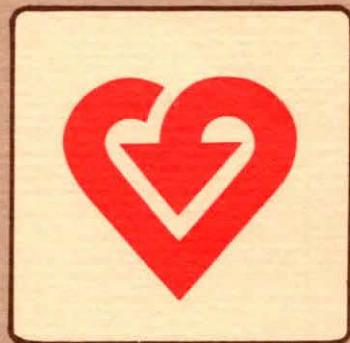


# KEEPING THINGS SIMPLE

A Guide to Effective Volunteer Program Management



Robert A. Christenson

This handbook was made possible through a Title I, H.E.A. grant from the South Dakota Department of Education and Cultural Affairs, Pierre, South Dakota. A special thank-you goes to the Department of Education and Cultural Affairs Planning Commission, Marian Hersrud, Chairwoman, 1978.

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by

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March, 1979

## FORWARD

It has been said that from the 1930's through the 1970's Americans depended on their government for various types of assistance and services more than at any other time in their history. Now in the late 1970's taxpayers are realizing that if they choose to pay fewer taxes they must rely on volunteers to maintain services at an acceptable level. Libraries, schools, parks, city and state governments, hospitals, and human service agencies all will have to rely even more on the valuable "volunteer service hour," to meet their goals and objectives. But many people are saying — so what? They emphasize that throughout modern history the United States — probably more than any other country — has been a nation of volunteers and will continue to be so through the 1980's and beyond. In the 1980's Americans will continue to realize that our greatest resource is our ability to volunteer for whatever reason or cause.

Today the challenge to volunteer coordinators is great. Volunteers must be supervised effectively. Volunteers must be challenged, motivated and recognized. It will become more and more obvious that the key to a sound and productive volunteer program is the volunteer coordinator to whom this handbook is dedicated in the spirit of education and cooperation.

Finally, a special thank you to Barb Leitschuh, Coordinator of the Department of Social Services Volunteer Program; Jim Green, Coordinator of the Volunteer Transportation Service; Bob Nygaard, Coordinator of the Handicapped Action Program; Barbara Painter, Voluntary Action Center Secretary; and President Dave Green and the entire Sioux Falls Voluntary Action Center Board of Directors. All of these people are very perceptive and intelligent and strongly believe in the magic of volunteers. Together as a team they have accomplished much.

Robert A. Christenson

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## CHAPTER I

### A VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Volunteering has always been an integral part of American culture. People in every community across the country are constantly volunteering. Volunteers are relied upon from everything to simply helping out a neighbor to addressing urgent political issues and social needs. Because volunteering is so prevalent in America what volunteers do often goes unnoticed. For example:

- Who donates blood?
- Who passes out campaign leaflets?
- Who goes Christmas carolling in hospitals?
- Who serves on school boards?
- Who works to preserve historic landmarks?
- Who tricks-or-treats for UNICEF?
- Who appears on fund-raising telethons?
- Who runs the PTA?
- Who uses radios to relay calls for help?
- Who leads 4-H clubs? Scout troops? Youth sport teams?
- Who advocates for less violence on television?
- Who supports community orchestras?
- Who recycles bottles, paper and old clothing?<sup>1</sup>

This list only touches the surface, but serves to illustrate the diversity of possible volunteer activity. "To volunteer" does not mean only the formal commitment of being a Big Sister or Friendly Visitor, but includes all the ways people choose to become involved in their communities and to help themselves.

Susan J. Ellis and Katherine H. Noyes in their book *By the People, A History of Americans As Volunteers*, developed the following definition:

"TO VOLUNTEER is to choose to act in recognition of a need, with an attitude of social responsibility and without concern for monetary profit, going beyond what is necessary to one's physical well-being."<sup>2</sup>

Ellis and Noyes continue to say that this definition contains several key words:

- "choose," emphasizing the element of free will:
- "social responsibility," meaning purposeful action in any area of public life, or for the benefit of those in one's immediate situation. Social responsibility can refer to meeting specific needs confined to a small group, as well as to actions relating to society at large;
- "without . . . monetary profit," meaning no personal economic gain, but allowing for some form of reward or reimbursement (monetary or not) that is not meant to equal the value of the service given;
- "beyond," meaning something extra, in addition to the minimum of involvement that might be unavoidable.<sup>3</sup>

In moving from definition to application it is safe to say that nearly every function currently performed by various governmental units and social agencies was once a new idea or experiment of some voluntary organization — roads, public works, medical aid, educa-

tion, welfare and the care of the aged. The pages of history are full of the exploits and achievements of the militia during the American Revolution, volunteer firefighters, and the groups of citizens who joined together to build schools and hospitals, or to provide for the sick and the poor of their communities.<sup>1</sup>

An example of some agencies that started as voluntary organizations that are in existence today are the Sierra Club (1892), Boys' Clubs of America (1906), United Way of America (1887) and Big Sisters Association (1908).

One out of four Americans over the age of 13 does some form of volunteer work, according to a 1974 Census Bureau Survey commissioned by ACTION. That means nearly 37 million Americans, or 24 percent of 156 million citizens over the age of 13 gave without payment some of their time, energy and effort to a cause in the year ending April, 1974.

The survey continues to say volunteers averaged nine hours a week on their individual volunteer projects. This is the equivalent of 3.5 million people working full time for one year. By comparison, the number of paid workers during 1974 was approximately 85 million.

The most typical American volunteer in 1974 was a married, white woman between ages 25 and 44 who held a college degree and was in the upper income bracket. However, a hallmark of American voluntarism is that all strata of economic, educational and social levels contribute their share. The survey shows that 12 percent of those Americans who live below the family income level of \$4,000 a year donate their time and effort to a cause of their choosing. Even among the unemployed, 17 percent do volunteer work.

A comparison between the Department of Labor survey of 1965 and the 1974 survey shows a continual rise in voluntarism. The 1965 survey showed 18 percent of the population volunteered, compared to 24 percent in 1974.

In 1965, 21 percent of the female population were volunteers, compared to 26 percent in 1974. This increase occurred at a time when female labor force participation rates rose substantially. Male volunteers numbered 15 percent in 1965 and 20 percent in 1974. Thus, the rate of increase for men during the nine-year interval was higher than that for women.

The ACTION survey shows that volunteers are working more hours each week than in 1965. For instance, a 1965 survey shows that only 54 percent of volunteers reported they worked more than 25 hours per year in their chosen fields, while in 1974 a total of 63 percent said they worked more than 25 hours a year.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, a volunteer profile cannot be completed until it is understood that people have always volunteered for a variety of reasons. Today these reasons include leadership training, academic credit, career exploration, social status, potential for eventual employment and strong personal sympathies. As long as the basic elements of choice, work toward a social goal, and lack of profit are present, why someone volunteers is largely immaterial. It is true that people may achieve their personal goals and still be volunteers.

## FOOTNOTES

### Chapter I

<sup>1</sup>Ellis, Susan J. and Noyes, Katherine H., *By the People, A History of Americans As Volunteers*, Michael C. Prestegord & Co., Philadelphia, PA, 1978, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, p. 10

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>*Viewpoint: Volunteerism*, A Summary Report on Current Programming in Volunteerism by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, Battle Creek, Michigan. March 1978.

<sup>5</sup>*Americans Volunteer 1974, A Statistical Study of Volunteers in the United States*, U.S. Government Printing Office, ACTION Pamphlet 4000-17. February 1975, pp. 3-13.



## CHAPTER II

### DO YOU NEED VOLUNTEERS? — AND HOW TO RECRUIT THEM IF YOU DO

Sometimes there isn't enough time in a working day to accomplish everything that needs to be done. Occasionally there are just too many things to do and too little time to do them. Hopefully this is the exception, not the rule. But what if it is the rule with your agency or organization? What if essential services are not being provided to clients because of "too little time to do everything that needs to be done?" What if staff becomes frustrated with work loads feeling too little time is being spent on important job goals and objectives? What if too much time is being invested in tasks that staff really does not enjoy doing or perhaps someone else could do with a bit of appropriate training?

If this is your situation, could volunteers help solve your problem?

In the Goodwill handbook series published in 1973 entitled *Volunteers in Rehabilitation* some of the benefits of involving volunteers in an agency included:

1. Increased services to clients, including more time, greater variety of services and more individualized programs;
2. Providing a bridge between clients and the community;
3. Providing a vital rehabilitation component — someone who really cares (even though they are not paid to do so);
4. Community understanding and cooperation;
5. Social Action-Advocacy (in legislation at local, state and federal levels);
6. Fund raising;
7. Administrative and clerical assistance;
8. Technical assistance and professional consultation; and
9. Bringing people together — clients, staff, volunteers and the community!<sup>1</sup>

If your organization needs volunteer assistance for any number of reasons then the next step in the process (after receiving approval from your supervisor) is the "job description."

It is essential to design the tasks volunteers will be asked to perform before actual volunteer recruiting begins. Marlene Wilson, in her book *The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs*, states that "recruiting (volunteers) before designing jobs is rather like trying to dance before the music begins. The possibility of ending up out of step is very good indeed."<sup>2</sup>

An excellent resource to utilize in developing useful volunteer jobs is Dr. Ivan Scheier's Need Overlap Analysis in the Helping Process (NOAH). Dr. Scheier states in *People Approach, Nine New Strategies for Citizen Volunteer Involvement*, that Need Overlap Analysis "directly, seriously, and systematically consults volunteer program constituencies as follows: (1) staff on their needs for help with their work, and their willingness to accommodate volunteers in receiving that help from them; (2) consumers/clients on their primary

needs for help in their lives; (3) volunteers on their willingness to contribute help which fits in the above two-fold matrix; also what they would like in return.”<sup>3</sup>

A job description used by the Sioux Falls Voluntary Action Center (VAC) is presented in Chapter IV, “Additional Resources.” The job description can be general or very specific, depending on the volunteer job. VAC requires all agencies using its recruiting services to submit requests for volunteers on this form.

Next in line, after the need for volunteers has been established and volunteer job descriptions developed, is the volunteer recruitment process. The Sioux Falls Voluntary Action Center tries to incorporate two basic volunteer recruitment philosophies into its program. The two philosophies are the “Marketing Approach” and the “People Approach.”

The Marketing Approach is based on the premise that a volunteer program is similar to a business for profit in that the product being sold is the opportunity to help others while many times helping yourself. In most cases helping others while helping yourself is a very sellable product. Dr. Norma Selvidge states in “Marketing Volunteering” that “helping others adds a dimension to the maintenance of daily living and has incredibly high pay-offs in self-satisfaction, social approval, and meaningful interactions.”<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Selvidge goes on to say that an effective marketing strategy is essential to any volunteer recruitment effort involving the following five steps:

- (1) Know your product
- (2) Assess your needs
- (3) Target the audience
- (4) Choose a medium
- (5) Sell<sup>5</sup>

Remembering that the best advertisement is a satisfied customer, the statement has meaning for volunteer coordinators who are selling an opportunity for service to customers who are buying the opportunity to serve. Dr. Selvidge concludes that “the very fabric of this country is woven with the yarn of our economic system, so let’s look at volunteering as a marketable idea.”<sup>6</sup> The key word with the Marketing Approach is “exchange.” In exchange for volunteering a volunteer can gain relevant experience for a future paying job, meet new people, develop a greater sense of community awareness, gain public exposure, receive support on a resume, and, of course, a sense of self-pride and appreciation for just plain helping out.

The second philosophy — entitled “People Approach” — was developed by Dr. Ivan Scheier of the National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado.

The People Approach philosophy is based on the premise that volunteer coordinators should build on the motivation, skills and talents a potential volunteer has, not the motivation, skills and talents the coordinator *thinks* a potential volunteer ought to have or wishes he/she had. The People Approach begins where the person is, not where the job is. Fit the job to the person, rather than the person to the job. Dr. Scheier states in *People Approach, Nine New Strategies for Citizen Volunteer Involvement*, that:

We approach Mary Doe, without a job in mind, not even in the back of our minds. We have Mary in mind. We don’t ask if she wants to be a volunteer probation officer or a meals-on-wheels volunteer, or a library aide; we ask only what she likes to do, can do, might be able to do. Only then do we think about building a volunteer job around her skillwills.<sup>7</sup> If we

discover she happens to like gardening and is good at it, we then try to find where gardening might be useful to other people in the community, or in association with an agency.

"Job Approach" is fairly dominant in volunteer programs today. Ordinarily, we come to the potential volunteer and recruit with some notion of what we want that person to do. Indeed, we often take pride in the specificity of our volunteer job descriptions. People must fit through that door to service, or they can't serve, either because they don't want to, or because we won't allow them to serve.

Job approach appears to be one legacy of a powerful trend in modern volunteer leadership: the adaptation of concepts and methods from the paid work world, principally personnel, business and public administration. To our credit, we have been willing to learn and apply what can be applied from other disciplines to the advancement of volunteering. Yet it may be time to pause and reconsider whether we have copied the paid work world too much, and in so doing, lost something of our special genius. We have failed to focus on the things we can do, which are less possible in the paid work world, or impossible. In the paid work world, job approach is necessary. Restricted by available budget lines, the employer seeks a secretary or an accountant not just because the employer has some need for such a position, but also because that's what the employer is able to pay for. An applicant may have many other significant capabilities, but if he/she cannot type, or cannot keep books, he/she cannot be accepted. The employer doesn't have a job opening for that person's other talents. This same person need not be lost to service in the people approach volunteer work model. As long as we are not trapped into copying job approach, volunteering can build the job around the person — People Approach. It is not bound by budget lines in engaging people.

Similarly, volunteer leadership may have copied too much from other disciplines as well; for example, from social work, and sociological and psychological theories of helping, paid or unpaid. People Approach may prove to confront them too, in some of their assumptions about the helping process.

We call for a return to the common ground of work out of which we believe paid work and all other models of service originally develop; people's natural work styles and preferences.

We call for a reconsideration of whether the strategies and methods of volunteer leadership have become too derivative. We believe they have. We believe it is time to redevelop strategies and methods based on the unique skill and spirit of volunteer leadership: motivating people without money. In order to motivate people without money, we must get closer to what they are motivated to do — People Approach.<sup>8</sup>

The Sioux Falls VAC utilizes aspects of both the Marketing Approach and the People Approach to recruit volunteers for its own programs and for programs of participating agencies. The People Approach is used when a potential volunteer is not specifically recruited for a job, but none-the-less, has a skill that a volunteer job could be developed around. For volunteer coordinators, developing an "individualized volunteer job" in this manner is a challenge in that creativity and sound judgment must be utilized to transform the skill of the volunteer into valuable volunteer service hours.

In many cases the Marketing Approach is used when volunteers are recruited for specific jobs. In these cases, what the volunteer can gain from the volunteer experience is highlighted. An exchange is made. The volunteer donates valuable volunteer service hours to the community in exchange for the opportunity to develop a skill or brush-up on an old one, to receive relevant work experience, to develop a greater sense of community awareness, or simply to feel good about yourself for helping when needed.

An important ingredient of the Marketing Approach to volunteer recruitment is choosing

the proper medium to sell volunteering. Marlene Wilson in her book *The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs* provides these few general suggestions:

1. Do specific, rather than general recruiting whenever possible. Some generalized PR is necessary to acquaint the community at large with your program and to establish both visibility and credibility. However, few volunteers are recruited this way. It is better to:
  - a. Choose appropriate audiences whose interests and priorities match your needs. For example, most service clubs have yearly priorities determined by their national organizations. If the priority for Kiwanis is senior citizens this year, an appeal for youth workers may not be appropriate.  
Likewise, it is futile to appeal to a club of business and professional women for day care aides, as they all work when that agency needs help.
  - b. Determine where the skills are that you need and actively seek them out. If you need a brochure done, seek help from an advertising agency or club or from the college art department. If you are starting a program for children with learning disabilities, try ex-teachers, psychology students and parents of the children (they have the basic skills needed, plus a real interest in learning more about the problem). If you wait for volunteers to find you instead of actively seeking them out, the results are usually disappointing.
  - c. Be as specific and honest in your appeal as possible. What is your need and why? The usual plea of "we need your help" is getting more and more ineffective, because so many groups and causes need help. As volunteers become more selective and concerned about the value of involvement, they become more insistent upon knowing what skills you need, when and why, so that they can make intelligent decisions as to whether they fit that need or not. And be honest about how much time and what type of work the volunteer job will entail. A glamorous snow-job or the casual "it will hardly take any of your time at all" are danger signals to a good volunteer.
2. Have a year-round recruitment plan. Most agencies find early fall and January to be their most fruitful recruitment months for community adults. (Many people determine their yearly schedule of involvement after the children are in school or after the start of a new year.)  
Students, both college and high school, are more likely to volunteer during the summer, so a late spring recruitment is often quite productive for them. However, many schools are now giving academic credit for community involvement and if this is possible in your community, the appropriate classes should be contacted in early September and January also. Some universities have Volunteer Bureaus, and if so, they do large, general recruitments in the fall and in January.  
During the slower recruitment months, you should still plan speeches, human interest news stories, brochures, etc., because there is often a lag time involved. The prospective volunteers you speak to today may actually be free and ready to volunteer 3, 6 or 12 months from now, so be consistent and year around in your efforts.
3. Utilize a variety of recruitment techniques. Certain approaches will appeal to one person, another to others, so try variety and creativity. Some of the possible techniques are:
  - Newspapers: feature and news stories; ads; volunteer opportunity column; picture coverage of volunteers at work.
  - Radio and TV: Public service spots (free); interview or talk shows; news stories.

- Posters, billboards or bumper stickers.
  - Presentations and Speeches: to service clubs, church groups, high school and college classes, professional organizations, special interest clubs (use visual aids whenever possible).
  - Brochures and other printed material.
  - Displays: utilize slides, pictures, posters and possible hand out novelty buttons. (This is appropriate at fairs, shopping centers, business or company lobbies.)
  - Person-to-Person: personal friends of staff or volunteers on a one-to-one basis or at a coffee, brunch or social event. (Perhaps the most effective approach of all!)
  - Tours and Open Houses.
  - Literature or notices to attract hard-to-reach volunteers in laundromats, grocery stores, bowling alleys, adult education classes, community and youth centers, manpower and employment offices.
  - Newsletters.
4. Be sure to utilize the services of the Volunteer Bureau, Voluntary Action Center, or Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in your community. They are there to help you and the volunteer find each other. They can help you best if you submit written job descriptions to them, so they know specifically what you need.
  5. Recruit by inviting people to respond to the opportunity to volunteer, not by telling them they ought to be concerned and involved. Hopefully, if the jobs you have designed are meaningful, based on all the criteria discussed in this Chapter, you can enthusiastically approach your audience with a real offer of opportunity to serve, to grow and to make a difference.
  6. Be enthusiastic! If you are not committed to or excited about your program, no one else will be either. And most certainly lack of enthusiasm will not attract or inspire volunteers to want to help.
  7. Opportunities to volunteer must be expanded to all segments of the community — it is consistent with the concept of equal opportunity. Instead of being the privilege of the already privileged, volunteering must become the right of everyone: minorities, youth seniors, the handicapped, blue collar workers, business people, the disadvantaged. Remember — those who understand the culture and life styles of those you are trying to recruit make the best recruiters.<sup>9</sup>

The Sioux Falls Voluntary Action Center also utilizes bookmarks, identification cards and volunteer logo stickers for advertisement and recruitment purposes.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, volunteer coordinators should realize that each person volunteers for a different reason. Each person will bring different talents, skills and interests to the volunteer job. The transition from recruitment to interviewing and actual job placement will be more effective if the most appropriate characteristics of the Marketing Approach and People Approach are utilized.

## FOOTNOTES

### Chapter II

<sup>9</sup>Wilson, Marlene, *The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs*, Volunteer Management Associates, Boulder, Colorado, 1978. pp. 114-115.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid, p. 102.

<sup>1</sup>Scheier, Ivan H., *People Approach, Nine New Strategies for Citizen Volunteer Involvement*, National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado, 1977. p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>Selvidge, Norma, "Marketing Volunteering," *Volunteering Administration*, Volume X, Number 4, Winter 1975. p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, p.

<sup>5</sup>Scheier defines a "skillwill" as something (1) you like to do, enjoy doing; (2) you can do quite well, and (3) which might be of practical help to someone else in your group, now or in the future.

<sup>6</sup>Scheier, pp. 4-5.

<sup>7</sup>Wilson, pp. 115-118.

## CHAPTER III

### INTERVIEWING VOLUNTEERS

Not everyone that applies for a specific volunteer position will be qualified for the position. Some people may be unqualified for any number of reasons including health factors, lack of transportation, inappropriate motives or simply a lack of a particular skill or talent that the job requires. Interviewing of potential volunteers, then, becomes a very important part of any volunteer program and is a very necessary prerequisite for a good volunteer placement.

Marlene Wilson, in her book *The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs* says, "we (coordinators of volunteers and volunteer programs) also owe it to our agencies and organizations to interview well. When we are about the business of human services we must be responsible about our efforts, or we and our volunteers may do more damage than good."<sup>1</sup> Wilson goes on to list several non-directive interviewing suggestions to use while interviewing potential volunteers. They are:

1. What have you enjoyed most in previous volunteer assignments? What have you enjoyed least? (ATTITUDES)
2. What kind of people do you work with best as co-workers? What kind of people are you most interested in as clients and why? Are there types of people you feel you'd be unable to work with? (INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS)
3. What would you consider to be the ideal volunteer job for you? Why? (MOTIVATION AND VALUES)
4. What things have you done that have given you greatest satisfaction? (MOTIVATION AND VALUES)
5. Why are you interested in doing volunteer work? What are your long-range objectives? (MOTIVATION)
6. What do you like to do in your leisure time? (VALUES)
7. What is your "energy" or "activity level" and how would you describe your work habits? (WORK HABITS)
8. Thinking back, what are the most significant decisions you have made in your life and how do you feel about them? (DECISION MAKING)
9. What makes you really angry — on the job or at home — and how do you deal with this anger? (EMOTIONAL STABILITY)
10. Tell me about your family. (EMOTIONAL STABILITY)
11. What kind of supervision do you prefer? (MOTIVATION)
12. Describe your temperament. What do you like best about yourself? If you could, what would you improve? (EMOTIONAL STABILITY)<sup>2</sup>

Along with basic interviewing skills, a basic ingredient of a good volunteer interview is honesty. Describe the volunteer job as it really is. Too often coordinators approach the volunteer with a distorted picture of what it means to be a volunteer. Volunteers are told the

job "won't take much of your time. You volunteer for about an hour a week and then you are finished until the next week." To do this, obviously is a disservice to both the volunteer and the agency the volunteer will serve with. Volunteers should not be pressured beyond what they are willing to give both in terms of available time and skills; allow them time to think over the job even to the point of scheduling a later interview.

Every volunteer is entitled to a job description which spells out the essential facts and duties about the work. It is a convenient instrument for discussion of the volunteer's interests and where his/her services may be best utilized. If a volunteer is "seduced" into service by a false picture, chances are, he/she will not be a volunteer for long. Volunteers traditionally have not responded favorably when they discover what they expected is really quite different than what they get in a volunteer job. It is essential to describe the job as it is, with as many details as possible. This may make it more difficult to fill certain volunteer jobs, but volunteers will stay with an agency longer when they receive an honest placement.

Coordinators should also be very concerned with the volunteer as a person, not as an object. Nothing loses the volunteer's interest more quickly than seeing they are important only as a pair of hands to handle a few boring and tedious tasks. During the interview coordinators should find the opportunity to explain the monetary value of their contribution to the agency; how many dollars they are saving in wages that may be applied instead to research, to service to clients, or to feed or clothe the underprivileged. Volunteers should know that their service is necessary and important no matter (in some cases) how menial the job may be, and without basic volunteer assistance the rest of the agency's program could not survive.<sup>3</sup>

## FOOTNOTES

### Chapter III

<sup>1</sup>Wilson, Marlene, *The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs*, Volunteer Management Associates, Boulder, Colorado, 1978. p. 122.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, pp. 125-126.

<sup>3</sup>"ABC's of Interviewing," Your Voluntary Action Center, 700 Sixth Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309.



## CHAPTER IV

### MOTIVATED AND COMPETENT VOLUNTEERS

People volunteer for a variety of different reasons and as volunteer coordinators it is our job to discover why people individually are motivated and use this motivation effectively. Dr. Ivan Scheier, in *People Approach, Nine New Strategies for Citizen Volunteer Involvement*, supports this idea by saying, "everyone is self-directed at something. Our job (as volunteer coordinators) is to discover that self-direction in each individual, then find a place where it can be used positively. Otherwise stated, the philosophical position is: everyone has something to give; our job is to help them find a way to give it." This is the essence of the People Approach — matching the volunteer job to the person — the utilization of "self-direction" and "self-motivation." Dr. Scheier continues to say:

People Approach seeks only to discover the jobs which are in the person, intrinsically; then to find where they can be engaged for positive benefit. There is a direct implication here for motivation-retention of volunteers. Retention of volunteers occurs because people are doing what they want to do. They are doing what they want to in part because someone seriously asked them what they wanted to do (People Approach). Turnover occurs because people aren't doing what they want to do, possibly because no one ever asked them. Recent surveys confirm older ones: high volunteer turnover rate averages out as one of the top volunteer program problem areas.<sup>2</sup>

The Marketing Approach also can motivate volunteers effectively. A coordinator who places a volunteer in a job that will satisfy the volunteer's desires to learn about the functions of an agency, to gain experience applicable to future job aspirations, to meet new people, to receive support on a resume or to receive a certain amount of public exposure, can be rewarded with a very dedicated volunteer willing to serve for a long period of time.

It is important then, for volunteer coordinators to initially place volunteers who are comfortably self-directed or self-motivated according to the philosophy of either the People Approach or the Marketing Approach. It can be very time consuming and frustrating to attempt to motivate volunteers after they have been inappropriately placed in a volunteer position. Obviously, it is more desirable to have volunteers inherently motivated with their placement.

If a particular volunteer program is supplied with motivated volunteers through an effective recruitment and interviewing process then there are certain actions a volunteer coordinator can take to support a volunteer's effort; such as orientation and training.

Orientation of volunteers is the key link between a recruit's willingness to serve and future productivity and competence as a volunteer. The orientation session or sessions can literally "make or break" a volunteer program. Too often agencies let volunteers flounder around until they lose interest and drop out of the program. Orientation sessions should leave the new volunteer with an understanding of the agency's expectations of him/her and provide him/her with the opportunity to express any reservations about volunteering that he/she may have. Orientation sessions should not threaten the volunteer but ease the volunteer into his/her future role and acclimate him/her to the organization. Ideally, orientation

sessions should be structured to generate enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility in the volunteer.

Ideas for successful orientation should include a history of the organization, goals and objectives, administrative structure, sources of funding, personnel policies, volunteer program rules and regulations, tour of facilities, and an introduction to staff the volunteer will be associated with.

After the orientation session comes in-service training for the volunteer. Training provides the volunteer with the opportunity to grow in his/her job with emphasis on skill development and reinforcement of the basic principles of the prior orientation session. Training can prepare a volunteer for promotion to a more difficult assignment and is a good opportunity to communicate basic organizational policy changes to the volunteer. Many training sessions serve to provide input feedback to the staff regarding the organization's over-all volunteer program. It provides the opportunity for volunteers to constructively express their complaints with staff addressing these complaints in an atmosphere conducive to support, responsibility and cooperation. Periodic training sessions can also be used as a time for volunteer and staff recognition for impressive volunteer program service.

A few keys to effective and successful training are:

- (1) Make the training sessions *realistic* to the volunteer participants. The training session topic should be useful to the volunteers.
- (2) Make the session *interesting* and *informative*, especially when using outside resource people.
- (3) Plan a reasonable *time limit* on the session, preferably a one to two hour limit.
- (4) Make the session *participatory*. Encourage volunteer questions and input.<sup>3</sup>

In summary, then, the interview is really the key to an effective and productive volunteer placement regardless of which recruitment philosophy — People Approach or Marketing Approach — the interviewer and/or volunteer adhere to. Proper volunteer orientation is next in line to insure the volunteer's smooth transition into the operations of the agency. Training is the next essential ingredient to assist the volunteer in educating himself/herself to remaining effective as a volunteer. If an agency has well planned interview, orientation and training programs chances are a volunteer will come into the program motivated and will remain so throughout his/her term of volunteer service.

## FOOTNOTES

### Chapter IV

<sup>1</sup>Scheier, Ivan H., *People Approach, Nine New Strategies for Citizen Volunteer Involvement*, National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado, 1977. p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Presson, Robert A., *NICOV: The Memo*, National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado, Winter 1978, Quick Reference Sheet #11.

## CHAPTER V

### MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

It has been said that "motivating volunteers is not the icing on the cake; it is the whole cake. All the recognition certificates in the world won't paper over the gaps in a poorly planned and operated volunteer program, though they certainly add to a fundamentally sound program. Nor can a formal recognition program really substitute for the informal things: the smile as you pass in the hall, remembering a name or a birthday, and all the little daily things that show respect for your volunteers, and give them a sense of inclusion."<sup>1</sup> Like paid staff, volunteers will perform more effectively if they are appreciated, given meaningful duties and listened to. The American National Red Cross, Office of Volunteers developed a "Bill of Rights for Volunteers." The Bill of Rights stated that every volunteer has:

- I. The right to be treated as a co-worker
  - ... not just free help
  - ... not as a prima donna
- II. The right to a suitable assignment
  - ... with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education, and employment background
- III. The right to know as much about the organization as possible
  - ... its policies
  - ... its people
  - ... its programs
- IV. The right to training for the job
  - ... thoughtfully planned and effectively presented training
- V. The right to continuing education on the job
  - ... as a follow-up to initial training
  - ... information about new developments
  - ... training for greater responsibility
- VI. The right to sound guidance and direction
  - ... by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient, and thoughtful
  - ... and who has the time to invest in giving guidance
- VII. The right to a place to work
  - ... an orderly, designated place
  - ... conducive to work
  - ... and worthy of the job to be done
- VIII. The right to promotion and a variety of experience
  - ... through advancement to assignments of more responsibility
  - ... through transfer from one activity to another
- IX. The right to be heard
  - ... to have a part in planning
  - ... to feel free to make suggestions
  - ... to have respect shown for an honest opinion

## X. The right to recognition

- ... in the form of promotion
- ... and rewards
- ... through day-by-day expressions of appreciation
- ... and by being treated as a bona fide co-worker<sup>2</sup>

Much has been said about the volunteer's involvement in the volunteer program. What about the staff person expected to work with the volunteer? Staff nonsupport of agency volunteer programs has traditionally been listed as the number one problem affecting volunteer programs. It has been found that staff resistance is usually not expressed as active hostility, but ordinarily as passive resistance or apathy. Several principles can be followed to help break down staff resistance to volunteers, including:

- (1) *Individual diagnosis of staff receptivity to volunteers.* It is far better to identify and work with a few receptive staff people at first. Their peers can get sold on it later by watching the successes. When diagnosing, be careful to distinguish those who "say the right thing" (almost everyone can) from those who have the potential to do the right things with volunteers.
- (2) *Flexibility.* There is no such thing as a staff person who dislikes all volunteers. They just dislike some kinds of volunteers, or rather some stereotypes of volunteers. Try some creative volunteer ideas and jobs.
- (3) *Participation.* Staff needs to feel it's their volunteer program, not yours or someone else's. Try for maximum staff participation in volunteer job design, and continuing participation in volunteer recruiting, screening, and training to fill staff needs.
- (4) *Rewards.* We ask staff to invest extra time, effort and intelligence in involving volunteers. Volunteers and staff should be a team. Reward each team member equally. The agency personnel system should also build in recognition and "promotion points" for staff who work effectively with volunteers.
- (5) *Orientation and training of staff to volunteers should precede volunteer training.* The latter may be wasted without the former. In-service training for staff and volunteers together is also a very helpful measure.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, as volunteer coordinators, remember to always supervise volunteers as you would "paid" staff. Remember also to work to open channels for successful volunteers to apply for paid positions if they are interested, and recognize *volunteers* and *staff* who work successfully together for the benefit of the agency and its clients. Also remember that any well-planned and resourcefully managed volunteer program will generally adhere to the following four principles:

- (1) A freedom of choice is essential for volunteers, staff, and the persons being served. Volunteers work with, not for, other people. Expectations and goals should be defined in clear, contractual terms.
- (2) Volunteers need appropriate placement to utilize their skills, knowledge, and interests; training to supplement their knowledge and skills; a place and tools to work with; and someone to turn to for support, encouragement, and appreciation.
- (3) Volunteers need periodic review of their accomplishments and growth opportunities when ready for more or different responsibilities; records to prove their service and training; and recognition.

- (4) Volunteers need access to the policy development process. Firsthand perspective policy makers focus on priority needs.<sup>4</sup>

## FOOTNOTES

### Chapter V

<sup>1</sup>Presson, Robert A., *NICOV: The Memo*, National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado, Winter 1978. Quick Reference Sheet #13.

<sup>2</sup>"Bill of Rights for Volunteers," Office of Volunteers, American National Red Cross, Washington, D.C. 20006

<sup>3</sup>Presson, Quick Reference Sheet #5.

<sup>4</sup>Beard, M. Susan and Boilean, Scott R., "Citizen Participation In Rural Social Services: A Kaleidoscope of Service." West Virginia Department of Welfare Volunteer Program. 1978. pp. 7-8.

## CHAPTER VI

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In February, 1976, the National Information Center on Volunteerism's National Learning Resource Center issued a report stating that:

- (1) The top educational needs of volunteer directors (coordinators) are to develop their skills, knowledge and attitudes in (a) the training of volunteers; (b) the management, administration, and supervision of volunteers and volunteer programs; and (c) the recruitment of volunteers.
- (2) The top priority learning goal of volunteer directors (coordinators) is, "the knowledge itself, upgrading my skills, and sensitivities so I can do a better job."
- (3) The preferred modalities of volunteer directors (coordinators) are (a) one-day workshops within driving distance of home and (b) accessible cheap or free information services on demand.<sup>1</sup>

The resource material presented in this chapter covers such topics as volunteer program evaluation, board and staff relations, facts about volunteers, the South Dakota Congress for Volunteers, the Marketing Approach, a list of suggested readings and a sample volunteer job description.

The purpose of this handbook is to assist volunteer program coordinators in meeting their educational needs. The "List of Suggested Readings" section of this chapter offers to the reader an excellent selection of volunteer program resource material. Especially recommended are Dr. Ivan Scheier's *People Approach, Nine New Strategies for Citizen Volunteer Involvement*, Marlene Wilson's *The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs* and *By the People, A History of Americans As Volunteers*, by Susan J. Ellis and Katherine H. Noyes. An excellent journal on volunteer programming is "Voluntary Action Leadership" published by the National Center for Voluntary Action. It should be noted, however, that all the readings listed are considered as excellent by the staff of the Sioux Falls Voluntary Action Center.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

Date:

Position Title:

Agency:

Address:

Phone:

Supervisor:

Specific times when needed:

Number of hours per week:

Duration of job (minimum):

Volunteer Qualifications:

Job Responsibilities:

Type of Training Given:

Other information or comments:

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM<sup>2</sup>

### SCORECARD

Want to see how you're doing? Below are some representative questions to help you take the temperature of your program. Of course, not all questions are equally relevant to all agencies, and you might even want to make up some of your own scorecard questions.

- Place **two** checks on each line if you're **sure** it's true for you ..... ✓✓  
Place **one** check on each line if you're **uncertain** or if it's only partly true ..... ✓  
Leave the line blank if it's not true for your program ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
Please be sure to look at all questions.
- 
- 

### PLANNING

1. Spent at least three months planning our program, before it started, carefully consulting all relevant people ..... \_\_\_\_\_
  2. During this time we looked into at least three national publications on the subject ..... \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

3. We have **written** volunteer job descriptions, at least two paragraphs long .... \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Deliberately go out after the kind of people who can fill our volunteer jobs ... \_\_\_\_\_
  5. At least half of the volunteers are personally and consistently involved working directly with clients ..... \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Definite plans or efforts to involve new types of people as volunteers: minority, younger, older, poor, etc. .... \_\_\_\_\_
  7. Before accepting volunteers we use and study a volunteer background registration form ..... \_\_\_\_\_
  8. Each volunteer is interviewed at least once before acceptance ..... \_\_\_\_\_
  9. Each volunteer is interviewed at least **twice** by different people ..... \_\_\_\_\_
  10. At least half of the clients we think could benefit from volunteers have them ..... \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

11. Require at least five hours volunteer orientation before assignment ..... \_\_\_\_\_
12. Top management and/or regular staff are closely involved in volunteer orientation ..... \_\_\_\_\_
13. We have in-service training meetings monthly or more often ..... \_\_\_\_\_
14. Films and/or tapes, and/or slide shows, and/or role plays used for at least 25% of the total training time ..... \_\_\_\_\_
15. Each new volunteer receives and keeps a written orientation manual ..... \_\_\_\_\_
16. Systematic effort to orient **staff** to working with volunteers ..... \_\_\_\_\_



## ASSIGNMENT, WORK ROLES

17. We have **at least two** main alternative work roles for volunteers .....
  18. We deliberately seek maximum compatibility of volunteer and client by asking and assessing **both** volunteer and client .....
  19. In addition to intuition, we employ specific compatibility criteria such as home location, interests, sex, age, etc. ....
  20. Volunteers sign or explicitly assent to a work contract of specific time commitment over a maximum period of at least eight months .....
  21. At least 90% of our volunteers are assigned and on the job no more than four weeks after the end of pre-service training .....
- 

## THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

22. We have a regular position of Volunteer Coordinator or Director .....
  23. He or she feels he has enough time to do the job adequately .....
  24. Volunteer Coordinator is suitably paid .....
  25. Our Volunteer Coordinator has attended at least three days of training institute-conferences, also has read at least 150 pages in this specific area, in the past year .....
  26. Our Volunteer Coordinator has an office near other staff and is regularly invited to attend staff meetings at the supervisory level .....
  27. Not more than 40 volunteers for each direct supervisor of volunteers .....
- 

## MOTIVATION — INCENTIVE

28. Each volunteer has an I.D. card or lapel pin or other suitable agency identification .....
  29. Certificates and/or volunteer recognition meeting at least once a year .....
  30. Regular or supervisory staff are also recognized for their leadership role in volunteer programs .....
  31. Volunteers have a desk or other designated place to roost at agency .....
  32. Provision for good experiences volunteers to move up in responsibility and status **as volunteers**, e.g. head volunteer, volunteer advisory board, etc. ....
  33. At least one of our ex-volunteers is now on regular paid staff .....
  34. Of volunteers who complete training, at least two-thirds are with us at the end of a year (or their assigned hitch) .....
  35. At least a third of our new volunteers are brought in by present volunteers .....
- 

## RECORD-KEEPING, EVALUATION

36. Within five minutes, we can tell you (a) exactly how many volunteers we have, and **also** (b) for any individual volunteer, current address, job and assigned client, if any .....
37. Volunteers are required to report at least once a month by phone or by report form and we enforce this .....
38. At least twice a year we systematically ask regular staff what they think of volunteer programs .....

- 39. Ditto, both volunteers and clients, what **they** think .....
- 40. Generally, volunteers are actively involved (e.g. advisory board) in decisions regarding their own volunteer program .....
- 41. We have a regular statistical-evaluation component supervised by a professional in the area .....

**BUDGET, FINANCE**

- 42. We prepare a regular, carefully considered budget for the volunteer program .....
- 43. We keep good account books and formal records on the program .....
- 44. At least one-half of our volunteer program funding is from **local** sources (including below) .....
- 45. At least one-half volunteer program funding is incorporated in regular state or local agency budget .....

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

- 46. We have a newsletter for our volunteers, monthly or bi-monthly .....
- 47. Main (or only) local newspaper has at least three favorable articles or editorials on volunteer program, each year .....
- 48. At least one of those is **not** deliberately requested by us .....
- 49. Regular staff **invited** to talk on our program in town at least 10 times a year .....
- 50. Agencies or organizations in similar service areas have expressed approval of our volunteer program .....

**SCORING YOURSELF: JUST COUNT THE CHECKS.**

Total Volunteer Program Score =

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

Your comments are welcome

## A. SCORECARD FOR VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS AND DIRECTORS

Scorecard is intended to be used by coordinators, directors, and supervisors of local volunteer programs. It provides a self-report of a sampling of standards for volunteer program administrative performance. This form is designed to apply generally to a wide variety of volunteer programs and, of course, only a sampling rather than an exhaustive enumeration of all standards are presented.

We suggest that directors of coordinators self-administer Scorecard every three to four months. Directors of new programs will find their programs' scores quite low, but the form itself can serve as a "standard setter" in itself. The form can be given to directors and their supervisors to compare their perceptions of the program; a spread of more than ten points is cause for concern. Also, Scorecard can be used to design a training session for volunteer directors or to help decide on the composition of workshop groups by simply administering it to the group and examining sectional scores.

## B. SCORING

The scoring process for this form is very simple. Just count the number of checks in each of the nine sections, record each, and then record the total for all sections. These sectional and total scores are referred to hereafter as "raw scores."

## C. NORMS

These norms are based on the responses of 474 people. The sample includes volunteer coordinators in a broad selection of programs from primarily the United States and Canada.

### NORMS FOR TOTAL SCORES

"Raw Score" taken directly from  
Scorecard as per instructions:

You are higher than Scorecard  
**approximately:**

	% of programs
0-25	5%
26-32	10%
33-37	15%
38-42	20%
43-46	25%
47-50	30%
51-52	35%
53-55	40%
56-57	45%
58-59	50%
60-61	55%
62-63	60%
64-65	65%
66-67	70%
68-70	75%

“Raw Score” taken directly from Scorecard as per instructions:

71-73  
74-76  
77-80  
81-84  
85-100

You are higher than Scorecard **approximately:**

% of programs

80%  
85%  
90%  
95%

You are in the top 5%

#### NORMS FOR TOTAL SCORES OF 50-65

Raw Score

50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

You are higher than **approximately:**

% of programs

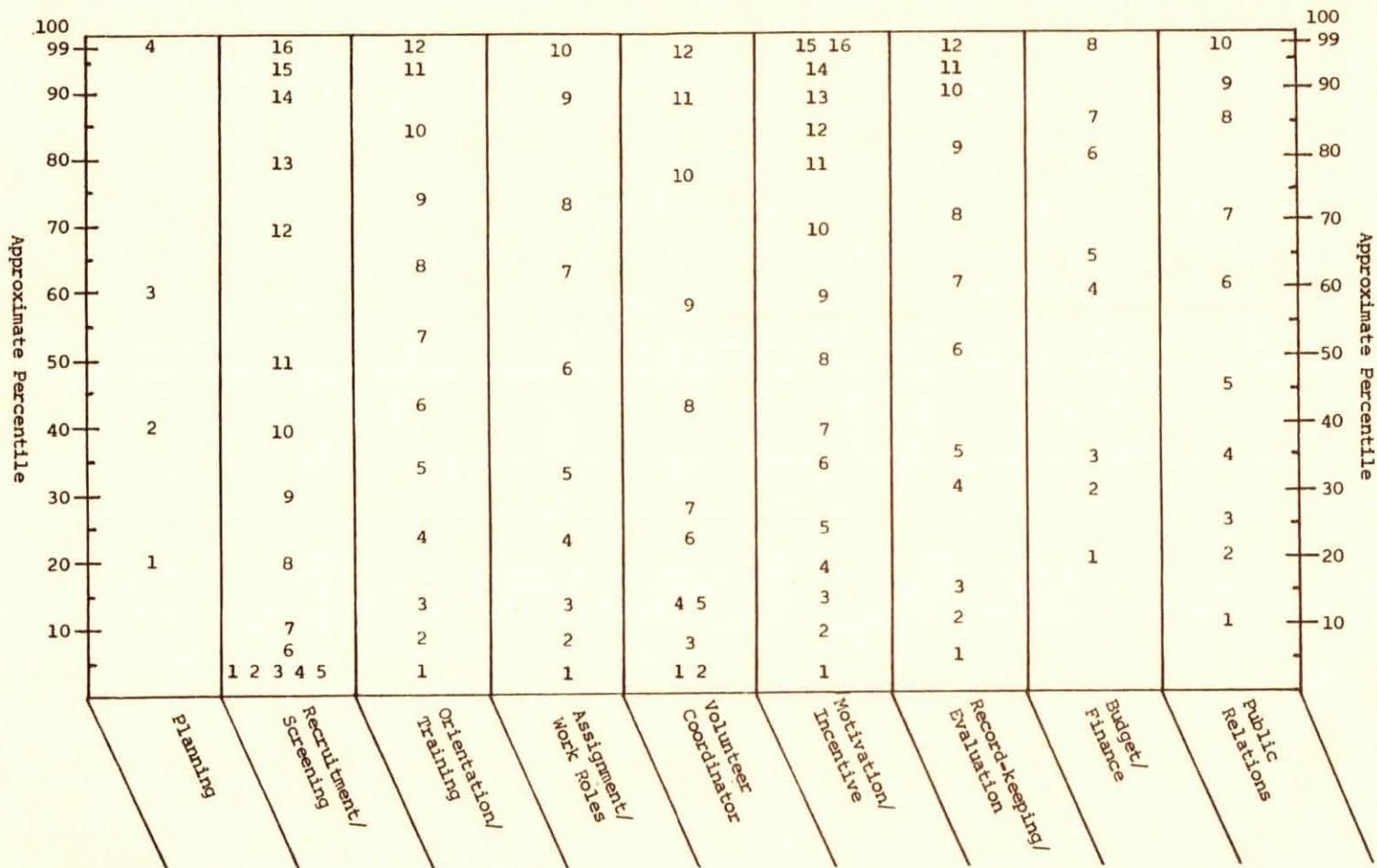
30%  
33%  
35%  
37%  
38%  
40%  
44%  
45%  
48%  
50%  
53%  
55%  
59%  
60%  
63%  
65%

Scorecard is divided into nine sections covering major volunteer program management functions such as Planning, Recruitment and Screening, Orientation and Training, etc.

After tallying each section of Scorecard, locate your raw score in each section of the following grid and circle it; connect the circled scores with straight lines. The resulting line graph will allow you to visualize the strengths and weaknesses of your program, and areas of needed development.

# BASIC FEEDBACK SYSTEMS — SCORECARD

## Analytic Norms



## “BOARD AND STAFF RELATIONS”<sup>3</sup>

Taken from *Volunteers*, Office of Voluntary Action  
o.c.d., Olympia, Washington

Board members, the nation's largest group of volunteers, number 6,000,000 across the country and contribute 68 billion dollars worth of volunteer time. Even though this group of volunteers, through their actions, touch the lives of almost every other volunteer in the country, there is very little information about what makes a voluntary board function properly and the characteristics of a good board member.

From her book *The Board Member, a Decision Maker*, Ms. Pauline Hanson described the two extremes of an operating board. At one end is the fogbound and rocky running board of directors and at the other is the goal oriented and smooth running board which is successful in making the decisions needed to operate the agency. A successful board has the following characteristics:

1. The board has authored an organization manual which includes by-laws, articles, policies, job descriptions (both staff and board), description of goals, outline of funding sources. This manual serves as protection to both staff and board.
2. The board has developed a training program for new board members. This may include a weekend retreat or a day long orientation in town. Also, some boards devote one hour (an extra hour) at board meetings to continuing training on a subject pertinent to the board.
3. In the best organizations, an outsider could not detect the role difference between staff and board when observed during a normal day in the agency. This characteristic suggests that there are no empires, no big bureaucracies, but there are small, highly educated staffs that the board trusts.
4. The board has developed a nominating committee which works year-round to fill vacancies on the board. This committee looks for people who 1) make management decisions from information, 2) commit time which is asked for by the board, 3) take training, 4) are team people.
5. The board is willing to weed the deadwood from the board so that action people can be used as replacements.
6. The board reviews and evaluates the agencies operations, then based on the information collected the board plans well ahead for new activities.
7. The board develops and maintains a constituency in the community and takes care of them.
8. The board can stand and usually enjoys community visibility.
9. The board members communicate freely with other members of the board, as well as the staff.
10. A good board knows that crisis management won't do.

## FACT SHEET ON VOLUNTEERISM<sup>1</sup>

### Dollar Value of Volunteer Services

GNVP (Gross National Volunteer Product):

1974 — approximately 30 billion dollars in services.

1977 — approximately 40 billion dollars in services.

### Number of Volunteers in the United States

1974 — 37 million people over the age of 13 volunteered at least once/year.

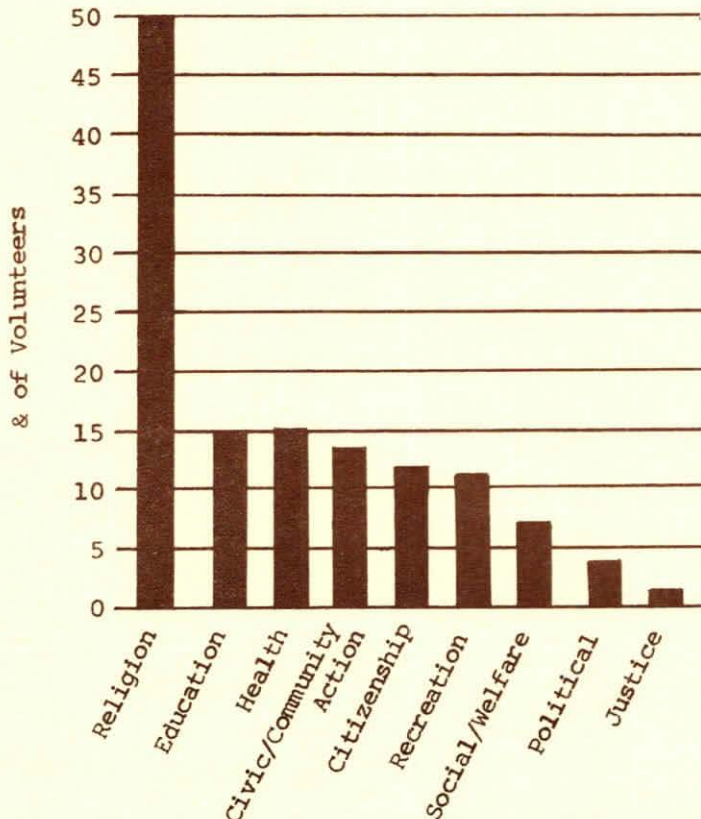
(The average volunteer puts in 5 hours of work/week.)

24 percent of the population in the U.S. does some form of volunteer service.

53 percent of the volunteers are female.

47 percent of the volunteers are male.

### General Areas of Volunteer Work and Percentage of Volunteers by Organization Types (April 7-13, 1974)



## **Volunteer Leadership**

Estimated total number of volunteer directors: 60,000 in 1975.

Average salary range (as of 1975): \$9,000-\$12,000 per year.

## **Structure**

Number of Statewide Offices on Volunteerism: 33

Number of Voluntary Action Center/Volunteer Bureaus: 377

## **Some National "Initials":**

AAVS — Association for Administration of Volunteer Services, Suite 615, Colorado Building, 14th and Walnut, Boulder, CO 80302.

AFV — Alliance for Volunteerism, Suite 617, Colorado Building, 14th and Walnut, Boulder, CO 80302.

AVAS — Association of Voluntary Action Scholars, Suite 617, Colorado Building, 14th and Walnut, Boulder, CO 80302.

AVB — Association of Volunteer Bureaus, Suite 615, Colorado Building, 14th and Walnut, Boulder, CO 80302.

GOVS — Governors Office on Volunteerism (33 states have them).

HEW — U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, & Welfare, Washington, DC 20036.

NAVCI — National Association of Volunteers in Criminal Justice, Inc., 1260 West Bayaud, Denver, CO 80223.

NCVA — National Center for Voluntary Action, 1214 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

NICOV — National Information Center on Volunteerism, P.O. Box 4179, Boulder, CO 80306.

NSVP — National **School** Volunteer Program, Inc., 300 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314.

NSVP — National **Student** Volunteer Program, ACTION, 806 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20525.

VA — Veterans Administration, Washington, DC 20420.

VAC — Voluntary Action Centers.

VB — Volunteer Bureaus.

VISTA — Volunteers in Service to America, ACTION, 806 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20525.

VIP — Volunteers in Probation, National Center on Crime Delinquency, 200 Washington Square Plaza, Royal Oak, MI 48067.



### **Some National Journals and Newsletters:**

*Aspects: International Journal of Volunteer Services*, ACTION, 806 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20525.

*Journal of Voluntary Action Research*, AVAS, Box G-55, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167.

*SYNERGIST*, NSVP, ACTION, 806 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20525.

*The Grantsmanship Center News*, 1015 W. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90015.

*VIP Examiner*, Volunteers in Probation, Editorial Office, P.O. Box 31, Flint, MI 48501.

*Voluntary Action Leadership*, NCVA, 1214 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

*Volunteer Administration*, AVAS, Box G-55, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167.

Most major organizations and state offices have a monthly or quarterly newsletter available to their members free of charge.

### **Popular Readings from the Basic Bookshelf:**

*Basic Feedback System: A Self-Assessment Process for Volunteer Programs*, Bobette W. Reigel.

*The Board Member: Decision Maker for the Non-Profit Corporation*, Pauline L. Hanson and Carolyn T. Marmaduke.

*Effective Management of Volunteer Programs*, Marlene Wilson.

*People Approach: Nine New Strategies for Citizen Volunteer Involvement*, Ivan H. Scheier.

*The Volunteer Community: Creative Use of Human Resources*, Eva Schindler-Rainman and Ronald Lippitt.

*Volunteers Today: Finding, Training, and Working With Them*, Harriet H. Naylor.

*Workshop Planner*, Gwen Winterberger.

All books and a catalog of further resources available through: VOLUNTEER, Division of NCVA/NICOV, P.O. Box 1807, Boulder, CO 80306.

\*We are deeply indebted to ACTION for most of the information contained in the fact sheet — from *Americans Volunteer — 1974*.

## CONGRESS HISTORY

The South Dakota Congress for Volunteers was organized during the last session of the "Fourth Annual South Dakota Volunteer Coordinators Conference," held in Sioux Falls on April 6-7, 1978. The Congress was organized because volunteer coordinators from across South Dakota felt there was a real need for a state-wide organization for volunteers and volunteer coordinators.

The South Dakota Congress for Volunteers was organized with several objectives in mind, including:

- (1) Serving as an "educational and information oriented" organization for volunteers and volunteer coordinators in South Dakota.
- (2) Helping unify volunteers and volunteer coordinators in South Dakota through a quarterly newsletter. The newsletter will be sent to all members. The content of the newsletter will be composed of material sent in by members of the Congress.
- (3) Investigating the possibility of using ACTION funds to offset training and workshop costs for members, to assist with a state-wide publicity effort and to assist with developing a master-plan for volunteerism in South Dakota.
- (4) Sponsoring an annual South Dakota Volunteer Coordinators Conference in the spring of each year.
- (5) Supporting appropriate volunteer-oriented legislation.

For more information on the South Dakota Congress for Volunteers call TIE-LINE 1-800-592-1865 or your local Voluntary Action Center.

## MARKETING VOLUNTEERING<sup>5</sup>

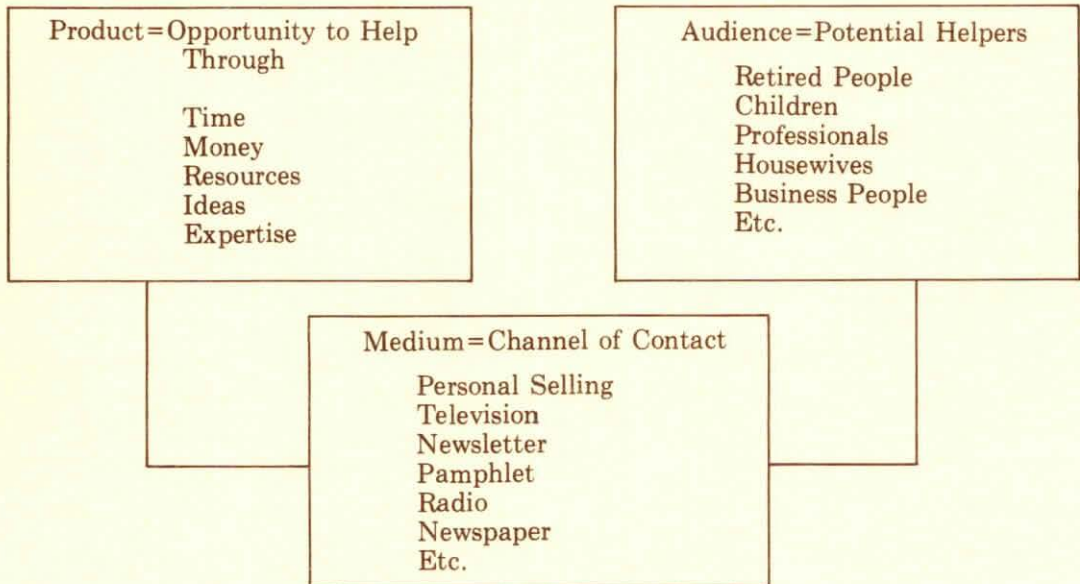
by Norma Selvidge, Ph.D.

"The best advertisement is a satisfied customer!" That's a statement most business people endorse. I think it also has meaning for volunteer coordinators who are selling an opportunity for service to customers who are buying the opportunity to serve. The very fabric of this country is woven with the yarn of our economic system, so let's look at Volunteering as a marketable idea.

"Don't you dare commercialize volunteering," says the idealist. "Don't you dare reduce human service to economic terms," says the altruist. "Don't you dare fail to use your finest creativity to market ideas," says the pragmatist.

Let's look at volunteering from the practical viewpoint and fit it into a marketing paradigm. Whether you view yourself as a salesperson or not, working with volunteers is selling. The quality of the volunteer program may be directly related to your ability to sell.

The paradigm involves a product, a medium, and an audience.



The product to be sold in volunteering is the opportunity to help others. That's a dynamic and highly sellable product! Helping others adds a dimension to the maintenance elements of daily living and has incredibly high pay-offs in self-satisfaction, social approval, and meaningful interactions. The question then becomes one of developing an effective marketing strategy that involves five steps.

- (1) Know your product
- (2) Assess your needs
- (3) Target the audience
- (4) Choose a medium
- (5) Sell

## **Know Your Product**

In planning your communication strategy for marketing volunteering you must assess your current product image. To do this you must look for information that identifies the volunteer program image. This image is built through person-to-person discussions, personality styles of volunteers, staff and professionals, attitudes of clients, and any written messages about volunteering. The volunteer image is also affected by the public image of the larger organization which it serves. Anyone associated with volunteerism contributes to the image.

You become a visible part of the image of volunteering. Let's suppose that you work with volunteers and someone comes to your office. The visitor may be talking to you at a time when you are tired, the phone is ringing, a report is due in fifteen minutes, and you have a headache. You are over-extended and pressured. The visitor is talking to you about volunteerism and you don't have your best face on, but you represent volunteering nevertheless. Volunteering is you at that point in time and that's the image the visitor gets. If you're selling an idea that you're tired, overworked, and surrounded by negative happenings, then that's the image of volunteering that gets sold to the visitor. Do you think you have a marketable product with that image?

Awareness of image building through personal communication can help you mobilize a dynamic sales force. Your "satisfied customer" — a happy volunteer — is one of the most potent sales mediums. **Personal satisfaction** and **commitment** to volunteering can combine as a dynamic duo of salesmanship. You can remember when you sold an idea that you believed was important, though the idea was pretty much unsellable at first. Real commitment and satisfaction which you communicated probably made the difference. Package a sellable idea in a positive, enthusiastic, realistic form and you will find a buyer.

## **Assess Your Needs**

The volunteer coordinator is continuously receiving data about needs of the volunteer program. The needs can range from recruitment of volunteers, to raising money, to seeking specific supplies or equipment. One of the difficulties involves the frequently shifting need patterns that result in the coordinator spending much time meeting unexpected needs with little time left for planning. Frequent crisis underscores the importance of a functional systematic approach to marketing the volunteer package.

Needs assessment involves weekly evaluation of current status of the program. Systematically matching the needs of the volunteer program with the needs of the potential audience is an essential link in the marketing strategy. Through clear and specific statement of needs, your success at meeting goals can be measured and evaluated. Evaluation of critical needs to meet (1) goals for the week, (2) goals for the month, (3) goals for the year, and (4) multi-year goals can provide a work sheet for matching potential audiences with potential needs.

## **Target Your Audience**

Planning a marketing campaign includes targeting the audience who (1) can afford your product, and (2) can meet personal goals by purchasing your product. The strategy does not include the favor system, but is based upon **exchange** of ways to meet individual goals. Very

often in the helping area, we ask for money or services in terms of asking for a favor. That is not a very viable selling position, for doing a favor upsets the equality that facilitates communication. Favors can trigger guilt mechanisms and enable a salesperson to make a sale. That's a one-time sale and does not foster a supportive long-term market. Few people enjoy owing a favor. The helping force does not have to ask anybody for a favor; instead, it's healthy to ask for an **exchange** rather than a favor. Know your product and design an exchange strategy.

Matching the needs of the volunteer program with the needs of the buyer provides an effective vehicle for the sales exchange. Let's suppose that you needed money from a banker. That's a tough sales situation. Ask yourself what the banker's goals might be. What does he need? Many banks try to counteract the stereotypic image of "No," and "Too money conscious." Perhaps your need for money can be traded for the banker's need for an improved public image. Match your needs with the buyer. Even this approach won't work, however, if you go in armed only with your enthusiasm. As you offer to exchange positive public relations for the money that you need, the banker quite legitimately should ask you how you plan to accomplish the exchange. A nebulous reply such as "Well, we're going to tell everybody that you sponsored this project," won't give the buyer a measurable way of estimating his return on his investment. Instead, have a specific plan. You could respond to him with specifics such as "We are planning to take this program to 5 meetings at which we are estimating the attendance of 2,000 people. Printed on the bottom of the program, we will show your sponsorship and we are additionally willing to make an announcement that you have contributed to our program in this way. We are also willing to return to you a report of the actual attendance and feedback from our program." Let's don't ask favors. Let's give our customers their money's worth. If we don't then we should pay for their services.

Volunteer programs are often viewed as involving "do-gooders," "bleeding hearts sorts of folks, who don't understand bank statements and can't be expected to give people equal value for their investment." We must change the image and show the kind of pragmatic business thinking that can improve the dynamic and positive nature of volunteering. You have to operate in the business community, then perhaps you had better speak business language. Speak the language of your buyer as you target the potential buying public.

### **Choose the Medium**

Marshall McLuhan's famous assertion that the "medium is the message" has special significance in selling the image of volunteering. The volunteer is often the medium. The message is associated with the person delivering the message and the volunteers are an important public relations link with the community. Helping volunteers become aware of the important image they are selling is an essential aspect of their training.

Matching the selling style to the buyer by selecting an appropriate medium to reach a targeted audience is the next step in the marketing strategy. Mediums that can be used include: television, telephone, radio, newspapers, newsletters, letters, posters, pamphlets, speakers, personal contact, etc. Many of these mediums are affordable even on a limited budget.

Personal contact is a vital selling medium. Marketing research indicates that television is excellent for getting name identification or information to the buying public, but is inept at

getting people to commit to a service or commit time. That more often occurs through personal contact. Even in selling of products, some research indicates that it is still the "opinion setter" who personally reinforces what was seen on television and causes action. The people link is still crucial. It is possible for television to disseminate information and have dramatic results, but in general you still can't replace a "turned on" human being who stirs others' imagination and consequently commitment.

In selecting the medium for the message, the volunteer coordinator should phrase the message according to the buyer's needs and language. When selecting a medium such as a newspaper, people usually go to the paper to promote their own concept and ask the paper to do them a favor by printing the story. What is the newspaper's goal? Financial solvency through advertisement and provocative news to enlarge circulation is one of the goals. Therefore a news story written in interesting fashion can meet one of the newspaper's goals. One volunteer coordinator has received exceptional coverage in the local newspaper. She finds interesting stories about volunteers, writes a sellable story, and just incidentally includes information about the volunteer activities. The story meets both the newspaper and the coordinator's goals. The image of volunteering is enhanced as the story reveals the kind of active, exciting people who are attracted to volunteering. Over time the coordinator has created a trusting relationship so that an article from her gets the paper's attention. She's earned a reputation of exchanging worthwhile products.

Other mediums for getting your message distributed can be uncovered through an assessment of your community. For the distribution of pamphlets you might consider including your message in these delivery sources: bank statements, teacher's boxes at school, industry's mail boxes, grocery stores, welcome wagons, scouts, public libraries, newspapers, and department stores. Use creative thinking and brainstorming to develop sources of selling the image of volunteering.

### Close the Sale

After following the marketing strategy, you still need to close the sale. A quick review of psychological factors that have been identified as motivators of behavior can stimulate thinking about the close of the sale. Subtle use of motives can enhance your chances of sale. These for sale. These include basically three kinds of motives — social, ego, and biological.

#### Social Motives

Group Norms  
Status  
Recognition  
Social approval  
Belongingness

#### Ego Motives

Self respect  
To gain power  
To excel  
To control  
To create

#### Biological Motives

Food/Shelter  
Sex  
Avoidance of danger  
Freedom  
Seek pleasant sensations and  
avoid unpleasant ones

Careful use of these motives can provide an action move toward closing the sale.

When you go to a potential buyer to sell a specific part of your volunteer program, **take with you a map in your head of your needs.** It is possible that the buyer's own re-

quirements won't allow him to buy the particular product you're selling. **Be flexible.** If you have a positive buyer who just can't afford the product you're selling, then switch to another project. If you were visiting a lawyer whom you wanted to serve on your board, watch carefully for signals of his positive attitude toward the project. Because of time constraints, he is telling you that he can't serve but he supports the idea. Quickly take a mental check of your other needs. You remember that you needed to send a personal letter to 300 people. And you also realized that he had a mag card typewriter. You might then negotiate with him for the use of that typewriter during a time when his staff was not ordinarily using it. Though you didn't make the sale you had intended, it's possible you can offer him a different product — one that he can afford. His desire to help and your meeting a program need result in exchange.

### Summary

Your marketing strategy includes (1) know your product, (2) assess your needs, (3) target the audience, (4) choose the appropriate medium, and (5) close the sale. Volunteering is a worthwhile idea that deserves the most effective marketing strategy you can devise. The idea of helping each other has been a central element in our survival since life first began on this planet. Some very impressive salespeople have been promoting sharing and caring for over 2000 years. When you add a sound marketing strategy to selling a positive image of volunteering, then you will achieve your goal. You will find buyers. You will have satisfied customers!

#### References:

Ithiel de Sola Pool, "Public Opinion," in *Handbook of Communication* Eds. Ithiel de Sola Pool, Frederick W. Frey, Wilbur Schramm, Nathan Maccoby, and Edwin B. Parker. Rand McNally College Publishing Company, Chicago, 1973.

Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore. *The Medium is the Message*. Bantam Books, New York, 1967.

## LIST OF SUGGESTED READINGS

### Books

*Basic Feedback System, A Self-Assessment Process for Volunteer Programs*, Bobette Reigel. National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado. 1977.

*NICOV: The Memo*, Robert A. Presson. National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado. 1978.

*The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs*, Marlene Wilson. Volunteer Management Associates, Boulder, Colorado. 1976.

*People Approach, Nine New Strategies for Citizen Volunteer Involvement*, Ivan H. Scheier. National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado. 1977.

*By the People, A History of Americans As Volunteers*, Susan J. Ellis and Katherine H. Noyes. Michael C. Prestegord and Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 1978.

*Volunteer Administration, Reading for the Practitioner*, Larry F. Moore and John C. Anderson. The Voluntary Action Resource Center, 1625 W. 8th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. UGJ IT9.

An excellent guide to use while locating resource books on volunteer programming is "The Basic Bookshelf on Volunteerism." The book catalog can be ordered from Volunteer, Division of NCUA/NICOV, P.O. Box 1807, Boulder, Colorado 80306 at no cost.

*By the People, A History of Americans As Volunteers*, can be ordered from ENERGIZE, 5450 Wissahickon Avenue, #534, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19144.

### Journals

"Volunteer Administration," Association of Voluntary Action Scholars. Box G-55, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, 02167.

"Voluntary Action Leadership," National Center for Voluntary Action. 1214 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20036.

### Reports

"Report on the Educational Needs Survey for the Leadership of Volunteers," R. Cooper, H. C. Gowdy, and I. H. Scheier. The National Learning Resource Center, National Information Center on Volunteerism. Boulder, Colorado, 1976.

"Americans Volunteer, A Statistical Study of Volunteers in the United States," ACTION, Washington, D. C. ACTION Pamphlet 4000-17. 1975.

### Papers

"The Value of Volunteer Services in the United States," Harold Wolozin, University of Massachusetts. 1975.

"Some Views on Volunteering," Jiri Nehnevajsa, Ann P. Karelitz in collaboration with Susan S. Guest, and Larry Stockman. University of Pittsburgh, University Center for Urban Research. 1977.



## FOOTNOTES

### Chapter VI

<sup>1</sup>Cooper, R., Gowdy, A. C., Scheier, I. H., "Report on an Educational Needs Survey for the Leadership of Volunteers," The National Learning Resource Center, National Information Center on Volunteerism. Boulder, Colorado, 1976. p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>Reigel, Bobette, *Basic Feedback System, A Self-Assessment Process for Volunteer Programs*, National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado, 1977. pp. 11-17.

<sup>3</sup>Hanson, Pauline, *The Board Member, A Decision Maker*, printed in "Volunteers," Office of Voluntary Action, Olympia, Washington 98501.

<sup>4</sup>Presson, Robert A., *NICOV: The Memo*, National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado, 1978. Quick Reference Sheet #8.

<sup>5</sup>Selvidge, Norma, "Marketing Volunteering," *Volunteer Administration*, Volume X, Number 4, Winter 1978. pp. 12-15.

<sup>6</sup>"Why I'm Not A Volunteer," reprinted from Voluntary Action News, Vancouver, B.C. March, 1976.

## WHY I'M NOT A VOLUNTEER!<sup>6</sup>

(a not-so-tongue-in-cheek confession of a former volunteer)

SOMEHOW, I get the feeling that to to be a volunteer in someone's program today is to be uncivilized. But, like many of my fellow sitter-outers, I have my reasons for letting opportunity pass me by. You, the program operator, the professional, have supplied me with them. Do you really want to know why I am not a volunteer?

1. For a long time I never knew you wanted me. You communicated quite well, "I'd rather do it myself, mother." You are articulate in expressing your needs in dollars and decimals. Your silence on service, I figured, was your last word.

2. Once you did call for help, and I stepped forward. But you never told me how to get started. I later thought that maybe what you actually said was, "Why don't we have lunch . . . sometime?"

3. I persevered however, I reported for duty. You turned me over to a department head, and he in turn, sent me down to the section chief. He was out, and the secretary did not know what to do with so rare a species as a volunteer, so she suggested that I get in touch next Tuesday. I called, but my message got lost.

4. I might have overlooked the run-around. People cannot be blamed for doing the best they can, and the worst and best are hard to distinguish in my emptiness of a vacuum. For some reason, I thought you as their leader would have given a bit of thought before-hand to what you would do with me, a volunteer, or at least let someone else know I was coming and give them the worry of organizing the situation.

5. Come time for the spring mail-out, and I and my neighbor appeared on the scene. We worked; for two days we licked stamps and envelope flaps, until the steak at supper tasted like tongue. Then I learned from the slip of a clerk that before our coming you had turned off the postage machine. I really cannot blame; if you had not gone out of your way to make work for us what could a couple of volunteers have done for two whole days?

6. I tried again a number of times. But you really did not expect much from me. You never trained me, nor insisted that my work be to a standard. A particularly tough day was coming up for the crew, and I cut out — it was a perfect day for golf. On my return, you said nothing of my absence, except to ask about my score. I never learned if my truancy made any difference.

7. In spite of all, I think I did make a contribution. But the only real thanks I got was a letter from you — a form letter. I know how "demanding" this letter was on you. My neighbor had typed the master copy. I had copied it and together we forged your name, stuffed the envelopes, sealed, stamped, and mailed them.