

# ARE YOU LISTENING?

Balancing the needs of your organization  
with the needs of volunteers to maximize  
success.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

*Margaret Mead*

# Objectives:

- **To examine ten (10) key elements needed to create a satisfied, sustainable volunteer force.**
- **To explore creative ways to utilize volunteers to maximize impact.**

# Definition of Volunteer

“Giving time, energies, or talents to any individual or group for which the individual is not paid.”

**Source:**

Safrit, R. D., King, J.E., & Burcsu, K. (1994). *A study of volunteerism in Ohio cities and surrounding communities*. Columbus: Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University.

# **Volunteering in America Research Highlights--Key Findings**

**[www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov)**

- In 2008, 61.8 million adult Americans contributed 8 billion hours of volunteer service worth \$162 billion based on dollar value of a volunteer hour (\$20.25).**
- Neighborhood engagement levels have risen sharply since 2007.**
- Nevada experienced the largest increase in their year-to-year volunteer rate at 3.6 percentage points, from 17.9% in 2007 to 21.4% 2008.**

# The Problem

According to the *Volunteering in America 2008* report:

- 1 in 3 American volunteers dropped out in 2007.
- Represents a huge loss of valuable human capital-about \$30 billion a year.
- Many nonprofit leaders are holding a leaky bucket of vital volunteer resources.

## **Why volunteers are dropping out:**

- **Volunteer opportunities aren't challenging or meaningful enough.**
- **Volunteer management is inadequate.**
- **Volunteering is too rigid.**

# Beyond Volunteer Management 101

## Components of a Successful Volunteer Program:

- Written Policies
- Written Job Description
- Recruiting
- Application
- Interview and Screening
- Orientation and Training
- Matching Criteria
- Supervision and Evaluation
- Record Keeping
- Measuring Program Effectiveness

# Mismanaging Volunteers - Statistics

## Good practices

- Matching volunteers' skills with Assignment
- Recognizing the contributions of volunteers
- Providing volunteers with training and professional development.
- Training paid staff to work with volunteers
- Measuring the impact of volunteers annually

## % non profits that practice

45%

35%

25%

19%

30%

Source: Volunteer Management Capacity in American's Charities and Congregations 2004

# Why They Volunteer:

Motivation is an inside job. People do things for their reasons, not yours, so our role is to create an organizational culture that stimulates the inner motivation of each volunteer.

# A model of volunteer involvement – *Understanding the volunteer's point of view*

- The **doubter** is outside volunteering and may have attitudes, characters or circumstances which keep them a non-volunteer
- The **starter** has entered volunteering by making an enquiry or application
- The **doer** has committed to being a volunteer and begun volunteering
- The **stayer** persists as long-term volunteer

The challenge for organizations is to aid each transition in the most positive way possible.

# What Can Volunteers Do For You?

Most community organizations need the professional skills offered by volunteers.

- Organizations are under strain of the current economic crisis, a leadership drain as older executive retire, and high turnover among younger staff.
- Volunteers are an undervalued and underused resource for address these challenges.

# Volunteers can help with:

- Technology services
- Developing programs
- Training staff
- Conducting strategic planning
- Fund development
- In some organizations they deliver most of the direct services: BB/BS, Scouting, AARP Money Management Program; Wetland Park

**All without pay!**

# 10 Ways to Make Volunteers Happy

[Joanne Fritz](#), About.com Guide

- 1. Volunteers want you to be prepared for them.***
- 2. Volunteers want to feel welcomed.***
- 3. Volunteers want good training.***
- 4. Volunteers want to do interesting work.***
- 5. Volunteers want to know up front how much time the job will take.***

# ***10 Ways to Make Volunteers Happy Continued***

- 6. Volunteers want to be appreciated.***
- 7. Volunteers want to be communicated with.***
- 8. Volunteers want to know that they are helping to make the world a better place.***
- 9. Volunteers want to be socially connected.***
- 10. Volunteers want to learn something new.***

# Environmental Literacy and Volunteers—In perfect Harmony

***A sustainable, quality volunteer base  
increases an organization's ability to  
foster Environmental Literacy***

# The principles of Environmental Literacy and “Happy Volunteers” are compatible

- Engage
- Empower
- Embrace

# The goals of Environmental Literacy and “Happy Volunteers” are compatible:

- Know
- Care
- Do

# ***Listen To Your Audience of Volunteers!***

**Apply your education, interpretation skills and techniques to create a competent, committed volunteer workforce eager to join you in fostering environmental literacy.**

**YOU DO IT SO WELL!**

# Making it Work in the Real World

The 10 essentials in *What Makes a Volunteer Happy* will be incorporated into the following focus areas:

1. Dedication and Leadership of Organization to Volunteer Programs
2. Life Long Learning
3. Getting Personal
4. Meaningful Service

***Thank You!***