



building Community building Capacity

Recruiting, Retaining and Recognizing Our Volunteers

Association of Manitoba Municipalities

Municipal Officials Seminar

March 17th – March 18th, 2015

Session Overview

- **Trends in Volunteering and Training Issues and Demands**
- **Recruiting Challenges**
 - Identifying Expectations (both sides)
 - Getting to Work – Trends and Challenges
- **Retention Strategies**
 - Matching Skills to Jobs
 - Managing our Volunteers
- **Recognizing Our Strengths**
 - What makes our Volunteers Happy?
 - How do we keep them happy?

WE 
VOLUNTEERS

Trends in Volunteering

According to Stats Canada, in a recent survey;

- In 2012, 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
 - 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

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
- 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”

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 and our volunteers
- Better match individuals to programs or services requiring work
- 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

- **Matching skills to jobs**
 - Volunteers are not always sure what it is that they want to do
 - They just know they want to be a part of something they believe in and support
 - Intake process is critical to identifying what a volunteer would like to contribute and in what way;
 - It should provide a clear picture of their role and responsibilities
 - Should clearly identify expectations and outcomes
 - Should also define other areas and needs of the organization
 - Intake process could be quite formal (interviews, applications) or very informal (they show up and are put to work)



Retention Strategies to Foster Engagement

- **Managing Our Volunteers**
 - There are processes and procedural manuals that can be used to manage our volunteer human resources
 - Orientation processes are very effective
 - They take the ``unknown`` component away
 - They detail and explain the rules of engagement
 - Provide in depth understanding of the demands of volunteering
 - And should be handled no differently as you would when bringing new employees on board

Retention Strategies to Foster Engagement

Managing our volunteers

- Allow for ``*empowerment*`` of volunteers:
 - Are they able to make decisions?
 - Do they have the organizations support when they do make decisions?
 - Are you providing training to deal with these issues?
 - Conflict resolution
 - Team building
 - Problem solving
 - Time management or other procedural needs



Seven Deadly Sins...

1. Taking advantage of someone's inability to say "NO"
2. Unrealistic expectations
3. Guilt tripping
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
- 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 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!!



A Sample of Volunteer Manitoba Workshops and Training Sessions for Non Profit Groups:

- Time Management Strategies
- Roles and Responsibilities of Boards
- Effective Communication Skills
- Liabilities for Non Profit Boards
- Basic Bookkeeping for Non Profit Boards
- Team Building Strategies
- Writing Persuasive Proposals
- Effective Meetings
- Designing and Launching Social Media
- Writing Board Policy
- Engaging Community
- The Three R's – Recruit, Retain and Recognize
- Succession Planning
- Strategic Board Governance
- Dealing with Diversity
- How to Incorporate As A Non Profit
- Creating, Developing and Revising Your Constitution

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 membership, but will help us build a strong, vibrant
and thriving organization.

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



Questions?



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