, thus giving perpetual recognition for her wonderful effort to establish the holiday event.

The Theory of Expectation

The Theory of Significance can be a valuable piece of knowledge in your hands as you consider recognition. Another wonderful understanding can come when we look at Victor Vroom’s Theory of Expectation. In this theory Vroom tells us that when reality does not live up to expectation, people will feel dis-trustful, uneasy and let down.

The basic learning is: “Never promise what you can’t deliver.” It is part of the broader picture that has recognition as a key part of basic management of volunteers and paid staff, as it demands that you

recruit, place, train and supervise people honestly and forthrightly. Good recognition means that you never deceive recruits in enlisting their help; you never “leave parts out” of their job description for fear that they might not accept the assignment; and you never withhold information as you supervise or train them for their work.

Good recognition is far more than plaques, pins and banquets....it is an integral part of good management!

The Motivational-Hygiene Theory

There is one last piece of information that might be helpful to you in understanding motivation and what turns people on or off. Frederick Herzberg gave us his Motivational-Hygiene Theory which says that when we provide for specific needs of workers we tend to have folks stay around longer and with greater feelings of satisfaction.

Herzberg’s theory says that people are motivated when you provide them opportunities for:

1. Achievement
2. Recognition
3. Challenging work
4. Increased responsibility
5. Growth & development

In addition to these factors, Herzberg notes that there are also “Hygiene” issues which come into play when dealing with volunteers or paid staff. They include policies, administration, supervision, working conditions, rewards, status, security and interpersonal relations.

Interestingly enough, when these factors are present and positive, workers don’t pay much attention to them. If, however, they are ABSENT, they DE-motivate, often causing folks to leave for more satisfying work elsewhere.

Rewards, therefore, can come in the presence of a place to park, to hang up a coat, a comfortable climate, clear policies, fair supervision, appreciation for work done, a safe place in which to work, etc.

#6: Recognition Must Understand the Changing World Around It.

No volunteer program lives within a vacuum. It is shaped, influenced and often molded by the world in

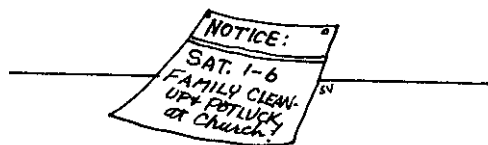
which it resides. Its clients, services, volunteers, paid staff and efforts are subject to its ups and downs, its variables and changes.

The world of volunteerism itself is a changing kaleidoscope. Where once volunteers were considered to be white, female, non-working moms willing to give 40 hours a week to the church or organization, we now find such a description to be rare for those who volunteer for our agencies.

In our new century, the Gallup Poll on Volunteering & Giving produced every two years by Independent Sector of Washington, DC, gives us a far more accurate picture of who volunteers. The polls consistently tell us that over 50% of American adults volunteer on a regular basis but nearly half are male, a growing number are non-white and very few are non-working.

As our population ages, it offers us more challenges but also an expanding work-force potential as people in their sixties see themselves as “middle aged” rather than old.

More and more families are seeking volunteer opportunities to work together. It affords quality time that everyone can enjoy as well as offering an example to the younger members of helping others.



It is critical for leaders of volunteer programs to look around them and get the facts about the world that most impact their work force. Such information will offer clues as to how best to recognize workers.

In retirement villages around North America many program leaders have identified needs in their volunteer or paid staff to connect to new people and surroundings. In response they have planned social events which can accomplish this.

In suburbia recognition potlucks for the whole family are popular. They are held on weekends and afford families the opportunity to interact in a safe environment while also receiving public recognition in the form of certificates, gifts, etc.

In lower income areas, volunteers often appreciate coupon books which offer practical and effective discounts at grocery stores, movie houses, drug and discount stores, cleaners, auto repair shops and even health clinics. Volunteer program managers who work within a site which can offer free meals, transportation, used clothing, education, skill-building, etc., find that allowing volunteers to tap into these benefits have built-in rewards to offer! Know your community, let IT suggest great ideas!

#7: Recognition Must Embrace Volunteer Diversity

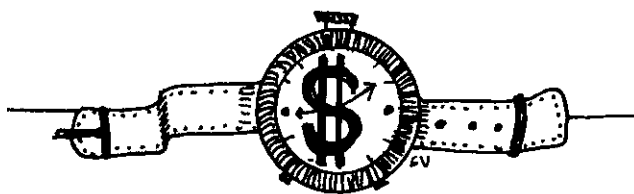
In examining the trends that surround your program, also consider the variables in the patterns and sources of volunteering which are becoming more the norm as time goes on.

The Polly Do-Gooder of old- white, female, suburban, affluent, non-working, highly educated- is a rarity. Today every category you can think of is present in volunteering. The wonderfully rich modern tapestry of individuals, families and groups has brought us a deeper, more effective resource base from which to work, as it brings diverse perspectives, gifts and talents from every corner of our land.

Interestingly enough, no matter where our modern volunteers come from and what they bring with them, they share one major commonality and challenge: TIME.

The greatest impact I have seen on volunteering is the fact that in today's fast-food, hurry-hurry world, TIME & Energy have become the new currency.

People no longer tell you how many miles it is between point A and point B, they tell you how long it takes to travel the distance. They make choices by how much time and/or energy an effort will take. They often choose to do something because it somehow offers them a chance to do multiple things at once (think about how many times you have seen a driver eating lunch while heading down the road to an appointment!)



People talk about “spending” their time, “investing” their energies, extending their “investment” of work, of “donating” themselves.

In response, volunteer program executives are wise to have job opportunities which allow people to “hit and run”.... signing up for projects which are short term or one-of-a-kind.

Such volunteers have always been around, but we have not been good at keeping them coming back for multiple smaller assignments. The reason, I believe, is that we were so focused on recognizing Martha and Martin, who gave 45,000 hours to the program, that we forgot to properly thank Suzie and Sam who gave 20 hours designing the recruitment brochure at their graphic arts business.

Keep in mind that we get more of what we reward and less of what we ignore. We need to find ways to say thank you to our in-and-out, once-in-a-while, unique volunteers as well as our steady-Eddies who show up week in and week out for a lifetime. Quantity is not the only measuring stick to use in rewarding others.

Other variations are emerging in volunteerism, including people wanting assignments which use their expertise, making them specialists rather than the typical generalist who would do anything asked of them. Once again, we need to be creative in finding ways to reward such folks.

It takes many people to make up an effective work force. We have to get better at saying how much we appreciate the diversity in volunteering.

#8: Recognition Must be Shared Openly

Sending letters of appreciation to volunteers and/or paid staff is a fine thing, but not to the exclusion of all, more public, statements of thanks. People, even those who are most shy, really do want others to know that they have made a difference through their work.

As mentioned before, it is helpful to know as much about your workers as possible, as the Affiliators will want their accomplishments touted to those others who mean the most to them. Achievers may want to have their efforts documented and lauded to those in positions of authority above them, and Empowerers

will hope you put their story in the local newspaper or company newsletter so that it might influence others to join your efforts.

Find meaningful ways to say “thank you” in a public way.... at banquets, conventions, through the media, on permanent plaques, through sites or awards named after someone, etc. If you are stumped for new ideas, gather your volunteers and staff around you in an informal meeting and ask for brainstorming to come up with new ways to thank workers.

You will probably get more ideas than you can possibly use, but it will give you a laundry list of creative ways to reward folks. It will also tell you a great deal about how the individuals present like to be thanked! (You’ll want to jot down notes of who suggests what for later reference.)

Remember that you have multiple avenues of public recognition: internally, externally, via media, through other organizations, to families specifically, to schools and houses of faith, through rewards that come via other groups and the community at large, etc.

A tip: The most carefully read printed materials are newsletters to members of a group. Make a list of editors of groups to which your folks belong and tap into these editors’ need for news!

#9: Recognition Must be Creative!

Avoid doing the same thing every year without examining its current effectiveness. One group which was losing volunteers had been holding their year-end recognition luncheon at the same country club, on the last Thursday of May since 1952.

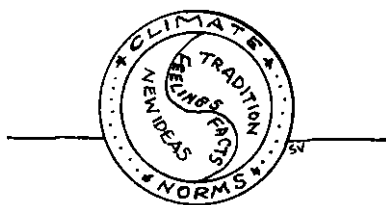
It never dawned on them that most of their volunteers also held down jobs and thus getting off in mid-day to travel to a rather out-of-the-way (and fading) site was not too appealing. Since it was also their only way of thanking volunteers other than giving certificates for those donating over 500 hours in a year, no wonder their numbers were declining!

Be creative! Solicit ideas. Try new things. At the same time, be careful to respect tradition. The group mentioned above switched their banquet to a Saturday afternoon, added a wonderful speaker to entertain

attendees, urged volunteers to bring a family member or dear friend, and found ways to recognize every single volunteer present. Did it make a difference in retention? You bet it did, and also “recruited” new folks who came as a guest and experienced the vitality, camaraderie and needs of clients as expressed through awards given.

#10: Recognition Must be an Integral Part of the Organizational Climate.

The most difficult concept to get across to people as I discussed recognition with them was that it was not an event or gimmick...it was an attitude that had to be present in everything the organization did.



It is critical that recognition, which is simply a way to express appreciation and respect, is apparent in every aspect of the group’s interaction with others, paid or volunteer.

From honest recruiting, to clear job designs, to realistic expectations, effective supervision, training and fair evaluation, we need to constantly monitor how we treat our workers. All of these things are part of a positive organizational climate, also known as “the feel of the workplace.”

Positive climates enhance and enable good work, positive relationships and satisfaction; negative or poor climates inhibit, hinder and very often fail to attain goals as they leave their workers dissatisfied. We cannot thank folks on the one hand while they have to put up with the with-holding of support & information on the other. We cannot expect that a plaque, pin or nice letter from the CEO will offset having to work with Byzantine rules and/or energy-wasting procedures.

If your organizational climate is negative, wastes time and energy, is disrespectful, bigoted, refuses to change, rejects anything never done before, is run by an “elite” group or dictatorial tyrant or has its head in

the sand as to clients’ and volunteers’ changing needs, no amount of praise and reward will overcome its nasty character.

Organizational climate is shaped by the “norms” or unwritten rules that exist there. Timeliness, inclusion, relationships, pace, interaction, information flow, shared responsibility, etc. are part of every program’s life, and the norms that tell people how to behave determine the health of the climate.

How these norms are enforced are also a part of the picture. When people “break the rules” (being late for work for example) how they are “corrected” is critical. Are they openly and angrily chastised, or are they taken aside and privately reminded that people are depending on everyone involved to be on time so that the clients (or cause) can best be served? The former reprimand is very harsh, the latter is gentler.

It must be obvious, therefore, that the climate is greatly influenced by how people are recognized and honored; by what norms determine appreciation, how it is earned and expressed; how fair and widespread it is. How folks “feel” in a program is very often in direct proportion to how they are recognized!

We are in a highly competitive business; that of recruiting and RETAINING volunteers. There are thousands of volunteer opportunities at hand, and getting and keeping folks is a full time job.

Keep in mind that volunteers always have the key to the front door and can depart as quickly as they came. In interviewing exiting volunteers, the only reason that comes close in explaining why a person is having to leave to that of “not enough time” seems to be: “it just didn’t **feel** right.”

Feelings are facts. Life is challenging enough without adding to stress by having to fight your way through an unhealthy, inhibiting or hindering climate. People who want to help a particular cause can probably find another agency addressing it that can offer them a job they can handle AND a healthy climate in which to work.

Conclusion:

Recognition is more than things, it is feelings... of people feeling effective, impactful, and welcomed. Feelings of being appreciated, supported, enabled and empowered. Of being esteemed and respected, encouraged and honored.

In recognizing the volunteers and staff of this new century, we must be creative, thoughtful, observant and constant in our praise and appreciation. We must find new ways all the time to express thanks. In short, we must "catch people being GOOD."

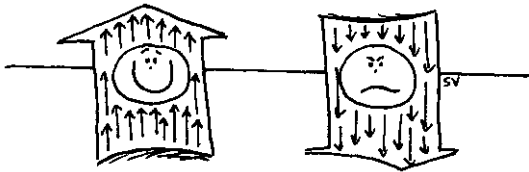
Recognition is more of an art than a science. It is the energy source that allows caring people to make a difference and those of us honored to work with them to say "Thank you. We value you so much."



Some Tips in Recognizing Others

1. See your staff as "one"...some are female, some male; some are white others are Hispanic or Black; some are Volunteers some are Paid..... don't let any of that matter or cause you to have a hidden caste system.
2. Accept differences. If it doesn't matter, DON'T LET IT MATTER! (Big deal, the volunteer who is willing to program your computer has spiked, green hair! What difference does it make if he can teach you how to use the infernal contraption?)
3. Exude friendliness. Everyone around you will pick up on that and reflect it also.
4. Keep a card file with notes on individuals. Include their home town paper, schools attended, birthday, anniversary, important events, kids'/grand kids' names, work, hobbies, etc. Use this information in reaching out to them. A birthday card from you may be more important than the trophy you give them at the end of the year.
5. Constantly gather new ideas for recognition. Let everyone contribute to the wealth of creativity!
6. Never underestimate the value of "thank you"... it is very powerful.
7. Never let people wallow in mistakes. If you see them make one help them correct it ASAP so they do not have to have the embarrassment (and anger) of repeating their mistake.
8. Involve all levels above you in recognizing others. Ask your Board members to assist in personal notes to individuals, for example. It's also a good way to make sure hierarchy is constantly made aware of the hard work being done in the trenches!
9. Examine the ways you recognize others. Make sure it is not "lop-sided" in favor of how YOU like to be thanked. We tend to thank others in the same ways we appreciate most. Vary your rewards to reflect different motivations and needs.
10. NEVER assume anything. Check it out!
11. Never trip over the past. Don't waste energy crying over what was and cannot be now. It taints your recognition and interaction with others.
12. Try new things. If they don't work out well, chalk it up to learning and move on.
13. Never consider recognition just a numbers game. Score-keeping is always dangerous in the extreme and begins to resemble a body count rather than a relationship.
14. Stop looking for the One-size-fits-all reward. It doesn't exist. Have as many tricks in your arsenal of rewards as possible.
15. Reward and motivation impact everything: PR. Planning. Climate. Production. Team Building. Morale. Recruitment. Visibility. Reputation. Client Services. Funding. Support. Creativity. Problem Solving. Leadership Development. Supervision. Retention, etc. It's a powerful tool. Use it WISELY.
16. Understand as much as you can about why a person has volunteered for your program. Such information will give you the most valuable clues as to meaningful recognition for that individual.

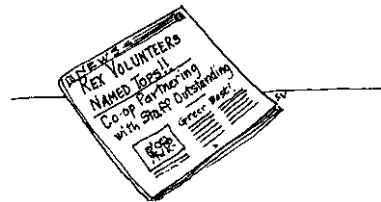
17. Recognition is a process, not an event or thing. It is also an attitude.
18. Keep your eye on the mission of your program. Work it into recognition efforts to make them more meaningful to those involved.
19. People get involved as volunteers for many reasons, but they typically fall into two categories:
 - a: They are attached to the asker.
 - b: They get something they value in return.
20. People want to be involved in decisions that affect them. Don't "hide" facts & plans.
21. Do it NOW!
22. Create a "Buddy List" on your computer. Share tidbits of news on a regular basis. Remember that typically, "what people are not UP on they will be DOWN on."



23. Assign a person or persons to assist you with on-going recognition such as e-mail or written updates, gifts, record keeping, bulletin boards, newsletters, events, awards, etc.
24. Cultivate good relationships with newspaper editors, newsletter editors, local TV producers and other media personnel. Feed them stories that are truly newsworthy, in the format they prefer. Be succinct; remove reasons editors might find to reject your submissions.
25. Compile a list of key organizations in your area which have newsletters. Submit short items highlighting volunteers and staff who belong to the group and general articles that spotlight what your agency or program does to help clients. Good publicity = good recognition = potential "friend-raising."
26. Leave upbeat messages on voice mail of volunteers and staff. Appropriate humor and news

can help workers have a better day: "Mary Jones says everyone should drive carefully for the next six months; her daughter Ann just got her driver's license!" or "Happy times at the Vineyard house. Sue & Wes' son Bob and wife just had twin boys. All is well. Congratulate Nana Sue when you see her floating down the hallway." or "Hats off to Mary Kohl who has spent the last few weeks repainting the mural on the lounge walls. Doesn't it look great?!!"

Recognition for Your Program!!



As important as it is to give public recognition to the people who carry out the work of a program, it is just as important to give public recognition to the program itself.

Keeping the good works of your organization and efforts in the public eye is essential for on-going support, recruitment, friend-raising, development and client-awareness of services available.

Keep the public aware of your good works through:

1. Articles in newspapers on new and on-going work.
2. Media stories of clients served.
3. "Ads" in newspaper for volunteers.
4. Press coverage of recognition events & awards.
5. Letters to key supporters: "Here's what you have made possible" and client stories.
6. Newsletters sent to past supporters and volunteers keeping them in the information loop & connected.
7. A web site for information on happenings, upcoming events, new projects, new volunteers or paid staff assignments, general information on the cause and people or public served, etc.
8. Participation in career day events in local schools and colleges.

9. Giving “symbolic” checks to the CEO of your organizations that represents the dollar value of the volunteer hours given in a year. Have the press there!
10. A speakers’ bureau available for groups’ programs.
11. Information pieces on what you do, who you serve, how to become involved to be used as inserts in monthly bills from stores, utility companies, etc.
12. Participation in local festivals, sidewalk sales, state and county fairs, etc. with an information booth offering information handouts, brochures, pictures of volunteers and clients (if appropriate) at work. Offer sign-up sheets for those interested, then follow up with calls and invitations to visit.
13. Fax-on-demand for volunteer job openings.
14. Ask newspaper and magazine advertisers to give you a small space in their ad for you to do a promo of your program or agency.
15. Get local businesses to “adopt” your program and promote it through their marketing avenues.
16. Ask local colleges or high schools with broadcast capabilities to create video & audio spots (aka: PSAs) to use with local TV and radio stations.
17. Get on local talk shows to tell your story and recruit help.
18. Ask local celebrities to do media promos for you.
19. Ask local movie houses to show video promos on your program before each movie. Show volunteers & staff working with clients served.
20. Have a poster contest in schools to promote your agency and cause and how volunteers help. Spread all posters around your town. Do a press story on the winners and awards. Involve local art teachers so students can have time in class to create the posters and ask teachers to judge them for the contest.
21. Create a phone message information site that lists volunteer job openings. Advertise it widely so folks know where to call if they wish to become involved.

22. Get an OK from local business/company CEOs to give written information on your program to their workers. Ask permission to do a presentation at a break time such as lunch to speak to the workers.

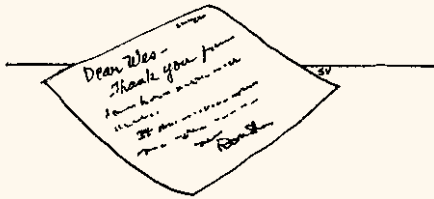


23. Make general information brochures available to local libraries and Chambers of Commerce.
24. Give general information brochures to “Welcome Wagon” hosts who call on newcomers in the area.
25. Provide brochures to civic groups.
26. Identify and contact any individuals or agencies which might refer clients or volunteer to you so that they have continual, updated information to share.
27. If you have other groups in your community which serve the same population as you do, identify distinctions which make you unique, then use these in your informational pieces.
28. Consider creating teaching packets for local schools so students can learn about you and the cause your serve. Remember that those squirmy 5th graders will grow up to volunteer and/or give money and you would like to be one of their fond memories!
29. If you are in the educational segment of human and public services, such as a literacy program, attend school board meetings and be visible; if you are in the health care arena, attend county health board meetings, again for visibility; etc. etc.
30. If you have a Volunteer Center in your area, make sure they are very aware of what you do, volunteers you need, etc. Establish a healthy relationship with them and keep them “up” on what you’re doing. See them as a public recognition avenue and as a fabulous resource for information, education and networking.
31. If there is a local organization of directors of volunteers in your area (often called “DOVIA”) join and participate. It’s a great source of support, ideas, resources and a way for your program to become well known.
32. Create simple inserts with general information etc. for church bulletins, concert programs, etc. Get the community calendar to see what is coming up.

& Now, Those GAZILLION Ideas!

Reward Options for Affiliators:

- Jobs that allow them to interact with others.
- Notes, photos, etc. from clients helped.
- Banquets or social events.
- Awards given in setting of other groups of theirs.
- Letters to family or significant others.
- Story about them in internal newsletter.
- Picture and thanks for xxx on bulletin board.



- Notes from authorities in agency.
- Recognition in presence of loved ones.
- Something named for them.
- Social interaction with potential recruits.
- Interaction with clients.
- Using their name to greet them.
- Hugs, smiles and other appropriate expressions.
- Gifts that reflect hobbies. (Says you know them well.)
- Taking time to listen to what they wish to say.
- One-on-One opportunity (over coffee?) w/ you.
- Evaluation measured in terms of people.
- Praising them to friends.
(It will get back to them.)
- Open house in your department...they are in a receiving line to greet guests/ be honored.
- Skits designed by closest friends & given at social or banquet to highlight their contributions.
- Letters to their personnel file at work, documenting how much they have helped people.
- Penny valentines sent all through the year.

Being involved in decisions that will impact them or the people they work with.

A candy kiss at their work station from you.

"Secret admirer" cards.

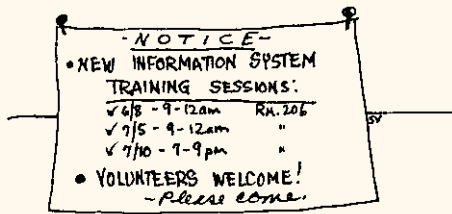
Personalized coffee cup in rest area they use.

Special parking space for "volunteer of month."

Recognition Ideas for Achievers:

- Inclusion in policy or planning decisions.
- Delegation of whole responsibility.
- Plaques, pins, uniforms, etc. Anything visible.
- Letters to work supervisor/personnel file.: Lists specific accomplishments.
- Record of impressive numbers: hours worked, clients helped, funds raised, etc.
- Assignments that can be compared to past efforts.
- Awards given through their other organizations.
- Efforts that can be documented for a resume.
- Assignments that can be measured.
- Awards given in their name and use of their documented contribution as a standard.
- Permission to consult you to check progress.
- Inside information.
- Clearly stated goals and objectives.
- Inclusion in authority circles.
- Impressive title.
- Advancement and promotion.
- Leadership assignments.
- Opportunities to innovate.
- Letter to college or hometown newspaper on specific contributions to effort.
- Training opportunities for skill-building.
- Efforts named for them.
- Not wasting their time.
- Involvement in decisions that impact them.

Articles that document their contributions.. placed in internal newsletters, local newspapers, etc.



- Inclusion in staff meetings to help plan.
- Being a guest at a Board Meeting.
- Being included in Board socials or events.
- Being a representative for the agency to groups.
- Nominations for area-wide volunteer awards.
- Creating and including them in a "wall of fame."
- Doing long range planning.

Recognition Ideas for Empowerers:

- Opportunity to assist in writing books, manuals, history, etc. which will influence others.
- Inclusion in long-range planning.
- Being PR Directors.
- Writing copy for print media.
- Media assignments (TV, radio, etc.)
- Being part of or leading a speakers bureau.



- Having an impressive title.
- Being given awards in front of many people.
- Telling their story in the newspaper geared to influencing others.
- Being recruiters.
- Allowed to represent the agency or program.
- Interaction with higher authorities.

Title that can be used to open doors, impress others.
Being given assignments, parameters and then left to own devices to accomplish it.

An "I'm nearby if you need me" supervisor who does not constantly check on progress.

Letters to family, significant others detailing how they have impacted others.

Telling their story in terms of services offered in internal publications of groups to which they belong. (to influence others)

Assignments that allow them to train or teach.

Awards in their name that highlight impact. They "set the benchmark" for others.

Visible awards...plaques, pins, etc.

Award plaque to any group or company from which they came.

Involvement in policy decisions and plans.

Involvement in implementing change.

Opportunities to strategize.

Letters from clients.

Letters from higher authorities or founder.

Notes from you as supervisor.

Involvement as problem solver.

Impressive title.

Creation of written history or documentation.

Any gift that shows growth since their involvement.

Personalized coffee cups, parking spaces, etc.

Special badge that reflects position.

Recognition for Hospital or Agency Volunteers

Article or mention in newsletter.

Picture and note of thanks on bulletin board.

Birthday, anniversary cards.

Additions to collections they treasure.

Ability to personalize their work space.

Free meals at cafeteria or at least staff discounts.

Specified, convenient parking space.

Coffee cup with name on it.

Opportunity to participate in staff training.

Special area to store coat, purse, umbrella, etc.

Treats in volunteer area (cookies, candy, etc.).

Holiday tree decorated with picture or ornament with names on them.

Involving direct supervisor at work site location in recognizing volunteer.

Button worn by staff: "I love volunteers!"

Button worn by volunteers: "I love staff!"

Sites in hospital named for outstanding volunteers.

Permanent plaque in lobby with names of volunteers.

Award given in honor of person.

Including volunteers in training of new staff or volunteers.

Personal notes from you, CEO, Board members, etc.

Personal notes from clients or client's family.

Pictures from young clients for refrigerator display!

"Volunteer of the Month" designation.

"Volunteer of the Year" designation.

Uniforms.

Banquets, social events and other gatherings.

Feature stories in local newspapers.

Items sent to college, fraternal, organizational, workplace, hometown, etc. newsletters.

Reimbursement for miles driven, expenses, etc.

Discounts in gift shops.

Insurance while on duty.

Suggestion box.

Flowers at volunteer rest area.

Clear job descriptions.

Good training and coaching for assignment.

Supportive supervision.

Timely reward.

Fair evaluation.

Permission to take time off.

Continuing newsletter even after leaving or on hiatus.

Field trips for enlightenment or just fun!

Gifts from local businesses.

Discount coupon books for local businesses and service providers.

Letters of commendation to their work bosses.

Stipends if appropriate.

Information on tax deductible expenses.

Lending library to increase their understanding of services needed, cause targeted, etc.

Notes on their e-mail of encouragement/praise.

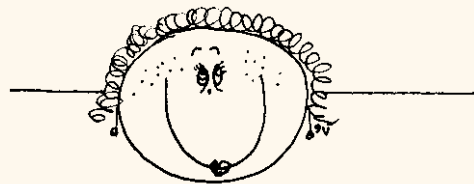
Messages left on their answering machines.

Create a "mascot" or symbol of the hospital or agency and give gifts that show it.

Networking opportunities.

Job recommendations.

Appropriate training to insure safe interaction with clients, patients, etc.



General Recognition Ideas:

(Including Informal Rewards & Humorous Ones!)

Smile when folks come in.

Call volunteers and staff by name.

Keep records of special events coming up in their lives.

Remember birthdays, anniversaries, etc.

Make sure their work environment is safe, clean and as comfortable as possible.

Insure access for handicapped.

Rigorous enforcement of zero-tolerance for bigotry or any form of non-inclusion.

Give banners that proclaim, "I love xxxx Hospital"

Bumper stickers that say, "I Volunteer @ xxxx" or "My Teenager Volunteers @ xxxx"

T-shirts, caps, mugs and other items with the logo or emblem of the site on it.

Job sharing.

At-home or off-site work opportunities.

Casual dress Fridays.

Plan social events: picnics, luncheons, potlucks featuring ethnic-origin dishes, high teas, etc.

Plan parties around holidays: Halloween can include costumes, Christmas can include Santa, etc.

Field trips, "Sock-hops", Theater-owl Night (rent a local theater for a midnight movie), etc.

Offer a Suggestion Box.

Bring treats for staff/volunteer lounges.

Hold a Holiday Party with Santa for workers' grandchildren and children.

If you have a volunteer who can draw caricatures have them draw key folks, frame the drawings and put them on the walls of the rest areas.

Have a volunteer artist draw the entrance to your site. Give prints of the drawing as gifts.

Hold a Variety Show at the end of the year banquet.

Say thank you.

Give unexpected praise.

Respect differences.

Send e-mail notes of thanks.

Put a friendly and/or funny message on your phone answering machine. (Insure humor is appropriate.)

Send faxes to people noting their recent effort.

Place "surprise" notes of thanks at work stations.

Have a special badge for a worker deserving special recognition.

Prepare a "Tantrum Mat" which tells recipients to stand on it & jump up and down when things get too crazy. This is great for those who are in the midst of a really complex effort.

"Name" the coffee pot after different people each week who "pour" themselves into their work.

Buy a large stuffed animal. Put it in different sites around your program when no one is looking.

Hang a sign around its neck with messages such as, "Volunteers BEAR the workload" & "Our staff is DOG-gone Great!"

Send a broadcast phone message (services on the internet offer this) or fax to workers to up-date them on a major event, share news, give special honors, etc.

Hold a contest for the most creative decoration of workspace. Give prizes to everyone.

Ask clients and/or their families to draw pictures or write a note of thanks to give to folks.

Create a booklet of great volunteer stories to be available for everyone to enjoy.

Arrange a group photo of volunteers or staff at their orientation. Identify them as the "Class of Fall 2001" etc.

Each fall, take a group photo of all the volunteers or staff working with them. Create a kind of yearbook. Use photos as gifts.

Have differently colored name tags for new folks.

Encourage innovation.

Write up volunteer & staff contributions and submit to their professional associations.

Set up a volunteer/staff chat room and web page on the internet.

Create a historical display for local festivals, fairs or organizational meetings. Use to educate or recruit others.

Staff with experienced volunteers who can tell the story of the agency and volunteer corps.

Prepare a float for local parades. Have volunteers & staff ride on the float.

Have permanent bulletin boards that feature work by volunteers.

Send Father's and Mother's Day cards.

Sponsor an "Adorable Pet" photo contest.

Have crowns for a "King or Queen for a Day" honors to special volunteers and staff.

Give "time outs" to overworked volunteers; make it OK to take R & R time.

Hold raffles.

Plan a Roast. Be careful the humor does not bite.

Give discounts to any in-house products.

Ask for and post appropriate cartoons.

Take a person to lunch.

When honoring a volunteer, also honor their direct supervisor other than yourself.

Invite volunteers/staff to sit in on a Board meeting.

Always give access to information (other than personnel issues of course).

Give donated tickets to local sporting ventures, plays, events, etc.

Ask for donations from publishers of books on the topic addressed by your agency. Give as gifts.

Write for commendations from White House.

Offer day care for children or elderly.

Ask workers what they need.

Give prompt responses to questions, needs, etc.

Assign whole tasks. Let folks know where they "fit."

Assign work in tandem with others they value.

Notes, gifts or calls from Founder.

Work assignments as a family (or friend) unit.

Controlled use of free-calling phone lines.

Articles to college newspapers on person.

Rewards for attractive & positive work sites.

Reward for recycling suggestions.

Reward for cost-cutting ideas.

Allow workers to bid (low amounts) on equipment or items that your agency plans to discard.

Let them go when they are tired, but keep in touch!

Create & post chart showing \$\$ value of volunteers.

Job opportunity board, for both paid and volunteer openings.

Scholarships to local community college or training.

Expense reimbursement when pre-approved.

Socialization opportunities at times when Seniors and Singles especially feel the most lonely.

Networking information they might need themselves.

Listen to them.

Tapes of job descriptions for visually handicapped.

Audio-enhanced messages for hearing impaired.

Volunteer to write letters of recommendation to colleges & employers for youth and job-seekers.

Offer seasonal job-sharing such as teens & seniors: kids work summer while seniors escape heat.

Rotate jobs to prevent folks burning out.

Create an openly displayed honor roll of volunteers.



Post monthly birthdays for all to see and respond to.

Insure paid staff understand job descriptions of volunteers. Insure they list parameters.

Discover worker's gifts; allow them to use them!

Appropriate, fair evaluation of work, not person.

Fun items in worker rest area: Nerf basketball hoop, cards, small video games, checkers, etc.

Access for volunteers to any fitness equipment for paid workers.

Authority delegated in life with responsibility.

Sensitivity to changes in group dynamics.

Get Well cards.

Tell people they were missed while away.

Put a "smiley face" on all clocks.

Offer flexible work opportunities for working volunteers.

Offer shorter, project-oriented job options.

Keep phone notes of contacts with off-site folks.

Invite off-site volunteers to lunch on-site.

For single parents, any event or effort that allows them to involve their children.

Let folks add their names to any products they produce.

Display graphs that show progress on project.

Decorate their work area on their birthday.

Upgrade their technology skills.

Ask local advertisers to donate some small space in their regular newspaper ads to tell about volunteer's efforts.

Give folks good space and equipment when possible.



Ideas for Those Plugged into the E-World!!

Put all volunteers or staff on a separate "Buddy List" in your e-mail box. Broadcast news weekly to Buddies: give brief high-lights of outstanding achievements, good news about clients, program advances, updates on changes, etc.

Assign an e-savvy person to assist you with on-going recognition efforts via electronic avenues.

Don't add this to your own to-do list unless it gives you great pleasure...it will grow in time demands!

Keep an electronic file, on a spread sheet if possible, of recognition efforts per person so you can have a "quick-glimpse" tally.

Keep your hierarchy apprised of what volunteers are doing via their e-mail, fax etc. Make memos short, to-the-point and meaningful.

Have someone gather e-addresses of local media, major newspapers, etc. of volunteers' work.

Leave up-beat messages on voice mails, telling of accomplishments of individuals or teams.

Leave thank you messages on voice mail of staff and volunteers. Be specific.

Have an e-savvy volunteer design a web page that can be easily updated with stories of what individuals & teams have done.

Have a web page that incorporates photos of volunteers and staff at work.

Create a web page and voice mail box that lists jobs available for volunteers. Have a simple response system for those who want to help.

Ask a local college for broadcast availability via their electronic and print avenues to recruit and recognize volunteers & staff. Telling stories about what folks do in your agency becomes a strong recruiting tool as well as a "staying- prompt" for those who feel appreciated.

Set up a "fax-on-demand" that allows folks to get information on your program and available jobs for volunteers as well as see photos and stories of current volunteers helping clients.

It's recognition and recruitment in one!

Offer training in computers and other electronic wizardry to volunteers and staff. It helps improve their skills and tells them you value them.

Allow volunteers permission to purchase used electronic equipment that your agency wants to get rid of. Sell at a very low price (it's usually worth three cents by the time you are ready to pitch it!) or give it. Yet another way to say, "thank you for what you do."

Creative Ideas of Your OWN*:

*or those you can steal from others!!





Sue Vineyard has written two dozen books for the field of Volunteer management, all with a light touch that is both delightful to read and immediately useful. She brings both wisdom and wit to her readers by sharing what she learned first-hand in managing a corps of 30,000 volunteers as National Director of project Concern in their Walks for Mankind.

Over 20 years, Sue trained up to 10,000 volunteer program managers a year across north America and Europe, sharing practical “how to” information in management, motivation, marketing, wellness, training and her favorite topic: Recognition.

Sue is semi-retired but continues to write, consult and co-edit GRAPEVINE:The Volunteer Manager’s Newsletter, with her business partner of many years, Steve McCurley. She even emerges from her home in Darien, IL and her beloved hideaway in Door County, WI to do an occasional training or two!

Sue is mom to Bill and Bob with wife Nikki and now the burstingly proud Nana to twin grandsons William and Curtis.

She is also the Managing partner of Vineyard-McCurley systems and holds a Bachelor of Education from Western Illinois University, and her CVM (Certified Volunteer Manager) from the University of Colorado Volunteer management program. Honors include: outstanding Young Woman of America, Western illinois University’s Outstanding leader and The association of Volunteer Administration’s Distinguished Service Award.