



**Yellowfire
Press**

**THE INGREDIENTS OF
VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP**

**A Capability Analysis
For The Careerist**

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At three 1984 workshops in California and Michigan, attendees were asked to brainstorm responses to these questions: "What does a volunteer coordinator do? What must she or he know in order to be successful?" Most of the approximately 180 people who participated in the exercise were volunteer coordinators, and there was reasonably good consensus on what it takes to do this job.

An alphabetized and roughly categorized list of responses is presented below. The list stays close to the actual words participants used, and thus, much the same thing is sometimes said in different ways. Nor did it matter for recording purposes whether the role description was expressed as a noun, verb, participle, or some exotic hybrid.

The list is a useful reminder in preparing or revising a resume; it also can help in assesment, goal setting, and transition. Of course, not every volunteer leader is endowed with all the listed competencies, skills, or experiences. But most of us have many of them. So, perhaps there is a tactful way in which the list may be allowed to fall into the hands of supervisors and colleagues, too. There could be dividends in appreciation and respect, even in job security. If the process also reinforces your self-respect and confidence, so much the better. Reconsider the list frequently, especially on bad days, and keep adding to it, on good days and bad.

In updating your resumé, review the list, and for each item check to see if you've given yourself credit for competency or experience. The same kind of review should help target appropriate career directions and goals.

ABILITY to organize, prioritize, etc.

ADMINISTRATOR

ADVISOR: academic, career, etc.

AWARENESS of political factors,
existing resources, etc.

BACK-SLAPPER

BRINGER-IN of outside
information & ideas

BUDGETING

CAMPAIGN MANAGER

CAREER COUNSELOR
 CHANGE AGENT
 COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS: oral
 and written
 COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT
 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION
 COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
 COMMUNITY, understanding of
 COMPUTER SKILLS
 CONSULTANT
 COORDINATOR of special events
 COUNSELING/COUNSELOR: personal,
 CREATING opportunities for
 people to express themselves
 CREATIVE
 CRISIS INTERVENTION
 CRISIS MANAGEMENT, planning
 CROSS institutional lines
 CUSTOMER service representative
 DALE CARNEGIE instructor
 DATA MANAGEMENT
 DELEGATOR
 DEVELOPER of community resources,
 special events, friends, skills-
 banks, opportunities for people to
 express themselves
 DIPLOMAT
 DIRECTOR: agency, career, etc.
 DOCENT
 DOER of more with less
 DONOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
 DRUDGE, drudgery
 ECONOMIZER
 EDUCATOR
 ENTHUSIAST
 EVALUATOR of programs and of
 individuals
 EVENTS COORDINATOR
 EXPERTISE: motivational, graphics,
 in own area of service, etc.
 EXPLORER (creative)
 FACILITATOR
 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
 FLEXIBILITY
 FUNDRAISER
 GENERAL MANAGEMENT
 GRAPHICS
 GRANT WRITER
 GROWING PEOPLE
 HEADHUNTER (recruiter)

HUMAN RELATIONS EXPERT
 INDEPENDENT WORKER
 INFORMATION CENTER
 INNOVATOR
 INTERDISCIPLINARIAN
 INTERVIEWER
 JOB ANALYSIS
 JOB DEVELOPMENT
 JOB ORGANIZER
 JOB TRAINER
 LABOR RELATIONS
 LEADERSHIP: skillsbank,
 career, etc.
 LEGISLATOR
 LIAISON SKILLS
 LIFE PROBLEM HELPER
 LINKER, NETWORKER
 LISTENER SKILLS
 LOBBYIST
 MAKE-DO-ER
 MANAGEMENT MANAGER:
 general financial, personnel
 data, etc.
 MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS:
 design and operation
 MARKETER of programs, jobs, etc.
 MARKETING
 MEDIA COORDINATOR
 MEDIATOR
 MENU PLANNER
 MINISTER, CLERGY
 MORAL VALUES BUILDER
 MOTIVATIONAL EXPERT:
 staff, agency, etc.
 MOTIVATOR
 NEEDS ASSESSMENT
 NEGOTIATOR
 NETWORKER
 NEW IDEAS: information,
 (bringing in), etc.
 OMBUDSPERSON
 ORAL COMMUNICATION
 ORGANIC JOB DEVELOPMENT
 ORGANIZER of jobs, people,
 events, etc.
 PEOPLE GROWER
 PEOPLE orientation, in
 transition, etc.
 PERSONNEL DIRECTOR
 PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

PHOTOGRAPHER	SMALL BUSINESS EXPERT
PLANNER: short range, long range, of programs, etc.	SOCIAL DIRECTOR: cruise ship, etc.
"POLITICIAN," POLITICAL AWARENESS	SOCIOLOGIST
PRIORITIZER	SPECIAL EVENTS developer and coordinator
PROPOSAL WRITER	STATISTICIAN
PROBLEM SOLVER	SUPERVISION-PLUS
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT	SYSTEMS ANALYSIS
PROGRAM EVALUATION or ASSESSMENT	TALENT SCOUT
PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALIST	TALK SHOW HOST
PUBLIC SPEAKING	TEACHER
RECORD KEEPING	TOUR GUIDE
RECRUITER	TRAINER, training
REPORT WRITER	TRANSITION PEOPLE, understanding them
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT	TREND REPORTER
RISK TAKER	UNDERSTANDING: of people in transition in the
ROLE MODEL	community, of delegations, of networking, etc.
SALES, SALESPERSON (marketer?)	WARMTH GIVER
SCUTSWORKER	WRITER, WRITTEN COMMUNICATION
SELF-STARTER, SELF-EMPLOYED SUCCESS	
SENSITIVITY	
SKILLSBANK development and operation	

A suggested exercise at professional association meetings is for the group to brainstorm their own list first, then to compare their results with this list. Almost always, a few new aspects of the role will appear. Group discussion of either or both lists will then yield dividends in awareness and understanding of our complex and fascinating role.

What about the person who daily is able to fulfill this demanding role? She/he is surely more than a dilettante, though some have worried about that. Rather, this is a versatile and creative generalist whose skills and experience merit and can help earn solid respect, status, and financial compensation, should she or he decide to stay in the volunteer leadership field. Otherwise, these competencies and experiences qualify their possessor for a wide range of other meaningful jobs. Among the possibilities mentioned by participants in the exercise were personnel director (Human Resource Development), sales, marketing, resource development and fundraising, public relations, communications, human relations, and management generally, especially management of an enabling type. Somewhat less frequently suggested are politics, small business entrepreneurship, the clergy, and education and training. Some of these above competencies and jobs are frequently needed in profit-making organizations. Group discussion here indicated that many of us have overcome our inferiority complex vis-a-vis the profit sector; we are prepared to predict that we can function there as effectively as we do in the non-profit sector.

Yellowfire Press welcomes and will acknowledge your contributions to this role description list. We also invite ideas on visual representation of the role.

OTHER READINGS

Virtually every publication on volunteer leadership inevitably describes leadership functions and competencies.

Elsewhere in the Yellowfire Mini-Series, the reader interested in professional development will find the following two articles on local associations of volunteer coordinators, or DOVIAs.

Activating Your Local Association of Volunteer Coordinators (Yellowfire Mini-Series #12) and Local Associations of Volunteer Coordinators: A Profile of North American DOVIAs (Yellowfire Mini-Series #11).

For effective transfer or translation of the listings to your resumé, see any good reference on resumé writing.