

This KIT includes this MANUAL and thirteen copies each of the two self-inventory questionnaires.

# PROBING VOLUNTEER-STAFF RELATIONS

developed by  
Council of National Organizations for Adult Education

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Alliance of Unitarian Women  
American Association of University Women  
American Cancer Society  
American Foundation for the Blind  
American Jewish Committee  
American National Red Cross  
Association of Junior Leagues of America  
B'nai B'rith Women  
Camp Fire Girls, Inc.  
Child Study Association  
Credit Union National Association  
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.  
Leadership Resources, Inc.  
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The National Foundation  
Young Men's Christian Association, National Council  
Young Women's Christian Association, National Board

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Credit Union National Association  
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Young Women's Christian Association, National Board

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### Starting Point

Although the American propensity for organizing voluntary associations has been evident since our early years as a nation, the rise of the staffed national voluntary association, with an educational, philanthropic, or fraternal purpose, is largely a phenomenon of the twentieth century. In such organizations, leadership is shared by staff and volunteers. The study of one or another aspect of leadership and leader interrelationships has been a major preoccupation of the Council of National Organizations for Adult Education. For a number of years, member agencies have urged a specific study in depth of volunteer-staff relationships at the leadership level. A committee was finally authorized in 1959. Membership consisted of both staff and volunteers from a spectrum of agencies. Its mission was broadly stated as that of "examining new concepts and approaches to the matter of role relationships and role responsibilities of volunteers and staff in national voluntary agencies."

### A New Approach Evolves

The committee started out on an assumption, later questioned, that the role of the paid executives and related professional or administrative staff members on the one hand, and the role of the officers, members of the governing body and chairmen of committees, on the other hand, would have certain identifiable characteristics common to all, or at least a very wide variety, of national voluntary organizations. This assumption was taken for granted by most members of the committee at the outset, but a lively exchange of views and comparisons of experience revealed that the extent and variety of structures and interpersonal relationships within organizations are as diverse as their objectives, and even less easily categorized.

In short, there is no one "model" division of responsibilities (role relationship) between "staff" and "volunteer" with leadership responsibility, which characterizes or is to be preferred for all voluntary organizations. It is recognized that the staff member is paid for his work while the volunteer devotes leisure time, securing his livelihood from another source. Beyond this fact, the group found that it was unable to pinpoint other universally invariable differences between staff and volunteers at the leadership level. Exception could always be found to other suggested differences.

Preconceptions about what constitutes universally "sound" or "good" organizational structure, what roles are "proper" for volunteers or staff, and who functions as a "professional" thus came in for some fundamental shaking up. Much that had been learned from sources considered authoritative was challenged. The group was forced to

the conclusion that much of the literature on volunteer-staff relationships today was predicated on too narrow an experience and too stereotyped and localized a concept of "the executive" and "the board." Discussion revealed that there are organizations which deviate from textbook patterns which nevertheless are effective and productive and cohesive not only in accomplishing their ends, but in achieving a high level of personal growth and satisfaction among the individuals involved.

These group findings reinforced the conviction that the individual differences among organizations, as among people, are not inconsistent with good democratic practice and indeed that such pluralism enriches our social processes. The committee, therefore, sought to build on this conclusion by making positive use of these values.

There are many circumstances which influence the development of the relationship and division of responsibility between volunteer leadership of an organization and the persons it employs to carry forward its mission. This relationship is molded by such factors as the expectations of the parties, their competencies, their cultural preconceptions of their respective roles, their prior experience, their maturity, their economic stability, the extent of their agreement on a common ethic, and the quality and extent of communication between them.

This proved to be the key for what the committee agreed could be its task, namely, that of devising a tool whereby a given organization could undertake a self-inventory to improve the working relationships of volunteer and staff at the leadership level, in their respective assignments.

### Assumptions in Developing This Self-Inventory Tool

The committee evolved the following six working assumptions:

1. Effectiveness in both personal and organizational accomplishment is reduced if there should exist substantial unrecognized differences in the way in which different people in leadership positions in the same organization (regardless of whether they are volunteers or staff) perceive the objectives of the organization and their respective roles in it.
  2. A common effort to discover whether such differences exist, and to arrive at common concepts within an organization, can be productive. A tool, forged out of the experience of many organizations, which can be used by any one group to conduct a private, intra-organizational study, will be useful.
  3. Unacknowledged differences in perception among individual leaders in the same organization will arise from many circumstances. A significant one may be a group identification as "volunteer" or "staff" with preconceived ideas and concepts as to their roles.
  4. Many leaders are engaged in a wide variety of voluntary activities at the local level (successively and concurrently) but by the very nature of national responsibilities, they tend to devote time in depth to leadership in only a limited number of national voluntary organizations. Preconceptions based on such necessarily limited experiences tend to accentuate problems when either the volunteer or staff leaders do migrate from one national organization to another, as well as from local to national.
  5. Individual interpretations given to words found in common usage among organizations, and the persistence of percepts based on individual experience, need to be examined by leaders of voluntary organizations to encourage clarity of communication.
  6. Individual volunteers and staff, by examining separately and then discussing together their respective mental pictures of their own organizations, can identify the ways in which it may truly differ from other organizations, recognizing that such differences are not in themselves "good" or "bad."
2. It is intended to be administered within the organization, in privacy. The greatest possible degree of anonymity should be maintained for participants in those phases of the study which do not involve face-to-face group discussion. The effect will be diminished if polite or expected responses replace candid replies to the questionnaires.
  3. The self-inventory provides a structure for self-study through identifying important characteristics which help to define organizational personality. These characteristics or "Dimensions" will then form the frame of reference against which leaders can view objectively the extent to which they do, or do not, agree among themselves about the purpose and personality of their own organization.
  4. The self-inventory consists of a sequence of phases, each building on the previous one but having a value of its own, so that early phases may be used for exploration without necessarily committing the organization to pursue the plan to its completion. This should provide adaptability to the needs of various organizations, particularly in the amount of time to be invested.
  5. The first part, more general, paves the way for the second part, more specific, more intimate, and more likely to lead to concrete changes in operational and "interpersonal" as contrasted to conceptual relationships.

This study tool will have full value to organizations to the extent that the participants will consciously develop a certain detachment and willingness to suspend judgment on many values which previously have been taken for granted. Testing experience has demonstrated the values of this tool at national, regional, and local levels of leadership.

Despite the care and planning which has gone into its construction, the operation of this self-inventory is far from automatic. The committee has provided guidelines for its use, but there is no substitute for the creative imagination and for the enthusiasm with which participants within a given organization will address themselves to the adventure. The committee wishes to participants as much stimulation and satisfaction as its own members have already enjoyed in the construction of this self-inventory tool for increasing organization effectiveness through improved volunteer-staff relations.

Volunteer-Staff Relations Committee,

Council of National Organizations for Adult Education

Virginia L. Blood, Chairman

### An Organization Self-Inventory: Objectives

It is important for organizations undertaking to utilize this self-inventory to keep in mind the following considerations and objectives:

1. This self-inventory is designed for use initially among staff and volunteers in policy-making or administrative positions.

### Purpose

This plan consists of a two-part self-inventory tool for use with the administrative and/or policy-making leaders in your organization, both volunteer and staff. An organization may use only PART I, or go on to PART II, basing the choices and emphasis within PART II on the experience with PART I. PART II should involve the same persons who participated in PART I. It is designed to help leaders in your organization do two things:

1. Identify and discuss significant variations in perception which may exist among the leadership in relation to the organization's basic characteristics (PART I). Only when this is completed:
2. Explore in depth the staff-staff, volunteer-volunteer, and volunteer-staff relations which affect the operation of the organization (PART II).

### Form of Presentation\*: PART I — Basic Dimensions

Phase A — Dimension Questionnaires — Individually self-administered check-list type of questionnaires dealing with eleven basic "Dimensions" relating to the organization's purposes, structure and ways of work.

Phase B — Group discussion focused upon certain of the Dimensions covered in the questionnaire. Criteria and set of suggested questions of an open-end variety designed to form the starting point for group discussion of each Dimension will be chosen from among the eleven by the organization itself.

### Form of Presentation: PART II — Interpersonal Factors

Phase A — Interpersonal Questionnaires — A similar set of check-list type of questionnaires based on the same Di-

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\*In order to achieve the most objective thinking and productive discussions, it is strongly urged that both sets of questionnaires be used without change. That is why multiple copies are provided. The value of this questionnaire, not specifically tied to any single organization, was borne out overwhelmingly in the testing. The participants will need specific directions as to whether their replies are to apply to their entire organization, or only the particular unit in which they work. Persons "wearing two hats" will need to choose one and wear it consistently throughout the response and discussion phases, in order to avoid confusion.

mensions. Each unit, individually self-administered, is related to the corresponding Dimension used in PART I with questions focused directly on interpersonal relationships.

Phase B — Group discussions based on the subject matter of the Phase A questionnaires. Again, a set of questions of an open-end variety to provoke discussion is included.

### Participants

Volunteers and staff should be selected because of their policy and/or administrative responsibilities. If the organization chooses to proceed to PART II, the same persons should take part. No one should be included in PART II who has not participated in PART I.

### Summarizing Data

Sample tallies are provided for tabulating and analyzing the responses to questionnaires. To maintain anonymity, each participant's returns should be identified only by whether or not the participant is volunteer or staff. A particular organization may choose to introduce such additional nonidentifying characteristics as sex or length of service, provided these can be added without destroying anonymity.

NOW, BEFORE PROCEEDING FURTHER, READ THE TWO QUESTIONNAIRES. Thirteen copies of each are in the pockets of this Kit. This number was chosen to provide twelve sets for participants, both volunteer and staff, and one for the administrator.

### Suggestions for Procedure: PART I and PART II

In using the self-inventory tool, the following procedure is suggested:

1. Lay out a time schedule for the organization's participation. This should include preparation, distribution and completion of the questionnaires, tabulation of responses, and subsequent group discussions.
2. Select the participants. Four to six each of volunteers and staff at the administrative leadership level would make a good group. Try to keep the group of volunteers and staff selected comparable in number and level of leadership responsibility.
3. Decide whether questionnaires are to be handled by mailing or whether a special meeting will be arranged.

#### Conduct PART I, Phase A: Dimension Questionnaire

1. Prepare a brief introduction including:
  - a) organization's interest in participation
  - b) reason for selection of participants
  - c) anonymity of the respondent
  - d) the importance of individual response without prior consultation
  - e) the importance of personal opinion; no implication of "right" and "wrong" answers
  - f) any other information which is necessary.

The above may supplement the Participant's Introduction to the Dimension Questionnaire. Make comments you think necessary in your own introduction.

2. Participants complete Dimension Questionnaire and return to administrator.
3. Prepare tallies for tabulating responses. (See sample on page 11.)
4. Analyze results. It is anticipated that several possible results may occur from any given Dimension. Volunteers may agree or disagree among themselves or with staff; staff may agree or disagree among themselves or with volunteers. Consideration should be given to

the actual differences in perception shown by the responses to the Dimension Questionnaire, as well as the choices for discussion indicated by the participants.

#### Carry Out Phase B of PART I: Discussion of Dimensions

1. Select the Dimensions for discussion making use of the information on your tallies (see pages 11 and 12) which will indicate:
  - a) those Dimensions about which there were widely varying perceptions among the participants
  - b) those Dimensions about which the participants thought other people would disagree with them
  - c) those Dimensions which the participants expressed a desire to discuss further.
2. Review suggested criteria and discussion questions for those Dimensions you select for discussion. (See page 12). Choose and adapt questions as necessary or write new ones.
3. Decide how much time as well as how many sessions you will give to discussion in depth and make a schedule. Groups of six to twelve persons are recommended, maintaining a balance between staff and volunteer participants in each group.
4. Select and orient discussion leaders.
5. Carry out discussion sessions.
6. Evaluate results giving special attention to clues pointing to tensions in the area of interpersonal relations to be picked up in PART II.

#### Conduct PART II, Phase A: Interpersonal Questionnaire

This part of the inventory focuses on the *interpersonal* relationships between volunteer and staff and is designed to assist organization leadership to examine the factors that help or hinder such relationships in organization

effectiveness. The same broad eleven Dimensions are provided to explore at an interpersonal level. PART II should be conducted for the *same* volunteers and staff who participated in PART I. Proceed as follows:

1. Prepare a brief introduction on the purpose of PART II with your organization in mind, picking up on the opportunity to delve into some of the interpersonal blocks to effective operation.
2. Participants complete Interpersonal Questionnaire and return to administrator.
3. Prepare tallies for tabulating responses. (See sample on page 11).
4. Collect and analyze data and share with group to determine those areas in which further discussion is needed.

#### **Carry Out Phase B of PART II: Discussion of Interpersonal Aspects of Dimensions**

1. When areas for discussion have been determined using tallies as in PART I, select discussion questions. (See page 12).
2. Schedule small discussion groups as above and orient discussion leaders.
3. Carry out discussion sessions and evaluate results.

#### **Review the Total Process**

1. Consider whether insights gained suggest need for any changes in orientation procedures, in-service training programs, etc.
2. Consider uses of tool with other volunteer-staff groups in the organization at the national, regional, state or local levels.

### Criteria for Selecting and Drafting Discussion Questions for PARTS I and II, Phase B

1. On the following pages, you will find some suggested questions related to each of the eleven Dimensions. These are intended as starters for group discussions. After you have selected two to four Dimensions for discussion, consider the corresponding questions in the light of the following criteria.
2. All questions:
  - a. should be clearly related to the differing perceptions about the particular organization using the self-inventory
  - b. should draw out the thinking reflected in the replies to the questionnaire
  - c. should be open-ended enough to provoke progression of ideas in the group, yet define the reasonable limits for each discussion session
  - d. should help clarify matters of fact which differing perceptions may indicate were not understood
  - e. should be stated so as not to alienate individuals from one another regardless of their point of view
  - f. should help identify potential problems facing the organization growing out of any wide differences in perception and understanding of the Dimension.
3. If the suggested questions which follow meet these criteria for your organization, use them. If not, adapt them or devise new ones to meet your needs.
4. For all discussion sessions, in addition to selected questions related to each Dimension, the following three questions should be asked:
  - a. What is the most important thing we can learn from the tabulation results of this Dimension?
  - b. What steps can we take to increase the effectiveness of staff and volunteer roles in this Dimension?
  - c. Can everyone who participated in this discussion name one thing he is going to do differently as a result of this discussion?

### Suggested Discussion Questions for PART I, Phase B

#### Dimension 1: Organization Objectives

1. What opportunities for individual growth and leadership exist in this organization?
2. How do we keep the organization's over-all goals and the needs of individuals in it in balance?
3. What does the organization do about a volunteer or staff leader who shows signs of inability to contribute well towards its goals?

#### Dimension 2: Decision Making

1. In what way does program personnel participate in major decisions concerning policy?
2. How are major national policy and program decisions interpreted and accepted by staff and volunteers at all levels?
3. Are major organization decisions enforced or are they merely guidelines?

#### Dimension 3: Accountability

1. How does the organization account for its acts to its leaders? its members? its contributors? its clients? to the general public?
2. What consideration is given to public opinion in the over-all activity of the organization?
3. How does the organization handle a situation in which the leadership, its membership, or the community-at-large are at odds about organization purposes and/or program?

#### Dimension 4: Sources of Volunteer Leadership

1. How do our volunteer leaders get started in the organization?
2. Who is responsible for recruiting volunteer leadership? What part does staff play? What part do volunteers play?
3. How does one achieve a key volunteer leadership position in the organization?

#### **Dimension 5: Sources of Ideas**

1. Where did our last major "new idea" come from? How extensive was participation in its development? What other participation might there have been?
2. When a change in program is being considered, how can those staff and volunteer leaders concerned, who are not directly involved in policy making, convey to top program planners the problems of operation and interpretation which may well result?
3. How do we encourage opportunities for creative expression in our staff and volunteer leadership? What else might we do?

#### **Dimension 6: Employment of Staff**

1. How do we define responsibilities of staff and volunteer leadership? Are there differences between stated responsibilities and those actually practiced?
2. Have the interests, expectation and participation of volunteer leadership changed following the employment of (additional) staff?
3. To what extent does staff do the work attributed to committees?

#### **Dimension 7: Manpower Resources**

1. How are our present personnel, volunteer and staff, meeting our programmed tasks?
2. What other resources are there for the recruitment of needed volunteer leadership?
3. Are the skills of present staff and volunteer leadership being used to their full potential?

#### **Dimension 8: Communication**

1. What are the advantages of "free flow" communication between staff and volunteers? the advantages of "channeled flow"?
2. Where do the channels sometimes break down? Why?
3. How can we prevent duplication of effort or lack of clearance?

#### **Dimension 9: Continuity**

1. How is continuity of policy and program maintained when there is turnover in top staff? in top volunteer leadership?

2. What are the effects of turnover on present personnel, volunteers and staff, and on those recruited?
3. What are the factors influencing reassignment-upward movement or dropping out? Is the total effect good?

#### **Dimension 10: Interchangeability of Roles**

1. Are there board or committee leaders in our organization who have professional skills related to our organization's mission? How do we utilize these skills if we have them?
2. Should staff members pinch-hit for volunteers if the volunteer leader isn't able to follow through for some reason?
3. What are the advantages of maintaining clearly separated "staff" and "volunteer" jobs in an organization like ours? What are the advantages of permitting or fostering interchangeability?

#### **Dimension 11: Personal Satisfaction**

1. How diverse are satisfactions received by staff and volunteer leadership in our organization?
2. How meaningful is the recognition we give our volunteers? our staff?
3. Are these means of recognition adequate? appropriate to our organization's purposes?

### **Suggested Discussion Questions for PART II, Phase B**

#### **Dimension 1: Organization's Objectives**

1. If you feel that leaders, whether volunteer or staff, have different views of this organization's objectives, and/or the means by which they should be attained, how are volunteer-staff working relationships affected?
2. How clearly do volunteers and staff see the relation of their jobs to the objectives of the organization?
3. What differences do you sense in the degree of commitment to these objectives felt by volunteers and staff?

#### **Dimension 2: Decision Making**

1. What problems exist because of the methods used in making decisions?
2. Why do volunteers or staff assume responsibility that is not theirs for making decisions?

3. Why do volunteers or staff shirk the responsibility that is theirs for making decisions?
4. How much do volunteers and staff feel they can influence decision making in this organization?

#### **Dimension 3: Accountability**

1. How do differences of opinion about this organization's accountability affect volunteer-staff relations?
2. To what extent should this organization be held responsible for the actions of its representatives, whether volunteer or staff?
3. To what extent should a volunteer or staff person be held responsible for the actions of this organization?
4. What are the problems in working relationships, created by a person's attitude toward and accountability to his profession such as social welfare, nursing, education?

#### **Dimension 4: Sources of Volunteer Leadership**

1. What kind of problems in volunteer-staff relationships may be attributed to recruitment of volunteer leaders from outside this organization?
2. What kind of problems in volunteer-staff relationships may be attributed to promotion of volunteer leaders from within?
3. Why do some volunteers in leadership positions prefer to be leaders in name only and have staff responsible for the directions of program, policies, etc.?
4. Why do some staff members in leadership positions prefer to have volunteer leaders assume the responsibilities for the direction of program, policies, etc.?
5. Why do some staff members prefer volunteers who are only figureheads?
6. What part should staff play in recruitment and selection of volunteer leaders?

#### **Dimension 5: Sources of Ideas**

1. If new program ideas are initiated primarily by volunteers, or primarily by staff, what effect does this pattern have on relationships between individual staff members and volunteers?
2. Can you identify any barriers that prevent any volunteers or staff members from suggesting new ideas, possible policy or program changes, etc.?

#### **Dimension 6: Employment of Staff**

1. How do differences in understanding about the purposes of staffing affect you in carrying out your responsibilities in this organization?

2. What kinds of assumptions about the role of staff create problems in working relationships?
3. What discrepancies are there between the stated job descriptions for staff members in leadership positions and the actual demands and expectations directed toward them?

#### **Dimension 7: Manpower Resources**

1. What kinds of personal frustration may occur when program goals exceed available manpower?
2. What factors may contribute to such frustrations?
3. How could better uses be made of time and talents in accomplishing program goals?

#### **Dimension 8: Communication**

1. What are the blocks to communications between volunteers and staff?
2. How can we overcome the special communication barrier created by "part-timeness"?
3. What kinds of information should be shared between staff and volunteers?
4. When might it be valid to withhold information?

#### **Dimension 9: Continuity**

1. What are the assumptions being made about who has responsibility for maintaining continuity in all of its aspects in this organization?
2. Who carries primary responsibility for continuity of work? passing on the traditions? passing on "know-how"?
3. How can continuity be maintained in the face of resignations, dropouts, and transfers?

#### **Dimension 10: Interchangeability of Roles**

1. What assumptions exist in this organization about the flexibility and interchangeability of staff and volunteer roles?
2. How willing are volunteers and staff to share their responsibilities for leadership?
3. When role interchangeability is desirable, what kinds of action would further increase the effectiveness of volunteer-staff working relationships?

#### **Dimension 11: Personal Satisfaction**

1. What are the factors in our working relationships between volunteers and staff in this organization that bring greatest personal satisfaction on the job?
2. What are the factors in these relationships that deter satisfaction or cause tension?
3. What steps can be taken in our working relationships which will tend to increase personal satisfaction and productivity in this organization?

**Sample Tallies for PART I and PART II, Phase A**

Below is a sample tally sheet suggested for use with each of the eleven Dimensions. To summarize all responses received from your participants, enter in each appropriate box the total number of people (volunteers in top row, staff in bottom row) who marked a given point out of the five choices on the range offered for each Dimension. For this purpose, consider that the points on the range given in the questionnaire were numbered 1 to 5 from left to right. For example, if a total of six volunteers' and six staff responses were received, the form for Dimension 1, PART I might look like this:

Number of volunteers participating in the self-inventory: 6  
 Number of staff participating in the self-inventory: 6

**DIMENSION 1 — Organization's Objectives**

**a) Opinion Responses**

Range:	Task-centered				Process-centered
Range Point:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Volunteers (6)	1	2		3	
Staff (6)	1	2	1		2

Note: A double-range tally will be necessary for some of the Dimensions in PARTS I and II.

**\*b) Similar-judgment Responses**

	Staff		Volunteers	
	yes	no	yes	no
Volunteer respondents (6)	2	4	1	5
Staff respondents (6)	3	3	4	2

\*For PART I — Dimension Questionnaire only.

### Sample Summary Tally Sheet to Determine Selection of Dimensions for Discussion

**Discussion Preferences:** Enter in the appropriate box a mark for each response designating the given Dimension as first, second, or third choice. (See the last page of each questionnaire.) The total of each column should equal the total number of respondents. To estimate the Dimensions preferred by the group as a whole, weights may be attached to first, second and third choices, for example, 5, 3, 1.

**Opinion Responses:** Show the variability in perception by ranking the opinion responses from your tally, from one to eleven. See sample Dimension 1 a), page 11.

Participants' Discussion Preferences					Rank of Opinion Responses	*Administrator's Choice for Discussion
Dimension	1st choice	2nd choice	3rd choice	Weighted Totals		
1	////	//	/	27	5	
2	/	///	/	15	2	2
3	//	/	///	16	1	3
4			/	1	6	
5	/		/	6	4	
6		/		3	11	
7			/	1	9	
8	////	///	//	31	10	1
9		/	/	4	3	
10		/		3	8	
11			/	1	7	
	12	12	12			

\*In choosing the Dimensions for discussion, the administrator will consider:

1. The weighted totals of Participants' Discussion Preferences.
2. The actual range of opinions shown in the column ranking opinion responses. Wider ranges may indicate a need for discussion.
3. Analysis of Similar-judgment Responses. See sample Dimension 1 b), page 11.
4. Other factors in the organization which would make discussion of the subject desirable.

# PART 1 – DIMENSION QUESTIONNAIRE

## of the organization self-inventory

# PROBING VOLUNTEER-STAFF RELATIONS

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## PARTICIPANT'S INTRODUCTION

### What It Is

This organization self-inventory is a tool designed for use by staff and volunteers with policy and/or administrative responsibilities in voluntary organizations. The purpose of using the tool is to achieve common perceptions of the goals, structure and volunteer-staff responsibilities and relationships within a given organization.

Organizations undergo subtle changes over a period of time. These sometimes are unperceived by those closely and continuously associated with them. In addition both staff and volunteer personnel move from one organization to another bringing with them previous experience and conceptions concerning the nature, function and operation of voluntary organizations. While this is a source of vitality, it can also be a source of misunderstanding, tension and inefficiency. A self-study is a method of revealing whether or not different understandings currently exist.

In planning to use this organization self-inventory, a comparable number of volunteers and staff at the administrative leadership level have been selected as participants. As a participant you will have a chance to exchange views with others.

Completing the attached self-administered Dimension Questionnaire is the first step. Your replies will be anonymous to encourage your frank response. The questionnaire deals with eleven basic ideas, called "Dimensions," descriptive of organizational purposes, structure, and actual ways of work. You merely check one of the boxes on the range which seems to you to most nearly correspond to the description of this organization. Answer in terms of what you see as actual practice even if this sometimes varies from the way you think it should be. We are interested in your opinion – there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. A tabulation of all anonymous responses for each Dimension will reveal where we have general agreement or disagreement. Then, opportunity for a group discussion of those Dimensions where we seem to have different perceptions will be arranged at a time convenient for the participants.



### DIMENSION 1: Organization Objectives

Some organizations are **task-centered**. They are primarily concerned with the achievement of some outside goal, such as the eradication of diseases, or the joint ownership of property, or the securing of beneficial legislation. Others are primarily concerned with what happens to individuals within the organization — that is, **process-centered**. They place most emphasis on providing members with opportunities for education or self-improvement through participation in the activities of the organization itself. Many organizations mix these two objectives in some measure.

a) Please check the box which, in your opinion, locates this organization on the range between **task-centered** and **process-centered**.

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

**Task-centered** **Process-centered**

b) Other leaders in this organization are being asked for similar judgments. Do you anticipate that your response will be much the same as that given by:

**Staff**    Yes                       No                       **Volunteers**    Yes                       No

### DIMENSION 2: Decision Making

In some organizations the power to make major decisions concerning policy, program, personnel, internal and external relations may be, in effect, **centralized** or concentrated in a small group, while in a different type of organization, it may be **distributed** among many people through formal or informal processes, such as a convention or council action, referendum, use of committees or referral for local discussion.

a) Please check the box which, in your opinion, locates the actual decision-making process in this organization on the range between **centralized** and **distributed** authority.

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

**Centralized** **Distributed**

b) Other leaders in this organization are being asked for similar judgments. Do you anticipate that your response will be much the same as that given by:

**Staff**    Yes                       No                       **Volunteers**    Yes                       No

### DIMENSION 3: Accountability

To whom must the leadership of the organization justify its acts? To whom are they accountable, not only in the formal sense but more broadly, depending on its objectives, structure, sources of support and other factors? In some organizations accountability is completely **internal** and the governing body depends on itself and its charter to perpetuate its activities. In some, accountability is to a well-defined membership, or it may include all contributors whether or not they "belong," or all the organization's "clients." In others, accountability may be more diffused and the organization may be viewed as accountable to the very broad community or public at large, and can be described as **external**.

a) Please check the box which, in your opinion, corresponds most nearly to the relative importance of **internal** and **external** accountability in this organization.

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

**Internal** **External**

b) Other leaders in this organization are being asked for similar judgments. Do you anticipate that your response will be much the same as that given by:

**Staff**    Yes                       No                       **Volunteers**    Yes                       No



#### DIMENSION 4: Sources of Volunteer Leadership

In some organizations, volunteer leadership for board and committees is recruited from within the organization itself. Personal knowledge and practical experience in the organization are felt to be essential to the achievement of the goals of these organizations and recruitment is primarily **internal**. On the other hand, there are organizations which seek their volunteer leadership from the larger community. For example, prominent people and those with certain specialized skills are thought to be essential to the achievement of the goals of these organizations, even though they lack prior participation in the group. This can be described as **external** recruitment.

- a) Please check the box which, in your opinion, corresponds most nearly to the relative importance of **internal** and **external** recruitment of volunteer leadership in this organization.

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Internal External

- b) Other leaders in this organization are being asked for similar judgments. Do you anticipate that your response will be much the same as that given by:

Staff    Yes                       No                       Volunteers    Yes                       No

#### DIMENSION 5: Sources of Ideas

Among organizations there is considerable variation in the role which volunteers and staff respectively play in the initiation of new program ideas. In some organizations the **volunteer** board members or committees actively originate ideas which lead to program changes, doing so largely independently of staff. In others, the **staff** is expected to take the lead in initiating new ideas and in providing the major impetus to the organization's program development. In between, there are organizations in which both staff and volunteers contribute, in greater or less degree, to this creative process.

- a) Please check the box which, in your opinion, most accurately represents the relative importance of **staff** and **volunteer** leadership in this organization in respect to the initiation of new ideas and program development.

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Staff

- b) Other leaders in this organization are being asked for similar judgments. Do you anticipate that your response will be much the same as that given by:

Staff    Yes                       No                       Volunteers    Yes                       No

#### DIMENSION 6: Employment of Staff

Historically, when volunteer leaders initially hired staff in various organizations, they were not all looking for the same thing. In some organizations, the volunteer leadership found that they needed to secure staff to do those tasks which they no longer had the time to do as the organization grew and the tasks became larger. In other words, they were **securing the time** of a staff person to carry out many of the routine responsibilities which they had previously carried alone. In other organizations, growth meant that the tasks which needed to be done had increased in complexity and scope to such an extent that skills were required which the volunteer leadership did not possess. In these instances, volunteer leadership was buying the **required competence** of a staff person to do what they did not have the skill to do alone. Such considerations enter, with varying importance, into employment of staff in organizations today.

- a) Please check the box which, in your opinion, corresponds most nearly to the relative importance of **secured time** and **required competence** in the employment of staff in this organization.

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Secured Time Required Competence

- b) Other leaders in this organization are being asked for similar judgments. Do you anticipate that your response will be much the same as that given by:

Staff    Yes                       No                       Volunteers    Yes                       No

## DIMENSION 7: Manpower Resources

Every organization confronts the task of balancing its immediate **program priorities** or goals against its available manpower resources, including both volunteers and staff. Some organizations set themselves program tasks for accomplishment in a given time and then go out trying to secure the necessary volunteer and staff manpower. Others may first assess their available manpower resources or **manpower potential** and then tailor their immediate program objectives accordingly. Many organizations take both these considerations into account in varying measure.

- a) Please check the box which, in your opinion, most nearly represents the relative weight given to **program needs** and availability of **manpower** in establishing short-term priorities year by year in this organization.

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Program Priorities Set First Manpower Potential Defined First

- b) Other leaders in this organization are being asked for similar judgments. Do you anticipate that your response will be much the same as that given by:

Staff Yes  No  Volunteers Yes  No

## DIMENSION 8: Communication

The manner in which communication flows back and forth between volunteers and staff is a basic characteristic of the organization and the way it tackles its tasks. Some organizations have **free flow** – a volunteer communicating freely with several different staff members or vice versa. Other organizations partially channel flow in such a way that any given volunteer (or staff member) communicates primarily with his staff (or volunteer) counterpart. The most clearly **channeled flow** is the pattern in which the top staff member and top volunteer communicate on behalf of their respective groups to clear on all significant matters.

- a) Please check the box which, in your opinion, corresponds to the pattern of volunteer-staff communications in this organization on the range between **free flow** and **channeled flow**.

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Free Flow Channeled Flow

- b) Other leaders in this organization are being asked for similar judgments. Do you anticipate that your response will be much the same as that given by:

Staff Yes  No  Volunteers Yes  No

## DIMENSION 9: Continuity

Every organization which is more than a few years old has a gradually growing body of unwritten, unformalized attitudes, traditions, and know-how. This "culture" is transmitted to oncoming leaders (whether staff or volunteer) by various planned or unplanned means, but basically it is a people-to-people process. In some organizations it is **staff** who are, in fact, mostly relied on to provide continuity in passing down the organizational lore. In other organizations, **volunteers** are the chief perpetuators. In many this function is shared between the two groups.

- a) Please check the box which, in your opinion, most nearly represents the relative weight of actual responsibility of **staff** and **volunteer** leaders in passing on the traditions and know-how to the new leaders in this organization.

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Volunteers

- b) Other leaders in this organization are being asked for similar judgments. Do you anticipate that your response will be much the same as that given by:

Staff Yes  No  Volunteers Yes  No

**PART II—INTERPERSONAL QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**of the organization self-inventory**

**PROBING  
VOLUNTEER-STAFF  
RELATIONS**

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**PARTICIPANT'S INTRODUCTION**

Now that you have had experience with this kind of questionnaire, here is a chance to consider the interpersonal implications of some of the same ideas you considered in PART I. The procedure is similar.

Place a check in the box which most nearly indicates what you feel is true about the relationships *in your work setting*.

As before, your frank response is sought to this anonymous questionnaire.

Again, you will have an opportunity to discuss those areas of greatest interest.

**NOW GO AHEAD WITH THE INTERPERSONAL QUESTIONS ON  
THE ELEVEN DIMENSIONS, WHICH BEGIN ON THE NEXT PAGE.**

### DIMENSION 1: Organization Objectives

In the daily working relationships between volunteer and staff, frequently there are differences in the way in which volunteers and staff may view their organization's objectives. Answer the following questions by checking the box which, in your opinion, best indicates your work situation:

To what extent do you feel that staff and volunteers have similar views of this organization's objectives?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Similar Different

To what extent do you feel that staff and volunteers have similar views on means of attaining this organization's objectives?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Similar Different

### DIMENSION 2: Decision Making

The effectiveness of working relationships between volunteers and staff is greatly influenced by understandings or misunderstandings concerning who has authority to make decisions and who should be involved in the decision-making process. Answer the following questions by checking the box which, in your opinion, best describes your situation.

To what extent are you in accord with the way decisions are made in this organization?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Completely Not at all

To what extent do you feel involved in decision making that you believe is appropriate to your position?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

To the Maximum Not at all

### DIMENSION 3: Accountability

Frequently organization leadership needs to justify its acts both to the general public and to its membership. Where there are differences of opinion as to where the organization is primarily accountable, tensions may develop in volunteer-staff relations. Answer the following question by checking the box which, in your opinion, most nearly reflects the situation in this organization.

To what extent do you feel that such differences of opinion about accountability are affecting volunteer-staff relations?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

To a great extent Not at all

### DIMENSION 4: Sources of Volunteer Leadership

Differences of opinion sometimes exist among staff and volunteers as to the relative importance of recruiting volunteer leadership from outside the organization as against promoting it from within the organization. Answer the following question by checking the box which, in your opinion, most nearly indicates your work situation.

To what extent does this organization's pattern of recruiting (outside or inside) volunteer leadership help or hinder you in your work?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Helps Hinders

### DIMENSION 5: Sources of Ideas

Productive work by staff and volunteers is frequently related to the way in which the ideas of both staff and volunteers are used. Answer the following questions by checking the box which, in your opinion, best indicates the position of this organization.

To what extent do you feel that the ideas of staff are encouraged and used?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

To the Maximum Not at all

To what extent do you feel that the ideas of volunteers are encouraged and used?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

To the Maximum Not at all

### DIMENSION 6: Employment of Staff

In many instances in organizations there are differences of opinion and of understanding among volunteers and staff as to why an organization employs staff. Answer the following question by checking the box which, in your opinion, best indicates the situation in this organization.

If you are a staff member:

To what extent do you feel that the volunteers with whom you work have the same perception as you do about the purpose for which your staff position was created?

If you are a volunteer:

To what extent do you feel that the staff members with whom you work have the same perception as you do about the purpose for which their positions were created?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

The Same Different

### DIMENSION 7: Manpower Resources

Problems may arise among volunteers and staff because manpower resources are not adequate to accomplish the goals set by the organization. Answer the following question by checking the box which, in your opinion, best indicates the situation in this organization.

To what extent do you feel that problems have been created because program requirements have exceeded available manpower?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

To a great extent Not at all

### DIMENSION 8: Communication

The way in which volunteers and staff communicate with each other frequently influences effective working relationships. Answer the following question by checking the box which, in your opinion, best indicates your work situation.

To what extent do you think staff and volunteers feel free to communicate with each other?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Very Free Not Free

### DIMENSION 9: Continuity

Ineffective relationships may occur where there are misunderstandings between volunteers and staff as to who has responsibility for maintaining the continuity of work and passing on the traditions and know-how in the organization. Answer the following question by checking the box which, in your opinion, best indicates your work situation.

To what extent do you feel responsible for maintaining continuity of work and for passing on the traditions and know-how in this organization?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

To a great extent Not at all

### DIMENSION 10: Interchangeability of Roles

Sometimes volunteer and staff roles are interchangeable, sometimes they are not. The effectiveness of working relationships is influenced by the degree to which this interchangeability is mutually accepted. Answer the following question by checking the box which, in your opinion, best indicates your work situation.

If you are a volunteer:

Do you feel that there are aspects of your job in this organization which could be interchanged with those of a staff member?

If you are a staff member:

Do you feel that there are aspects of your job in this organization which could be interchanged with those of a volunteer?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Many Aspects No Aspects

### DIMENSION 11: Personal Satisfaction

Productive and effective relationships and the retention of volunteers and staff in organizations are frequently related to personal satisfaction on the job. Answer the following question by checking the box which, in your opinion, best indicates the way you feel about your work situation.

To what extent do you feel the rewards for working in this organization are personally satisfying to you?

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Very Satisfying Not Satisfying

## Participant's Discussion Preferences

Now that you have completed the Interpersonal Questionnaire, please indicate on the following scale which of the eleven Dimension topics you would like to discuss in a small group at some later time.

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
Dimension No.			

Please check whether you are: { Staff   
Volunteer