THE JOURNAL OF
VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

ASSOCIATION FOR ![AVA] VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

The Association for Volunteer Administration, an international membership organization, enhances the competence of its members and strengthens the profession of volunteer resources management. Members include directors of volunteer resources in a wide variety of settings, agency executives, association officers, educators, researchers, consultants, students—anyone who shares a commitment to the effective utilization of volunteers.

Membership in AVA is open to salaried and non-salaried persons in all types of public, non-profit, and for-profit settings who choose to join with AVA to promote and support effective leadership in volunteerism.

AVA is an association run by its members. Active committees include: Professional Credentialing, Ethics, Fund Development, Organizational Relations, Communications, Member Services and Network Development. Members also plan the annual International Conference on Volunteer Administration, a major event held each year in a different city in the United States or Canada. This conference provides participants the opportunity to share common concerns and to focus on issues of importance to professionalism in volunteer administration.

Two major services that AVA provides, both for its members and for the field at large, are a professional credentialing program and an educational endorsement program. Through the process that recognizes leaders of volunteer programs who demonstrate professional performance standards, AVA furthers respect for and appreciation of the profession of volunteer administration. Similarly, AVA educational endorsement is given to those workshops, courses, conferences, and training events that provide opportunities for professional growth in volunteer resource management.

Finally, AVA produces publications including informational newsletters and booklets and *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*.

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EDITORIAL

The articles in this issue offer interesting ideas and opinions for ongoing professional development. Occupational Standards and the AVA Credential programs are formal approaches for building credibility through standardized means. The Ideas That Work explore practical approaches to building teams, organizing collaborations, working with highly skilled volunteers, and dealing with the sudden disappearance of volunteers. The commentaries offer challenges and opinions to stimulate thinking.

The feature article comes from our colleagues in the United Kingdom. It describes research to identify and define professional standards for managers of volunteers. The study identified six key areas of activity for volunteer managers and 39 Units of National Occupational Standards. These units describe the standards of performance volunteer managers should achieve when they are carrying out their work, and the knowledge and skills they need to perform competently. While these standards provide an objective measure of performance, they are also intended to improve performance and enhance the professionalism and the status of volunteer managers.

The next four articles are grouped under the heading of Ideas That Work because they share practical advice for working more effectively with volunteers.

- The first article, *Real World Advice for Creating a Successful Team-Based Volunteer Program,* by Hurst and Bernstein explains the benefits of creating team based volunteer projects and emphasizes the importance of recruiting effective project managers. As the corporate workplace relies more and more on functional teams, volunteer managers are given specific strategies for creating and managing volunteer teams.
- *Religion and Politics,* written by a highly skilled volunteer, discusses how volunteers bring personal biases into an organization. It points out the political teeter-totters that non-profits face. Volunteer administrators will appreciate the insights and advice offered by this hi-tech volunteer.
- Borden and Perkins, in *Volunteers as Essential Members of Community Collaborations,* offer a concise overview of the differences between coordination and collaboration, as well as opinions about the appropriateness of having volunteers represent an organization in each instance. It is interesting to note why the authors do not recommend the use of volunteers in collaborations.
- *The Day All the Volunteers Left* offers insights on the impact of the SARS outbreak for a Toronto hospital's volunteer program. Faced with a sudden quarantine and the removal of all volunteers, the volunteer administrators found themselves scrambling to meet new challenges and planning for a changing future.

The last five articles are commentaries from experts and practitioners in the field, sharing challenges and insights for increasing credibility and recognition for professional administrators of volunteer programs.

- *Paving Paradise,* written by Linda Graff as a follow-up to Suzanne Lawson's article, *The Day All the Volunteers Left,* asks probing questions about lessons learned in the Toronto experience. She offers a provocative plan for driving home the importance of volunteers and for gaining recognition for the work of volunteer program managers.
- Kathy Levine's informative article explains the AVA credentialing process and presents a personal/professional view of the value of this credential.

- *Moving Beyond the Volunteer Management System* offers a historical overview of the systems approach to volunteer management and makes a plea for the need to expand beyond our traditional reliance on skills-based training programs.
- Lucy McGowan, CVA, shares her personal efforts to develop good library resources in volunteer management. She offers an interesting challenge, with practical advice, for professional networks to partner with a local library to develop good professional resources.
- Finally, from down under the manager of Volunteering Canterbury in New Zealand, shares her thoughts on the challenges and joys of managing a volunteer center. Quietly tucked into this article is a testament to the value of volunteer work for skill development (career change) and the personal satisfaction and growth that can come from "soul work" whether paid or unpaid.

Professional development is more than a conference or workshop. The role of the journal is to promote professional development by providing a written forum through which administrators of volunteers share and debate applied research, best practices, and innovative—even controversial—ideas related to volunteerism and the management of volunteer programs in a collegial and professional manner.

Mary V. Merrill, Editor

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:

The Journal of Volunteer Administration will host two research sessions at the International Conference for Volunteer Administration, October 15-18, 2003. Eight researchers from four countries will share an overview of their research and the practical applications for volunteer management. Their studies will appear in future issues of the journal.

ABSTRACTS

Feature

• *A Standards Framework for Managing Volunteers*
   Trevor Boutall, Principal Consultant, The Management Standards Consultancy
   Sarah Pollet, Standards Development Officer, Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation
   In recognition of the important role volunteer managers perform and the need to better support their development, a United Kingdom initiative is underway to develop National Occupational Standards to cover this distinctive role. This paper outlines how the standards have been developed and the vital role they can play in improving performance, professionalism, and the status of volunteer managers.

Ideas That Work

• *Real World Advice for Creating a Successful Team-Based Volunteer Program*
   Aaron Hurst, Founder and President, Taproot Foundation
   Michael Bernstein, former Chairman, Taproot Foundation
   Team-based volunteer programs can deliver large-scale, highly valuable professional services at a relatively low cost. To manage successful team-based volunteer programs, organizations must learn to attract excellent project managers and to implement a few key processes. Organizations that effectively manage this systematic approach typically find that the rewards of a team-based volunteer program easily outweigh the effort involved.

• *Religion and Politics: A Cautionary Tale of a Volunteer and a Technology Upgrade*
   Joe Follansbee, Compel Interactive
   Technology is religion. At least to people in technology. The fervor of a volunteer technologist can set up a not-for-profit for disaster, even if the technology solution moves the organization forward. Not-for-profit leaders needing a technology upgrade can use this cautionary tale as a case study in clear communication of needs and limits to volunteer computer network professionals, database designers, and web developers.

• *Volunteers as Essential Members of Community Collaborations*
   Lynne M. Borden, Ph.D., University of Arizona
   Daniel F. Perkins, Ph.D., Pennsylvania State University
   Community-based organizations are often asked to meet the complex needs within their communities by joining with other organizations to address these issues. As Gray (1989) has noted, this is often a "process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem [issue] can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible" (p. 5). Coming together to address complex problems often requires a great deal of time and commitment on behalf of each organization. Volunteers can be an important link between the home organization and these community-based initiatives. Each organization must carefully consider the level of involvement and the roles and responsibilities of the volunteer before having a volunteer represent the organization.

• *The Day All the Volunteers Left*
   Suzanne Lawson, CVA
   Volunteer administrators in Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children faced an extraordinary challenge during the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak in Toronto. All the volunteers in the hospital were told to go home and to stay home until further notice. They were then confronted with the serious question of how to maintain and motivate volunteers who were no longer able to do what they volunteered to do because they were not allowed to enter the hospital at all. Although very busy providing leadership and support to the screening process, these professionals analyzed the situation day by day, found methods of weekly communication, kept the volunteer leadership engaged, found ways of articulating the increased risks to returning volunteers, and adjusted daily what was planned. Hard decisions were made during the seven weeks the hospital was closed to volunteers that will have an impact on the program for a long time. Lessons have been learned. In a crisis never before experienced, volunteer administrators can go back to basics, mix that with creativity and sensitivity, and keep a program not only afloat but also alive!

Commentaries

- *Paving Paradise ... How My IYV Initiative Failed*
  Linda L. Graff, President and Senior Associate, Linda Graff and Associates Inc.
  The recent withdrawal of all volunteers from hospitals in Toronto in response to SARS reminded me of my efforts to organize a volunteer strike as my personal IYV project. I have come to believe that the only way volunteerism will ever be understood is for it to be withdrawn, if only for a relative instant. So while Suzanne Lawson's article, "The Day All the Volunteers Left" (this volume), about her Volunteer Department's strategies to keep volunteers connected during the withdrawal, I believe we need to hear more from the managers of volunteers in Toronto hospitals about what learnings were gleaned when volunteers were removed from the scene. More to the point, there is an urgent necessity to demonstrate the value of volunteering and its need for infrastructure. Strategic political actions, up to and including a volunteer strike, are called for.

- *A Mark of Excellence: The Value of the CVA Credential*
  Kathy Levine, CPL, CVA
  Until the implementation of AVA's unique CVA (Certified in Volunteer Administration) certification program, our significance, worth, and recognition as volunteer managers across the globe have been decided by individuals who, for the most part, have never fully understood or appreciated our leadership roles and the salaries commensurate with our knowledge of the volunteer management profession. The CVA credential offers us the essential opportunity to position ourselves as performance-based, effective, universal volunteer managers by means of a professional credential that commands solid value and respect from employers, staff, volunteers, clients/consumers, and peers.

- *Moving Beyond the Volunteer Management System*
  Mary V. Merrill, LSW, President, Merrill Associates
  Researchers and practitioners have long recognized that volunteer managers deal with diverse managerial responsibilities, and for many years they have tried to make a simple itemization of the functions that are required to manage volunteer programs. This systems approach has led to a reliance on skills-based educational programs that focus on technical, management-related concepts. Today's rapidly changing work environment requires a new emphasis on higher levels of cognitive learning that focus more on leadership related concepts.

- *Impact of Library Resources on Professional Development in Volunteer Administration*
  Lucy McGowan, CVA
  The mission statement for public libraries addresses "the extension and enhancement of the library's resources, services, and access to information that reflect diverse points of view in accordance with the Library Bill of Rights." There are demands from various diversities, each with their own agenda. What if a coalition of volunteer agencies, acting as the driving forces in their local libraries, were to promote resources on professional development in volunteer administration?

- *Cost/Benefits of Managing a Small Voluntary Organisation*
  Ruth Gardner, Manager of Volunteering Canterbury, New Zealand
  Volunteering is about free will and having a choice. I chose my job as manager of Volunteering Canterbury and I love it, but along the way there have been some challenges.

A Standards Framework for Managing Volunteers

Trevor Boutall and Sarah Pollet

BACKGROUND

"Volunteer managers are key players on the volunteering stage. It is they who recruit, train and support the volunteers, and enable them to deliver myriad services to countless thousands of people. Less tangibly, they can create the environment in which volunteering can flourish and expand."[1]

There are approximately 141,000 registered voluntary and community organisations in the UK, with over 3 million volunteer staff contributing in excess of 90 million hours of time each year[2].

Since the appointment of the first voluntary services organisers and co-ordinators in the early 1960s, the management of volunteers has become increasingly formalised, with over 80% of UK volunteer-involving organisations having a volunteer manager[3].

However, the 1997 National Survey of Volunteering found that 71% of respondents agreed that "things could be better organised," and a third of respondents "sometimes got bored or lost interest."[4] Volunteer managers clearly have the leverage to use the resources of volunteer staff more effectively, to help volunteers meet their individual motivations for volunteering, and to retain the services of volunteers at a time when high levels of employment and government schemes like the New Deal are making it more difficult to recruit and retain volunteers.

The Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation (VSNTO), the organisation responsible for ensuring the availability of appropriate training and qualifications for all those who work in the voluntary sector in the four nations of the UK, identified that three quarters of voluntary organisations needed to improve their management skills[5]. VSNTO has therefore made the development of National Occupational Standards[6] and relevant qualifications for those who manage volunteers one of its three priority areas for development (together with fundraising and trustees).

In January 2002, VSNTO appointed The Management Standards Consultancy to research an occupational and functional map for the recruitment and management of volunteers, and to develop appropriate National Occupational Standards and qualifications (see Figure 1). Using a wide range of research techniques (desk and Internet research, technical working groups, focus groups, structured interviews, and postal/e-mail questionnaires), our first job was to identify the nature of management in the voluntary sector and define the role and functions of volunteer managers.

The Distinctive Nature of Management in the Voluntary Sector

Although the voluntary sector is so diverse, it is possible to make some broad generalisations about what makes the sector distinctive

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Sarah Pollet is the Standards Development officer for VSNTO. VSNTO is responsible for enhancing learning opportunities and skill levels for the half million paid workers and millions of volunteers and trustees who work in the UK voluntary sector. Pollet manages the projects to develop and implement standards for fundraisers, volunteer managers and trustees — tools to help individuals and organisations recognise competent practice and identify development needs as well as provide a common framework for training qualifications, creating clearer pathways into and through these roles. Contact her at sarah.pollet@ncvo-vol.org.uk.
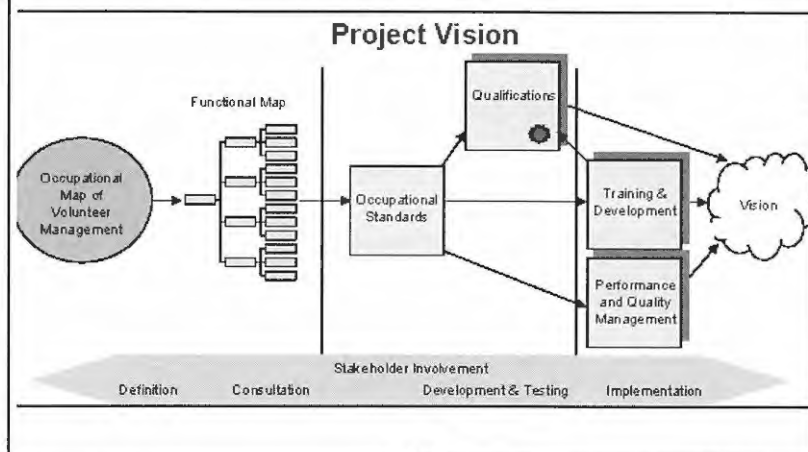
Figure 1:
The Standards Development Process

and provides common and particular challenges to those managing volunteers.

Voluntary organisations are organisations with a very strong sense of purpose. People are working for the organisation primarily because they share its values, believe strongly in its mission, and want to help the organisation to achieve it. External pressures, particularly the conditions associated with contract funding, may sometimes be in conflict with the organisation's values and purpose, and it is a challenge for management to protect its ethical position, or at least to strike a balance, in order to serve its client group without compromising its integrity.

One of the values of voluntary organisations tends to be a profound respect for diversity; volunteers often volunteer their services to the organisation where they are accepted for who they are, and feel comfortable in an environment where unorthodox or idiosyncratic behaviour is accepted without comment. Another value consistently found in voluntary organisations is user-focused service, and a conscious effort to involve users, as well as staff, volunteers, funders, and other stakeholders, in decision-making processes.

People working for voluntary organisations tend to be personally highly motivated to work and claim that they get a high level of job satisfaction. However, in a sector where most workers are volunteers and the others are comparatively low paid, motivation is the key tool used to enable people to perform effectively and deliver results. Managers need

to spend time helping volunteers understand and articulate their motivations, and ensure the work that they are doing meets their expectations. Because there is no contract of employment with volunteers (although there may well be other forms of agreement), they can quickly "vote with their feet" if dissatisfied.

Many voluntary organisations view volunteers as customers with needs to be met. They make conscious efforts to understand volunteers' needs and what they hope to experience or gain from working with the organisation. Volunteer managers then try to find suitable placements, either within their own or other organisations, to meet the volunteers' expectations and make effective use of the skills and competence these voluntary resources can offer. This is significantly different from the recruitment of paid staff for an organisation, where the key priority is to fill a vacancy with a "qualified" applicant, and little thought may be given to the opportunities that may be available for other applicants which are not suited to the advertised post.

Organisations with successful volunteer policies also have systems and practices which take full account of the nature of volunteering. Volunteers may be giving a few hours, days, or weeks of their time to the cause and clients of the organisation. They do not want to spend time on bureaucratic form-filling, training, and meetings unrelated to their purpose for volunteering. However, their credentials do need to be checked (quite rigorously, sometimes, particularly when dealing with vulnerable groups), they do need to be properly inducted into the organisation, its procedures and health and safety requirements, and they do need to be made to feel part of the organisation's decision-making process, not an expendable afterthought. This requires creative thinking to get the right balance and flexible scheduling so that volunteers can be

effectively involved in the decisions affecting the organisation.

Working with volunteers can be more risky than working with paid staff in a number of ways. The same legal and professional safeguards are not in place (apart from health and safety legislation). There is no contract of employment, and so there is limited legal redress in the event of a gross breach of conduct or other misdemeanour by the volunteer, or if the volunteer leaves without notice, seriously jeopardising their clients. Volunteers may not have the same professional qualifications or work to the same professional codes of ethics as their paid colleagues. To minimise the exposure, volunteer managers need to ensure that volunteering agreements, codes of practice, and custom-made disciplinary and grievance procedures are in place.

In the voluntary sector, partnership working, as opposed to competitive activity, is the norm. This is partly a function of the sectors in which voluntary organisations work, (such as health or social care with the need to provide integrated services for clients), partly a funding imperative (not having enough cash to do everything), and partly a result of Government policy promoting partnership working, particularly at local community level.

While there are as many organisational structures as there are organisations in the voluntary sector, it is fair to say that, apart from the very large charities, they have flat structures, i.e. managers have a very broad span of control, a wide variety of responsibilities to meet, and little opportunity for career progression within the same organisation. All these factors provide challenges to volunteer managers, as does the need to work with management committees, most of the members of which will be volunteers themselves, often with a limited grasp of the day-to-day exigencies of delivering services.

THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF VOLUNTEER MANAGERS

Since the first appointment of volunteer co-ordinators in the UK in the 1960s, the role of volunteer management has increased dramatically due to the increase in numbers of volunteers, the greater complexity of the functions volunteers carry out, the heavier demands of legislation, and the greater accountability demanded by project funders. The role now includes formalised recruitment, selection, vetting and induction procedures, appropriate deployment of volunteers to tasks, and the provision of support, training and development and mentoring to volunteers on personal and career matters.

Of the 550,000 employees working for general charities in the UK, approximately 112,000 (20%) are in management positions[7]. With 3 million volunteers this gives a ratio of volunteers to managers of 27:1, but only a proportion of these are volunteer managers. It is not unusual to find that one volunteer manager is responsible for well over 100 volunteers. When the volunteer-involving organisations in the public and private sectors are also taken into account, the number of *paid* volunteer managers in the UK is estimated to be in excess of 100,000. There are no statistics to indicate how many *unpaid* volunteer managers there are, but the number could easily double to nearly a quarter of a million. However, not all of these will adopt the same formal management techniques.

In a small organisation, one person, perhaps a volunteer herself or himself, may run the whole show, getting the funding, recruiting and managing the volunteers, supervising service delivery, and keeping the accounts. As a delegate at one of the focus groups said: "In a small agency, the volunteer manager might do anything from changing the spark plugs on the van to making a lottery bid application, then meeting the Queen…and all in one day." The time that can be spent on formal volunteer management will be minimal.

In a larger organisation, the volunteer manager's role may be more closely defined, and indeed there may be layers of management with voluntary "volunteer leaders" working closely with a small team, reporting to a volunteer manager who is responsible for recruitment, resourcing and rostering, who in turn reports to a regional manager or senior manager with more of a strategic responsibili-

ty for volunteering. Clearer job descriptions and performance management systems become evident as the organisations become larger.

Figure 2 was developed as a means of capturing the variety of roles and responsibilities different volunteer managers have to ensure these were all taken into account when developing the standards.

Figure 2: The Roles or Functions of Volunteer Managers

Volunteering Strategy and Policy

Trustees
Chief Executive
Directors
Volunteering Managers
Volunteer Development Managers

Volunteer Management

Paid Staff Managing Volunteers | Volunteers Managing Other Volunteers

People Leading Small Groups of Volunteers

Volunteers

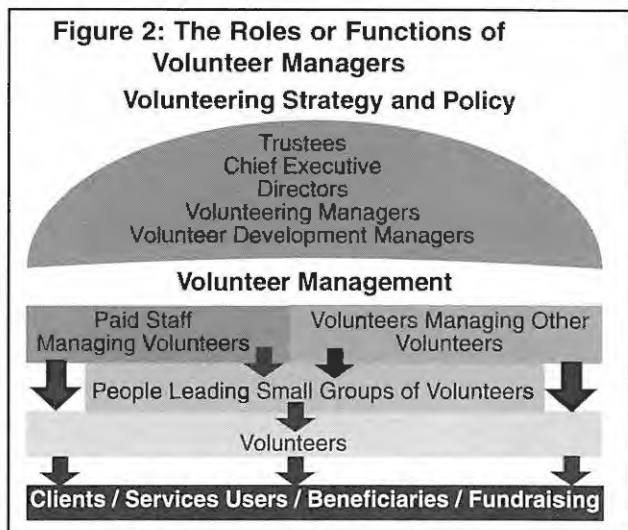Clients / Services Users / Beneficiaries / Fundraising

Figure 2 portrays organisations delivering on their mission — delivering services to clients and other beneficiaries — with the help of volunteers. The volunteer contribution may be co-ordinated by unpaid volunteer leaders, who in turn are managed by paid or unpaid volunteer managers. Alternatively, the volunteers may be managed directly by paid or unpaid volunteer managers. All these activities are referred to as "volunteer management."

However, organisations also have responsibilities for determining volunteering strategy ("Why should we be using volunteers to help deliver our corporate objectives?") and volunteering policy ("How should we be using volunteers?"). In small and medium-sized organisations, these may be carried out by the same individuals who are directly managing volunteers, or they may be carried out by others such as trustees, chief executives, directors, or other senior managers with titles such as Volunteering Manager or Volunteer Development Manager.

Our project covered all individuals, paid or unpaid, who as a routine part of their work

regularly recruit, select, and support volunteers. Individual roles vary significantly and may include strategic and policy making functions as well as service delivery functions.

One respondent to the postal consultation succinctly expressed her experience of different volunteer manager roles: "The role of volunteer co-coordinator/manager varies from organisation to organisation. In [a large national children's charity] I take no part in strategic development as it is a hierarchical culture. However, whilst working in [a smaller women's action group] as a volunteer co-ordinator the opposite was the case. As part of the collective system, I had an equal input into all levels of planning and reviewing through quite formal processes."

In order to tease out of this diversity the recognisable functions of volunteer managers wherever they work, we used the functional analysis methodology. This starts with gaining consensus about the Key Purpose of Volunteer Management, which, after a number of iterations, was agreed as:

To enable volunteers to make their full contribution to the organisation's goals and provide opportunities for them to develop related skills and interests.

To complete the functional analysis, we consistently asked the question: "What has to happen to *enable volunteers to make their full contribution to the organisation's goals and provide opportunities for them to develop related skills and interests?*" This led to the identification of six Key Areas of activity.

Volunteer managers:
A. Develop and evaluate strategies and policies that support volunteering.
B. Promote volunteering.
C. Recruit and induct volunteers.
D. Manage and develop volunteers.
E. Manage yourself, your relationships and your responsibilities.
F. Provide support to volunteering.

For each of these Key Areas, the question was asked: *What has to happen for this outcome to be achieved?* This led to the identification of 39 functions or activities — a "Func-

tional Map" of Managing Volunteers[8] — for which Units of National Occupational Standards would need to be developed.

National Occupational Standards for Managing Volunteers

The National Occupational Standards for Managing Volunteers describe the standards of performance volunteer managers should achieve when they are carrying out their work and the knowledge and skills they need to perform competently.

We developed these National Occupational Standards through focus groups with volunteer managers and their bosses, helping them to articulate what competent performance of each function/activity looks like. With such a diverse sector, we found a rich variety of approaches which we tried to encapsulate within draft Units of National Occupational Standards. These draft Units were piloted by individual managers to test whether they accurately described the performance expected of them and the knowledge and skills required. A technical working group of volunteer managers, trainers, and representatives from umbrella organisations helped us to resolve areas of conflicting feedback from the pilot and develop a standard form of expression for the Units.

Each Unit comprises:
• Unit Title
• Introduction — describing what the unit is about, who it is for, how it relates to

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Figure 3: An Example of a Unit of National Occupational Standards

B1   CHAMPION VOLUNTEERING WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION

Introduction

As a volunteer manager, you may well find that it falls to you to act as the "champion" for volunteering within your organisation. To do this effectively, you need to help key people such as trustees and committee members, managers, and employee representatives understand the role of volunteers and the contribution they can make to achieving your organisation's goals. You also need to help other members of your organisation, particularly staff and other volunteers, understand their responsibility to support volunteers and how they can do this effectively. You may also need to take very practical steps to try to improve your organisation's structures, policies, and practices if these are preventing volunteers from making their full contribution.

To champion volunteering within your organisation, you need to:
• B1.1 Promote volunteering to key people in your organisation
• B1.2 Help members of your organisation support volunteers
• B1.3 Identify and reduce barriers to volunteering in your organisation.

This unit links closely with unit B2 Involve, motivate, and retain volunteers which is about promoting volunteering to the volunteers themselves and with unit B3 Develop relationships with individuals and organisations that can support your volunteering strategy which covers working with external organisations that can support your volunteering work.

This is an optional unit in Volunteer Management NVQs and SVQs at level 4.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

B1.1   Promote volunteering to key people in your organisation

To perform to the standard you need to:
• identify the role of volunteers within your organisation's strategies and plans
• communicate the role of volunteers and the contribution they can make to the organisation's goals to key people in your organisation in ways that gain their understanding, enthusiasm, and support
• identify, quantify, and communicate the contribution that volunteers make to your organisation's goals.

B1.2   Help members of your organisation support volunteers

To perform to the standard you need to:
• help members of your organisation
• understand their attitudes to volunteers and the reasons for these attitudes
• think creatively about how volunteers can make effective contributions
• adopt attitudes that support volunteers in making effective contributions
• communicate clearly to members of your organisation the roles and responsibilities of volunteers and their roles and responsibilities in supporting volunteers
• provide appropriate opportunities for members of your organisation to develop the competences they

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need to support volunteers effectively
- encourage behaviour that helps and discourage behaviour that hinders volunteers in making effective contributions.

B1.3   Identify and reduce barriers to volunteering in your organisation

To perform to the standard you need to:
- monitor the impact of your organisation's structures, policies, and practices on volunteering
- monitor the level of support volunteers receive from members of your organisation
- analyse monitoring information to identify and prioritise any issues that prevent volunteers from making their full contribution
- work with relevant people to identify and recommend improvements to your organisation's structures, policies, or practices or the support volunteers receive to ensure volunteers are able to make their full contribution.

KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING, AND SKILLS

To perform to the standard, you need the following knowledge, understanding, and skills.

Analytical techniques
- how to quantify the contribution volunteers make
- how to assess the impact of policies and practices
- how to analyse information
- how to identify priorities

Communication
- how to communicate complex issues in ways that gain understanding, enthusiasm, and support

Involvement and motivation
- the importance of involving relevant people in activities and how to do so
- methods of encouraging helpful and discouraging unhelpful behaviour, how to select appropriate methods or combinations of methods, and how to use them effectively

Learning and development
- methods of helping people understand their attitudes to volunteers and adopt attitudes that support volunteering and how to select and use appropriate methods
- methods of helping people think creatively about how volunteers can make effective contributions and how to select and use appropriate methods
- the competences people need to be able to work effectively with volunteers
- the range of opportunities for developing competences to work effectively with volunteers and how to select appropriate opportunities

Monitoring and evaluation
- methods of monitoring and evaluating volunteers' contributions to organisational goals and how to select and use appropriate techniques

Organisational context
- your organisation's goals
- your organisation's strategies and plans and the specific roles and contributions of volunteers within them
- key people in your organisation — e.g. trustees and committee members, managers, employee representatives, and others — who can influence and support volunteering
- members of your organisation — e.g. trustees and committee members, managers, staff, volunteers and supporters — who can help volunteers make effective contributions to the organisation's goals
- your organisation's structures, policies, and practices

VOLUNTEERING

- the variety of different roles volunteers can play and the different ways they can contribute to organisational goals
- your organisation's policies and practices relating specifically to volunteering
- the different ways in which organisational structures, policies, and practices can help or hinder volunteers
- the importance of clearly stating people's roles and responsibilities in supporting volunteers and the competences they need and how to do so.

other Units, and where it fits in the quali-
fications framework
- Performance Standards — two or more
  Elements, the main activities within the
  Unit, each with a series of Performance
  Criteria, which show what is required of
  volunteer managers when they are carry-
  ing out the activity
- Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills —
  listing what volunteer managers need to
  know and understand and the skills they
  need to possess to be effective in the Unit.

Figure 3 is an example of a Unit, B1
Champion volunteering within your organi-
sation.

USING THE NATIONAL OCCUPA-
TIONAL STANDARDS

The National Occupational Standards have
now been approved by the Project Steering
Group and will shortly be accredited by the
Department of Education and Skills for use
within the National Qualifications Frame-
work. Work is already underway with the
Institute of Leadership and Management to
award National Vocational Qualifications and
other certificates and diplomas to volunteer
managers who can demonstrate they consis-
tently perform to the standards.

Qualifications provide an objective mea-
sure of volunteer managers' performance, but
they are only one way in which we intend to
use National Occupational Standards to
improve performance, enhance the profes-
sionalism and status of volunteer managers,
and help them meet their key purpose to
enable volunteers to make their full contribu-
tion to the organisation's goals and provide
opportunities for them to develop related
skills and interests. Now that the preparatory
work has been completed, we plan to use the
National Occupational Standards for the
Recruitment and Management of Volunteers
throughout the Human Resource Manage-
ment and Development cycle, as shown in
Figure 4, and as well as to assure quality,
develop organisational culture, and improve
partnership working throughout the volun-
tary sector and in our relationships with the
public and private sectors.

This article discusses work undertaken by

Figure 4: The Uses of National Occupational Standards

(Figure courtesy of the Custodial Care National Training Organisation[9])

The Management Standards Consultancy for
the UK's Voluntary Sector National Training
Organisation during 2002 and 2003. For full
details of this work, refer to *A Standards
Framework for Managing Volunteers: A Report
to the Voluntary Sector National Training
Organisation, The Management Standards
Consultancy, 2002* and *National Occupational
Standards for Managing Volunteers, Voluntary
Sector National Training Organisation, 2003*,
both downloadable from www.voluntarysec-
torskills.org.uk.

ENDNOTES
[1] *Delivering the Goods: The work and future
direction of volunteer management*, Pat Gay,
The National Centre for Volunteering, 2000
[2] *Delivering the Goods: The work and future
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Real-World Advice for Creating a
Successful Team-Based Volunteering Program

Aaron Hurst
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INTRODUCTION

Organizations often rely on individual volunteers to provide a wide variety of services, including event staffing, accounting, and even strategic consulting. Sometimes, however, individual volunteers just are not enough. Some jobs, such as developing a web site, building a donor database, or launching a major marketing campaign, require teams. In the past, organizations seeking help with large jobs had no choice but to hire a professional services company. Today, however, an increasing number of organizations are using *team-based volunteer programs* to deliver an increasing variety of broad, complex services.

As the name implies, a team-based volunteer program organizes a group of skilled professionals into a team. The team is assigned a specific project, and each team member is assigned a specific role. The team is led by an experienced project manager, who uses a project plan to guide the team through the various phases of the project, which may last several months or more.

Team-based volunteer projects can be very attractive to volunteers for numerous reasons. For one thing, they are inherently social. It is well-known that one of the reasons many people volunteer is to meet other people, and team-based volunteer projects are a great way to do this. In addition, team-based volunteer projects offer valuable networking and career development opportunities, as volunteers interact with and learn from other skilled professionals on their team. And finally, team-based volunteer projects help communicate to professionals that their time will be well-spent. Individuals who may be hesitant to volunteer for fear of getting stuck on an ill-defined project that goes on forever will be reassured by the presence of project managers and project plans.

CHALLENGES OF MANAGING A TEAM-BASED VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

While team-based volunteer programs have many merits for both organizations and volunteers, they can be demanding in terms of management. In particular, they require organizations to overcome three key challenges.

The first major challenge involves staffing teams. This entails screening volunteers and assigning them to specific roles. Many organizations may not have the expertise to accurately assess whether volunteers have the right professional credentials and capabilities to fulfill these highly specialized roles. For example, consider an organization that wants to use a volunteer team to build a web site. This organization may likely know that it will need a web designer, a web developer, and a copywriter on the team, but may not realize that it should also have a marketing expert as well as a project manager to coordinate the overall

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The Taproot Foundation, launched in 2001, is redefining volunteering by combining the efficiencies of traditional volunteer matching services with the quality management practices of leading business consulting firms. The result is the ability to assign volunteers to the most appropriate projects based on their skills and to ensure the timely delivery of quality professional services.

effort. Further, the organization may not know how to assess the web developer's technical expertise, or the marketer's experience with interactive technologies. These kinds of oversights or knowledge gaps will often lead to major problems as a team-based volunteer project progresses.

The second major challenge involves defining project scope and requirements. Consider again the organization trying to build a web site, perhaps to communicate its capabilities to clients or its value proposition to donors. It is common for this type of organization to dramatically expand its requirements once a project in underway. For example, the organization might decide midway through the project that it wants to include an events calendar, or a password-protected section of the site. Complex changes such as these can dramatically lengthen project scope, which in turn, can frustrate volunteers. Once this starts to occur, a project will often begin to derail entirely.

The third major challenge involves retaining team members. Organizations must pay special attention to the interactions between team members and must work constantly to ensure that team members cooperate, respect each other, and remain engaged in the project. Organizations must also pay close attention to potential issues, such as sexual harassment or cultural differences, that can occur within a team and affect team member productivity. To prevent these types of problems from causing volunteers to defect, organizations should begin each volunteer project with an orientation session to explain what type of behavior is allowed and what type is not permitted. Also during this session, organizations should explain the escalation path used to resolve all issues and should make sure that volunteers know who to contact in the event of a problem.

LEARNING FROM SUCCESS

While these management challenges may seem daunting, organizations can learn to overcome them successfully by studying the project and team management techniques used by today's leading corporations, particularly those within the professional services

industry (e.g. advertising agencies, law firms, etc.). This exercise will reveal that most successful corporations do two key things. First, they hire excellent project managers and rely on them extensively. Second, they put in place a repeatable project management process and allow project managers to improve that process over time, based on real experience. By emulating these two actions, volunteer program managers can greatly enhance the chances that their team-based volunteer programs will be successful.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

It is essential that organizations find excellent project managers to lead their team-based volunteering projects. Project managers perform a number of critical functions, including:
1. Translating an organization's vision for a project into specific requirements and deliverables that the project team can understand and deliver.
2. Determining what skills a project will require and what number and type of individuals will be needed.
3. Tapping into professional networks to help recruit additional volunteers for an organization.
4. Building a realistic project plan and using that plan to anticipate and avoid cost overruns or time delays well before they occur.
5. Helping an organization circumvent or mitigate the numerous pitfalls, such as volunteer defection, that can derail even well designed professional services projects.

Project managers must have experience managing the type of project they are to lead. Inexperienced project managers generally do not have the necessary technical or subject matter expertise to manage a large-scale professional services project and often underestimate the complexity of the task. If an organization lacks the right kind of project manager, it must seek a project manager from outside the organization.

Ideally, project managers should be hired,

but for organizations with small staffs and small budgets, volunteer project managers are the only realistic option. Volunteer project managers can be found by asking board members for referrals, working with local volunteer centers, approaching local corporations and professional associations, and posting help wanted ads on community web sites. A good example of one such community web site is www.craigslist.org, which is available in 18 major metropolitan areas and allows users to post want ads free of charge. Other good web sites include www.idealist.org and www.volunteermatch.org.

When evaluating project management candidates, some of the key criteria to consider are experience, personality, and cultural fit. Ideally, organizations should select candidates who have at least three years of general project management experience, as well as at least one year of experience managing the specific type of project to be conducted. In terms of personality, optimism, energy, and charisma are essential since project managers will be responsible for motivating the rest of the volunteer team. Lastly, it is important for organizations to ensure that their project managers are good cultural fits. One good way of checking this is to ask candidates to state their expectations for how decisions will get made and how much time all interested individuals will spend on the project. Candidates who disagree with the organization about these issues are not likely to be good cultural fits and should probably be passed over, even if they have the right experience and personality.

IMPLEMENTING THE RIGHT PROCESS

Finding a core group of skilled project managers is a critical step for any organization seeking to establish a team-based volunteer program, but it is equally important for the organization to put in place the right process for project managers to follow. This

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process should consist of the following five major project phases.

1.   Definition — It is crucial for organizations to create at the outset of each team-based volunteering project a list of requirements and desired outcomes. Project managers can aid in this process, but additional organizational involvement (especially at the board level) will always be required. Questions to answer during the Definition phase include:

- What are specific deliverables of the project?
- Why do we need these deliverables?
- How long will it take to produce these deliverables?
- What interim milestones can we establish to measure the progress of the project?
- What will be the cost for the deliverables?
- What type of staffing does the project require?
- Who is responsible for the project?
- How will the project's success be measured?
- How will we know when the project is complete?

2. Staffing — Once a team-based volunteering project has been defined, it is time to recruit and screen volunteers. One effective way for organizations to recruit volunteers is to establish ongoing relationships with local corporations and volunteer centers. Project managers should also help recruit volunteers and should play a central role in screening candidates and assigning them to particular roles.

3. Management — Before project delivery begins, an organization needs to determine which senior manager within the organization is ultimately accountable for

the project, and who is responsible for managing the project manager (this will often be the same person, but not always). These are critical responsibilities. Even though the project manager will perform most of the day-to-day management tasks, at least one senior manager needs to remain intimately involved in every project. This entails attending periodic project update meetings and spending time with volunteers to express direct appreciation for the work that is being performed.

4. Knowledge Transition — Once project work is complete, there needs to be a clean transition of both knowledge and tools from the volunteer team to the staff of the organization. A good transition will ensure that the organization knows how to benefit from the project deliverables and understands how to modify them if necessary in the future. For example, at the end of a web development project, volunteers should train the organization how to maintain and update the web site and should transfer to the organization all project-related documentation and assets, such as image files. While transition requires some additional effort on the part of the volunteers, the extra time spent can save the organization valuable time in their day-to-day operations and allow them to focus on their mission. It can also save the volunteer from having to come back and fix small glitches or make minor changes.

5. Assessment — After a project is complete, it is imperative that the organization spend at least an hour meeting in person with all members of the volunteer team, especially the project manager, to discuss how the project worked and identify opportunities to improve the process. This meeting is also a great opportunity for the organization to recognize great volunteers. Organizations that wish to maintain relationships with star volunteers may want to ask them to serve on an ongoing committee that assesses the organization's volunteer needs and programs and helps

attract other volunteers and project managers.

CONCLUSION

Team-based volunteer programs offer organizations an effective way to procure the kind of large-scale professional services that most organizations need but cannot afford. Organizations seeking to create a team-based volunteer program should concentrate on devoting resources up-front to recruiting experienced project managers and implementing a sound project management process. They should also continue to study the best practices (and pitfalls) of successful professional services companies[1]. By following these steps, organizations can create a team-based volunteering program that delivers high-impact, professional services at relatively low cost.

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Religion and Politics: A Cautionary Tale of a Volunteer and a Technology Upgrade

Joe Follansbee

Technology is religion. At least to people in technology. Tech companies anoint "evangelists" to spread the gospel to customers. Executives declare "jihads" against competitors. And if you don't swallow the cool-aid, you may be shunned. When these technologists volunteer their expertise to not-for-profits, they sometimes forget to leave their religion at the altar.

The fervor of a volunteer technologist can set up a not-for-profit for disaster, even if the technology solution moves the organization forward. A technology volunteer myself, I recently learned a hard lesson in the basics of listening to customers, as opposed to pushing my belief in a superior technology. Not-for-profit leaders needing a technology upgrade can use this cautionary tale as a case study in clear communication of needs and limits to volunteer computer network professionals, database designers, and web developers.

One day in 1999, I found myself with time to donate my technology skills. I was a veteran of the internet boom, and I grew interested in a small not-for-profit doing historic preservation work. Seattle Shipyard (not its real name to protect confidentiality) had a staff of 1.5 full-time equivalent employees, several dozen volunteers, an active board, five ships, and blue-sky potential. The operating budget ranged from zero one month to several thousand dollars the next month. Visiting their offices on a jaunt with my wife and two children, I saw three personal computers. None were networked. In order to print, the user switched the printer by hand from one computer to the other with a toggle. The staff complained of an old and mismanaged

Microsoft® Access database of members, donors, and volunteers. I offered to analyze the office's technology needs and develop a technology plan. My religion got the better of me.

My technology creed is open source software, specifically the Linux sect. Open source relies on a community sharing a common goal: creating high-quality software. Open source developers show the world their code and allow anyone to change it, as long as the originator gets credit. These developers believe open debate about the best solution to a problem means better software. Microsoft, on the other hand, keeps the code for its software secret, and if you see it or change it, you'll be sued.

The Linux operating system is the finest example of the open source model. In October 1991, Finnish computer student Linus Torvalds wrote Linux and gave his code to the programming community. He wanted an alternative to Windows® for his personal computer. Other programmers offered comments and improvements, and the result combined the best software engineering practices with a strong philosophy of community service. Hundreds of companies, ranging from one-person shops to Amazon.com, use Linux today. It is a staple at universities with computer engineering departments.

I had come to know the Linux system first hand while I worked at RealNetworks, which makes the leading software for delivering audio and video over the internet. I had built Linux servers and database applications for my team. Every piece of software I used was open source. I loved those boxes. I built a full-featured, Linux-based local area network

> The operating budget ranged from zero one month to several thousand dollars the next month.

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in my house. I now own a small web development business, and my web site runs on Linux. Unlike Windows®, Linux almost never crashes. As of this writing, my Linux server has been running uninterrupted for 474 days.

When I presented the PowerPoint® of my technology plan, the Seattle Shipyard board expressed deep skepticism. What would Microsoft think? Microsoft is based in the Seattle suburb of Redmond, and had gained a strong reputation as a provider of free software to local community organizations. The company had recently donated $25 million in software and services to NPower, a Seattle not-for-profit providing technology consulting and training to other not-for-profits. Seattle Shipyard's board asked, would using a rival software system alienate this powerful member of the business community, a potential donor? Furthermore, the board and staff were reluctant to switch to an unfamiliar, even mildly scary technology, when Microsoft's products worked adequately. I argued my technical facts and figures, and while the board did not say no to my plan, it did not say yes. I took this ambiguity as an opening, much to my later regret.

I revamped the old Access® database first. The board president was impressed enough to offer me one of the board's open seats. I regarded this offer as a "call" to vocation and a validation of my technology plan. The reality was different.

Within three months of my appointment, I designed and built an intranet for Seattle Shipyard, complete with advanced file and printer sharing, an online database superior to the Access® system, all with open source software, including Linux. I was proud of my achievement. All the while, there were complaints, particularly from a key board member who did not want to learn a new system. She was an elderly woman who felt comfortable

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with the old system, despite its flaws and frustrations. She was also one of the organization's biggest supporters, having worked with Seattle Shipyard for nearly 20 years. She paid the bills, organized volunteers, and published the newsletter.

I ignored her complaints – a fatal error. After two months of steadily intensifying rancor, the only way to reduce the conflict was to pull the plug on the new LAN and database, *despite the fact that it had been successful from a purely technological perspective*. It had solved almost all the technology and productivity problems I set out to conquer. But I had to resign from the board to maintain my sanity. Months passed before relationships healed.

What are the lessons?

VOLUNTEERS

- *Forget your biases and listen to your customers.* This is Marketing 101. If the organization believes a technology is not appropriate, even if they agree it's superior, then it's not appropriate, pure and simple.
- *Attune yourself to the political environment in which the organization works.* Every not-for-profit works within a donor environment and is constrained by that environment. I believed Microsoft wouldn't care a whit about what operating system Seattle Shipyard used. But the board believed it was important, and that's enough. At the least, I should have found a way to show bow or why Microsoft wouldn't care.
- *Slow down. This isn't the high-tech business.* I didn't acknowledge the slower pace and deliberate decision-making that can be the hallmark of community service groups. These organizations work on normal time, not the warp speed of internet time.

ORGANIZATIONS

- *Make your technology needs clear from the outset and stick to your boundaries.* Many

not-for-profits tend to feel inadequate about technology and prefer to leave decisions to the experts. This is a mistake. You can figure it out. You can make your needs known and rein in the technology enthusiast when boundaries are crossed.

- *Make your political situation clear to the consultant.* If you feel a donor relationship is at risk because of a technical choice, say so. However, it may pay to be open to another solution, especially if money can be saved. Ask yourself, is the risk to the donor relationship greater than the benefit of using a "politically incorrect" technical choice?
- *Be patient and ask volunteers to put on the brakes, if needed.* High-tech companies can be meat-grinders, where only the strong survive. The "get-it-done-yesterday" work ethic is driven by the constant awareness that a competitor may be, at this very moment, inventing the next gizmo that will destroy your business. Successful high-tech workers get into a habit of thinking on internet time, magnified by gallons of free, caffeine-rich soft drinks. They may forget as volunteers that the real world works much more slowly. Don't be afraid to enforce a speed limit.

Every not-for-profit feels blessed when an enthusiastic volunteer makes a contribution of time and knowledge that transforms the organization for the better. Technology volunteers can do wonderful things to improve communications, productivity, and data management. But don't let their belief in the rightness of a particular technology push you in directions you don't want to go. To some of them, technology is the mission, while your mission may lie elsewhere.

Volunteers as Essential Members of Community Collaborations

Lynne M. Borden, Ph. D.
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THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATIONS

Meeting the complex needs of today's communities, in a time where there are fewer resources to address the growing demands on services, requires the multiple sectors of the community to come together. Community organizations are facing the daunting task of addressing complex issues such as family violence, poverty, poor educational systems, and others. Given the complexity of these issues, communities recognize that many social problems are influenced at multiple levels requiring a comprehensive examination of the issue through a community-wide effort, such as a collaboration (Connell & Kubisch, 1998; Donnermeyer, Plested, Edwards, Oetting & Littlethunder, 1997; Perkins, Borden & Knox, 1999; Silverman & Williamson, 1997; Wandersman & Nation, 1998). Thus, the effective prevention, intervention, and treatment of social issues involve multiple systems, ranging from the individual and the family, to social service agencies, law enforcement, employers, courts, schools, and health care providers. Often, however, these systems work independently of each other and consequently are ineffective in fully addressing the social issues (Dryfoos, 1990; 1998).

Many individuals and groups recommend working together to form strong collaborative relationships to improve the present status and future well-being of children, youth, families, and the communities in which they live (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992, 1995; Dryfoos, 1994; Ellison & Barbour, 1992; Perkins, Borden, & Hogue, 1998). Moreover, many local, state, and federal initiatives that focus on children, youth, and families now require collaboration among multiple sectors (Borden, 1999). Non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, faith-based organizations, schools, and community members are often asked to be a part of a community-wide efforts.

THE PURPOSE

This paper has two objectives pertaining to the work of volunteers on behalf of organizations in community-wide efforts. First, it provides a detailed description of the multiple levels of linkages among community groups (Houge, 1993) and delineates the roles of volunteers within each of the levels of linkage. Second, the roles and responsibilities of the organization are briefly described for the volunteer to successfully represent the organization.

LEVELS OF LINKAGES AND THE ROLES OF VOLUNTEERS

There are five levels of community linkage: networking, cooperation, coordination, coalition, and collaboration. Within each level there is a *purpose*, *a structure*, and a *process*. Using volunteers to support an organization with a particular linkage first requires the identification of the "**role**" of the volunteer in each level of linkage. The volunteer's role and responsibilities change dramatically as the level of linkages become more complex. The levels of linkages are described in Table 1.

Networking, the first level of linkage, is defined as the sharing of information among organizations. For example, a networking group would meet to share relevant informa-

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TABLE 1

Community Linkages – Choices and Decisions

Levels	Purpose	Structure	Process	Volunteers
Networking	Dialogue and common understanding Clearinghouse for information Create base of support	Non-hierarchical Loose/flexible link Roles loosely defined Community action is primary link among members	Low-key leadership Minimal decision making Little conflict Informal communication	Good communication skills

Cooperation or Alliance	Match needs and
	  provide coordination
	Limit duplication of services
	Ensure tasks are done
		Central body of people as
		  communication hub
		Semi-formal links
		Roles somewhat defined
		Links are advisory
		Group leverages/raises money
			Facilitative leaders
			Complex decision making
			Some conflict
			Formal communications within
			  the central group
				Excellent communication skills
				Function as a member of the
				  central body
				Able and willing to take
				  on and complete tasks

Coordination or Partnership	Share resources to
	  address common issues
	Merge resource base to create
	  something new
		Central body of people consists
		  of decision makers
		Roles defined
		Links formalized
		Group develops new resources
		  and joint budget
			Autonomous leadership but
			  focus in on issue
			Group decision making
			  in central and subgroups
			Communication is
			  frequent and clear
				Excellent communication skills
				Excellent decision making skills
				Take on a role in the group
				Must be able to complete tasks

Coalition	Share ideas and be willing to pull
	  resources from existing systems
	Develop commitment for a
	  minimum of three years
		All members involved
		  in decision making
		Roles and time defined
		Links formal with written agreement
		Group develops new resources
		  and joint budget
			Shared leadership
			Decision making formal
			  with all members
			Communication is common
			  and prioritized
				Excellent communication skills
				Excellent decision making skills
				High degree of trust between
				  volunteer and organization
				Excellent knowledge of the
				  home organization
				Excellent interpersonal skills

Collaboration	Accomplish shared vision and
	  impact benchmarks
	Build interdependent system to
	  address issues and opportunities
		Consensus used in shared
		  decision making
		Roles, time, and
		  evaluation formalized
		Links are formal and written in
		  work assignments
			Leadership high, trust level high,
			  productivity high
			Ideas and decisions equally shared
			Highly developed communication
				Represent director of home
				  organization
				Excellent communication skills
				  — oral and written
				Good negotiation skills

(Modified chart from Houge (1994) Community Based Collaborations-Wellness Multiplied)

tion on a specific topic (e.g., disaster relief, employment opportunities, and child care referrals). Networking's *purpose* is to provide an opportunity for dialogue and common understanding, to be a clearinghouse for information, and to create a base of support for a specific issue. The *structure* needed for a Network to function effectively is flexible, not hierarchal, and has loosely defined roles with the focus of providing a link among organizations. The *process* within a Network includes: low-level leadership, minimal decision-making, low conflict, and informal communication procedures. A volunteer's role in a Network requires the volunteer to regularly attend meetings, to be knowledgeable about the organization, be able to provide information about the current work and resources of the organizations and to report back to the home organization. Given the limited structure and processes within a Network, this level is ideal for volunteer involvement.

The second level of linkage, **Cooperation**, is defined as the matching and organizing of existing programs and services to meet identified needs. An example of Cooperation is a volunteer association comprised of multiple organizations that meet to coordinate their services to better facilitate volunteer efforts within the community. Cooperation's *purpose* is to match needs, limit duplication of services, and ensure that tasks are completed. The *structure* required for Cooperation includes a central communication hub and semi-formal links between organizations. Roles within the group are somewhat defined, and the group works together to leverage and raise money. The *process* needed for Cooperation requires facilitative leaders, complex decision-making, and formal communication among the central body of participating organizations. Within this level of linkage there will be some, albeit minimal, conflict. This level of linkage requires the volunteer to have a sound knowledge of the home organization. The volunteer must begin to make decisions on behalf of the organization as tasks are identified, roles become more defined, and the group begins to work to leverage resources. Volunteers must have excellent communication skills, be able to function as a

member of the central body, and must be able and willing to take on and complete tasks as a representative of the organization.

The third level of linkage, **Coordination**, is defined as the integration of resources to allow for the development or creation of a new project/program that addresses a common issue. For example, partnering youth organizations in a particular community create a joint budget to support the annual communication booth at the local community festival where a common brochure is distributed listing the activities available within each organization. Coordination's *purpose* is to share resources to address common issues and merge the resources available from individual organizations to address common issues. The *structure* of Coordination requires: a central body of organizations willing to make decisions, clearly defined roles and expectations, clearly defined linkages within the group, collective efforts to develop new resources, and a joint budget. The *process* of Coordination involves leadership that is autonomous and focused on one issue. Decision-making occurs both within the central group and subgroups, and communication is frequent and clear. Moreover, conflict within this level increases as part of the process. Having a volunteer represent the organization becomes more multifaceted as the volunteer is now in a position to make decisions about the organization's commitment of resources for the coordinated effort. The volunteer must be able to make the time commitment needed to act as the representative of the organization as this level requires formal linkages and budgetary commitments.

The fourth level of linkage, **Coalition**, is defined as multiple organizations coming together and pooling their resources, from existing systems to work together on a prescribed issue for a minimum of three years. For example, a group forms a Coalition to increase the availability of after-school programs for youth by pooling their resources to sponsor AmeriCorps members who will provide much needed support to local youth programs. Coalition's *purpose* is to share ideas and be willing to pull resources from existing systems to create a way to address a common

issue. The *structure* of a Coalition demands that all the members be involved in the decision making process. There are clear expectations of the roles and the time commitment required, written agreements to establish formal links, and the procurement of new resources for a joint budget. The Coalition *process* requires shared leadership and formal decision making among all organizations. Communication is formal and prioritized. The level of commitment both in terms of time and resources increases the potential for conflict. The major distinction between coordination and coalition is the commitment of time and resources. With a coalition there is a very high level of commitment on the part of a volunteer and a high degree of trust and commitment to the volunteer on the part of the organization. The organization must be comfortable empowering the volunteer to make commitments on behalf of the organization, both in terms of work and finances. The volunteer will need to be able to assume leadership and must have excellent communication and negotiation skills.

The fifth and final level, **Collaboration**, is defined as multiple organizations coming together to act as a new entity with shared vision and the power to impact the participating organizations. An example is a Collaboration formed to address family violence that included such groups as social services, law enforcement, hospitals, schools, judicial system, and others. The Collaboration determined that in order to better serve and assist victims of family violence, the system for local law enforcement reporting needed to change, with new reporting procedures developed and sent to local law enforcement to be implemented. The Collaboration's *purpose* is to accomplish shared goals, impact benchmarks, and to build an interdependent system to address issues and opportunities. The *structure* of the Collaborative effort involves shared decision-making through consensus; formalized roles, time commitment, and evaluation; and, written agreements that formalize the relationships among organizations and their work assignments. The Collaboration's *process* requires high levels of leadership, trust, and productivity; equally shared ideas and

decisions; structured formal and informal communication within the collaboration and between the partnering organizations that occurs on a frequent basis.

The Collaborative process offers organizations the opportunity to be engaged in comprehensive efforts that often have long-term implications for the work of the organization, often requiring a redefining and/or a refocusing of the organization. Thus, collaborative efforts cannot be successful if those involved do not have the power to make the necessary decisions to move the effort forward. Therefore, organizations must carefully consider the role of volunteers within this level of linkage. Given this level of power, the use of volunteers is not, in our opinion feasible nor recommended.

ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Community linkages offer organizations the opportunity to work with other organizations to better meet their own goals and objectives. The long-term goal when participating in a community group is the ability to effect sustainable change. The use of volunteers in roles within these groups offers the organization yet another way to maximize their efforts within the community. Participation in a community group on the behalf of an organization is like other volunteer roles and tasks within the home organization; thus, "volunteers must be recruited; they must be screened and given orientation to the agency; they must be assigned to positions and afforded training as necessary; they must be supervised, motivated, and accorded appropriate recognition; they should be evaluated to assess the efficacy of their placement for themselves as well as for the organization" (Brudney, 1994, p. 279). Moreover, it is essential that the volunteers have clear job description of their roles and responsibilities within this community group. The degree of volunteer management required by the organization increases as the level of linkage increases from network to collaboration. Volunteers within a community organization can strengthen and expand existing work by representing the organization and becoming

essential members of community groups at their various levels (networking, coordination, cooperation, coalition, and collaboration).

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ENDNOTE

The Day All The Volunteers Left

Suzanne Lawson, CVA

Early in my career as a volunteer administrator, I received a wonderful one-page handout from a Marlene Wilson workshop that highlighted a list of things that didn't happen "The Day All the Volunteers Stayed Away." On March 27, 2003, three weeks into my new job as Director of Volunteer Resources at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, it actually happened—all of the volunteers at the hospital were asked to leave within the hour! SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) had arrived in Toronto, and this world-famous hospital for children was essentially closed down to visitors and volunteers in a mammoth effort to contain the virus. The prestigious hospital volunteer program (winner of a city newspaper's award as the Best Place To Volunteer in Toronto) was closed down.

The Toronto Hospital for Sick Children, affectionately call "Sick Kids" by many Canadians, had about 400 volunteers actively involved in direct and supportive services throughout the hospital. There was a superb program in the Emergency Department, where volunteers greeted families as they waited, worked with the children (patients and their siblings) to keep them happily occupied, and helped parents cope with their anxiety. Volunteers played with kids in the well-equipped playrooms on each unit, cuddled babies who needed warmth, and gave weary parents a break for their lunchtime. Volunteers ranged in age from late teens to nearly 80.

PRIOR TO MARCH 26

The volunteer program was on the cusp of regular seasonal changes as the SARS crisis began. March is the time of year we begin planning the summer program that brings in about 400 high school and university students for an experience within the hospital setting. Young people who are looking at potential careers in the medical and healthcare area, as well as those investigating working with children in the future have, in the past, found this volunteer opportunity a great summer experience. (So-called "year-round volunteers" were then offered an opportunity to take the summer off if they wished.) April was traditionally the month to hire the summer program coordinator and begin to schedule screening interviews for applicants.

The Women's Auxiliary (an entity separate from Volunteer Resources) was beginning to make plans for the handover of several of their services to summer volunteers from our program.

In addition to our volunteer placements, we had built an excellent placement reputation for co-op students, both from high schools and from the university programs related to the profession of Child Life. These co-op students were beginning their spring term with us. They were building a sense of team and testing the waters in their placements, mostly in administrative positions on various patient care units, in research, and in clinics. Their credits for the school year were hanging on their work in the placements.

On top of all of this, the Volunteer Resources Department had a new director, who had less than three weeks to get to know some basics about the hospital. I was brand new to a hospital setting, so the learning curve was quite sharp anyway. The staff had been managing without a director for nine months, and really wanted to get moving on some new program development that had been on hold. The Student Advisory Committee was well into a major project on help-

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ing young volunteers deal with grief. I had had one meeting with the Volunteer Advisory Committee and was raring to go to make changes to solidify the program.

THE FATEFUL DAY

On March 27, 2003 the orders were given to remove volunteers from all Toronto area hospitals. Our staff immediately tracked down each of the volunteers currently in the hospital to help them understand why they had to leave. The database was searched for those who would be on duty, first that evening, and then later that week, so that phone calls could be made to alert them to the new status. We worked the phones and broadcast e-mails, missing very few people who turned up for their shift only to be turned back at the door by masked "screeners." Thank goodness for almost-up-to-date database programs!

As Director of Volunteer Resources, I am a member of the Human Resources Department...the group that was then handed the responsibility of managing the whole screening effort for the hospital (for what turned out to be seven weeks). I was immediately called into service for the first screening shift early that evening...telling parents that only one of them could accompany their sick child to Emergency; turning back grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings who would no longer be able to visit the in-patient (the one parent rule held here too); and getting used to a smelly and confining mask that makes you look much like a duck and muffles your words.

As a student of organizational change, I had a chance to see a huge organization turn on a dime, moving from a hospital that boasted of (and evidenced!) true "family-centered care" to one that held back shocked parents, relatives and siblings from even visiting.

The Play Park for siblings on the main floor (operated by the Women's Auxiliary) was closed; doors to all patient units were closed; children were confined to their rooms; Marnie's Lounge, a gathering place for children, family, and volunteers —where they could watch large-screen TV, play on the computer, and bake cookies—was off limits;

and the seating area of the cafeteria was blocked off. Neither staff nor parents nor kids could "congregate."

AFTER THE FIRST FEW DAYS...

The Volunteer Resources staff began to come out from under the contributions we needed to make to the screening teams (photocopying information packages, collating materials, ordering the printing of material, training screeners, supporting the screening stations at each hospital entrance, etc.) after the first few days, and we began to turn our attention to the need for monitoring and supporting a volunteer force that could not be on site—a conundrum indeed. The major question was how to keep a volunteer force motivated when the very reason most had volunteered was denied them?

Our response was a commitment to be in touch with each volunteer (or at least try to be in touch) once a week. Utilizing the two part-time staff who could not come into the hospital at that time and a couple of the volunteer leaders from the Volunteer Advisory Committee, we began the first set of calls. A script was developed to guide the calls, but callers were urged to do their own adaptation so that it was a friendly and warm connection. The volunteers on the other end of the phone were encouraged to speak of their emotions at being "locked out," and to begin to think of whether they might be able to continue their volunteer role through the summer. We also used this opportunity to update contact information.

Many of the calls went to answering machines, but at least there was an inviting and caring human voice passing on the information. The volunteer and staff callers reported feeling better *themselves* after these calls because there was such an enthusiastic commitment from the volunteers to continue volunteering at Sick Kids. Most volunteers were eager to return and offered to do anything they could to help. The second call a week later gave more details about the SARS restrictions, and callers continued to receive supportive answers to the question of ongoing volunteering.

Then came Volunteer Week. The staff was

able to meet with a few volunteers (outside the hospital of course) and do a mailing to thank volunteers for their commitment over the past year. It was easy and very powerful to be able to tell our volunteers that their contributions were so noticeable, in their absence, that the understanding of what volunteers contribute was high across all the staff, among the families, in the Executive Offices, and with patients. The 400-plus letters were hand-signed by the president of the Volunteer Advisory Committee and myself.

> It was easy and very powerful to be able to tell our volunteers that their contributions were so noticeable, in their absence, that the understanding of what volunteers contribute was high across all the staff, among the families, in the Executive Offices, and with patients too.

A second mailing the following week from the President of the Hospital (orchestrated by our department) was one of gratitude for their commitment and patience.

A commitment was made to maintain regular communications until the program was back in full swing, a decision we were extremely pleased about since it has broadened the connections among volunteers, built the role of the Volunteer Advisory Committee, and made volunteers who were forced to be absent feel a little more connected.

HARD DECISIONS MADE

After we began to realize that the SARS crisis was going to be with us for more than a few days, we had to face some very difficult decisions. The summer program (400 plus high school and university students coming into Sick Kids for one month placements) was to begin in June. We needed to decide by late April whether there would be the capacity to bring students as young as 16 into the hospital this summer.

With great regret, we decided that this could not be the case. We could not have volunteers for the foreseeable future, and staff were too over-hurdened to take on the supervision of young people and give them a good experience. This decision reduced our volunteer strength (and, of course, the statistics which are used for reporting and grant-seeking) and denied the young people in Toronto

a credit for useful volunteer work on their resume.

Another tough decision was what to do about the Co-Op Program for students from Toronto-area high schools and a few universities. Students were just beginning their placements, and their marks and required "hours" were needed for graduation or passing their years. Now they could not come in. As time went on, concerns about whether the students could complete their year at Sick Kids increased.

Working in concert with the other hospitals, we were about to make public the obvious decision when the Toronto School Board announced that no co-op students would be placed in hospitals for the rest of the year. This removed both the students and the hospitals from limbo. Sadly, we had removed from many young people tbe opportunity of a lifetime—to work in close connection with healthcare professionals and learn what the various professions might be like as a future occupation.

BEGINNING TO PLAN FOR VOLUNTEER REENTRY: NEW ASSIGNMENTS

Following a discussion with a lead professional in Infection Control about the issues surrounding volunteer re-engagement, it began to dawn on us that our understanding of this volunteer program would have to change drastically at least for the foreseeable future. If volunteers could not be with the children or their families then positions needed to be developed that made them feel they were contributing indirectly to the children and their families, or contributing to the capacity of the overburdened staff to deliver better service to the children.

The team of professional volunteer administrators (four) began in earnest to design positions that fit the criteria given to us by Infection Control (limited numbers; no patient or family contact) and the criteria that

we deemed important (indirect connection to the kids; help to a beleaguered staff).

As of this writing, we have described and articulated 19 formal position descriptions that meet all these criteria. They range from the cleaning and/or reorganization of the playrooms (which are at this time locked and not able to be used by children on the units), to tackling the archiving of volunteer files, to videoing games and contests for the hospital's closed circuit TV.

Because these positions are often not as compelling as what volunteers are used to doing at Sick Kids, we have been careful to clarify within the body of each position description the two headings: *Benefits to the Hospital* and *Benefits to the Volunteer.*

Recruiting to these positions has not been easy. Those who have had leadership in the program (members of the Volunteer Advisory Committee and the Student Leadership Advisory Committee) have had to be more open about trying something different for the sake of the cause. But they too long for the day when they can be back working with the kids on the units. Others volunteers have indicated that these positions do not interest them; being with the children is what they want and will wait for.

We are, however, making some progress in engaging a small number of volunteers, especially for work that involves being in a team.

BEGINNING TO PLAN FOR VOLUNTEER REENTRY: NEW CRITERIA

Since it was becoming obvious that the hospital really had changed and that much of the change could be permanent, we began to ask questions about what we needed to have in place for the volunteers as they came back.

First, we checked on the liability insurance and discovered that, while it is a good policy, it does not cover wage replacement should a volunteer not be able to work as a result of what happened in the hospital. Since many in the community were being quarantined for at least 10 days after exposure to a suspicious case of SARS, that was a real possibility for anyone exposed here. Working with solicitors and those skilled in risk management, we developed an informed consent form which

volunteers now must sign before they can return.

We also realized that returning volunteers would need to understand what the staff and patients had been going through for many weeks. A reminder about handwashing and attention to cleaning was also needed. So, we designed a mandatory Volunteer Reentry Orientation Program. After three of these sessions, we are convinced that it helps folks come back into a somewhat stranger setting with more confidence and more caution. We have all learned a lot about infection control, and the re-entering volunteers are now as astute as we have become about this kind of diligence.

We were given permission to bring back up to 50 of our over 400 volunteers, subject to two conditions: the signed informed consent form and attendance at a Volunteer Reentry Orientation Program.

In many ways, these orientation programs have also been a bit like family reunions. We tell our stories (and there are many...about screening, about doing training at 6 a.m. for groups of screeners, and so on), and we reconnect with volunteers. There has been an added bonus in building for the volunteers a sense of a larger team in that they get to know people who ordinarily do not work on their shift.

THE FUTURE

As I write, restrictions are beginning to diminish, but volunteers are still not allowed to be with patients or families. We see that change coming in the fairly near future, but are certainly aware that, even then, we will be moving carefully to reintegrate. We also are quite sure that it will be some time, if ever, before volunteers will be active in such very high-risk areas as the Emergency Department and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit—our former flagship programs.

Today we are preparing the Volunteer Lounge for the return of more of our volunteers. There will be huge construction paper daisies put on the wall, and staff from the whole hospital will be invited to leave messages on these daisies for the returning volunteers. Staff has been telling us daily that they

never again will take volunteers for granted. We needed to find a way to help them say that directly to the volunteers! So, "bouquets" on the wall will be our answer.

The hospital has changed forever. TheVolunteer Resources Program has also changed forever. It is just that we do not yet know what we will look like six months from now...let alone tomorrow!

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED AS PROFESSIONALS IN VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION?

We have really learned that we need to be flexible! Whenever we have planned something, a change in directives meant a subsequent change to the overall plan. So, we have learned to dance with our skills and knowledge, creatively adapting at every turn.

We have had to pull out all the basics of our profession to design and redesign what volunteers do and how we will interact with them.

We now know that, in the future, we will need to recruit volunteers who have a variety of motivations...offering direct service to children who are ill is only one of these. We will need to be more proactive in targeted recruiting for administrative support volunteers and for special projects.

We have learned that working as a team is the only way to survive: we have actually had fun and built camaraderie during a time of severe distress at the hospital. We are better able to work collaboratively than before and are excited, if somewhat awed, by what the future will hold for the program.

We have learned much more about risk management and about how to be explicit about risk without scaring off potential volunteers.

We learned that, at the heart of a volunteer program, is clear and honest communication, and this communication can come from other volunteers and staff if there is a set script available. Frequency of communication is also important.

We have learned that volunteer administration is indeed a "work in progress."

AND WHAT QUESTIONS REMAIN?

These are questions that we will be puzzling over when the dust clears. We simply do not have time or perspective yet.

- What style of leadership (or what mix of leadership styles) is most useful to volunteer administrators in a crisis? After the crisis?
- How does the role of leadership volunteers have to change through the crisis and beyond?
- How do we maintain the integrity of the basics of our profession during swift and constant change? How do we keep grounded?
- What are the limits to the situations we can put volunteers in? What ethical and health considerations do we need to be considering?
- How do volunteer administrators and volunteers feel valuable when what we do is removed? What can be put in place to restore value?

POSTSCRIPT

Seven weeks to the day after the volunteers were sent home, we received word that they had permission to return to ALL their former tasks. We are rejoicing, as they are, but need to work now to make the reentry an orderly and exciting time for all. And the messages from staff are here, on the daisies and on the walls of the lounge. The Vice President of Clinical and Academic Affairs wrote: "HSC was not the same without you! It's great you're all back." Around the clock it reads, "Time went so slowly when you were not here!" A good start for a renewed future!

Volunteer Reentry Informed Consent Form   May 2003

Please return the signed form to Volunteer Resources by fax (416 813 8191) or mail.

The presence of SARS in our city and in The Hospital for Sick Children means that there are certain people who will not, at this point, be able to volunteer in the Hospital. These people are:
- those who are employed by or work as volunteers in any other hospital or long term care facility;
- those who have travelled recently (within 10 days) to affected areas: China, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Singapore, Taiwan;
- those who have been hospitalized anywhere in the last ten days;
- those who are living with someone who is in quarantine for SARS.

If, as an HSC volunteer you will be in situations where masks are required, you must understand that they are particularly hard on those with sensitive skin or with allergies.

You will be required to attend a short but **mandatory** Reentry Orientation Program before beginning with your new volunteer tasks. This will focus on infection control, and an understanding of how protocols in the Hospital have changed since SARS.

If, as a result of being an HSC volunteer, you are not allowed or able to return to your regular paid work, HSC will not compensate you for any such financial loss.

The HSC will not compensate you or any member of your family should any of you become ill or become quarantined as a result of this volunteer assignment.

Should you at any time have a dry cough, fever, muscle aches, shortness of breath and/or a severe and unusual headache, you must stay at home until the symptoms have passed.

I have read the above and accept these conditions of volunteering at The Hospital for Sick Children. I understand that I will be working under stressful circumstances and there may not always be the nurturing and support that I as a volunteer might wish.

Name: (please print)

_____

Signature: _____Date: _____

"Paving Paradise ... How My IYV Initiative Failed"
A Commentary and Call to Action
Linda L. Graff

I have been in the business of volunteering in one capacity or another since April Fool's day, 1980 (and yes there may be a connection there!). In that time I have seen many changes in volunteering, volunteerism, the non-profit sector, nonprofit organizations, and the world around us. I don't mean to sound like I have seen everything or know everything about volunteering, even though I have enough grey hair to just possibly get away with such a claim. The one observation I can offer, with the clarity and confidence borne of endless repetition, is this: Nonprofit organizations, senior administrators in agencies and other entities such as government programs and departments, funders, and boards of directors still remain relatively ignorant of the importance of volunteerism. Many organizations (boards and executive staff) are still woefully unaware of what their own volunteers actually do, and in a directly related way, have little to no idea of what an organization must do to ensure volunteer program success. Sure there are exceptions, and most of us can identify one or two. But they are the exceptions. The pattern is nonetheless prevalent.

Herein lie the principal puzzles of my working life.

- How can volunteers and volunteering be so central to community life as we know it in the United States, in Canada, in the United Kingdom, and beyond, and still be as misunderstood and fraught with decades-old stereotypes?
- How can funders pressure organizations to increase volunteer involvement in program delivery and at the same time declare volunteer program management costs ineligible for core funding?
- How can boards approve the development of new services which will in large part be supported by volunteer involvement, yet time after time, in agency after agency, fail to provide a budget for the stimulation and coordination of that very volunteer effort?
- How can it be that we still have not, in a widespread way, figured out that volunteering is cost-effective *but not free?*
- How can organizations who are asking volunteers to take on ever more responsible and sophisticated work, simultaneously cut the volunteer program budget?

These questions arise out of a more than 20-year career that has allowed me the good fortune of connecting with thousands of managers of volunteer programs every year. I hear time and time again the same messages from the managers of volunteer programs who participate in my workshops:

- I know we need to enhance our program management systems.
- I know we need to screen volunteers in positions of trust more thoroughly.
- I know we should not recruit one more volunteer until we are sure we are properly

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supporting the volunteers we already have in place

• ... but my supervisor, my executive director, my board, our funders keep pressing for more and more, and *they* don't understand what it takes to make all of this happen.

How many volunteers can we expect one manager of volunteer to manage? How far can a volunteer program be expanded without additional resources? In my more macabre moments, I wonder if it is a game: Let's see how far a manager of volunteers can be stretched before s/he "snaps"? How can we keep putting volunteers into risky situations without the necessary training and supervision they need to do their work safely?

It is not the managers of volunteers who need to hear these messages. It is the non-profit organizations. It is boards and senior administrators. That's who we need to be advocating with.

Individual managers of volunteers cannot do it in isolation, organization by organization. That should be abundantly clear to us after at least two decades of concerted effort to influence organizational understanding and appreciation.

So how do we illustrate, demonstrate, drive home the importance of volunteers and volunteering? How do we gain recognition for the occupation of volunteer program management? How do we educate politicians, public policy makers, funders, and agency leaders about the blinding obvious need to properly resource voluntary action?

I believe the answer lurks in the lyrics to Joni Mitchell's 1970 hit song, Big Yellow Taxi:

Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you've got
till it's gone?
They paved paradise and put up a
parking lot.

Over many years of anguishing over the absence of progress along these lines, I have come to believe that the only way volunteerism will ever be understood is for it to be withdrawn, if only for a relative instant. I am convinced, as Mitchell suggests, that we will not see any deep understanding of the value of volunteering until its absence is experienced.

So my personal commitment in the run up to the International Year of Volunteers was to try to talk some community, somewhere — anywhere, really — into organizing a volunteer strike. I pushed hard in Winnipeg, Canada because Winnipeg has an important history with strikes, having been the site of the 1919 General Strike in which the almost unanimous participation of working men and women closed the city's factories, crippled its retail trade, and stopped the trains. Even public sector employees such as policemen, firemen, postal workers, telephone operators and employees of waterworks and other utilities joined the strike in an impressive display of solidarity (Natalia Beszterda, no date). I was passionate in my appeal to MAVA (the Manitoba Association of Volunteer Administrators) to take the lead in organizing a strike of all volunteers in Winnipeg as *their* IYV project, but to no avail! I've made the plea in a multitude of other communities across Canada, the United States, and even in the United Kingdom. Similarly to no avail. Managers of volunteers nod there heads and say, "Gee, ya, that might do it," but nobody rises to the call.

The recent withdrawal of all volunteers from Toronto hospitals in response to the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) virus has raised the issue once again in my mind. The immediate expulsion of all volunteers emulated mini-volunteer-work-withdrawals. The impact was enormous. Suzanne Lawson talks a bit about the crisis in her article "The Day All The Volunteers Left" (this volume), but we need to hear more from the managers of volunteers in Toronto hospitals

about what learnings were gleaned by hospital staff, administrators, and the wider community of health care consumers when volunteers were removed from the scene. I anxiously wait to hear the stories and yearn for fodder to make a political statement! Tell us more. Write it up. Share it widely. Use it to make change happen.

Here are some other suggestions:

- Organizations that are invested in the promotion of volunteersim (e.g., Volunteer Canada, the Points of Light Foundation, the International Association for Volunteer Effort, volunteer centres everywhere) could redirect their energies away from the promotion of best practices and professional development in volunteer program management. Leave that work to the professional organizations such as the Association for Volunteer Administration, and the state/provincial and local associations of managers of volunteers. Just imagine what could be accomplished if all of the lead organizations, worldwide, collectively committed —even for one year — to the education and lobbying of nonprofit boards, funders, governments, politicians, and executive directors.

- Imagine what we might accomplish if all consultants in volunteer management committed for a year to cultivate speaking engagements and training opportunities, *not* to managers of volunteers, but to those managers of volunteers' supervisors and executive directors.

- Consider the impact if the writers in the fields of volunteering and volunteer program management committed to the production of a full year of articles, not about volunteer program management, but about the importance of volunteering and the organizational need to support the infrastructure of volunteering. What learning could be generated if those authors submitted those articles to all of the journals and newsletters and web sites of all of the voluntary sector organizations they could think of?

What impact might be generated by the hundreds of voluntary sector researchers if they collectively concentrated on how to stimulate a sector-wide consciousness raising about the indispensability of volunteering to the health and functioning of the nonprofit sector?

- Imagine if we *all* seized every opportunity we could find or make to educate about volunteering, its importance to civil society, to democracy, to quality of life, to human service, to our children, our grandparents, our communities ... and what volunteering needs to be healthy, vibrant and rise to the challenges it is sure to face over the next decade.

- Imagine the impact if we — somebody — would organize a strike of volunteers, if only for a relative moment. For a day or a week. Yes, some people would go without service. But think of how many people are right now being denied safe, quality programming because volunteer program managers do not have the resources they genuinely need to support effective volunteer involvement because governments, corporations, funders, and politicians have not allocated sufficient funds to support effective voluntary action.

While we wait for the strike to get organized, check out these other efforts to stimulate awareness about, and support for, volunteering:

The launch by the European Volunteer Centre of the *Volunteering Manifesto in Europe 2003*, a document which outlines the importance of volunteering and ways to advance it: www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/cfapps/news/news2.cfm?ArticlesID=181

The Development of Volunteering and Social Capital: a paper for the Symposium on Volunteering and Social Capital by Liz Burns, President of the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) in which she explores "the strong links between volunteering and social capital and their importance for sustainable communities and for the future of democracy itself.": www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/cfapps/news/news2.cfm?ArticlesID=196

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involve-

ment and its companion resource book
downloadable from Volunteer Canada's web
site: www.volunteer.ca/volcan/eng/iwork/
can-code.php?display=3,0,1

Most importantly, let's stop whining about
the fact that we are not understood, or appre-
ciated, or resourced. Let's, as a movement,
actually do something about it! Go on. Take
off your white gloves and roll up your sleeves.
Sharpen your elbows and get yourself to the
tables where decisions are made. Be rebel-
lious! Be outrageous! Be strategic. Make
change happen!

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A Mark of Excellence: The Value of the CVA Credential

Kathy Levine, CPL, CVA

THE HISTORY BEHIND THE CREDENTIAL

As a member-driven organization, the Association for Volunteer Administration successfully connects individuals throughout the world who strive for excellence in the profession of volunteer resources management. Early in AVA's 43-year history, it became clear that members were seeking validation of their unique knowledge, skills, and role. This led AVA to develop a certification program as a key component of its activity in support of practitioners. Since that time the CVA (Certified in Volunteer Administration) credential has become a recognized standard for competence in the management of volunteers.

THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The credential is intended for you if you have accumulated at least three years of experience related to volunteer resource management, in either paid or unpaid positions. In addition, a minimum of 50% of your current position must be related to volunteer administration in order to be eligible to register for the credentialing program.

The process of earning the CVA credential involves two parts: a written portfolio, and a proctored multiple- choice exam. Both demonstrate your knowledge and application of five core competencies that AVA identifies as:

- Commitment to the Profession,
- Planning and Conceptual Design
- Resource Development and Management
- Accountability
- Perspective and Responsiveness

The Credentialing section of AVA's website contains more detail about these core competencies. The portfolio and exam each count 50% towards a final score. As a candidate, you have one year to complete both parts of the process, in whatever order you prefer.

The portfolio consists of two written pieces that you complete independently, according to an established format. The management narrative describes a project or program from your past experience and addresses at least three out of the five core competencies in 1,500 words. The philosophy statement of 500 words expresses your personal perspective as a professional in the field. Upon submission to AVA, the portfolio is read by CVA peer reviewers, who follow a prescribed checklist to obtain a numerical raw score. The score is then translated into a pass or fail grade.

The exam is a two-hour, multiple-choice test given once a year on the fourth Wednesday in May at local sites near candidates. AVA's goal is to make the exam accessible, wherever you are. Questions are designed to measure your knowledge using recall, and analysis skills. Test questions are written by AVA members who are trained in item writing. The questions are documented to a set of specific articles and books that support the core competencies. You are expected to study these references to prepare for the exam. After each exam, all scores and candidate comments are reviewed by the Test Sub-Committee and AVA's Test Consultant. (Confidentiality of all candidate names is protected.) If there are questions that appear to be flawed, the committee reviews them carefully to determine if scoring adjustments should be made. This process is a standard practice for credentialing programs and assists in ensuring the highest level of integrity of the testing

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process. You are then notified of the results via a letter from the AVA office.

An added bonus to the credentialing process is the Candidate Support Sub-Committee, made up of CVAs who can answer questions about any component of the process. While they do not review your portfolio or discuss specific test questions, they can provide encouragement and general guidance that you may find helpful. AVA is now in the planning stage of developing an online resource for all CVA candidates where they can exchange tips, ask questions, or find a study partner.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CVA

As managers of volunteers, we are acutely aware of the continued growth and importance of volunteerism over recent years, especially since the International Year of Volunteers 2001. As demand for performance-based management increases and stiff competition continues in the job market, the CVA credential serves as a benchmark tool that can help organizations with their hiring decisions. On a more personal level, many of us feel that our work is not appreciated to the fullest extent and that our salaries are not commensurate with our level of responsibility and skills. These two concerns make obtaining the CVA credential a "must." Just as some professions require certification as a prerequisite for seeking employment, the CVA can document your knowledge base and provide added credibility that may translate into potential monetary value within your organization.

Your CVA also gives you the firm base of knowledge that you need to support your organization's reliance on volunteers to accomplish its mission. Your CVA demonstrates your commitment to professional excellence to other volunteer managers, both within and beyond the community's borders.

Earning the CVA credential automatically places you in an elite group of individuals who have demonstrated performance-based skills in volunteer resources management.

> AVA's credentialing program is universally relevant. It creates an established hallmark of quality that becomes a defined standard for you as a professional in the 21st century workplace.

Your certification, created and managed by your peers, not only enhances your professional development, but identifies you with a unified voice that supports and recognizes volunteer administrators for their leadership skills. At the same time, you are acknowledging and supporting AVA's vision by becoming an advocate, empowered to address issues affecting the profession in and outside the workplace.

CERTIFICATION OPTIONS

Some professions, such as teaching and medicine, will always require a degree for entrance or advancement in the profession. The growth and importance of volunteerism has led institutions of higher learning to offer courses in volunteer management, most of which are incorporated into non-profit management and fundraising programs. The term "certification" is used by many organizations and programs, so it may be helpful to understand the definition to select the best professional development option.

• Certificate programs normally fall into two well-recognized categories: certificates of attendance and certificates of accomplishment. Certificates of attendance are given at the conclusion of a session/workshop/course to indicate an individual participated in the course. Certificates of accomplishment do contain a measurable component and are awarded to individuals who meet the requirements. Measurements may include a test, paper, presentation, or some other method to indicate learning.

• Certification is a voluntary assessment program usually sponsored by associations. Certification examinations are based on established bodies of knowledge, developed and evaluated through a peer review process and standardized measurements, and usually contain a recertification requirement.

• Certification programs measure knowledge and the ability to apply the knowledge; they do not indicate the ability to perform competently. They do measure an individual's

knowledge, skills, and abilities against a standardized tool based on the roles and responsibilities of colleagues in the profession.

According to the February 1998 Vol.ume 2, No. 2 edition of *Literacy Links: An Adult Education & Literacy Newsletter,* "Professional development must come from teachers [peers] and bubble up." I interpret this to mean that we learn the best practices in volunteer management from those within our professional sphere. As a model for other professional fields to emulate, AVA's credentialing program is universally relevant. It creates an established hallmark of quality that becomes a defined standard for you as a professional in the 21st century workplace. Although the specific strategies needed to manage volunteers effectively can vary, AVA has developed a generic, practical, ethical, and cutting-edge performance-based credential that is based on the common elements we all share.

Following a similar historical path as AVA, a study group in 1992, representing three statewide public health organizations — the Illinois Public Health Association, the Illinois Association of Public Health Administrators, and the Illinois Association of Boards of Health — examined the feasibility of implementing a certification program that "recognizes individuals based on evidence of having demonstrated or acquired specific competencies that would provide several benefits."[1] The credential would support efforts to increase salary levels for competent administrators and assist local Boards of Health in their search and recruitment efforts by providing a pool of pre-qualified individuals and competency-linked criteria. The study group envisioned a competency-based credentialing program that would lead to professional recognition, increased remuneration, greater visibility, and career mobility as achievable benefits. Enhanced organizational and public health system performance would be additional benefits for the entire population. Targeted public health managers and administrators would come from all settings — public, private, and voluntary. After receiving funding in 1998, a Certification Board was established as an independent, non-profit, tax-exempt entity. The board identified appropriate competencies for the credentialing process and established processes to solicit, evaluate, and approve applications, courses, and training programs used as evidence in the competency testing process. The board established five general competency areas. After several years of developmental work and arranging reciprocal certification with other states that adopted similar programs, the certification program formally began in 2001.[2]

Clearly, earning a credential is a proven method of identifying performance-based competency. How do you know if AVA's credentialing program is right for you? If you already know how to do the job and have been doing it for at least three years, then the CVA program offers an ideal way for you to demonstrate this to others. This is not the way to learn the basics of volunteer resources management, but rather a way to document that you identify with and practice the core competencies that define the profession.

THE VALUE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The value of continuing your professional development is, of course, based on your own individual needs, desires, and goals. It is a life-long process that becomes the centerpiece of your daily work life. Your ability to perform practical and problem-solving learning through the choices you make and through self-direction results in best practices in how you manage your volunteer program. Further, your ethical standards are grounded in your knowledge, understanding, and practice of AVA's core competencies. Continued activities such as additional training, mentoring newcomers to the field, and holding leadership roles in your community and professional associations provide many opportunities to integrate new ideas with existing knowledge, while accumulating even more experience in the field.

YOUR POTENTIAL AS A CVA

Since the inception of AVA's certification program, approximately 400 individuals have received CVA status. Testimonials by CVAs attest to the fact that the credential has given merit to their effectiveness within the organization, enhanced their leadership abilities within and outside the organization, and placed them on a higher rung on their peer ladder. CVAs are a leadership-based core of individuals who manage effective, cutting-edge programs where everyone connected to the organization wins. In summary, your CVA credential:

• Is an outstanding experiential pathway for self-discovery of your core values as a person, how you perform as a volunteer manager, how you interact with others, how you are viewed by your colleagues, and how you see yourself as a proficient manager of volunteers.

• Strengthens your commitment to the volunteer management profession.

• Calls to the attention of your organization's top management your competency and effectiveness in managing this unique human resource.

• Opens the door for salary advancement based on your knowledge of and advocacy for "positioning the profession."

• Raises your organization's visibility within the community via your professional standing among your peers.

• Provides you with a competitive advantage in employment opportunities.

• Nurtures your leadership capabilities in the workplace, in your local DOVIA or professional network, and in volunteer centers, corporations, and other community organizations;

• Enables networking opportunities and collaborations for you with peers and organizations in and beyond your local area.

• Provides you an opportunity to mentor other volunteer managers in best practices.

• Offers you the ability to effectively and successfully manage volunteer programs almost anywhere.

I invite you to read the testimonials from current CVAs on the AVA web site and encourage you to add your name to the growing list of those professionals who are "Certified in Volunteer Administration." Go online to www.AVAintl.org and click on Credentialing or call the AVA office at 804-346-2266 for more information.

ENDNOTES

[1] Evans L., Williams M., Egler T., Todd J., Turnock B. J. *Public Health Administrator Competencies Study Group Recommendations.* Springfield IL; Illinois Public Health Association; 1993.

[2] From an abstract titled *Competency Based Credentialing of Public Health Administrators in Illinois,* by Bernard J. Turnock, M.D., MPH, Clinical Professor of Community Health Sciences, School of Public Health, University of Illinois at Chicago.

Moving Beyond the Volunteer Management System

Mary V. Merrill, LSW

Picture yourself standing in front of a large poster board with a packet of Post-it® Notes in one hand and a pen in the other hand. You are a volunteer manager. Your task is to identify all of the tasks you perform in your job. Write each task on a Post-it® Note and stick it to the poster board in front of you. I will assume that you will begin to list tasks such as: answer inquiries, interview potential volunteers, return phone calls, develop orientation and training materials, write volunteer job descriptions, check on references, conduct training, identify volunteer opportunities, train staff about volunteers, manage volunteers, plan national volunteer recognition week, write thank you notes to volunteers, schedule volunteers, produce a volunteer newsletter, evaluate volunteers, etc. etc. etc. You will easily have 20 to 30 Post-it® Notes on your poster board. When viewed as a set of unrelated tasks, managing volunteers seems overwhelming. If however, we take the Post-it® Notes and group them into related activities we begin to develop a pattern or plan for the work. Communication tasks might include phone calls, letter writing, interviewing, newsletters, and evaluations. Arranging the parts into organized components is a systems approach to volunteer management. A system "is an organized, integrated whole made up of diverse but interrelated and interdependent parts" (Webster, 1996).

Researchers and practitioners have long recognized that volunteer managers deal with diverse managerial responsibilities, and for many years have tried to make a simple itemization of the functions that are required to manage volunteer programs. Harriet Naylor, one of the early pioneers in the profession of volunteer management, wrote about the importance of finding, training, and working with volunteers.

Some of the earliest literature about volunteer management systems comes from 4-H, a major program of the Cooperative Extension Service. Several studies done in the early 1970s discussed the important of volunteers for program delivery in reaching the 4-H goals. Historically, 4-H has viewed volunteer management in the context of leadership development as they developed models for training volunteers to serve in leadership capacities in youth development programs. Volunteers were (and are) engaged extensively as group and project leaders. It is not surprising, therefore that one of the earliest volunteer system models was derived from a leadership development model composed of "seven sub-processes or phases: leader identification, leader selection, leader orientation, leader training, leader utilizations, leader recognition and leader evaluation." (Smith, Miller, Kwarteng, 1987). Boyce (1971) believed this model correlated with the basic components of a volunteer development program: identifying volunteer opportunities, selecting volunteers, orienting volunteers, utilizing volunteers, recognizing volunteers, and evaluating volunteers, programs and program managers. By 1992 this I.S.O.T.U.R.E. Model (derived from the first letter of each of the preceding components) for volunteer program development was widely recognized among 4-H professionals as a practical, easy to learn and apply system for volunteer program development (Safrit, Smith, 1992).

Marlene Wilson, (1976) one of the earliest authors on volunteer management practices, taught the first formal volunteer management courses focusing on six components of a volunteer management system: organizational climate; planning and evaluation; designing jobs and recruiting; interviewing and placing; training and communications. Ellis (1986)

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divided the components into new subsets and developed a Volunteer Management Task Analysis that included: program planning and administration; recruitment and P.R.; interviewing and screening; orientation & training; supervision; motivation and recognition; program evaluation; record keeping and reporting; and other responsibilities.

In the 1980s volunteer management was clearly an emerging profession. Sarah Jane Rehnborg, at The Charles A. Dana Center, The University of Texas in Austin, was one of the first practitioners to focus her dissertation research on a study of the competencies required for volunteer managers. This research led to the development of the four functional areas of volunteer management in the performance-based assessment program for the certification of volunteer administrators through the Association for Volunteer Administration (Rehnborg, 1982). The four AVA functional areas were identified as program planning and organizing; staffing and directing; controlling; and agency, community and professional relations

Through the 1990s a variety of management systems have been identified. The LOOP System promotes locating, orienting, operating, and perpetuating (Penrod, 1991). The Volunteer Retention Cycle focused on pre-recruitment, recruitment, interview, selection/placement, orientation, training, review, reassignment, recognition, assessment, and coaching (MacKenzie & Moore 1993). The GEMS System identifies generate, educate, mobilize, and sustain as the key elements of volunteer program development (Culp, Deppe, Castillo, & Wells, 1998).

A relatively clear pattern has emerged over the years regarding the core functions of a volunteer manager. Most "systems" included identifying needs, recruiting and selecting volunteers, training and supervision, and recognition. In recent years, some educators and authors have begun to promote higher-

> A relatively clear pattern has emerged over the years regarding the core functions of a volunteer manager. Most "systems" included identifying needs, recruiting and selecting volunteers, training and supervision, and recognition.

level functions such as program planning, risk management, advocacy, and program evaluation. In some ways, this is a return to those early professionals who initially identified the importance of organizational culture, program planning, and evaluation. Fisher & Cole (1993) were the first authors to link the concept of leadership with management of volunteer programs and were also the first to introduce the language of impact assessment, quantitative data, and cost benefits comparisons to volunteer programs.

Contemporary researchers continue to identify new components to create new systems for managing volunteer programs. Trevor Boutall, *A Standards Framework for Managing Volunteers,* published in this issue, has taken the components of a system and established standard of performance for each component. In 2001 AVA reviewed its credentialing program and moved away from focusing on the components of volunteer management and redesigned its credentialing program around five core competencies that serve as a foundation for the profession: commitment to the profession; planning and conceptual design; resource development and management; accountability; and perspective and responsiveness (AVA, 2001).

There is no question that as a profession we must be able to identify basic competencies necessary for effectively carrying out the work of volunteer management. But, as the profession matures, success requires more than a set of standardized skills.

> *While agreeing with and supporting the current renewed focus on identifying and clarifying critical professional competencies needed by volunteer administrators, we believe that equally (if not more) important for the future of volunteer administration are those personal capacities needed in contemporary volunteer administration ... the higher level attitudes and aspirations*

needed to take fundamental competen-
cies to our profession and easily adapt
them to our ever-changing world. Pro-
fessional competencies are knowledge
and skills based, and serve as a critical
intellectual foundation for many pro-
fessions. They involve fundamental lev-
els of cognitive learning, including
assessing, comprehending and applying
knowledge (Bloom, 1956) to our day-
to-day roles and responsibilities as
administrators of volunteer programs.
(Safrit & Merrill, 1999, p. 29)

To create professionals for today's increas-
ingly complex world, we must look beyond
education that focuses on skills based train-
ing. Traditionally, those entering the field
have had to rely on workshops that focus
exclusively on the individual components of
the work, such as position design, recruit-
ment, retention, and recognition. These skill-
building workshops help managers do the
work, but they focus only on the technical
aspects of the job. As long as we continue to
focus on these individual components — the
systems approach — and fail to demand edu-
cational opportunities that develop intellectu-
al and personal capacity, we will continue to
have individuals who view the work as a job,
rather than as a profession. Professionals rec-
ognize and foster educational opportunities
that increase their capacity to analyze, synthe-
size, evaluate, and extrapolate information
that can be applied to professional responsi-
bilities and situations. Professionals under-
stand the need to support and encourage
research that builds an educational founda-
tion. As a profession, managers of volunteers
should be demanding greater emphasis on
leadership development and personal capacity-
building opportunities from their local net-
works, their international conference, and
educational institutions. Two-hour skill build-
ing workshops may provide quick answers to
immediate problems, but they fail, in the
long term, to cultivate the critical thinking
skills to help individuals ponder, reflect, and
create the new systems that will support vol-
unteerism into the future. In her keynote

address at the 1st AVA Asia Pacific Regional
Conference, Arlene Schindler emphasized that
we must expand our knowledge and develop
our capacity as leaders in a profession that is
rapidly being recognized around the world.

We must be informed not only in the
field of volunteerism, but in economics,
trade, medical advances, and social
issues. We, who provide opportunities
for citizens to participate in the shap-
ing of their societies, must — above
all, be informed — about emerging
issues, about trends, about what is
happening next door as well as what is
happening at home. We must be
informed beyond our field of volun-
teerism.
Secondly, we must be trained and
skilled, not only by attending confer-
ences such as this, but by broadening
our own personal experiences, continu-
ing with our education, becoming vol-
unteers ourselves, understanding and
taking advantage of the progress being
made in compatible fields. For
instance, what is the latest thinking in
organizational development, what are
the new insights in management, in
the required attributes of leadership?
And then, we must integrate the best
of these into our personal management
and leadership practices. (Shindler,
2002, p. 8)

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Impact of Library Resources on Professional Development in Volunteer Administration

Lucy McGowan, CVA

During my second term as a volunteer on the Lake Oswego Public Library Board of Directors, I was assigned to assess the volunteer program because of its inactivity over a number of years. After six months volunteering as the temporary, non-paid, part-time volunteer coordinator, I prepared a report for the board. My recommendations were that there was a need for space as well as a structured plan for the organization to be coordinated by a paid, part-time person with supervisory skills. When the city approved a budget for the program, I was offered that paid, part-time management position.

It was a challenge and a fortunate opportunity to begin a new career, especially in a familiar environment, the library. The limited resources in the card catalog pertaining to volunteerism were referred to as "voluntarism." Turning to a research for volunteer agencies in the vertical file, I found some government and local brochures that led me to the discovery of Northwest Oregon Volunteer Administrators Association (NOVAA), an affiliate of the Association for Volunteer Administration. One of the member/mentors introduced me to AVA and its certification program.

The position required time and energy with volunteers, staff, and the public. To enhance my knowledge of dealing with human resources, I made a commitment to develop my personal library collection. Purchasing autographed books by those who were presenters at workshops I had attended became a hobby. Marlene Wilson's book, *The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs*

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became my Bible at work. Sue Vineyard's consoling *How To Take Care of You*, enlightened the evaluation of my personal life. Gradually, my collection continued to grow to include a variety of works, including: *From The Top Down* by Susan Ellis; *Library Volunteers—Worth the Effort* by Sally Gardner Little; *Building the Short Term Volunteer Program* by Nancy Macduff; and *Leadership Skills for the New Age of Non Profits* by Trudy Seita.

When I presented workshops at the Oregon Library Association, I displayed my personal library collection, along with the NOVAA and AVA literature. One year Val Ogdon, former president of AVA, addressed the library association about the current trends of volunteerism and its application to libraries.

Just imagine the compelling effect if all the professional networks were to support the concept of promoting and creating collections in libraries. They could be influencing factors if they would become a friend of their local library, contact the director and state their needs. They could offer to pay for a subscription, such as *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*. Or they could appeal to individuals and/or local organizations to help defray the cost for subscriptions and/or books, videos, and tapes. These would be available in the library for all the agencies. As we continue to develop the profession, we should expand our resources to include journals and publications on leadership, planning, evaluation, and human resource development.

Depending upon the demand for usage, the library may decide to carry subscriptions

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on its renewal list, likewise, with books, tapes and videos. If suggestions are submitted to the library, its Book Review Committee may consider adding those materials to the collection and/or research for current material pertaining to volunteerism. Professional networks should always provide membership brochures, plus any literature regarding future workshops, for distribution through the library.

School and college libraries should also be considered. Professional networks need to be visible to reach the new generation. Consider linking web sites, marketing subscriptions to *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, leadership journals and magazines, videos and tapes, future workshops and distribution of brochures.

Serving as Vice President of the Professional Development for NOVAA, I was inspired with an opportunity to form a library committee. NOVAA had a limited number of donated books stored in a box that remained with the board. Included were two copies of current issues of *The Journal of Volunteer Administration* to be shared by all. The committee agreed to the necessity for developing a collection pertinent to the profession of volunteerism and that it should be stored at a central location for all its members.

The proposal we presented to the NOVAA Board of Directors requested an allotment of a specific amount from the annual budget each year to be allocated toward building a library collection that would include AVA's journal, volunteer leadership, books-on-tape, and videos. Several libraries in the area were explored as the possible storehouse for the collection.

An agreement was signed with the Lake Oswego Public Library in Lake Oswego, Oregon, stating that the library would be responsible for ordering materials based on suggestions from the NOVAA Library Committee and would maintain the processing and distribution of the materials. The agreement

Professional networks need to be visible to reach the new generation. Consider linking Web sites, marketing subscriptions to JOVA, Leadership magazine, videos and tapes, future workshops and distribution of brochures.

stated the collection would remain the property of the library.

It was a win-win situation. The library administration was pleased with the increase of circulation, and proud to be the sponsors of a special collection. The administrators of volunteer services had access to resources that were available locally or via inter-library loans.

In 1996 at the International Conference on Volunteer Administration in Calgary, Canada, NOVAA received the AVA Regional Ruby Award for a group that developed and implemented an outstanding creative new program. The ruby represents freedom. The library mission advocates its services in "access to information that reflects diverse points of view in accordance with the Library Bill of Rights."

Today, 13 years later, the collection continues to grow. NOVAA continues to fund its yearly allotment, and its Library Committee continues to update the bibliography that is on the web site, www.nova.org.

Cost/Benefits of Managing
a Small Voluntary Organisation

Ruth Gardner

There have been times when I have considered my paid position as manager of Volunteering Canterbury and wondered why I stay here. As the senior of three paid workers in an organisation with limited financial resources that has a wide range of operations, the amount of work for which I am responsible sometimes seems impossibly large. And yet, in my ninth year in the job, I still love it! Why?

Volunteering is about free will and having a choice. And I definitely chose this job. After 20 years in commercial administration I was thoroughly disillusioned with working in a culture where the dominant values were very different from my own. I had always been involved in voluntary work, mainly in child-related organisations and political activism, but until I moved to Christchurch in the late 1980s, I was not aware that there was such a thing as the voluntary sector.

After settling in here, I took a couple of University Feminist Studies papers, and as my disillusionment with the commercial sector grew, I decided to seek training that might enable me to gain employment in the not-for-profit sector. I vaguely thought this might be in the helping skills area, still not really aware that there were paid jobs available in voluntary organisation administration. The only training option seemed to be at Christchurch Polytech, and in 1993 I duly enrolled as a part-time student in the Certificate in Community and Social Services program. This was an extremely basic, non-assessed course, but I enjoyed the classes, found the assignments manageable in time and content, and soon felt ready for more.

The course required that I do some hours of supervised voluntary work, and I carefully considered where this might happen. My choice was the local Women's Centre, a feminist organisation with a focus on domestic violence. My offer of help was accepted, and I commenced training as a volunteer support worker, a role that I found immensely satisfying. Later that year I was made redundant from my paid job and took on several part-time accounting contracts. The Women's Centre needed a finance worker, and that role became another part of my "portfolio." By now I was a member of the organising collective, an experience which provided both challenges and pleasure as we struggled to balance the task of managing the centre while caring for the wellbeing of clients and collective members.

During all this, my dream was to obtain a full-time, paid administrative position in a not-for-profit organisation. In late 1994 my dream came true. I became manager of Volunteering Canterbury, and I slowly discovered that my dream contained some nightmare elements. At times my learning curve seemed steeper than Mount Everest. My commercial management experience had gained me the job, but time and again it was my experience in the Women's Centre Collective, as the chairperson of a local residents' group, and as a Green Party activist that I called on for guidance.

I quickly discovered that the scope of the job was infinite, and I needed to put some very clear boundaries in place. I learned to prioritise (and re-prioritise as circumstances changed). I was obliged to abandon my perfectionist habits. Thoroughly completing any task seemed to be out of the question. Uninterrupted time became a scarce commodity.

The benefits derived from managing a small voluntary organisation mirror in many ways the benefits of being a volunteer. There is an element of free will, of giving service, especially when income is considered. In

Ruth Gardner has been manager of Volunteering Canterbury for the past eight and a half years. This organisation was the second volunteer centre to open in Aotearoa New Zealand and has been operating for 15 years. Gardner believes everyone benefits when there is open sharing of resources and experience.

most cases the salary received is less than the reward given for similar skills in other sectors. There are unlikely to be any extra benefits, such as superannuation or a "company" car, and job security tends to be minimal. But there are other less tangible benefits that are immensely rewarding. For me, the overwhelming benefit is to be working for an organisation whose values closely match my own. The vision of the organisation I work for is "Supportive communities where voluntary work is understood, recognised and valued." This is a vision I have consciously subscribed to since I joined the Green Party in the mid 1970s. While I continued through the '70s and '80s to work in the commercial sector, much of my energy and passion went into green politics. As it was 1996 before we saw the election of New Zealand's first Green M.P.'s, this work was often frustrating in terms of public success, yet always immensely rewarding in terms of friendship and personal growth, and a feeling that I was making a difference, however small. I find it fascinating to review how as my paid work moved into the voluntary sector in the early '90s, my active Green involvement diminished, a clear indication to me that those needs for "soul work" were now being met in my paid work.

While certainly true that deep friendships can and do emerge among colleagues working together in the commercial sector, it is my observation that they are likely to be more prevalent and of a deeper nature when nurtured in the voluntary sector.

The stresses of managing a small voluntary organisation can be overwhelming. I have witnessed "burnout" in a number of my colleagues and have at times been aware that my own limits were close to being reached. In a small voluntary organisation, the tasks available are often limitless, and even when clear boundaries have been set, unforeseen circumstances can breach those boundaries. The manager of a small voluntary organisation must be able to prioritise and re-prioritise, then re-prioritise again as circumstances

> Contacts and networking are invaluable, leading us to people who willingly give their expertise for free because they too are inspired by the vision.

change. Those of us who are perfectionists soon learn that there is rarely time to thoroughly complete any task. You learn to do the bare minimum and see any extra "frills" as an exotic luxury.

My personal values are honesty, openness, connection, and simplicity, and I see these personified around me every day.

As a manager, I have autonomy, can set my own agendas, and plan my own work schedule. I lead a team that shares my values and vision. Many of the team are people I have personally recruited, and we care for each other. While I am the "boss" and bear the final responsibility, the spirit of team co-operation is strong, and help and support are freely offered. I continually watch team members develop and blossom and often see them leave for new roles and careers. While they are missed, there is immense satisfaction in knowing I have helped them along their path.

In most small voluntary organisations, there are limited resources. Again, there is satisfaction in managing the budget wisely, occasional frustration over having to work with outdated equipment, and satisfaction in overcoming obstacles without spending money. Contacts and networking are invaluable, leading us to people who willingly give their expertise for free because they too are inspired by the vision.

All these benefits have a "shadow" side, a matching cost. The skill of managing a small voluntary organisation lies in keeping positive, developing the relationships that will help to promote the vision, and always keeping the vision firmly in view.

I am aware of a number of people managing small voluntary organisations in New Zealand whose experience is similar to mine. I wonder how my experience compares with people working in the voluntary sector in other countries and welcome feedback.

GUIDELINES

FOR SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

Content

The Journal of Volunteer Administration seeks to publish original manuscripts that provide for
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