



building Community building Capacity

Volunteers – A Valuable Resource for Community Recycling and Waste Reduction Efforts

**October 19, 2017
2017 MARR Forum**

Session Overview

- **Trends in Volunteering**
- **Recruiting Challenges**
- **Retention Strategies**
- **Recognizing Our Strengths**
- **Risk Management for Volunteers**

WE 
VOLUNTEERS

Trends in Volunteering



Food
Collection

Trends in Volunteering

According to Stats Canada, in a recent survey;

- In 2014, about one-half of Canadians contributed their time, energy and skills to groups and organizations such as charities and non-profits.
- They provided leadership on boards and committees;
 - canvassed for funds
 - provided advice, counselling or mentoring
 - visited seniors
 - prepared and delivered food
 - served as volunteer drivers
 - advocated for social causes like the environment and fair trade
 - coached children and youth.

In short, they shaped their communities and enabled non-profit organizations to deliver programs and services to millions of their fellow Canadians.

Trends in Volunteering

Points to ponder;

- Over 13.3 million people (47% of Canadians aged 15 and older) did volunteer work
- Devoted almost 2.07 billion hours to their volunteer activities which is equivalent to 1.1 million full time jobs
- Number of hours dedicated to volunteer work has plateaued
- A small portion of the volunteers do all the work (10% of volunteers accounted for 53% of all volunteer hours)
- Sports and recreation and the social service sectors get the most support
- Likelihood of volunteering depends partly on life stage
 - Age
 - Marital status including having young children
 - Education
 - income

Non Profits in Canada

- Over 80,000 registered charities in Canada
- At least 1500 new ones each year
- 725 organizations per 100,00 Manitobans
- According to 2014 survey Manitoba has a 53% volunteer rate compared to Saskatchewan at 54%;
 - 19 % sports and recreation
 - 18 % social services
 - 15 % religious based
 - 9 % education and research
 - 6 % development and housing
 - 5 % health related
 - 5 % arts and culture
 - 3 % hospitals
 - 3 % law, advocacy and politics
 - 2 % environment



By Frits Ahlefeldt

Training Issues and Demands

Here is what we are noticing as being “hot button” training requests;

- How to recruit, retain and recognize volunteers
- Roles and responsibilities of the board
- Leadership development – training for senior staff
- Operational issues
 - Effective meetings
 - Constitutional work
 - Policy development
 - Volunteer management
 - Team building and conflict resolution
- Governance and Strategic Planning



Identifying Expectations

Here is what we know about volunteering!

- Volunteers are a unique group
- Manitoba has one of the highest percentages of volunteers in Canada
 - Good, because it makes our communities strong
 - Bad, because we know programs are under funded and potentially at risk
- Volunteer for a variety of reasons
- Need to understand the “why” before we can figure out what makes and keeps them “happy”



"The youth have been great volunteers.
Plus, they work for donuts!"

Who is volunteering and why?

- **Adults**

- Volunteer rate is 54% in the 35 – 44 age group
- This was the only group to record an increase in volunteer hours
- They are contributing to groups where their families may be involved (sports, PAC or other school based groups)
- Most other groups of volunteers are plateauing and not increasing as this group is

- **Other facts:**

- Marital status plays a role (singles volunteer more hours than married couples do)
- May be because they have more free time
- Education plays a role
 - Post secondary grads more likely to volunteer (58%)
 - Without a high school diploma (37 %)

Who is volunteering and why?

- **Seniors**

- Volunteer rate of 36 - 41%
- Very active in their communities
- Tend to serve on multiple boards or groups
- Like the social aspect
- Sometimes may be difficult to manage (set in their ways, know best)
- Spirit is willing but the flesh may be weak (health issues may impede ability)

- **Youth**

- Very engaged in community despite what you have heard (58% aged 15 – 24)
- Tend to lean to “popular” pursuits
- Organization must have relevancy to attract
- Also like the social aspect
- Need to see volunteering as a “plus” to their resume
- Push the “community credit” gain to involve

Who is volunteering and why?

• Indigenous Volunteers

- No word for ``volunteering`` in native language
- Helping out or volunteering is often times not discussed in the community – they just do it!
- Favour a holistic or integrated sense of community
- Groups need to ask `Why do we need or want Indigenous volunteers involved?``
- All about the environment

• Immigrant Volunteers

- Heightened sense of community
- Tend to volunteer as a family unit
- Trust issues can be often times hard to get around
- Need for acceptance into their community before they will be receptive to volunteering
- Obvious barriers in place like language, comprehension and understanding, fear and intimidation

If we know who is volunteering, then we can target them for recruitment!



- Examine why and where you need volunteers;
 - Look at your activities; waste management, recycling programs, community events, marketing?
 - Look at gaps in skill set or expertise
 - Look at your clientele or members who participate or use your services
- Look to the greater community to seek out those individuals;
 - If you need younger volunteers, recruit through the high school or post secondary institutes
 - If you feel that older volunteers are required, then go through the community 55 plus centre
 - Word of mouth works!! Ask your current volunteers to recommend others – 47% volunteer because someone they know someone else that is doing it

Identifying Expectations

So...why do we volunteer on not for profit boards?

- To make a difference
- We believe in the organization and want to be a strong part of it
- We have a personal connection
- It is the “right” thing to do
- Gain work experience or share work expertise
- Make friends
- Share a skill or talent
- For personal fulfillment
- Want to give back to the group
- Are a part of the community
- Hidden “agenda”



Identifying Expectations

If we understand the “why”...

We can...

- Make decisions that are in the best interests of our organization, communitiites and our volunteers
- Better match individuals to programs or services requiring work – recycling and other programs
- Increase volunteer involvement and ownership
- Decrease volunteer turnover
- Implement effective recruitment and retention strategies
- Build in loyalty to the organization

Retention Strategies to Foster Engagement



Retention Strategies to Foster Engagement

- **Matching skills to jobs**
- **Managing our volunteers**
- **Empowering our volunteers**
- **Risk management**



Seven Deadly Sins...

1. Taking advantage of someone's inability to say "NO"
2. Unrealistic expectations
3. Guilt tripping or bullying
4. No supports in place
5. Damaged or non existing communication lines
6. Sabotaging new volunteers
7. Making volunteers incur unreasonable expenses with no compensation made available



How do we change our sins?

- Understand personalities of volunteers
- Expectations should be reasonable and projects/programs should be “doable”
- Don’t lay the guilt - we are all in this together
- Have foundation documents/policies/procedures in place and follow them AND provide ongoing supervision to volunteers
- Open communication lines to staff, administration and to governing boards
- Balance the workload, examine underlying relationships
- Make all attempts to ensure that volunteers aren’t paying a price financially for their volunteer efforts

Recognizing our Volunteers



**“Organizations that don’t
celebrate success will
eventually have no success to
celebrate.”**

Recognition: Keys to Success

- It's the little things that make the difference
- Recognition is more than an “event”
- It should be both formal and informal and
- Should be continuous and spontaneous
- May be a financial cost and if so, will need a budget line
- Should be meaningful to the volunteer
- Timely and relevant
- Creative and fun!



Recognizing Their Strengths and Contributions

What makes our volunteers happy?

- Acknowledgment
- Gratitude
- Listening to what they “want” to contribute
- Matching their skills to tasks
- Giving support: ongoing and situational
- Giving guidance
- Knowing the “burn out” signs
- Readiness of volunteers to step up
- Connection with staff
- Connection with clients, membership and community
- Not assuming they will incur costs for their volunteer effort
- They want professional development opportunities, too!
- And...they want to have fun and enjoy the volunteer experience!!



Risk Management



Risk Management for Volunteers

- Ignoring risks does not make it go away
- Denial merely increases liability
- Cannot be 100% proactive nor should you be 100% reactive
 - Identify: what is the risk or issue?
 - Evaluate: what is the impact?
 - Control: what can we control and how?
 - Review: what can we change?

Making a Difference...why it matters to our volunteers.

- Involved in something “bigger than themselves
- Ability to meet a need and have an impact
- Opportunity to enhance skills/training
- Direct connection with membership
- Involvement in program/project creation
- Evaluation procedures
- Ongoing feedback and assessment of what works, what doesn't and what needs to be changed
- Empowerment and fulfillment that go hand in hand
- Strong sense of community and ownership of organization

Volunteers are our life's blood...

We need to respect, nurture, honor
and support our volunteers.

It not only will make our programs and services the best they can
be for our organizations but will also help us build strong,
vibrant and thriving partnerships within them.

That will translate to a strong, vibrant and thriving community.



Questions?



building Community building Capacity

Judith Cameron

Manager, Training and Development

Volunteer Manitoba

Judith.cameron@volunteermanitoba.ca

www.volunteermanitoba.ca

info@volunteermanitoba.ca

1-204-477-5180 ext. 222