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ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

The Association for Volunteer Administration, an international membership organization, enhances the competence of its members and strengthens the profession of volunteer resources management. Members include directors of volunteer resources in a wide variety of settings, agency executives, association officers, educators, researchers, consultants, students—anyone who shares a commitment to the effective utilization of volunteers.

Membership in AVA is open to salaried and non-salaried persons in all types of public, nonprofit, and for-profit settings who choose to join with AVA to promote and support effective leadership in volunteerism.

AVA is an association run by its members. Active committees include: Professional Credentialing, Ethics, Fund Development, Organizational Relations, Communications, Member Services and Network Development. Members also plan the annual International Conference on Volunteer Administration, a major event held each year in a different city in the United States or Canada. This conference provides participants the opportunity to share common concerns and to focus on issues of importance to professionalism in volunteer administration.

Two major services that AVA provides, both for its members and for the field at large, are a professional credentialing program and an educational endorsement program. Through the process that recognizes leaders of volunteer programs who demonstrate professional performance standards, AVA furthers respect for and appreciation of the profession of volunteer administration. Similarly, AVA educational endorsement is given to those workshops, courses, conferences, and training events that provide opportunities for professional growth in volunteer resource management.

Finally, AVA produces publications including informational newsletters and booklets and ***The Journal of Volunteer Administration.***

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EDITORIAL

In the New Economy, success is the fusion of ideas and technology.[1]

Information technology, cyberspace, portals, virtual volunteering, and Internet recruitment are the focus of this issue of *The Journal.* Technology has become the new tool for managers of volunteers, yet we are only beginning to explore its potential.

Information and Communications Technology: Navigating Change recognizes that managers of volunteers have traditionally been hands-on administrators but the experience and knowledge they brought to the job may no longer be the skills they need to use the new tool of technology. Based on Canadian volunteer organizations, the study explores the factors that influence the use of information and communication technology in volunteer administration and makes recommendations for creating a "supportive climate." The second study, by O'Rourke and Baldwin, looks at the success of an Internet matching service to assist potential volunteers in their search for suitable volunteer opportunities, and to assist nonprofits in expanding their reach to recruit new, diverse volunteers. These two studies hint at the dichotomy that exists between the attitude and comfort of managers of volunteers and the attitudes and comfort of increasing numbers of volunteers.

Brian Cugelman, the architect of the World Volunteer Web for the United Nations Volunteers program, guides readers through the resources available at this global portal. He highlights promotional tools that can be downloaded and invites managers of volunteers to share their expertise with a larger global network. Jayne Cravens, Online Volunteer Specialist with the United Nations Volunteers program, shares her insights about the challenges of cultural differences and language as online volunteering transcends global borders. The last technology article, by Lori Gotlieb, promotes the advantages of online volunteering and shares practical steps for getting started.

The last four articles offer insights and recommendations on three important topics for organizations that engage volunteers. Connie Pirtle and Steve McCurley look at legal and management implications of allowing employees to volunteer in their own workplace. *Reviewing Partnerships* provides a tool for analyzing and improving profit—nonprofit relationships. The final article, by Schmiesing, discusses the effects of unresolved conflict on organizational reputation, and offers suggestions for managing negative conflict.

The authors in this issue are colleagues from four countries—two continents. Just as cyberspace has the power to link us across borders, *The Journal* is excited with this opportunity to bring together an international group of researchers, information technology specialists, and practitioners to spark a fusion of ideas and technology.

Mary V. Merrill, Editor

[1]Chester, E. (2002). *Employing Generation Why?* Lakewood, Colorado: Tucker House Books

Research

- ***Information and Communications Technology: Navigating Technological Change and Changing Relationships in Volunteer Administration***

Yvonne Harrison, University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
Vic Murray, University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

The introduction of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) into the nonprofit sector is thought to be helpful to NPOs in finding new ways to meet their missions, but it does, at the same time, present significant challenges (Brock, 2002; Schneider, 2003). For example, little is known about the types of applications, and to what extent these applications are used, in volunteer program work. Nor is much known about what factors influence ICT decisions and in what ways ICT applications should be managed for success. Drawing from the literature and our research on ICT use in Canadian volunteer organizations, this article argues that if volunteer programs are going to be successful users of modern ICT, then greater emphasis must be placed on understanding its uses and the factors that influence its effectiveness in volunteer program work.

- ***How the Internet has Changed Volunteering: Findings from a VolunteerMatch User Study***

Molly O'Rourke, Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc., Washington, D.C.
Greg Baldwin, VolunteerMatch, San Francisco, California

In December 2003, Peter D. Hart Research Associates conducted an evaluative survey on behalf of VolunteerMatch to better understand how its use of the Internet has changed the process and experience of volunteering for its community of active users. The study highlights the successful use of VolunteerMatch among both nonprofits and volunteers while providing strong evidence of the power of the Internet to shape the volunteer sector.

- ***Your Goals, Global Campaigns and Internet Technology***

Brian Cugelman, United Nations Volunteers, Bonn, Germany

This article examines how International Volunteer Day (IVD), celebrated every 5 December, can help organizations reach their goals in a creative and efficient way. Through the WorldVolunteerWeb.org volunteering portal, campaigners and volunteer managers can download all the tools they need to get their campaigns moving. This article provides highlights of the IVD 2003 campaign, and glimpses into campaign 2004. It examines some of the ways IVD activities and participation can strengthen the work of organizations by providing a platform to network and a public forum to honor outstanding volunteers. Mandated to provide the global volunteering community with resources, the article highlights key services and resources on the WorldVolunteerWeb.org, and proposes ways organizations and volunteer managers may use the volunteering portal to share their expertise with a large global network.

- ***Challenges of International Online Volunteering: Re-Learning Words, Transcending Boundaries***

Jayne Cravens, United Nations Volunteers, Bonn, Germany

With the permeation of cyberspace, it is difficult for even the smallest of volunteer programs anywhere to think of itself as only local—any volunteer manager with an Internet connection will interact internationally in some way eventually, if not regularly. However, there are substantial cultural differences throughout the world that may cause discrepancies in how volunteerism is talked about. These differences can make it difficult for volunteer managers in "the West" to engage effectively with people in "the South." Being aware of these differences can help all volunteer managers more easily transcend country boundaries, and, to be better communicators in every aspect, locally and globally.

- ***Virtual Volunteering: Get Involved by Getting Online***
  Lori Gotlieb, Eva' Initiatives, Toronto, Ontario
  Virtual Volunteering is a growing field, and our way of thinking of the traditional volunteer needs to shift with the times. Virtual Volunteering can extend the resources of agencies by enlisting help from people who otherwise could not help. To use the phrase of "thinking outside the box," Virtual Volunteering is a perfect opportunity to get involved by adding a new dimension to volunteer programs.

- ***Utilizing Employees as Volunteers***
  Connie Pirtle, Washington, D.C.
  When employees volunteer in their own workplace, it blurs the lines (factually and perceptually) between employment and voluntary engagement. It can become very difficult to distinguish between what employees do for salary and what they do voluntarily. This article looks at the legal and management implications of allowing staff to volunteer within the same organizational structure.

- ***Management Implications of Staff Who Volunteer***
  Steve McCurley, VM Systems, Olympia, Washington
  Building on the discussion of legal and management issues raised by Pirtle in "Using Employees as Volunteers," this article addresses a range of management implications for engaging employees as volunteers within the organization where they work. The author raises additional concerns and considerations for managers of volunteers.

- ***Reviewing Partnerships: A Developmental Perspective of Profit–Nonprofit Partnerships***
  Lucas Meijs, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands
  Judith M. van der Voort, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands
  Nonprofit organizations face increasing pressure to develop partnerships with businesses. Professional volunteer administrators must be able to cultivate corporate volunteering arrangements into better partnerships. A partnership can be improved either by becoming more integrative or by incorporating more exchanges. To help volunteer administrators who are currently engaged in such endeavors, we present an instrument for analyzing existing partnerships. This tool has at least five applications: 1) the analysis of existing partnerships maintained by a nonprofit organization with the business sector; 2) support for decision processes concerning the selection of potential partners; 3) the preparation of transactional agreements regarding money, means, manpower, mass, and media; 4) the discussion of future directions for specific partnerships; 5) the facilitation of cost-benefit assessments.

- ***Strengthening Organizational Goodwill through Effective Volunteer Conflict Management***
  Ryan J. Schmiesing, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
  Conflict is inevitable where people and ideas come together, including nonprofit organizations engaging volunteers serving in local communities. Conflict, while potentially constructive, can also be tremendously destructive for organizations. Failing to manage conflict damages an organization's reputation and leads to a potential decrease in volunteers, service recipients, donors, community support, and program partnerships. An organization's reputation and ability to fulfill its mission is at stake as nonprofits rely heavily on face-to-face interaction to recruit volunteers, solicit donors, meet clientele needs, and build new partnerships. This article explores ongoing negative conflict, including sources, impact, and potential solutions, as a risk that must be managed by volunteer administrators to help insure that the organization maintains a positive reputation in the community.

Information and Communications Technology: Navigating Technological Change and Changing Relationships in Volunteer Administration

Yvonne Harrison, University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
Vic Murray, University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

For volunteer administrators who scan the more popular nonprofit technology Web sites, such as Tech Soup or Charity Village,[1] the number of applications for modern information and communications technology (ICT) may seem overwhelming and confusing.

Some examples of the areas where ICT is being used in nonprofit work include capacity building and policy development (Government of Canada, 1999; Nonprofits Policy and Technology Project, 1998); advocacy (McInerney, 2004); fundraising (Johnson, 1999; Warwick, Hart & Allen, 2002); philanthropy (Blau, 2001);volunteer recruitment and management (Ipsos Reid, 2001; Murray & Harrison, 2002a); volunteering (Cravens, 2000; Murray & Harrison, 2002b; Virtual Volunteer Project, 2001); community development (Seedco, 2002); and management education (Cargo, 2000) just to name a few.

While the introduction of ICT into the nonprofit sector is thought to be helpful to nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in finding new ways to meet their missions, it does, at the same time, present significant challenges (Brock, 2002; Schneider, 2003). For example, little is known about the types of applications, and to what extent these applications are used, in volunteer program work. Nor is much known about what factors influence ICT decisions and in what ways ICT applications should be managed for success.

Drawing from the literature and our research on ICT use in Canadian volunteer organizations, this article argues that if volunteer programs are going to be successful users of modern ICT, then greater emphasis must be placed on understanding its uses and the factors that influence its effectiveness in volunteer program work. Our argument will be built around the following questions:

1. What is information and communications technology?
2. How significant is it?
3. What are the common types of ICT applications in volunteer programs and to what extent are they used?
4. What factors influence the use of ICT applications in volunteer administration?
5 So what? How can volunteer administrators create a supportive climate for ICT?

1. WHAT IS INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY?

ICT is a combination of three modern electronic components: computer hardware, software applications, and the Internet. Like the manufacturers that produce them, each of these components plays a different role in processing information and facilitating com-

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Vic Murray is currently Adjunct Professor in the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria. Until 1995, he was Director of the Voluntary Sector Management Program in the Schulich School of Business at York University, Toronto. He is the author of over 100 books, articles and papers in the fields of organizational behaviour and nonprofit management. Currently he is the Director of the Voluntary Sector Knowledge Network (www.vskn.ca), a web-based service providing information on a wide range of issues related to the management of nonprofit organizations.

munications. For example, computers store, microchips process, and networks make possible the transmission of information within a social environment. While each of these components has a separate and unique function, they work in concert to form what is known as the electronic information and communications technology system (Clarke, 2001).

Like other types of technology that have come before them, ICTs can be thought of as a set of tools to achieve specific goals, a "means to an end" approach (Richter, 1982, pg. 8). But technology should also be thought of in terms of the knowledge and know-how to achieve specific objectives (Richter, 1982, pp. 7). In thinking about technology in these two ways, it is not hard to imagine different types of technology that have been used at different points in time by organizations to conduct their work and achieve their objectives. In fact, organizations, like societies, have long been described and characterized on "the basis of their knowledge and the technologies available to them" (Richter, 1982, p. 20). For example, machine technologies characterized the industrial era, and ICT has spawned what we now call the information age.

Originally, computers were used as machines for doing a lot of routine work faster and better, such as keeping records and sending out bills. Then it was realized that their vastly superior information-processing capacity could be used for making important management decisions. However, with the relatively recent advent of the Internet and web-based technologies, it has become an important means to facilitate different kinds of work (e.g., e-commerce, e-business and e-government) as well as in building and sustaining relationships between people (Checkland & Holwell, 1998; Warren & Weschler, 1999).

Based on our review of the literature and our research into how volunteer programs are making use of ICT, we therefore want to separate our discussion of ICT into two components:

1. ICT that is used primarily for the purpose of "doing for," that is, it is used to carry out specific *tasks* more efficiently or effectively (e.g., recruitment of volunteers, fund-raising) to aid or benefit the voluntary organization in meeting its mission.
2. ICT that is used primarily for the purpose of "doing with," that is, it is used to build and manage relationships to increase *trust*, develop mutual *respect*, improve motivation and build teams (e.g. e-mail that provides volunteer recognition, online newsletters and Web sites that host discussion forums).

2. HOW SIGNIFICANT IS IT?

In Canada, the authors of this article carried out several surveys of volunteer administrators between 2001 (n=494) and 2003 (n=462)[2] asking them questions about how much access they had to ICT components in their volunteer programs. The data for this paper comes from three different respondent groups. The first group, the "2001 local group," consisted of administrators of volunteer programs who were members of Volunteer Victoria, a volunteer support and referral organization covering the Capital Regional District of Victoria, B.C. Canada.[3] The second group, the "2001 national group," consisted of administrators from across Canada who were registered users of Volunteer Canada's Volunteer Opportunities Exchange (VOE), an online recruitment system used to increase volunteerism in Canada.[4] The third group, the "2003 national group," consisted of administrators who were on an updated electronic listing of registered VOE users, and administrators who were on the mailing lists of a number of local volunteer centres across Canada.[5] The local group of administrators responded to mail questionnaires while both national groups responded to online questionnaires.[6]

As of 2003, the amount of access that volunteer administrators had to ICT components was high, and in most cases levels had increased over the two years we conducted assessments. Highlights of the data indicate

- The majority of volunteer programs had access to personal computers (up to 99% in 2003 from 89% of the national group and from 94% of the regional group) and fax machines (up to 92% from 87% local-

ly and nationally).

- Less than a third of administrators reported using specialized volunteer management software to manage their volunteers. (By 2003 this figure was up slightly at 31% nationally from 29% nationally and 15% locally.)
- Use of the Internet in the volunteer program was high (2003 up to 100% nationally from 95% nationally of those we surveyed by e-mail and 90% among the local administrators we surveyed by mail). These findings are not surprising given both national groups were biased in favour of Internet use. The local group may be more typical of the amount of access volunteer programs in the sector have.
- Volunteer administrators were not big users of cellular phones (up to 37% in 2003 from 35% nationally and 15% locally in 2001) or handheld computers (up to 10% in 2003 from 2001 levels of 1% regionally; 6% nationally).

In summary, our findings suggest that volunteer administrators in Canada, while they did not have access to all the "toys," were certainly not laggards in the ICT tool department. These findings are consistent with other nonprofit research coming out of Canada (e.g., Government of Canada, 2002; Kerr, 2002; Murray & Harrison, 2002; Parmegiani & Sachdeva, 2000); the U.S. (e.g., Nonprofits Policy &Technology Project, 1998; Pitkin & Manzo, 2002); and the UK (e.g., Hall Aitken, 2001; Ticher, Maison and Jones, 2002) suggesting that physical access to ICT components in these types of organizations in developed countries at least is very high.

3. WHAT ARE THE COMMON TYPES OF ICT APPLICATIONS USED IN VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS AND TO WHAT EXTENT ARE THEY USED?

Table 1.0 shows the different types of ICT applications volunteer administrators from our samples reported using during the years 2001-2003. The applications we looked at were aimed at informing prospective volunteers about the volunteer program and available opportunities, locating potential volunteers (recruitment), selecting and putting them into positions, and overseeing their performance. This meant examining the use of organizational Web sites, e-mail, online volunteer opportunity recruitment systems, virtual volunteering[7] and how software applications were used for managing volunteers.

Along with general reports on the amount of access to these applications, in some cases we also looked at how applications were used. For example we looked at the ways Web sites were used in volunteer programs. Different uses represent different "levels of connectivity". Some were used simply to inform potential volunteers about the volunteer program (level 1-information hosting) while others were interactive, allowing potential volunteers to apply online or communicate with the organization (level 2-interactivity). At a more advanced level a few Web sites allowed the sharing of work, or information, with colleagues in their own organization or even others (level 3-vertical and horizontal work sharing). We assessed whether e-mail was used only for communicating among staff and colleagues within and between organizations (type 1) or for communicating with volunteers (type 2). In the same fashion, we looked at the use of two different Canadian online recruitment systems to search for and match volunteers to available positions. Two of the better-known systems are the VICTA program developed by Volunteer Victoria and adopted by about 50 volunteer centres across North America; and, the Volunteer Opportunity Exchange (VOE) started in 1998 by Volunteer Canada.[8] Finally, we report on uses of software applications and the extent to which volunteer programs had volunteer positions that could be performed from a distance using ICT (known as virtual volunteering, or VV).

Table 1 shows the amount of ICT use by the three samples of volunteer administrators that we studied: the national and local samples measured in 2001 and the national sample measured two years later in 2003. It reveals the following ICT usage patterns:

TABLE 1

Use of ICT Applications by Volunteer Administrators in Canadian Volunteer Programs

ICT Application Type	National 2001 % (n) n=365	Local 2001 % (n) n=129	National 2003 % (n) n=462
Organizational Web site	90 (330)	78 (98)	90 (415)
Level of Web site Connectivity			
Level 1-information hosting	79 (225)	85 (58)	70 (257)
Level 2-level 1 plus interactive features	19 (54)	12 (8)	20 (75)
Level 3-level 2 plus vertical and horizontal shared database	2 (6)	3 (2)	10 (35)
Use Internet to search for volunteers	64 (235)	55 (71)	N/A
Use of VOE	34 (124)	8 (10)	28 (128)
Use of VICTA recruitment system	N/A	47 (77)	N/A
Use of E-mail in Volunteer Program	96 (349)	76 (87)	100 (461)
Type 1 E-mail used only within org	94 (342)	99 (91)	99 (458)
Type 2 E-mail used for volunteer communication	88 (320)	85 (78)	93 (430)
Uses for Software Applications:			
Writing	99 (363)	98 (124)	N/A
Communicating	90 (328)	88 (110)	N/A
Record Keeping	89 (325)	83 (104)	N/A
Scheduling	50 (181)	47 (59)	N/A
Use of ICT to Volunteers:			
Virtual Volunteering	34 (124)	33 (42)	N/A

Use of Web sites

- Over three quarters of administrators in 2001 had access to Web sites (90% national sample; 78% local). There was no change in Web site access between two national samples taken two years apart (2001 and 2003 were both 90%). This suggests some stabilization in the rate of adoption of this technology.
- The majority of Web sites were at the lowest level of e-connectivity, using them just to host information about their volunteer programs (2003 level 1 connectivity was 70% compared to the 2001 samples which were 79% national and 85% local.) Local administrators reported the lowest levels of e-connectivity (85% at level 1). Clearly, the potential for using Web sites to get work done or build relationships was still not recognized.
- However, the trend is on the upswing. Volunteer programs in 2003 had reached higher levels of connectivity than those in 2001 (2003 level 3 at 10% compared to 3 or less percent nationally and locally).

Use of Online Recruitment Systems

- Over half of volunteer administrators (64% national; 55% local) reported using the Internet in 2001 to search for volunteers.
- Though overall usage was low, more volunteer administrators used the national online recruitment system (VOE) in 2001 (34%) than they did in 2003 (28%). Of the national administrators who did not use the national system in 2003, 63% cited lack of knowledge about it as the primary reason for not using it; 7% didn't use it because they felt their local volunteer centre could provide the recruitment services they needed, while only 5% had a general belief that online recruitment systems were not a good source of volunteers.
- In the sample of local administrators, 47% used their locally based online recruitment systems while only 8% of them used the national system. Of the local managers that did not use the national system, 71% said they were interested in learning more about it.

Use of E-mail

- For each of the years assessed, administrators used e-mail mostly for 'organizational' purposes such as sharing information with management and staff, and tasks from a distance (2001, 94% national and 99% local; 2003, 99% national. The mean usage score was 4.22 out of 5 where 1 is *never use* and 5 is *use very much*). E-mail was used somewhat less for communicating with volunteers (88% of the 2001 national sample; 85% of the 2001 local sample; and 93% of the 2003 national sample). The mean usage score was 3.67 out of 5.

Use of Software

- The majority of administrators from our 2001-2002 samples used software applications to write letters, reports and other documents (99% national; 98% local) and communicate (90% national; 88% local) or keep records (89% national; 83% local) on volunteers. Fewer used software to assist with the task of scheduling volunteers (50% national; 47% local).

Use of ICT to Volunteer

- About a third of administrators (34% national and 33% local) in 2001 had volunteer positions that could be performed from a distance using ICT in whole or in part (known as virtual volunteering, or VV).

In summary, it appears that the amount of access to ICT applications like Web sites, e-mail, and online recruitment systems did not change all that much over the two years we conducted assessments. But we do see some variation in the use of these applications. For example, Web sites reached higher levels of connectivity in 2003, suggesting that Web sites are being seen not only as tools to host information about the volunteer, but also as a way to facilitate its work. We also see changes in e-mail use with ICT being used in 2003 as a tool to manage volunteers more than in previous years. The comparatively low use of national online recruitment systems and the reasons cited by administrators for this suggests that lack of knowledge about their potential value to volunteer administration might be a major factor to explain the low level of uptake. The same may be true for VV positions. Regarding the use of software, the pattern suggests that administrators see these applications more as tools for writing, communicating and record keeping rather than for managing volunteers.

4. WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE THE USE OF THESE APPLICATIONS IN VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION?

While we were interested in knowing how much and in what ways administrators were using ICT applications, we were also interested in whether certain factors might account for the variation in ICT use between volunteer programs.

To accomplish this, we assessed a large number of factors. They are grouped into three categories: (1) at the organizational systems level, "hard" *characteristics of volunteer organizations* such as the sector they are in (e.g., social services, the arts, health, etc), size (represented by budget size), size of volunteer program (represented both by the number of volunteers and size of the volunteer program budget and how much of that money was allocated to ICT), the extent to which there were ICT changes, and "soft" *characteristics of the job environment* (level of job autonomy, satisfaction, leadership, and co-worker support); (2) *characteristics of technology*, which included the quality and capacity of ICT systems, system satisfaction, and use of ICT applications; (3) *individual characteristics of volunteer administrators* (e.g., age and education, experience in the job, time using ICT, level of technical ability, attitudes toward ICT and specific types of applications) and *social characteristics* of the environment (e.g., the extent to which they were involved in ICT and organizational decisions).

Using our 2003 data we found a number of factors were associated with the different uses of ICT and their perceived impact on the volunteer program by volunteer administrators (See Appendix A for a list of these correlations.)[9,10] Only a few factors were significant predictors.

From Table 2 it can be seen that different

TABLE 2

Predictors of ICT Usage and Effectiveness Patterns in Canadian Volunteer Programs

	Web site Use Level of Connectivity	E-mail Use Organizational Purposes	E-mail Use Volunteer Management	Online Recruitment System Use (VOE)	Online Recruitment System (VOE) Impact	ICT Impact
Organizational Level Predictors	The greater the % budget allocated to ICT, the higher the level of e-connectivity.	The more stress in the job environment, the less e-mail is used for organizational purposes.	The greater the size of the volunteer program budget, the more e-mail is used to manage volunteers.			The greater the level of administrator job autonomy, the greater the perceived impact of ICT on the volunteer program.
Technical Systems Predictors		The more e-mail is used to manage volunteers; the more it is used for organizational purposes.	The easier ICT systems are to learn, the more they are used for volunteer management purposes. Administrators who use online applications to recruit volunteers are more likely to use e-mail applications to manage them. Administrators who use e-mail for organizational purposes are more likely to use e-mail for managing volunteers.	The more administrators use e-mail to manage volunteers, the more likely they will use online recruitment systems to recruit them into the volunteer program.		
Socio-Individual Predictors	The younger the administrator, the higher the level of e-connectivity.		The more time administrators spend using ICT, the more they will use e-mail to manage volunteers.	The more positive administrators are about the usefulness of ICT, the more likely they will be adopters of new ICT applications like the VOE. Administrators who are also volunteers are more likely to use online recruitment tools to search for volunteers. The greater the involvement of the administrator in "network" type training (e.g., training provided by volunteer centers and professional associations), the greater the perceived impact of the VOE on the volunteer program.	The greater the perceived usefulness of the VOE, the greater the perceived impact on the volunteer program. The more time spent using ICT in the job, the more positive the perception that ICT is having a positive impact on the volunteer program.	The more positive the perception that ICT is useful, the more positive the perceived impact on the volunteer program.

factors were responsible for different patterns of ICT use. This reflects the realization that ICT use is not a singular construct.

However, even though the various forms of ICT use were associated with differing organizational, technological and socio-individual factors, there is nevertheless a pattern among the predictors. Specifically, applications that were "newer" to volunteer administration, like the use of online systems to recruit and the use of e-mail to manage volunteers, are more likely to be influenced by the individual characteristics of volunteer managers such as their attitudes and past experience with use of these applications. This finding is consistent with the earlier research on determinants of when technology is adopted. It, too, suggests that attitudes play a central role (Davis, 1989, DeLone & McLean, 1992; 2002; DeSanctis, 1983; Franz & Robey, 1986; Seddon, 1995; Seddon, Graeser & Willcocks, 2002; Seddon & Kiew, 1994). For those with access to ICT, the variation in usage of new applications in volunteer administration is not so much because of the technology as it is because of the attitudes users have toward it. Those who see the value of ICT applications in the new administrative context tend to gain more experience with them than those who do not, so are more prone to adopt them.

5. SO WHAT? HOW CAN VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATORS CREATE A SUPPORTIVE CLIMATE FOR ICT?

While new ICT applications have provided volunteer programs with new tools to conduct work and to manage relationships, not all administrators are making use of them to the same degree. The purpose of this paper has been to provide answers to basic questions about ICT and ICT applications including the extent to which they are used, and the factors that challenge their use in volunteer programs. In sum, our findings suggest that there may be an ICT "usage divide" in the sample of Canada's volunteer programs we studied. This problem stems not from administrators being "inadequate" users of ICT but more from the presence of certain factors at organizational, technical and social-individual levels that create barriers to successful implementation.

The research also highlights the importance of the underlying attitudes of those responsible for making key decisions about the adoption of ICT or implementing new applications once they are acquired. All those involved must perceive there are advantages to them in their work and must see them as exceeding the costs of implementation in terms of available time and money. Simply buying ICT components and expecting individuals to use them is unlikely to succeed. Success, then, is measured in terms of "the users' perception of utility and satisfaction with ICT and how well it supports them in pursuit of the benefits they perceive will result from use" (Garrity & Sanders, 1998, pg. 2). In this "socio-technical" view of ICT use, which has gained more attention over the years as more failures were attributed to individuals' reactions to new ICT systems (Tait and Vessey, 1988, pg. 91), attitudes are shaped from successful interactions users have with ICT (DeSanctis and Poole 1994, pg. 125). Successful interactions, then, breed attitudes that create a more positive climate to support ICT use. Conversely, negative attitudes will have the opposite effect.

Lack of attention to "climate" issues is of particular concern for volunteer programs because ICT is being introduced into a sector that has traditionally been very non-technological. The sector is full of hands-on administrators who were recruited to work in the volunteer program because of their experience in working with volunteers and commitment to the cause or the mission of the organization. As a result, the experience and knowledge they bring to the job may not be of the kind that will assist them in using new ICT. The same can be said for the heads of volunteer organizations. The managers that face the most challenges, then, are those with the least experience using ICT.

The key factors that lead to successful use of ICT, then, are those that pay attention to how managers gain experience with ICT (Taylor and Todd, 1995). While there is no ICT success management model available for use in volunteer programs, our research and the existing general ICT literature suggests that the best approach should incorporate the following elements:

- If possible, "try before you buy" by acquiring ICT applications on a trial basis so administrators can gain experience with new ICT as well as having a chance to identify any potential weakness in their suitability. If you can't try first, "start small" by introducing new technology in manageable pieces that don't overwhelm its potential users. This type of introduction to ICT allows for an ongoing or "evolving" approach to technological change and organizational development.
- Take an "involving" approach to ICT by involving administrators in the development of new ICT applications. We found online recruitment systems that were perceived to be the most successful were those with high degrees of administrator involvement in the development, training and evaluation of these applications.
- Develop "modular training" which breaks learning into manageable bits that provides knowledge of new tools, how to use them, and how they will benefit volunteer administration work.
- Try to build adequate training into the contracts negotiated with ICT vendors. We found a positive relationship between vendor-supplied training and use of ICT

applications in the programs we studied.

- Be sure there is plentiful access to technical support on an ongoing or as needed basis. This support should be of the kind that assists administrators in working through technical issues so that they gain more experience in resolving them. Support can be obtained from many sources including vendors, volunteer centers, specialty organizations, or informally from colleagues in the work environment who have experience with ICT.
- Actively engage volunteer administrators in ICT issues within the volunteer community. Engagement of this kind has been found to positively impact ICT change in private sector companies. This type of engagement has been referred to in the literature as *Communities of Practice* (CP). CP is a knowledge management framework used by IBM (Birman & Ritsko, 2001) and other private sector companies (e.g., Braganza & Lambert, 2000; Coe, 1998) as a way to improve organizational performance during times of technological change (Birman & Ritsko, 2001). With the CP model, there are multiple levels linking "persons and organizational behaviour, supporting processes, and enabling technological factors" (Birman & Ritsko, pg. 812). The logic behind this approach is to "develop social capital ... based on existence of communication channels between practitioners, on relationships that build trust and a sense of mutual obligation, and on a common language and context for the community" (Birman & Ritsko, pg. 812). This type of framework is supported by our research, which revealed that social influences between administrators and stakeholders were positively associated with the use of ICT. A CP framework linking administrators and other stakeholder groups with evolving technologies would be helpful in reducing the kinds of barriers that are negatively impacting the capacity of volunteer administrators to use ICT effectively.
- Dedicate resources (money and time) to support all aspects of ICT use as described above including resources to purchase ICT components, develop them over time, provide training and ongoing support of individuals in using them, as well as resources to create volunteer administrator *Communities of Practice.*

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ENDNOTES

[1]See http://www.techsoup.org; http://www.charityvillage.com for these Web sites.

[2]Though the surveys were related in that they all dealt with ICT use, the questions were not all the same for each sample; hence, the results to follow draw on different combinations of survey data based on commonality of questions.

[3]We mailed 250 questionnaires to this group and 129 were returned for a response rate of 52%.

[4]The questionnaire was very similar to the one sent to the local group. In this group, 1,100 surveys were electronically delivered by e-mail and 365 were returned for a response rate of 33%.

[5]Response rates were difficult to determine because of a high rate of delivery failure. Some estimates are possible by calculating the percentage of responses of the total number of respondents reached. For the VOE subsample 516 e-mails were delivered to the specified addresses. Of the 516 e-mails, 467 were acknowledged by the users as received while 49 were not. A response rate was calculated by averaging the number of receipted e-mails by the number of surveys completed. By this calculation the VOE subsample response rate was very high at 70%. Due to difficulty confirming how many volunteer centres distributed the 2003 survey to their members, we are unable to calculate a response rate for this subsample.

[6]The national samples are considered biased in favour of Internet users while the mail survey respondents are considered more representative of volunteer program administrators. Although these restrictions limit our ability to generalize from our findings, we would argue that the total sample represents considerable diversity of volunteer administrators in terms of location, personal background, organization size, mission, and size of volunteer programs.

[7]Virtual volunteering is the use of ICT to perform volunteer work in whole or in part at a distance from the organization.

[8]VICTA contains volunteer opportunities offered by the locally-based members of the volunteer centre that adopts it (in the case of this study, Volunteer Victoria). The VOE system contains volunteer opportunities from across Canada and is open to volunteers everywhere.

[9]We entered all of the factors that we found to be "associated" with ICT use and effectiveness to see whether they were also significant predictors. We accomplished this through statistical procedures that hold all of the factors or independent variables constant. These techniques, known as hierarchical and binary logistic regression, allowed us to comment on which of the independent variables predicted or did not predict the dependent variable.

[10]Dependent variables included the different uses of ICT (e.g., e-mail, Web sites and online recruitment system) and their perceived impact on the volunteer program. The ICT Impact variable is a scale that measures manager perceptions (0=not at all; 1=small extent; 2=moderate extent; 3=large

extent) of the extent to which the use of ICT in the volunteer program resulted in reduced cost, increased productivity, improved overall efficiency, improved service quality, and increased significance of the volunteer program. The VOE Impact variable is a scale that measures perceptions of the abiliry of the online system to perform the task of recruitment of volunteers (1=extremely ineffective or inefficient or not at all; 5=extremely efficient or effective or very much) including, how efficient it is in saving time or other resources, how effective it is in bringing in volunteers and, the exrenr to which it meets information processing needs (i.e. matching

APPENDIX A

Factors or Independent Variables (X)	Dependent Variables (Y)					
Factors and Influences	**E-mail Type 1 Use (Org)**	**E-mail Type 2 Use (Vol Man)**	**Web Level**	**VOE Use**	**VOE Impact**	**ICT Impact**
ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS LEVEL						
"SOFT" FACTORS						
Leadership Support						
Co-Worker Support						
Job Satisfaction	.11*					.11*
Job Autonomy	.17**		.12*			.18**
Job Stress	.10*					.13**
Job Environment Stress (Reverse Code)	.14*					
"HARD" FACTORS						
Number of Volunteers						.22
Number of Volunteer Position Openings		.12**	.13*			.21**
Number of Enquiries to Openings		.10*	.15**			.20**
Volunteer Program Budget		.20**	.15**			
Percentage of VPB Allocated to ICT	.09*	.10*	.23**			.21**
Size of Org. Annual Budget		-.12**				.10*
Number of ICT Changes	.14**	.10*	.14**			.20**
ICT Support	.11**					.11**
TECHNICAL SYSTEMS LEVEL						
ICT System Quality	.17**		.13*			.13**
ICT System Capacity			.13*			
ICT Ease of Learning	.23**	.24**				.19**
Perceived Ease of Use of VOE System						
E-mail Type 1		.33**				.18**
E-mail Type 2	.33**			.14**	.21**	.31**
Web Site Use for Volunteer Program		.16**				.17**
Web Site Level						.13*
VOE Use						
Online Recruitment Method Usage (Not VOE Specific)		.11*	.12*		.74**	.10*
Network Type			.13**			

**Correlation is significant beyond the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*
***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*
****Correlation is borderline significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)*

Factors or Independent Variables (X)	Dependent Variables (Y)					
Factors and Influences	E-mail EM1 Use (Y1)	E-mail EM2 Use (Y2)	Web site Use (Y3)	VOE Use (Y4)	VOE Impact (Y5)	ICT Impact (Y6)
SOCIAL-INDIVIDUAL LEVEL						
"USER INVOLVEMENT"						
Involvement in ICT Decisions and Feelings of Ownership Over Them	.23**	.26**				.18**
Participation in Organizational Decisions	.19**	.20**				
ICT Self-Training		.10*				
ICT informal Training	.15**					
LVC ICT Training					.21*	
NVC ICT Training	.09*	.11*			.28**	
Professional Association ICT Training						.10*
College ICT Training	.11*					
Organizational ICT Training	.19**					
Vendor ICT training	.17**	.11*	.11*			
Voluntary Sector Network Training (National, Local and Professional Combined)					.23**	
Involvement in ICT Development (VOE only)	.09*	.15**	.11*	.19**		
Involvement in ICT Training (VOE only)	.09*	.09*	.17**	.17**	.26**	
Involvement in ICT Evaluation (VOE only)		.09*	.16**	.22**	.18*	
"END USER CHARACTERISTICS"						
Gender (Males =1; Females=0)		.11*	.13*			
Age (Reverse Code)		.10*	.13*			
Education				.09***		
Knowledge (VOE only)				-.59**		
Position Status (Paid or Unpaid) (Reverse Code)		.18**				
Time Using ICT at Work	.20**	.29**			.19*	.31**
Time Work per Week	.13**		.12*			.19**
Time Using ICT at Home	.12**	.14**				.16**
Technical Ability	.21**	.21**				.24**
"EXPECTATIONS OF BENEFITS"						
Perceived Usefulness of ICT	.25**	.11*			.08***	.38**
Perceived Usefulness of VOE					.79**	.18*

How the Internet has Changed Volunteering: Findings from a VolunteerMatch User Study

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Greg Baldwin, VolunteerMatch, San Francisco, California

INTRODUCTION AND KEY FINDINGS

Since 1998, the VolunteerMatch user community has grown to over 1.5 million a year including more than 29,000 registered nonprofits. (July 1, 2004) In December 2003, Peter D. Hart Research Associates conducted an evaluative survey on behalf of VolunteerMatch to better understand how its use of the Internet has changed the process and experience of volunteering for this community of active users. The study highlights the successful use of VolunteerMatch among both nonprofits and volunteers.

Key Nonprofit Findings

- Nonprofit respondents indicate that the Internet has become second only to word-of-mouth as the most useful volunteer recruiting strategy
- 94% of respondents found VolunteerMatch to be among the most useful of the available Internet services
- 85% of nonprofit respondents agreed that VolunteerMatch helped them to recruit volunteers who they otherwise would not have been able to find
- 85% agreed that the service made it easier for their organization to find the right volunteers
- 94% reported satisfaction with the overall service
- Most importantly, 90% were satisfied with the quality of the volunteers they had recruited.

Key Volunteer Findings

- 86% of respondents agreed that the VolunteerMatch service made it easier for them to find a volunteer opportunity of interest
- 82% reported they were more likely to find a satisfying volunteer relationship
- 79% of respondents also agreed that they were more likely to volunteer because of VolunteerMatch
- 86% were satisfied with the volunteer opportunity they found through the service
- Overall, 86% of volunteer respondents indicated they were more satisfied with VolunteerMatch than with other Internet services.

The survey provides strong evidence of the role the Internet has had on the volunteer sector. Nonprofits using VolunteerMatch are not only able to tap the Internet to reach out to a more diverse population of volunteers, they are attracting first time volunteers as

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Greg Baldwin joined what is now VolunteerMatch in the spring of 1998 as its Chief Imagination Officer. Today, VolunteerMatch is a leader in the nonprofit world widely recognized for its use of the Internet to encourage service and volunteering. The organization is the proud recipient of Webby Awards for "Activism" and "Services," and has been recognized for its accomplishments by The White House, M.I.T., the Smithsonian Institution, and recently, the Yale-Goldman Sachs Foundation. Mr. Baldwin currently serves on the senior management team and has responsibility for shaping the organization's identity, communications and strategic direction. Mr. Baldwin completed his undergraduate studies at Brown University in 1990 with a B.A. degree in Public Policy. He regularly speaks at nonprofit events and conferences on the subjects of volunteering, communication, and the Internet.

well. Perhaps most significantly, both nonprofits and volunteers are reporting high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the volunteer relationships that they are forming.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted among participating nonprofits and individual site users employing two distinct survey instruments. In both cases, respondents were contacted and e-mailed an invitation to participate in the study. The e-mail contained a direct link to the survey and the surveys were administered online.

The nonprofit sample was drawn from nonprofit organizations that had been registered with VolunteerMatch for at least one year and had at least one active volunteer opportunity posted with VolunteerMatch. Site users included only people who responded to at least one listing on VolunteerMatch within the past year.

In total, Hart Research interviewed 996 nonprofit users and 1,122 individual VolunteerMatch site users. Accordingly, this study's findings are representative of neither all individuals who have ever visited the VolunteerMatch site nor all nonprofits who have ever posted an opportunity with VolunteerMatch. The chosen sample frame, however, allows a greater focus on the most relevant target audiences for VolunteerMatch to examine to better understand how nonprofits and individuals each experience the VolunteerMatch service.

NONPROFIT FINDINGS

Growing Use of the Internet

Over the last 10 years Internet usage has grown to become an everyday part of our lives. It has affected our professional lives, our personal lives, and also our civic lives. In 2003 over 1.5 million individuals used the Internet to access the services of VolunteerMatch. The power of the Internet as a communications tool is clear. Nonprofit users indicate that the Internet has become the second-most important source for recruiting volunteers, behind word-of-mouth (71%) and ahead of live presentations to groups (33%), events (29%), and newspaper advertisements (29%). The organization's own Web site is the most-used Internet source (45%), followed by Internet recruiting services (37%).

Within the category of Internet recruiting, VolunteerMatch has established itself as the leader—94% of nonprofit users say that they have found VolunteerMatch to be one of the most useful Internet recruiting Web sites. The second-most useful service—local Volunteer Center Web sites—is named by 29% of nonprofits. Although the survey sample consists of only nonprofits that have used VolunteerMatch in the past year, the degree to which the service stands out against other Internet recruiting services is still notable, given that nonprofit users do not have to use VolunteerMatch exclusively and are presumably open to and considering other Internet services.

NONPROFITS: SOURCES OF VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

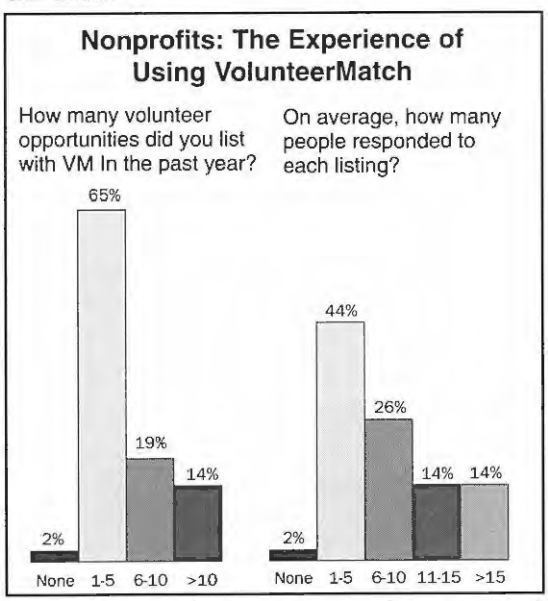
Most useful volunteer recruiting strategies	
Word-of-mouth	71%
Our Web site	45%
Internet recruiting services	37%
Live presentations to groups	33%
Events	29%
Newspaper ads	29%
Local volunteer center	17%
Relationship with local corporations	15%
Direct mail	8%
Radio/TV ads	8%

Most useful Internet recruiting strategies	
VolunteerMatch.org	94%
Local volunteer center Web site	29%
Idealist.org	12%
VolunteerSolutions.org	8%
Craigslist.org	7%
ServeNet.org	7%
Local City Cares Web site	3%
OpportunityKnocks.org	2%
1800Volunteer.com	1%

ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS

A significant portion of this survey focused on nonprofits' experience using VolunteerMatch's service and, in particulat, trying to set a benchmark to rrack nonprofits' ability to successfully engage volunteers from listings and responses.

The majority (65%) of nonprofits report posting between one and five separate listings on the site in the past year, while one-third (33%) have posted more rhan five opportunities. Not surprisingly, larger organizations tend to post more opportunities—37% of nonprofits with an annual budget of more than one million dollars report listing six to 20 opportunities a year, while only 20% of those witb budgers of $200,000 or less say the same.



Listings nearly always pique the interest of potential volunteers. Virtually all (98%) nonprofits say they receive at least one response to each listing on VolunteetMatch; slightly more than half (54%) say they receive six or more responses for each listing they post. The response rate is fairly consistent across all subgroups, regardless of organization size and number of listings per year.

As the Internet has made information about volunteering easier to find, volunteers are becoming choosier. Nearly all prospective volunteers responded to more than one opportunity before finding the right place for them to volunteer. For example, 48% say that it takes two to three responses; 21% say four to six responses and 10% say seven or more. Only 21% say that they found the right place to volunteer after responding to one listing.

On average, nonprofit users report that they are converting 25% of their referrals into volunteers. However, conversion rates vary. Two in ten (21%) nonprofits report that they are able to engage 50% or better of their responders as volunteers while another 20% are converting between 20%-49%. This stands in contrast to 36% who report that they are able to successfully convert only between 1%-9% of their respondents.

A closer look at the conversion rate reveals that several internal factors related to nonprofits' structure and their use of the service could have a determinative effect on their ability to engage volunteers successfully. For example, nonprofits that already have a high volume of volunteers and presumably have some experience in this area also have a higher conversation rate—36% of nonprofits with more than 100 volunteers per year report a 30% conversion rate, while only 19% of those with 50 or fewer volunteers say the same.

Also, despite the fact that smaller organizations typically receive about the same number of responses to their posted opportunities as nonprofits with larger budgets, smaller nonprofits are not able to convert potential volunteers as effectively as larger nonprofits. Nearly three in four (74%) smaller organizations with budgets of $200,000 or less report that they engage less than 30% of their respondents; 67% of organizations with budgets of more than one million dollars say the same thing. This differential may be linked to many factors, including the likelihood that larger organizations have more resources available to respond more quickly and more thoroughly to inquiries.

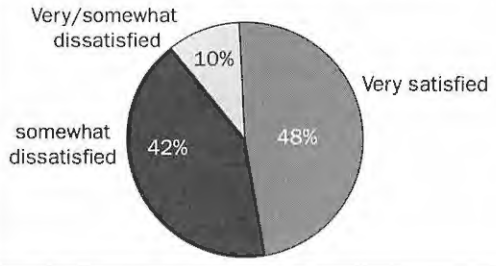
Overall Satisfaction

The research findings suggest that nonprofits are extremely satisfied with VolunteerMatch. In fact, 94% of nonprofits report that they are satisfied with the overall service, including 60% who say they are very satisfied; 85% agree that the service makes it easier to find the right volunteers, while another

85% agree that the service helps recruit volunteers they wouldn't otherwise have found. Most importantly, a nearly unanimous 90% of nonprofits indicate that they are satisfied with the quality of the volunteers they have found using VolunteerMatch, including nearly half (48%) who say that they are very satisfied.

Nonprofits: Satisfaction with VolunteerMatch Volunteers

How satisfied have you been with the quality of volunteers you have recruited through VolunteerMatch?



VOLUNTEER FINDINGS

Volunteer Profile

The Internet has allowed nonprofits using VolunteerMatch to attract an extremely diverse group of individuals looking to explore volunteer opportunities in a wide area of interests and causes. This diversity has one notable exception—VolunteerMatch users are overwhelmingly female (84%). Half (50%) of the volunteers are under 30, including a remarkable 22% who are under the age of 18; only 2% are age 65 and over.

POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS: A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

VolunteerMatch site users are:

Overwhelmingly female	84% women 16%men
Highly educated	57% have college degree 39% do not have a degree; half of these ar under age 18
Young	50% under age 30 32% age 40 or older
Diverse	58% Caucasian 11% African American 10% Hispanic

Compared with the U.S. population at large, potential volunteers are a highly educated group—more than half (57%) are college graduates. This high level of education is even more apparent after looking closer at the non-college educated bloc of potential volunteers (39%)—more than half (51%) are under age 18, and presumably many of them are college-bound.

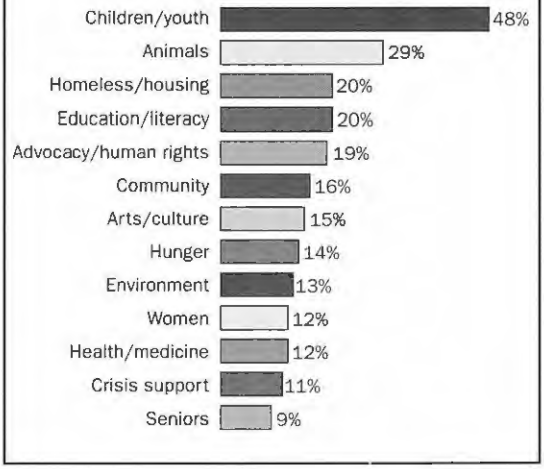
Potential VolunteerMatch volunteers are also racially diverse—while the majority (58%) describe themselves as white, more than one-third (36%) are non-white, including 11% African-American/black, 10% Hispanic/Latino, and 8% Asian/Pacific Islander.

Interests and Motivations

In addition to having a diverse demographic background, VolunteerMatch attracts potential volunteers who express interest in a variety of issues and causes that they want to become involved with through volunteering. The strongest area of interest is working with children and youth, cited by almost half (48%) of volunteers as one of the areas that most interests them. The second most popular area is animals, which is chosen by 29% of all volunteers and is a particularly appealing area for younger volunteers—for example, 43% of volunteers under 18 express interest in volunteering in this area. Other areas of interest for volunteers include the homeless and housing (20%), education and literacy (20%), advocacy and human rights (19%), and arts and culture (15%).

Potential Volunteers: Areas of Volunteering Interest

Which two/three of these volunteering areas most interest you?

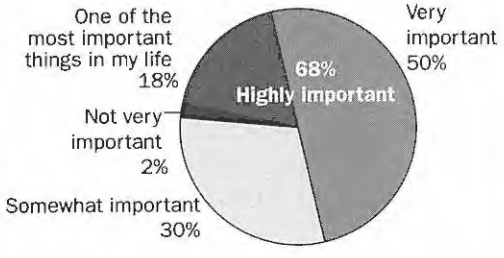


Volunteering Habits

Volunteering fits into the volunteers' lives in different ways, but most individuals who use the VolunteerMatch service view volunteering as a significant part of their lives. About one in five (18%) say that volunteering is one of the most important things in their lives, and another 50% say that it is very important. Volunteering is especially important to respondents over 40—in fact, 74% say it is one of the most important or very important things in their life.

Potential Volunteers: The Importance of Volunteering

Compared to other things you do in your life, how important to you is your volunteer work?

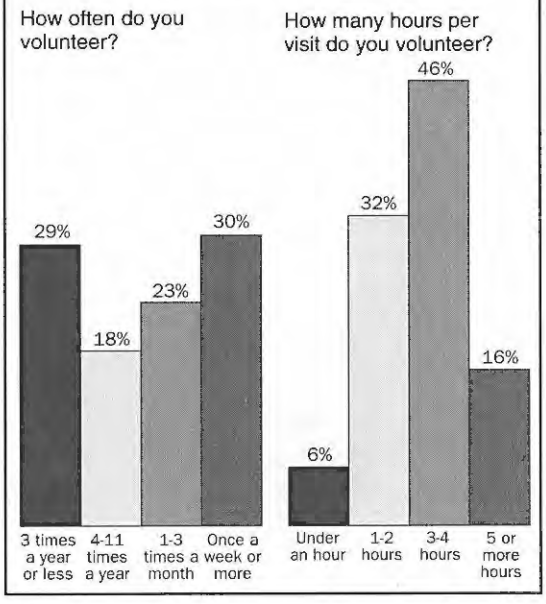


The more frequently that individuals volunteer, the more likely they are to say that volunteering is important in their life.

Consistent with other measures, the findings from this study show that VolunteerMatch is appealing and responsive to potential volunteers who have divergent backgrounds and interests as well as wide-ranging schedules and time available to commit to volunteering. Potential volunteers who use VolunteerMatch cover the spectrum in terms of their volunteering habits and behaviors, from the 29% who report that they volunteer very sporadically (1-3 times per year) to an almost equivalent proportion (30%) who indicate they volunteer once a week or more.

Many volunteers make a strong commitment to the organizations they volunteer with, spending several hours volunteering per visit. Almost half (46%) report that they volunteer three to four hours per visit, and 16% say that they volunteer five or more hours. Only 38% percent say that they volunteer two hours or less per visit. Among those who volunteer once a week or more, almost two

Potential Volunteers: Wide Spectrum of Volunteering Behavior



thirds (64%) say that they volunteer three or more hours per visit—a remarkable level of dedication.

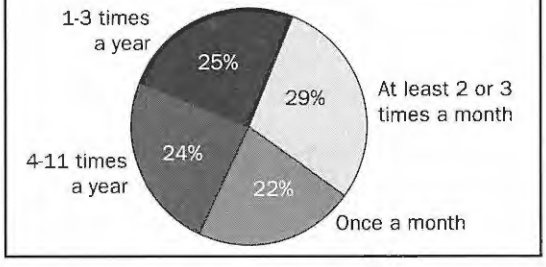
Finding Volunteer Opportunities

One of the most insightful findings in the survey is greater awareness of the process by which potential volunteers search for and find volunteer opportunities through VolunteerMatch that interest them and suit their schedule and other needs.

The frequency with which potential volunteers visit the VolunteerMatch Web site varies a great deal. Generally speaking, these potential volunteers are divided evenly into those who drop in occasionally and those who log-on on a regular basis. Twenty-five percent report going to the Web site one to three

Potential Volunteers: Using The VolunteerMatch Site

How often do you visit the VolunteerMatch Web site?



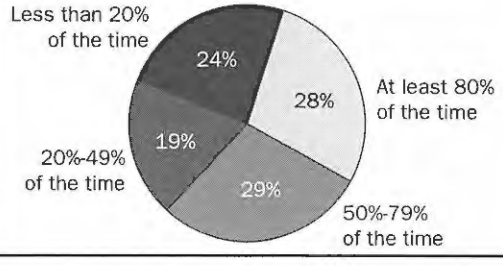
times a year; another 24% say they visit 4-11 times per year. Among the more frequent visitors, 37% say they visit one to three times per month, and 14% say once a week or more. The wide variation in frequency in visiting the VolunteerMatch Web site is likely a reflection of the broad audience VolunteerMatch serves—including people who have different areas of interest and different quantities of time to commit to volunteering.

A strong majority of site users report that they usually find a volunteer opportunity that matches their interests when they visit VolunteerMatch; in fact fifty-seven (57%) percent of volunteers say that they find an opportunity at least half the time they visit the Web site, including 28% who say they find an opportunity 80% or more of the time. A smaller, but potentially significant proportion of potential volunteers report that they have difficulty finding an opportunity that interests them when they visit the site—24% say that they find an opportunity less than 20% of the time. Interestingly, younger users report more success in finding opportunities that interest them—63% of potential volunteers under age 18 say that they find an opportunity that interests them at least half the time, while only 44% of those over 40 say the same.

Introducing a greater degree of choice into the process of finding a volunteer opportunity is having a positive effect on the quality of the volunteer experience. In fact, fully 86% of individuals who volunteered with an organization found through the service say that they were satisfied with their volunteer experience, including 48% who say that they were very satisfied. In addition to being satisfied, 61% reported that they had gone on to become regular ongoing volunteers with the organization they found. Among those who do not report satisfaction with their experience, 11% report having a neutral experience, and only 3% say that they are dissatisfied.

Potential Volunteers: Finding A Match I

When you visit VolunteerMatch, how often do you find a volunteer opportunity that matches your interests?



Improving the Connection Between Volunteers and Nonprofits

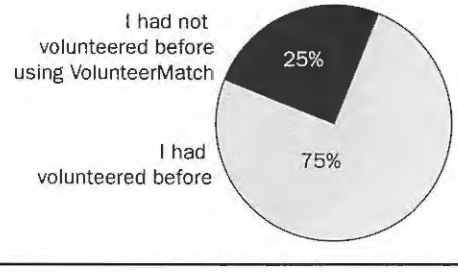
Before the development of Internet recruiting services like VolunteerMatch, respondents report having encountered a range of challenges in trying to find suitable volunteer opportunities. These obstacles revolved primarily around finding opportunities that fit their schedule (35%), getting specific information about volunteer opportunities (32%), and finding volunteer opportunities that interest them (26%). Not surprisingly, "finding volunteer opportunities that were nearby and convenient for me to get to" was a major challenge for 41% of volunteers under 18, many of whom have limited ability to travel to volunteer locations.

Respondents credit VolunteerMatch with successfully addressing many of these challenges. For example, fully 86% of respondents with previous volunteer experience agree that "VolunteerMatch has made it easier for me to find volunteer opportunities that I'm interested in," including 50% who strongly agree with this statement.

The Internet is not only making volunteer-

Potential Volunteers: Expanding the Pool of Potential Volunteers

Not only has VolunteerMatch changed the way in which volunteers and nonprofits connect, it is also attracting new volunteers: fully one in four site users had not volunteered prior to submitting a referral through VM.



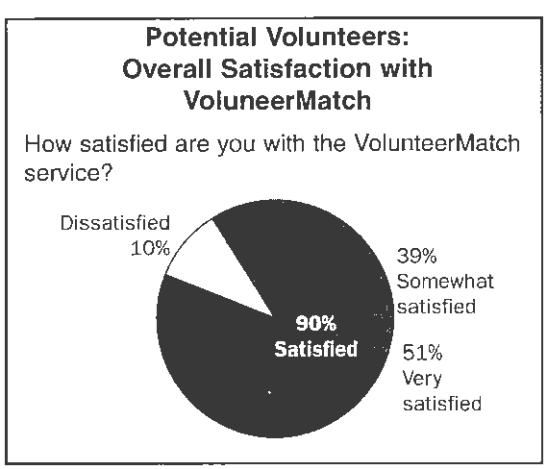
ing more efficient by connecting individuals with the organizations that meet their schedules and reflect their interests, it is also expanding the volunteer pool by opening doors to individuals who had not previously volunteered. Fully one in four (25%) of respondents report that they had never volunteered prior to using VolunteerMarch.

Most of those who had never volunteered before recognize and value the role of technology in making it possible to search for and respond to the real volunteering needs of their community. An almost unanimous 86% of new volunteers agree that "I am more likely to volunteer because of VolunteerMatch," including 53% who say they agree strongly with this statement. In addition, 85% agree (57% strongly) that "VolunteerMatch has made it easier for me to find opportunities I'm interested in."

Overall Satisfaction

As with the nonprofits, volunteers give VolunteerMatch overwhelmingly positive ratings on a wide range of measures, including the quality of the volunteer postings and the more technical aspects of searching for volunteer opportunities.

A nearly unanimous 90% of volunteers express overall satisfaction with the VolunteerMatch service, including 51% who are very satisfied. Among the few (10%) who are dissatisfied with VolunteerMatch, their dissatisfaction appears to be due to a lack of success in finding volunteer opportunities on VolunteerMatch; fully seventy-five (75%) percent of these respondents say that they typically find opportunities on VolunteerMatch that interest them less than 30% of the time and 78% say that they did not volunteer with an organization found through VolunteerMatch.



CONCLUSION

The survey findings are an indication of the breadth of the influence the Internet is having on the volunteer sector. VolunteerMatch has established itself as a valuable service to potential volunteers in facilitating the search for suitable volunteer opportunities and to nonprofits in expanding their reach to recruit new volunteers. The data also reveal that VolunteerMatch is not only reshaping established volunteer patterns, the service is also expanding the pool of potential volunteers by attracting individuals who have not previously volunteered. In doing so, VolunteerMatch has made it easier for nonprofits to tap into not only the existing population of volunteers, but also the new population of individuals who are looking to serve as the next generation of volunteers.

Your Goals, Global Campaigns and Internet Technology

Brian Cugelman
United Nations Volunteers, Bonn, Germany

Beyond slapping logos on publications and adding pages to your Web site, International Volunteer Day (IVD) offers an opportunity for volunteer advocates to reach their goals quickly, cost-effectively, creatively. All the resources you need are available on the WorldVolunteerWeb.org, a volunteering portal coordinated by United Nations Volunteers.

Each year during the lead-up to 5 December, the WorldVolunteerWeb.org serves as the global focal point for IVD, a celebration created by the United Nations General Assembly. The portal hosts tools and resources for volunteer managers and advocates, such as planning sheets, press releases, the official IVD logo, and posters—all available for downloading. It provides the latest news about volunteerism and volunteering activities around the world. The front page features the latest updates throughout the site while the news section provides daily highlights.

During the 2003 campaign, activists in 125 countries marked IVD; 76 tackled one or more of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), time-bound targets to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. The story of Dung, an inspired bike enthusiast, shows how the dedication of one individual can make a difference; and how tying those activities to IVD can spread that inspiration across the globe. Setting off on 5 December 2003, Dung cycled across Viet Nam to distribute an MDG publication, promote volunteerism and raise awareness. As he stopped at Vietnamese cities along the way, his message reverberated around the world as the most talked about youth inspired IVD initiative.

The United Nations General Assembly, in Resolution A/RES/57/106 "Invites the United Nations Volunteers to develop a global Internet volunteer resource based on the International Year of Volunteers Web site and on national Web sites with a view to enhancing network capabilities and to expanding information, knowledge and resource management, and encourages governments and all stakeholders, in particular the private sector, to contribute on a voluntary basis to this initiative..."

IVD is a global celebration. It offers a shared arena where civil society and governments can join forces, identify national priorities and implement common activities. "Volunteer-involving and -supporting organizations can use IVD to speed up efforts towards agreed goals which otherwise would take much longer to achieve, if they would be achieved at all. The sum of all these efforts can be an indicator of the health of the volunteer movement in any given country," says Robert Leigh, Chief of UN Volunteers Representation Office North America. Mr. Leigh has

Brian Cugelman is an Internet analyst and the architect behind the WorldVolunteerWeb.org, a volunteering web portal managed by the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV). He joined the UNV in 1999 to conduct Internet-based campaigning and web technology development for the International Year of Volunteers 2001. Prior to joining the UNV, he worked in the technology and nonprofit sectors, working as a campaign coordinator and technology consultant.

been the leading advocate for volunteerism since the early days of the UN Volunteers.

The Day engages national governments and big volunteering organizations as well as community programmes and volunteer managers. Throughout the history of IVD, participants have found it to be an effective networking and relationship building opportunity. Merging UN support with a grassroots mandate, IVD represents neutral ground where governments and voluntary organizations can work together to attain common goals.

Many volunteer managers have coordinated volunteer recognition events on the Day. They are an opportunity to highlight what volunteers give to their organizations; and, moreover, what their organization gives to the community. At the same time, they provide an occasion to expose would-be volunteers to the value of volunteering. The WorldVolunteerWeb.org provides the official IVD logo, media tip sheets and radio public service announcements which will help identify your events with this UN volunteering day. With the WorldVolunteerWeb.org, organizers of volunteer events have an opportunity to project their volunteers beyond their community; they have an outlet where the volunteers can be recognized globally.

The portal provides an opportunity to share resources and highlight your work with a global volunteer network; and the months before 5 December offer the biggest opportunities. As the campaign musters steam, the portal's audience reaches peak viewership. News, stories, events, documents, photos, best practices and volunteer requests—these are some of the many materials posted on the portal. All contributions are welcome and editorial guidelines are available on the site.

The volunteering portal provides networking services for the global volunteering community. The directory of national committees will connect you to your country's lead IVD organizations so you can learn about existing plans or even better—join their team. It also serves to identify countries where a committee needs to be set up. Through the national profiles, the portal highlights volunteer initiatives worldwide and provides links to volunteering organizations undertaking noteworthy activities. By sharing information and resources, volunteer organizations in one part of the world can help organizations in another.

For those who would like to keep abreast of voluntary sector developments, but may not always have time to visit the portal, the Global Volunteer Update is sent out monthly with a summary of the last month's top news, postings, and upcoming events. It combines news, events, documents and editorials from volunteerism experts around the world; anyone wishing to subscribe can register for free on the portal. Before, during and after 5 December, the Global Volunteer Update provides a convenient overview of the campaign.

The research section gives you access to statistics, links to research institutions and volunteering journals. This section contains volunteer studies and tool-kits that can help you quantify the impact of volunteerism. Of particular interest is the Measuring Volunteering Toolkit that outlines how to undertake a national volunteering audit. It has remained a top download since it was launched by UN Volunteers and the Independent Sector in 2001. The Measuring Volunteering Toolkit provides a convenient starting point to undertake a national study of volunteerism. IVD has become a popular occasion to announce the findings, kick start new initiatives or start advocating for a new study. It provides a vehicle to bring people together and muster public support.

The WorldVolunteerWeb.org provides information about volunteering laws and policies in various countries. It contains legal references for policy makers and advocates to develop volunteer friendly policies and legislation. If you are interested in the legislative frameworks surrounding volunteerism, the policy section contains examples to support your efforts: resolutions, policy documents, governmental speeches and legislation. Presenting international, regional, and national legislation, these examples were collected to facilitate the sharing of best practices. Furthermore, the national profiles also provide a list of UN resolutions endorsed by each nation. When dealing with national volunteerism issues, especially in the IVD context,

these resolutions add weight to policy discussions by showing commitments that your country may have already made through the General Assembly.

Apart from academic and political resources, the global volunteering portal provides a showcase that reflects the global diversity of volunteerism. The initiatives section brings some "heart and soul" to the portal. With over 3,000 photos, poetry, stories, and songs about volunteerism, there are many inspirational resources available. Fifteen songs are available in CD quality, free to download. Should you wish to re-use any content, contributors' names and contact details are posted so you may contact them.

The events calendar lists major happenings and opportunities around the world. Global volunteerism campaigns, such as Global Youth Service Day and Make a Difference Day, among others, are important events that contribute to global development through mohilizing volunteers and highlighting volunteerism. Throughout the IVD campaign, the portal offers a chance to highlight your celebrations in many ways. Details about joining these activities are posted in the calendar section and sent out in the newsletter; they are also referenced in various IVD reports.

To start the campaign ball rolling, volunteer managers, organizations or governments can download the IVD planning sheet. This one-page document highlights best practices and lessons from previous IVD celebrations. Starting wirh advice on forming or joining IVD national committees, it ourlines steps to develop a national theme; plan activities; network internationally; produce promotional materials; develop a media strategy; and finally, document the outcomes. The sheet points to other essential resources that are available on the WorldVolunteerWeb.org: the IVD logo, ideas on what to do, advice on how to tackle MDGs, a poster that can be downloaded and modified.

The campaign this year promises to be one of, if not, the biggest celebration to date. Building on the 2003 campaign, which saw 125 countries mark the day and 57 countries set up national planning committees, expectations are high. Already, Pakistan is planning to host a global conference on volunteering and the Millennium Development Goals. Fiji is planning a series of events leading up to the "Spirit of the Fiji Islands Volunteer Champions Awards" and in Suriname, organizers will attract university students to local volunteer programmes with a young volunteer entrepreneur fair. In September 2005, the UN General Assembly will conduct a five-year review of the International Year of Volunteers. This means that any activities undertaken during this year's IVD campaign will be distributed to the highest levels of government around the world.

If you would like to ger involved, visit www.WorldVolunteerWeb.org, click on events, then on International Volunteer Day. E-mail your news, events or resources to info@WorldVolunteerWeb.org.

Brian Cugelman, the architect of UNV's WorldVolunteerWeb.org.

Challenges of International Online Volunteering: Re-Learning Words, Transcending Boundaries

Jayne Cravens
United Nations Volunteers, Bonn, Germany

With the permeation of cyberspace, it is difficult for even the smallest of volunteer programs anywhere to think of itself as only local—any volunteer manager with an Internet connection will interact internationally in some way eventually, if not regularly. However, there are substantial cultural differences throughout the world that may cause discrepancies in how volunteerism is talked about. These differences can make it difficult for volunteer managers in "the West" to engage effectively with people in "the South." Being aware of these differences can help all volunteer managers more easily transcend country boundaries, and to be better communicators in every aspect, locally and globally.

The phrase "volunteering in the developing world" conjures an image for most people: volunteers from "the West" (North America, Western Europe and Australia) going to the developing world, also known as "the South" (Africa, Asia, Latin America, Arab states, and former Soviet Union states). Such volunteering can also be seen as the domain of only large volunteer-sending organizations.

Two things are changing the concept of volunteering in the developing world. The first is increasing pressure to empower local people to help themselves. This pressure comes not only from the donor nations of the West, but also from within the countries of the developing world themselves: local people are saying, "Give us the tools, and we can feed our own children and build up our own communities and create sustainability." Volunteerism can play an important role in this paradigm shift in the way we think about helping these countries. Volunteerism means not only sending volunteers from the West to these countries, but also means building the capacities of these communities to involve local volunteers effectively.

The second thing changing the concept of volunteering in the developing world is the Internet. Cyberspace is making an increasing number of volunteer programs global, whether the staff behind these programs like it or not. A volunteer manager in a small town in Kansas may find herself or himself answering questions via e-mail for a person half a world away, trying to run a similar program. A volunteer manager seeking an online volunteer to design a brochure may find that the best qualified and most passionate person lives on another continent, even in a country thought of by most as "poor." Online communities, once the sole domain of volunteer managers based in the West, are seeing increasing numbers of people from the South who are interested in learning more about volunteer management. These increasing global encounters mean that we all have to look at the way we communicate and the words we use.

The vast majority of volunteer manage-

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ment books, guides, Web sites and conferences are dominated by people in the United States and Canada, as well as Great Britain and Australia. This does not mean that the people behind these activities, as well as the primary audiences they address, are not diverse: a volunteer management seminar in San Jose, California, for instance, may draw people descended from immigrants from Europe, Asia and Africa, as well as actual Europeans, Asians and Africans, and also American Indians. And certainly these practitioners do not always speak with a unified voice, from a unified understanding: for instance, bring up your own definition of who is and isn't a volunteer on CYBERVPM (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cybervpm), an online discussion group for volunteer managers, mostly in the United States, and watch the sparks fly as the debate ignites yet again.

There are substantial cultural differences throughout the world that may cause discrepancies in how volunteers are involved, or even talked about, and these are becoming more and more apparent as the Internet is used by more and more volunteer managers worldwide. These differences can make it difficult for volunteer managers in the West to engage effectively with people in the South. Being aware of these differences can help a Western-based volunteer manager more easily transcend country boundaries. Ultimately, it will make him or her a better communicator in every aspect, locally and globally.

SAME WORD, DIFFERENT MEANING

Take, for example, the word "development." A person who is involved in causes relating to people and communities in the South, such as education programs about HIV/AIDS in Africa, community technology centers in Latin America, or agricultural reforms in Asia, is referred to as working in "development." Among volunteer managers in the United States, however, that word means fund-raising. For people in many regions of the United States, it is also associated with software. But for the majority of the world, "development" means improving the lives and raising the standards of living of people, usually the world's poorest people, through building their capacities and increasing their access to education, health services, sustainable livelihoods and healthy environments.

Another word that can cause misunderstandings is "entitlement." To most Americans, the word can have a very negative connotation. For them, it means having an assumed right to something, and in the negative sense, someone with an "entitlement attitude" means someone who believes they are owed various things by other people, particularly the government. But "entitlement" in development work means something quite different; it relates to the frameworks, established through trade or an individual's direct production, that help a person or family gain access to food. Imagine a volunteering project proposal from a developing country frequently using the word "entitlements" landing on the desk of a corporation in Texas in the hopes of attracting funding, and you can understand how misunderstanding of this word could lead to the proposal's rejection.

Even simple phrases that we use in the West can be seen with a hostile eye in developing countries. Susan Ellis's popular book on volunteer management, *From the Top Down,* is frequently recommended to people online seeking volunteer management advice. It was once recommended to a person working at a large, international volunteer sending organization. The employee saw the title and replied, "I don't believe in 'from the top down' strategies. We need to be more grassroots focused." This immediate hostility came from the mantra that permeates most development organizations now: "bottom-up." Once the context of the title and the focus of the book were explained, he was much more relaxed and much more receptive to the book's recommendations—but still did not want to share the book with colleagues because of the title, a title which is perfectly acceptable in a Western context.

HOSTILITY TOWARDS THE WORD "VOLUNTEER"

When working in international contexts, it is important to be aware that there can be

much more hostility against the idea of volunteerism in the South than in the West.

For example, and as mentioned at the start of this article, the concept of volunteerism often immediately conjures up the idea of someone from, say, Canada, coming to a poor country to help build a new fishery. To this, the local people now will often say, "Why did you bring in an outsider when there are people with this expertise in our country you could have hired?" As a result, the necessity to be clear about what one means when talking about volunteerism in the developing world has never been more important.

Countries in the South are often facing dire unemployment, and volunteers can be perceived by communities as taking paid jobs away from local people, or as a way for organizations to avoid paying staff. Yet, the concept of volunteering is not foreign anywhere—people in every community volunteer in some way, but may not call it such. Building bridges between the word and the concept, through avoiding assumptions about its understanding and through constant dialogue, goes a long way in convincing people that formal volunteerism initiatives are worthwhile, culturally appropriate, and beneficial to all involved.

STANDARDS "HERE" MAY NOT FIT "THERE"

Standards that are taken for granted among volunteer managers in the West are sometimes almost impossible to apply in some developing countries. For instance,

- Time and short deadlines often seem quaint concepts to organizations in international settings and the South, who are facing immediately dire circumstances, from staff members dying of AIDS to a drought wiping out surrounding villages. It can be very difficult to convince a nongovernmental organization (NGO) serving the South that they must devote the time needed to developing a volunteer policy or a tracking system for volunteer applications when this same organization may be near an armed conflict that could break out into a civil war at any moment.
- In the West, most organizations are understanding of the "hoops" they have to jump through in order to receive grants, volunteers or other support, and often appreciate detailed guidance on how to manage a project. They know that meeting set requirements can help prove credibility and even improve chances for more support. Organizations in the South, however, are often resentful of the values of the North being forced on them, and can interpret such "hoops" as being oppressive. What seems normal to be asked of volunteer centers that refer volunteers in the United States or Canada can feel imperialistic, unrealistic or culturally-insensitive to similar organizations in the South.
- In managing the Online Volunteering (OV) service (www.onlinevolunteering.org), the United Nations Volunteers program (www.unvolunteers.org) has found that it is imperative to strike a balance between empowering individual organizations to find their own best practices regarding online volunteer involvement versus enforcing quality control measures, obtaining high user numbers, and requiring certain standards among OV host organizations. The staff of the OV service frequently recommend certain practices in recruiting and managing online volunteers, and the service does require certain basic activities, but most of what is offered are suggestions for management, rather than requirements. For instance, users are frequently encouraged to report to UNV about the impact online volunteers are making to their work, but UNV does not require it. That can make some things difficult for staff, particularly the reporting of meaningful service results. Staff at the OV service are continually looking for ways to help build the capacities of service users, without imposing what could be perceived as unrealistic demands.
- The writing style of people and organizations in the South can be less structured, and more wordy, than those of the West, but it also can sound much less "PR-esque." Staff at organizations in the South don't try to talk in sound bites, and this

adds a strong element of sincerity to their words. In addition, for many, English is not their native language. When "cleaning up" a proposal or testimonial, a person from the West should keep these realities in mind, not only to make sure that the information is accurate, but also to keep the unique voice and style of a particular community or culture. Often, a questionnaire can work best in obtaining the material for a testimonial, rather than asking someone to write the entire testimonial themselves.

DIFFERENT COMMUNICATIONS STYLES

People in developing countries may seem to have a "please provide this information/help right now" attitude to people in the West, particularly via e-mail. It can feel rude and overly demanding to the recipient. There are several reasons this kind of communication can happen. One is that, according to the television shows and movies people in the South have seen about the West, everyone there has unlimited amounts of wealth and time on their hands, and this stands in the starkest of contrasts to how those in the South are living. Another reason is that, indeed, they may be facing an immediate, dire circumstance, and aren't thinking in terms of how to be polite and professional but, rather, how to communicate in the quickest and most effective manner to get the critical information or resources needed. When a person from the West receives such a communication, the best tactic is to respond in the most polite, helpful, and definite way possible. Be clear about what can be done or offered, by when, and what cannot be done or offered. Whether they say it or not, the person on the other end of the e-mail will be most appreciative of your response, no matter what it is, and your "style" of response may even rub off on them in future communications.

A WORTHWHILE ENDEAVOR

Ultimately, the world's people, including volunteer managers, probably have much more in common with each other than differences. Helping at local community events (if you happen to be lucky enough to go on-site in the South), learning about a local community's situation on your own, and, whenever possible, listening more than talking, go a long way in building bridges in an international context. Cultural gaffes are frequently forgiven, and expert knowledge deeply appreciated by volunteer managers and volunteers worldwide. It doesn't mean leaving your professional standards and ideals behind; it does mean being flexible, open-minded, ready to try and to propose new things, and ready to alter your communications style as needed, and on an ongoing basis.

Jayne Cravens, the face behind the UNV Online Volunteering project. Many readers may be familiar with her frequent contributions to CyberVPM.

Virtual Volunteering: Get Involved by Getting Online

Lori Gotlieb
Eva's Initiatives, Toronto, Ontario

Technology has changed every facet of our lives. As soon as we incorporate a new gizmo or gadget into our computer system, it is already obsolete. The same goes for our thinking on how we use technology and how the computer can best serve our community. First, you no longer have to leave your house or office to get information, do your banking, go shopping, and communicate with others. People feel the need to connect with others, so much so that surfing the Internet is fast becoming the most popular hobby for all ages. For example my five-year-old son comes home from kindergarten and asks whether he can see his favorite characters on the computer. We are no longer isolated by geography, a telephone or even voice mail. We can do just about anything via the computer including helping others. Let's put this theory to practice.

A GROWING TREND

Volunteering as a concept has always been to call up an agency and ask whether you can help out. Historically, after being accepted as a volunteer you go to a site to do your volunteering. Now take this concept and consider using the computer as a way of volunteering. This new category of volunteering was not even imaginable a few years ago but has evolved as a direct result of computer technology and the need to interact in cyberspace. This is called "Virtual Volunteering." We can go one step further and consider the situation of a gentleman, no longer able to travel due to a disability, who would love to volunteer for you but cannot get to your location. He explains that he is computer literate and fully linked to the Internet and could do something via e-mail. Does this not create a whole new way of thinking of your traditional volunteer positions? Can we now incorporate volunteers who have special needs with greater ease?

Technology provides an excellent opportunity to enhance a volunteer program, including recruitment, orientation, assignments and recognition. It allows people to volunteer who may not be able to participate in the traditional way. Online volunteering will never replace traditional volunteering but does provide some excellent ways of using people's skills while accommodating any special needs. Some people find it easier or more comfortable communicating via e-mail. For example, someone who has a speech impairment may have difficulty using the traditional lines of communications but would not have any issues with a computer. People who have concerns over being in public could feel comfortable with the anonymity of the computer. Basically, Virtual Volunteering could allow people to participate who may find on-site volunteering difficult. The main reason to consider Virtual Volunteering is that it is already happening.

A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

Virtual Volunteering is an educational process, and in a constant state of change. Virtual Volunteering means that volunteer tasks can be completed in whole or part via the Internet and computer. It is also known as online volunteering, cyberservice, and telementoring to name a few. Many organizations are combining online volunteering with traditional on-site volunteering. For example, you could have a friendly visitor spend time with a homebound person once a week and have follow-up communication during that week via e-mail. Your agency could send out orientation packages via e-mail, submit progress reports, communicate with your volunteers while removing transportation barriers.

There are two main types of Virtual Volunteering.

Lori Gotlieb works in Toronto, Canada, at Eva's Initiatives, an emergency shelter for homeless youth

Technical Assistance:

- Online research
- Professional and consulting expertise
- Translating
- Designing marketing tools, databases
- Online outreach and advocacy
- Volunteer management assistance

Direct contact:

- Electronic visits with someone who is homebound
- Online mentoring
- Tutoring
- Chat rooms
- Phone support network
- Distance learning
- Writing articles
- Linking volunteers from different agencies for support

FIRST STEPS

There are a few basic points to consider when coming up with assignments. You need to evaluate the task primarily by qualitative results. The assignment should not involve high security measures. The project must require a computer and should be focussed on an individual rather than a team approach.

For the first time we have a powerful tool to include people with special needs. For many years we have made people with hearing disabilities accessible in cyberspace with TTY. Most of the obstacles of disabilities can be in the attitude of others and not considering job descriptions prior to even recruiting volunteers. Everyone should have the right to volunteer. Anyone who can make a contribution should be able to volunteer and be encouraged to do so. Diversity provides a rich resource that can be used in many ways to accurately reflect the community that you serve.

Those interested in virtual volunteering need to have computer accessibility as well as the appropriate technical support based on their need for accommodation. The cost and availability of hardware for the computer is a temporary problem. There are many Internet companies and nonprofit agencies that have free e-mail access. The public library has computers that allow their patrons to go online free, colleges and universities have accessibility, some nonprofit agencies may have computers available for their clients. The future holds the integration of telephone, television and Internet technology. Linda Graff in *By Definition* (1955, p. 44) states, "Attempts are being made to integrate various 'special needs' populations in volunteering. This trend is a function of at least two movements:

a) Organizations attempting to be truly representative of their communities and consumers
b) Integration of various populations in mainstream community life."

There are many vocational rehabilitation programs and other nonprofit agencies that are looking at integration through a variety of programs. Some agencies that may be of service are Canadian Institute for the Blind, March of Dimes; Job Accommodation Network, rehabilitation hospitals, and Human Resource and Skills Development Canada. Another organization involved in Virtual Volunteering is Impact Online: its Web site lists volunteer positions that can be done online, as well as other information regarding Virtual Volunteering.

Before looking at Virtual Volunteering you need to assess the volunteers' capabilities to use a computer, look at the agency they are going to support, and access the types of accommodations necessary to do the job required. A volunteer's disability should only be considered in the context of deciding what accommodations will work. There are many options such as web browsers that read aloud what's on a web page, web pages that have been simplified. Augmentative communication devices enable those who cannot speak to use touch- or light-activated keyboards linked to synthetic speech systems. Screen reading programs and screen magnification systems are available for those with low vision. Braille computer systems are available as well as Braille software translators and embossers that enable users to print documents from the PC. Many adaptations are available to assist those with impaired mobility use the computer. For many people, speech, language and learning impairments

are a barrier to volunteering. Computer programs have been designed to improve speech and language capabilities of those who need assistance. Among those adaptations are vehicles for speech therapy and word prediction software programs.

THE FUTURE OF VOLUNTEERING

It is important to understand that the technology for the computer user is enlarging everyday, new opportunities for accommodating users such as students will eventually reach out to all facets of the community. For example, a university student who has used assistive devices for education will use those technologies to support their work environment as well as their community involvement.

Virtual Volunteering is a collaborative process including agency staff, board of directors, vocational and rehabilitation counselors, and the volunteer, all working together. Virtual Volunteering has little to do with technology and everything to do with people.

In summary, it is important to realize that Virtual Volunteering is a growing field. Technology, community involvement, education, just to name a few are constantly changing. The growth of all these industries is rapid, and our way of thinking of the traditional volunteer needs to shift with the times. Virtual Volunteering can extend the resources of many agencies by enlisting help from people who otherwise could not help. Prepare a written plan, redesign a position description, start talking to staff about the potential for Virtual Volunteering and get other community resources involved. To use the phrase "thinking outside the box," Virtual Volunteering is a perfect opportunity to get involved by adding a new dimension to volunteer programs.

RESOURCES

Graff, L. (1995). *By definition: Policies for volunteer programs.* Dundas, Ontario, Canada: Graff and Associates.

Impact Online [www.impactonline.com]

Virtual Volunteering Project [www.serviceleader.org/vv]

JANCANA [http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu/english/homecan.htm]

Utilizing Employees as Volunteers

Connie Pirtle, Washington, D.C.

With the advent of volunteerism in all levels of service for nonprofit organizations, the distinction between salaried employees and unpaid "workers" has begun to blur. (Sixel, 2002) This issue gained national visibility in 1999 when volunteer moderators asked the U.S. Department of Labor to investigate unfair practices at AOL. (Junnarkar, 1999) Another volunteer in fact sued AOL for unfair labor practices. Some of these claims have been settled financially and others may still be pending.

While AOL is a for-profit company, these incidents served to heighten concerns throughout the nonprofit sector. We realized that our good intentions had potential liability implications for our organizations, didn't protect our employees as much as we thought, and could undermine the important work of our volunteers. Suddenly people were thinking about the Fair Labor Law, ADA, workers' compensation insurance, and a host of other legalities in a very different way.

Could employees feel coerced, no matter how subtly, to volunteer for us? What happens if an employee-volunteer gets hurt while volunteering and then we learn that workers' compensation doesn't apply to them because they are wearing their volunteer hat for us? How do we ensure that the work of an employee-volunteer is "substantially" different from their paid job?

And then there are the human resource management questions—Will a potential employee-volunteer resent being rejected from the volunteer program? Do we have to be careful not to single out for special treatment employees who volunteer for us? Can we ask volunteers to supervise employee-volunteers or will they resent that? If someone sues us, how will we manage the public relations and potential ill will in the community? How do we protect the organization, our employees, and our volunteers?

Conventional wisdom right now is that the best thing to do is not utilize employees as volunteers for your own organization. The labor issues are too gray and the potential risks are not worth taking. Many organizations have taken a straightforward approach and written a policy that prevents employees from volunteering for their employer. For example, according to the HR director at a science museum in Ohio, their policy is that employees cannot volunteer for the museum. This policy was formulated to avoid any confusion or perception of an employee doing any work as a volunteer for which he/she would normally be paid. She also cited concerns about terminating an employee-volunteer if necessary, along with concerns related to federal discrimination laws, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Federal Fair Labor Law.

In a personal survey of nonprofit institutions in the Washington, DC area, colleagues revealed the following information (quotation marks indicate specific wording from respondents):

- One organization permits employees to volunteer on an "emergency" basis, e.g., when a volunteer is sick or when one is absent without notice. Employees do their "volunteer" work during regular business hours with an excused absence from their supervisor and do not volunteer on their personal time.
- Another organization does not permit employees to volunteer for it. This is based on their philosophy that "volunteers receive benefits in thanks for their work (memberships, programs, etc.) and

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employees receive remuneration."

- One federal institution permits employees to volunteer in other similar federal institutions for which they are not paid, e.g., an employee of one Smithsonian museum could volunteer at another Smithsonian museum. This policy was established to "keep supervisors from abusing their volunteer/staff members (by declaring someone a volunteer on certain tasks when they didn't want to or couldn't afford to pay them) and to keep the volunteer/staff person from suing the organization for back wages if he/she decided they were treated unfairly as a volunteer for their [employer] institution."
- One museum does not permit employees to volunteer for it. Occasionally, employees work during special events "beyond their usual work times," and they receive compensatory time off in these instances.

In the right circumstances it is not illegal for employees to volunteer for their employer, but it is not advisable unless an organization is willing to create policies and procedures that specifically govern employee-volunteers to avoid liability and provide protection for their employees and volunteers. And, even taking those steps does not guarantee that a dissatisfied employee won't seek redress for perceived unfair treatment.

In the absence of any statutory or regulatory exemption, the Department of Labor has utilized statutory precedent to formulate an exemption for the employees of charitable entities who wish to perform volunteer work for their nonprofit employers. The Department has drafted a set of six criteria or conditions under which not-for-profit employees can volunteer:

1. The services are entirely voluntary, with no coercion by the employer, no promise of advancement, and no penalty for not volunteering.
2. The activities are predominately for the employee's own benefit.
3. The employee does not replace another employee or impair the employment opportunities of others by performing work that would otherwise be performed by regular employees.
4. The employee serves without contemplation of pay.
5. The activity does not take place during the employee's regular working hours or scheduled overtime hours.
6. The volunteer time is insubstantial in relation to the employee's regular hours.

In addition, although not specified above, the Department of Labor appears to require that nonprofit employee-volunteers offer their uncompensated services in activities distinct from their normal employment duties (U. S. Department of Education, 1998). Thus, the following would constitute permissible volunteer situations for the employees of a nonprofit public broadcasting television station:

- an administrative assistant or janitor who volunteers to work as a member of the production crew
- a secretary or bookkeeper who offers to do some announcing and on-air work.

EMPLOYEE OR VOLUNTEER?

Terminology often sets the stage for determining how laws may be applied. For example, the applicability of a specific labor law will depend on whether the worker in question falls under the law's definition of "volunteer" or "employee." The classification chosen by the service organization will not affect the law's applicability. Therefore, whether a charitable entity refers to its personnel as "volunteers," "participants," "gratuitous employees," or "interns," the organization's choice of appellation will not modify its obligation to afford certain protections to all personnel who meet the statutory qualifications of an "employee." Just as the characteristics of volunteers may vary, so do the classifications imposed by different laws. An individual who may qualify as an "employee" under one law may not meet the "employee" criteria for another. For example, the Internal Revenue Code uses different rules for distinguishing between employees and independent contractors than the federal Fair Labor Standards Act uses when determining whether someone must be paid the minimum wage. As a result, those who administer volunteer service programs must familiarize themselves with the classifications posed by both the state and fed-

eral laws that potentially affect their volunteer and salaried personnel. See Nonprofit Risk Management Center, http://www.nonprofitrisk.org (Johnstone, 2002).

Some additional considerations include:

- **Americans with Disabilities Act**—Because volunteers are not regarded as employees, they are not covered by some parts of the ADA. When an employee is also a volunteer, the organization may subject itself to unnecessary risk and/or liability related to volunteer recruitment procedures and decisions, how people are treated while they are employed (versus how they are treated as volunteers), or volunteer separation/termination procedures and decisions.
- **Federal Employment Discrimination Law**—Federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin include Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (1) the Age Discrimination In Employment Act of 1967 and (2) the Pregnancy Discrimination Act. Several cases under these laws have involved volunteers or prospective volunteers who claimed discrimination and sued organizations. These cases held that volunteers who receive no compensation are not protected by federal employment discrimination laws. Thus, the issue for any organization that allows employees to volunteer for it is whether or not it is worth the risk to blur the lines between who is a volunteer and who is an employee.
- **Workers' Compensation**—Workers' compensation laws provide a means of recovery for individuals injured during the course and scope of employment. Workers' compensation benefits are commonly reserved exclusively for injured "employees" and their families. In a few states, the courts have addressed the question of whether a volunteer may receive workers' compensation benefits. Some of these decisions hinge on whether the volunteer receives any form of compensation, such as a living allowance, stipend, room and board, benefits or even reimbursement for expenses. Volunteers are not covered in most states. When employees volunteer for their employer, there may be a risk that they will not be covered by workers' compensation when they feel they should be because they are also employed by the same organization.

When employees volunteer in their own workplace, it blurs the lines (factually and perceptually) between employment and voluntary engagement. It can become very difficult to distinguish between what employees do for salary and what they do voluntarily. It can also lead to frustration and resentment among employees who work for pay and who don't volunteer in the workplace because they can't or choose not to volunteer. Also, volunteers from outside the organization can have these same frustrations with employees who volunteer.

Negotiating the legal maze of volunteer service administration can be confusing. The laws that have been designed to protect volunteers from exploitation and employees from unfair competition often make it difficult for service organizations to offer community service in a legal and economically feasible manner. One of the key questions to answer before embarking on utilizing employees as volunteers in your organization is how to guarantee that the legal requirements for employee-volunteers are met.

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Management Implications of Staff who Volunteer

Steve McCurley, Olympia, Washington

The previous article by Connie Pirtle has addressed some of the legal implications of allowing staff to volunteer within the same organizational structure. This follow-up article will address the management implications.

MANAGEMENT ASPECTS OF STAFF VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

Any complication of a managerial system is likely to cause occasional supervisory difficulties. In the case of paid staff volunteering within the same organization these supervisory difficulties fall within what is referred to as the "multiple hats" problem—an individual who is attempting to fulfill several different roles at the same time. This type of situation commonly creates

- possible conflict between the roles, resulting in the performance of one role negatively affecting performance of the other;
- confusion over which role is being performed at what time; this confusion can afflict either the person performing the work or those around them; and
- complications to the hierarchical structure that affect communication flow and lines of authority.

Consider the following example:

> *Alison Smith is the Assistant Director of the Education Department of the Riparian Museum of Art. She began work in the museum as a curator of prehistoric art, but over the years as opportunities arose advanced up the ranks and across departments to her present high position as part of the Senior Management Team of the Museum. While she enjoys her job, she misses the opportunity to work directly with exhibits and has decided to volunteer within the Curatorial Department as volunteer curator, assisting in the classification of new acquisitions of prehistoric art. Within this Prehistoric Art Curatorial Unit are one unit supervisor, two other paid curators and three other volunteers.*

What happens if

1. Alison so enjoys her volunteer work that she begins to direct much of her attention to it. It is, after all, the type of work that got her into prehistoric art in the first place. This diversion bothers her supervisor, the Director of the Education Department, but since he doesn't want to directly confront Alison he instead comments to the Director of the Curatorial Department about the situation and asks that something be done. The Curatorial Director then asks the Supervisor of the Prehistoric Art Unit why he is causing trouble by stealing staff away from other departments.
2. As Alison volunteers she gets to know the paid curators with whom she works. One of them is quite accomplished and seems perfect for an opening in the Education Department. Alison invites the curator to apply for the position, hinting that there would be a good chance of success. As it happens, the curator isn't that interested in moving away from curating, but worries about refusing such a pointed suggestion from someone so high in the Museum's executive structure. After all, he doesn't want to make an enemy either out of a coworker or out of someone in a significant position in a department where he someday might want to work.
3. While Alison was once an accomplished curator, many years have passed since she was actually involved, and the state of the art has advanced as well. Much of what Alison knows is now out of date, but Alison keeps returning to what she is accus-

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tomed to, much to the consternation of her Supervisor. Despite instructions, however, Alison keeps repeating the same mistakes, which have to be corrected by those around her. The Supervisor has tried everything, and is now at wit's end. How, after all, can he discipline someone who is three levels above him in the Museum hierarchy and who is best friends with the head of his department?

4. As Alison volunteers, she concludes that her supervisor is not very accomplished and worries that he misrepresents the status of work assignments in reports. Alison has not actually seen these reports, but feels from his comments and attitude around staff that something is not right. To deal with this situation, Alison has a private talk with her friend, the Director of the Curatorial Department, suggesting that something needs to be done.

Management is already difficult enough, and the more you complicate it the more likely you are to eventually get what you deserve.

CREATING A SYSTEM TO INVOLVE STAFF AS VOLUNTEERS

For those of you who are attempting to involve staff as volunteers here are some suggestions that may reduce, but not eliminate, managerial problems.

1. Before accepting an employee as a volunteer, engage upper management in a discussion of the issue. If the organization decides to proceed, develop a policy that outlines the circumstances under which such volunteering is acceptable.
2. Ensure that any decision by paid staff to volunteer is entirely voluntary and without coercion or suggestion from management. This probably means that you should avoid any organized program or project created by the agency to specifically involve staff as volunteers in which the type of work is directly connected to the normal business activity of the agency. It may also be prudent to avoid any organized internal recruitment campaign, which might be viewed as pressure from management to participate. The most suitable recruitment process, if any, would be spontaneous decisions by staff who are volunteering to tell their co-workers about what a good time they are having.
3. Compare the employee's paid position description with their proposed volunteer assignment to ensure that they are distinct in type of work, location and time frame. All of these factors should be as different as possible. As the volunteering continues, periodically conduct an assessment to ensure that these distinctions remain in place. It's absolutely amazing how often unofficial job redesign can take place, all with the best of intentions.
4. Much greater care must also be exercised in making sure that involvement in volunteering will not negatively impact the staff person's professional work. Before allowing the staff person to submit a volunteer application, require that they consult with their work supervisor and seek approval for the volunteer work. You may also want to discuss the situation with the supervisor yourself.

   The purpose of this preliminary work is to ensure that the volunteer program does not become involved in disputes between supervisors and their staff (or between labor and management) which are not really its concern and which will only harm the volunteer program. To avoid this you may want to consider a requirement that an employee's volunteer position may be temporarily suspended if it conflicts with performance of normal work duties.

   It is also wise to check with the person who will be supervising the staff person in his or her volunteer capacity to make sure they are comfortable with this arrangement.
5. The staff person should follow all the normal enrollment procedures of the agency. This includes completing an application, being interviewed, going through orientation and training, and all other steps of volunteer involvement.

   If background checks are normally conducted on volunteer applicants, they

should also be conducted for the staff person, unless they have already been done by the agency's personnel department. Be sure that the employee is screened to the standards required by the volunteer's work. They might have met lower standards when they were hired.

6. While it may seem silly to ask a staff person to participate in an orientation session about an agency where they may have worked for a number of years, this step is important for two reasons. First, it will allow the staff person to be introduced to some aspects of agency operation with which they are not familiar, such as the procedures of the volunteer program. And second, *it is important to remind the staff person that, while volunteering, they are subject to all the rules and procedures of the volunteer program.*

   This last point is quite important. You will need to monitor the ability of the staff person to adapt to their new role, and to maintain that role while volunteering. This means that they must be able to keep to the status and limits of their volunteer role while interacting with staff who are assigned as their supervisors, even though in their "work" identity they may have greater authority than those staff.

   And they must also maintain their volunteer identity while working with other volunteers. Any attempt to "pull rank" or display a sense of greater knowledge or importance could be very detrimental to other volunteers.

7. It will also be important for you to keep good written records on staff who volunteer. An up-to-date position description should be maintained and time sheets of volunteer hours (recording the actual hours worked, not just the total amount) should be kept, even if you do not keep them for other volunteers. Both of these documents could become invaluable if a dispute about "employment" status ever arises.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS TO WATCH OUT FOR

Finally, the following are some special situations where you will want to take extra care or even avoid entirely.

Volunteering within Small Agencies

Staff involvement works reasonably well in larger organizations because their size and complexity allows for a clear separation of work and volunteering. In smaller agencies, however, this is seldom the case. Jobs are often ill-defined, everyone does everything, and nothing can be separated.

If you encounter a staff person who wants to volunteer in a small agency, suggest that they simply add the work to their paid job description, perhaps under "other duties as assigned." Sad as it is, there are no restrictions on paid staff agreeing to work themselves to death.

Professional Services

If staff whose work requires professional credentials want to volunteer in positions where they will be utilizing those professional credentials, then some additional care must be taken. Your best bet is to try to discourage them, since it is very difficult to show a separation between their paid and volunteer work.

Conflicts of Interest

Be careful about assigning staff as volunteers in departments with whom they have a "professional" relationship. This would include departments with which they work extensively in their paid job and departments where they will have access to information that impacts on their own paid job (such as personnel information) or upon their co-workers.

Nepotism

Another situation to avoid is allowing family and close relatives of staff to volunteer. The only thing more delicate than supervising the Vice President who wants to volunteer is supervising the Vice President's spouse...

Community Service Assignments

While not mandatory, it may also be wise to avoid accepting volunteer applications from staff who are fulfilling community service requirements. One reason for this is that

it will become difficult to maintain privacy for the employee in cases where you notify volunteer supervisors about community service volunteers. If you do accept a staff person who is fulfilling a requirement of this sort, make sure that the sentencing authority approves the placement, since there could be some dispute as to whether volunteering within one's own agency qualifies as work for the "community."

Organizations with Employee Unions

In institutions with employee unions it is critical to reach an agreement with the union on the suitability of staff involvement as volunteers.

Upon first encountering this situation union representatives are likely to be as perplexed as you, and this often leads to a quick negative response. On the other hand, unions themselves have a long history of involvement in volunteering. One technique for working through the union question is to arrange a joint meeting of the requesting staff person, yourself, and a union representative to discuss this issue.

The actual "request" for union approval should come from the staff person, to avoid any semblance of management pressure.

Since the decision on this will be setting a precedent of sorts, the involvement of the union should occur whether or not the staff person involved is a member of the union or subject to collective bargaining agreements.

If the union is uncomfortable with the involvement of staff as volunteers it is probably in the best interests of the volunteer program to attempt to find a volunteer placement for the staff person in another agency. Turning volunteer utilization into an issue of contention in labor negotiations is in no one's best interest.

Additional considerations

1. One of the key elements about the Wage and Hour Law is that its enforcement is proactive in nature. What this means is
   - they don't have to wait for a complaint from an employee to bring an action
   - they can actually bring an action even if the employee disagrees and doesn't want them to
   - they will tend to interpret things from a standpoint of protecting employee rights, which means if there is any doubt they are likely to act.

   This is what makes this so dangerous.

2. The legal restrictions seem to apply only when the work being done by the employee is directly connected to the work done by the organization, not necessarily to other work. The importance of this distinction is that some types of employee volunteering, whether in a for-profit or nonprofit organization, don't seem to violate the rule. These are things such as employee wellness and recreation activities or employee charitable fund-raising campaigns, even though these are directly supported by the organization. The theory behind this is that the work isn't being done for the benefit of the business so it isn't part of the normal work situation. Since there is actually a whole lot more of this going on than paid staff volunteering to do "normal" work, please note that this isn't what Connie is talking about.

3. An additional legal red flag occurs, when staff serve as volunteers, if they receive any tangible benefits from the organization for doing so. These benefits could be viewed as "compensation," which would then trigger considering them as qualifying for pay for any "volunteer" work. Some of the benefits which might look like compensation are
   - if volunteers get discounts or access to things which equate to money (free admission) which aren't also given to paid staff
   - if volunteering (including this internal volunteering) is used as part of the employee evaluation system and thus is part of an employee's chance of advancement
   - any stipend which goes to a volunteer beyond strict reimbursement of expenses.

Reviewing Partnerships
A Developmental Perspective of Profit–Nonprofit Partnerships

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INTRODUCTION

Nonprofit organizations do not operate in a vacuum. On the contrary, they depend upon the support of other organizations to survive and achieve their goals. Taking the perspective of the volunteer administrator, this article investigates corporate volunteering as one form of partnership development. We begin by discussing various stages in the evolution of a partnership between a company and a nonprofit organization. In the second section, we introduce five resources that two partner organizations may exchange. In part three, we present an instrument for analyzing existing partnerships. We continue with a brief discussion of some of the benefits and risks involved for both partners. The final section presents conclusions and provides ideas to volunteer administrators for moving their organizations forward.

PARTNERSHIP EVOLUTION

"New social partnerships," "inter-sectoral partnerships" and "public-private partnerships" are only a few of the terms commonly used to refer to cooperative relationships among companies, nonprofit organizations and governments. Nelson and Zadek define a "new social partnership" as "people and organizations from some combination of public, business and civil constituencies who engage in voluntary, mutually beneficial, innovative relationships to address common societal aims through combining their resources and competencies" (2000: 14). Such partnerships are important for the creation and implementation of solutions for many of the problems in modern society. The rhetoric of synergy underlies this claim, proceeding from the assumption that no single organization or sector is by itself capable of confronting present-day social challenges (Huxham, 1996).

A partnership can be understood as resulting from a long-term collaborative process that passes through the following continuum (Austin, 2000):

- **Philanthropic phase:** A company makes donations (of money or other means) to a nonprofit organization, which reciprocates by publicly acknowledging the gifts;
- **Transactional phase:** As in market relationships, both partners strive to achieve their own aims and to make concrete agreements concerning activities with mutual investments and mutual benefits;
- **Integrative phase:** The partnership takes on a sustainable and strategic character, based upon a common mission and joint policy, value creation and activities.

Kjaer and Tennyson define the evolution of inter-organizational relationships as "the growing up from a more personalized to a more formalized working relationship, through the greater engagement of organizations and the creation of management systems" (2003: 85). Strictly understood, the philanthropic phase involves a one-way partnership. In this phase, a company decides to provide support (financial or in-kind) to a specific charity. The unsolicited, anonymous gift represents the most pure form of this kind of partnership. The transition to the second, transactional phase is characterized by a conscious search for a "win-win" situation. A shift from donations to sponsorship charac-

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terizes this transitional phase.

The integrative phase occurs as more activities are undertaken jointly, more actors (from both organizations) become involved in the partnership and its activities. The consequence is that each partner organization adapts its mission to that of the other, a common agenda is set, joint policy is adopted and social value is sought. Experiences in the first two stages are necessary prerequisites to the building of trust relationships. In a process identified by Lewicki and Bunker (1996) as the "stage-wise evolution of trust," organizational actors progress from being prepared to enter a partnership to actively identifying—or bonding—with their partner organizations.

Recent research in the Netherlands suggests two different models for establishing partnerships (Van der Voort, 2003). The direct model, based upon practices in the United States, predominates in the literature and describes a situation in which a nonprofit organization and a for-profit company work together to develop a partnership. In the indirect model, an intermediating body is involved in connecting the different partners. Redmond (2003) links this notion of indirect partnering and the use of a broker to employee volunteering. This broker matches profit and nonprofit organizations, facilitates the organization of employee volunteering projects and supports both organizations in generating the best value from their joint projects.

RESOURCES-EXCHANGE

The evolution of partnerships between corporations and nonprofit organizations, and of the general perceptions of these partnerships is described in the Collaboration Continuum developed by Austin (2000). At the beginning of the continuum lies the philanthropic phase, in which companies reap public relations rewards for making donations to nonprofits in times of prosperity. At the other end lies the integrative phase, in which both parties perceive the partnerships as strategic by both parties, and in which such partnerships are generally accepted as the preferred means of addressing many of the problems facing current society. The transaction lies in the middle of the continuum and describes an emancipatory process in which nonprofit organizations become equal partners.

Sustainable partnerships, sustainable projects and sustainable impact areas are three examples of *sustainable strategies* for focusing the activities of Business Community Involvement (Meijs and Van der Voort, 2002). Sustainable partnerships are represented at the end-point of the Collaboration Continuum described above. The annual volunteer weeks organized by some companies is an example of a sustainable project. Adopting a thematic focus on issues addressed by partner organizations (for example, "youth, ambition and a handicap") is an example of a sustainable impact area.

Transactions between corporations and nonprofit organizations currently fall under five broad classifications: money, means, manpower, mass and media (in the Netherlands sometimes known as the "Five *Ms*.").

- Money: donations of funds as philanthropy or sponsoring;
- Means: donations in kind, including stationery, computers and other facilities ;
- Manpower: corporate employee volunteering;.
- Mass: the capacity of both partners to use their reputations and networks to carry weight in lobbying, opening doors for their partners that would otherwise remain closed;
- Media: the capacity of both partners to promote the missions of both organizations and of the partnership through both internal and external media channels.

DEVELOPING THE RELATIONSHIP

For volunteer administrators, corporate volunteering programs are likely to be among the first activities involved in developing relationships between for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Corporate volunteering, however, has yet to receive much serious research attention from the perspective of the management literature in both nonprofit and profit sectors. Especially the relation between corporate volunteering and HRM in businesses needs much more attention. In a review of publications concerning corporate volunteering, Benjamin (2001) concludes that most are

aimed at providing guidance for the corporate employee administrators involved in such projects, and arrives at the following conclusions: 1) Administrators of corporate volunteering programs face many challenges and have limited resources, 2) the needs of employees are generally more influential in the selection of programs than are the needs of the community, and 3) although many corporate volunteering programs involve onsite events, the primary focus for most companies is on promoting volunteering broadly among their employees.

As discussed by Westerman (2000), nonprofit organizations in the United States are better prepared to work with one-time corporate volunteering projects than are their Dutch counterparts. In addition, Dutch national volunteer organizations tend to have little hope that either corporate volunteering or Business Community Involvement has any significant capacity to counteract the lack of volunteers. Olde Hanter (2002) found neither common language for nor common understanding of corporate volunteering among seven companies in the Netherlands that are most actively involved with such programs.

According to Redmond (2003), factors contributing to success in the organization of employee volunteering include clear planning, selection of projects that suit the objectives of both partners, and the use of professional mediators as brokers. In an investigation of the benefits of employee volunteering programs to companies, communities and organizations, Lee (2001) concludes that "employee volunteering works on mutual benefit," and that the benefits of employee volunteering could be further enhanced by stimulating employees to invest their professional, managerial and technical expertise (in addition to skills that are not related to their work) in nonprofit organizations. A distinction should be made between the provision of "helping hands" and the contribution of employee expertise and knowledge to the efforts of nonprofit organizations.

Figure 1 presents an analytical tool that considers both the concept of partnership evolution and of resource-exchange as two possible approaches to developing a partnership between a for-profit and a nonprofit organization. The upper horizontal axis represents the evolution of a partnership from philanthropic to transactional and ultimately to integrative, as described by Austin (2000). The traditional philanthropic gift that later develops into sponsorship is an example of such "horizontal" development. It is important to note that these phases are not static, but part of a flowing continuum.

Alternatively, partnerships between for-profit and nonprofit organizations can expand in the manner represented by the vertical axis of Figure 1, which considers all of the resources that can be exchanged between partners in the scope of their cooperative relationship. The broadening of a typical sponsorship to include corporate volunteering illustrates this process. The lower horizontal axis considers guidelines that the prospective partners set for each other. These guidelines are expected to change as the partnership enters a new phase. The development of "black lists" of unacceptable partner organiza-

FIGURE 1

The partnership-analysis instrument

		Philanthropic	Transactional	Integrative
Money				
Means				
Manpower				
Mass				
Media				
Which companies are (not) potential partners?	Black list	Guidelines	Guidelines	Guidelines

tions is a part of the process of setting guidelines.

As discussed above, a real partnership can begin with the incidental (or even accidental) volunteering experience of an individual within a company. The task of the volunteer administrator, then, is to bring both the horizontal and vertical development of the traditionally philanthropic relationships into practice. Fund-raisers must also seek to steer the partnership by recruiting not only money, but each of the other four *M*'s as well. The board of directors should focus more specifically on the third axis.

Current research involving semi-structured interviews with representatives of companies, nonprofit organizations, local governments and intermediary bodies in the Netherlands has identified at least five applications for the analytical tool presented in Figure 1. These applications are listed below.

Analysis of existing partnerships maintained by a nonprofit organization with the business sector

This analysis can take the form of either a "total picture" of all partnerships, including the names of corporate partners, or in the form of a collection of separate "charts" for each cooperative relationship maintained by the organization with for-profit entities. The latter allows the examination of both needs and new opportunities.

In this application the volunteer administrator seeks to answer the following questions: Does a specific philanthropic relationship have the potential to become transactional? Are all five *M*s included in the agreement, and can any of the five be expanded? Do the current relationships fulfill specific needs for resources and benefits? Do they provide opportunities for consciously pursuing integrative partnerships?

Supporting the decision process regarding the selection of potential partners

The selection of potential partners begins by drawing up a "black list" of companies with which no partnership—even in philanthropic terms—could be explained to the supporters of the nonprofit organization or to the public in general. In such cases, the risk of reputation damage or loss of members (or supporters) outweighs any potential benefits a partnership could offer.

The philanthropic phase is difficult to manage with such a list, however, particularly with regard to spontaneous, anonymous gifts. The greatest risk obviously rests in the decision of the company to publicize its financial support of the organization. To address this problem, a nonprofit organization must establish an upper limit for anonymous gifts as part of its process of specifying guidelines in the philanthropic phase. Beyond this upper limit a simple check has to be made to look if the company's name is not on the black list. This implies that the donor has to tell its identity, otherwise the donation cannot be accepted! Above a following limit an even more severe test is needed.

Preparation of new transactional deals in terms of the five Ms;

As corporations and foundations consciously seek to enhance the benefits and lower the extraneous costs of their partnerships and to stretch the limits of the transactional arrangements, partnerships based solely on philanthropy will continue to become less important. The analytical tool allows both nonprofit organizations and businesses to prepare transactional agreements in terms of supply and (expected) demand. Furthermore, it prevents the partners from limiting their attention to financial deals. The model forces its users to consider what they are able to offer in return for the benefits offered by the partner organization. Finally, it visualizes opportunities for synergy.

Discussion of future directions for specific partnerships

How can a purely philanthropic relationship make the transition to a transactional relationship and how can a transactional relationship be broadened to include the manpower, mass and media in addition to money and means? Both partners should use the model to guide joint discussions concerning the future direction of the partnership.

Determining the ratio of costs to benefits

This model can also be used as a foundation for a cost-benefit analysis, moving

beyond simply mapping out supply and demand to highlight many (value) issues that must be addressed. Does the reputation of the nonprofit organization have a price tag? What is the value of its brand equity (or logo), in terms of the five *M*s? What is an acceptable balance between costs and benefits, and what factors influence this balance? Austin's Collaboration Continuum can also be interpreted in terms of these benefits and costs. The philanthropic phase is characterized by a very limited exposure of companies to community involvement. The costs of donated money and means are relatively high and the benefits are minimal. In sponsoring relationships, the company's investment is still restricted to money and means, but the direct benefits expand to include mediaexposure, with the goal of increasing brand familiarity or reputation. The nonprofit organization, in turn, invests in media and receives means and money in return. Transactional relationships can be broadened further to include the other three *M*s. By thus broadening the transactional deal "vertically," the nonprofit partner is able to confirm its role as an equal partner to business.

BENEFITS AND RISKS FOR BOTH PARTNERS

Both parties invest in terms of the five *M*s and receive specific benefits in return. Extra activities, positive exposure and organizational development are among the benefits to the nonprofit partner. The for-profit partner, in turn, enjoys benefits in terms of strategic management, marketing and/or human resources management (see Meijs and Van der Voort, 2002). Strategic management benefits refer to support from the nonprofit partner concerning issue management and the prevention of governmental regulation. Motivation, personnel recruitment and competence development are only a few of the potential human resource benefits. Marketing benefits include both reputation and cause-related marketing.

The transition towards the integrative, sustainable stage of a partnership represents conscious and collective choices of the partners involved. In this phase, attention shifts from the creation of individual value to the creation of joint value and joint impact. The mission of each partner is tuned to that of the other, with the business partner supporting the fulfillment of the nonprofit partner's mission directly, rather than indirectly through the donation of the five *M*s. The assumption that costs increase with the intensity of the relationship (in terms of both evolution and exchanged resources) applies to both partners. Risk plays an important role in addition to the operational costs of placing resources at the disposal of partners and the partnership. Both organizations must consider the chance that the partner organization will make (repeated) unfortunate and costly mistakes. A good partnership is characterized by trust and increasing benefits relative to the costs involved in maintaining and developing the relationship.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Preparation plays an essential role in every partnership in which a nonprofit organization wishes to be an equal partner. Preparation means that the nonprofit organization has not only an offer for the short run but also a more or less clear view of developing the relationship in the future into including more *M*s and going to "higher" stages of partnering. A professional volunteer administrator should be highly involved in these preparations. It is something that cannot be trusted to fundraisers or board members alone.

The partnership analysis tool introduced in this article offers necessary stepping-stones toward the realization of a successful and equal partnership. The model can help to prepare successfully. It allows for the visualization of (new and other) "win-win" opportunities, offers starting points for reviewing existing and potential partnerships and provides a common basis for discussing the future of a specific partnership. Based upon the recommendations of the volunteer administrator, the nonprofit board of directors should therefore concentrate on answering the following (and similar) questions: What kind of partnership do we prefer? Which organizations are (and are not) to be considered as potential partners? What division of costs and benefits,

supply and demand, is acceptable in terms of the five *Ms*? These policy guidelines will allow the volunteer administrator to move forward and close the deal! It is important to make clear that a nonprofit–profit partnership doesn't always start with donating money but in many cases by having some personal involvement from people within a company with the nonprofit's cause. It is this personal involvement (volunteering) not yet within a formal corporate volunteering program that can and needs to be developed!

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Strengthening Organizational Goodwill through Effective Volunteer Conflict Management

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INTRODUCTION

The Nonprofit Risk Management Center (1997) categorizes risks associated with community-based programming as follows (1) people (board members, volunteers, employees, clients, donors, and the general public); (2) property (buildings, facilities, equipment, materials, copyrights, and trademarks); (3) income (sales, grants, investment earnings, and contributions); and (4) goodwill (reputation, stature in the community, and the ability to raise funds and appeal to prospective volunteers). While each of the categories identified are important and deserve equal attention, an organization's goodwill or reputation in the community is paramount to its ability to deliver effective programs.

It is not uncommon for nonprofit leaders to think of worst-case scenarios first and implement strategies to manage those potential risks, even though such incidents are relatively infrequent. Organizational leaders seldom consider conflicts that emerge involving volunteers as a potential risk that could harm the organization's reputation, even though these issues are common and potentially harmful if ignored. While not always easily identified or managed, volunteer administrators must recognize that conflict exists in all organizations. Failing to manage conflict can have a detrimental, long-term impact on the ability of the organization to achieve its goals related to volunteer recruitment, program expansion, and fund-raising. Additionally, persistent conflict may adversely affect the morale of volunteers, potentially leading to ineffective programs for service recipients.

CONFLICT

Hocker and Wilmot (1995) define conflict as "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals" (p. 21). Nonprofit organizations face many challenges to meet community needs, including diverse agendas and goals of volunteers, decreasing budgets, and changing societal expectations and needs. Volunteer administrators are likely able to identify with the challenges mentioned, as potential sources of conflict; however, just as important is investigation of the potential impact on the organization involved and strategies to reduce negative conflict.

Conflict is a persistent fact in organizations; however, it is not always dramatic or highly confrontational where third parties are necessary to resolve the dispute (Kolb & Putnam, 1992). Conflict is likely to be embedded in the organization, potentially out of sight to many individuals, and not requiring extensive negotiation or implementation of grievance procedures (Kolb & Putnam). Conflict among volunteers that does not require extensive negotiation and/or is not a result of a highly charged issue may still require some level of intervention by volunteer administrators.

There are times when conflict is positive and can benefit the organization. When conflict emerges between individuals or groups, the dialogue is likely to produce contrasting opinions that may lead to further discussion and new and creative ideas (Zander, 1993). Zander goes on to suggest that conflict, specifically between board members, may increase group cohesiveness as they struggle to work together addressing an issue. As a result of intense discussion, individuals are more likely to understand opposing viewpoints and gain greater appreciation and

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respect for each other. Positive conflict provides tremendous opportunities for organizations; however, ongoing, negative conflict potentially causes long-term harm.

SOURCES OF NEGATIVE CONFLICT

The volunteer administrator may or may not be able to control the circumstances that create conflict. Conflict emerges in organizations as a result of a number of factors including short supply of funds, authority, privileges, benefits, or time; communication barriers; personality clashes; a strong emotional response or resistance by decision-makers to a style used by advocates presenting their ideas (Kreitner, 1998; Zander, 1993; Deutsch, 1973); or the failure of organizational leaders to address emerging issues.

Organizations rely on volunteers for a variety of services, ranging from committing a specific number of hours at a location to having volunteers in remote locations with flexible hours and multiple responsibilities. Volunteers serving in a more remote capacity (i.e., not directly supervised each time they are serving, and geographically away from a central location) may present management challenges for an organization. The "off-site" volunteer is oftentimes required to work independently; perform tasks in multiple timeframes; serve as a primary communication link; be inaccessible during traditional office hours; and have sporadic access to resources (McCurley & Lynch, 1996). Volunteers not centrally located may also feel less connection to the organization, losing focus on the mission, vision, and values, ultimately serving outside the scope of their responsibilities and in conflict with their intended responsibilities.

Volunteer administrators may ignore potential conflict as it requires staff time to resolve, or they don't have the skills to address the issues. McCurley and Vineyard (1998) suggest that conflict is ignored because there is hope it will go away; nobody really notices; confrontation is bad; and, if confronted the volunteer may quit. Additionally, those involved in highly competitive programs may ignore conflict, as they believe that conflict is a part of the program and is to be expected in competitively based programs, or that the volunteers perform better when entrenched in conflict. Ignoring conflict only supports an ongoing negative environment that potentially has a long-term impact on the organization.

IMPACT OF NEGATIVE CONFLICT

Organizations that rely heavily on word-of-mouth strategies may find it extremely difficult to recruit and select candidates when they are experiencing ongoing negative conflict (Bennis, 1989). The impact of negative conflict goes beyond the recruitment of potential volunteers. The loss to the organization as a result of ongoing conflict may include (1) a decrease in financial support from donors and grantors; (2) a decrease in membership and/or participation; (3) difficulties establishing or strengthening community collaborations; (Jackson, White, & Herman, 1999); (4) the diversion of human resources from program implementation to conflict management; and (5) diminished morale among volunteers involved.

In the current environment of reduced operating budgets and reductions in paid staff, it is becoming increasingly important for organizations to collaborate with community partners. Organizations experiencing ongoing negative conflict may find it more difficult to form partnerships in their communities. Organizational leaders may not be interested in working with groups that experience constant conflict and are not focused on program delivery, but rather on continually resolving internal disputes.

Conflict escalating out of control in an organization and affecting the organization may require additional staff time to resolve. Time devoted to addressing conflict takes away from program delivery, likely resulting in less effective programs. Furthermore, it may become necessary to engage third parties in conflict resolution, increasing the expenditure of financial resources. At the same time, extensive conflict may damage the morale in the organization as a much larger group of people become involved, through formal interviews and meetings and informal "hallway" discussions.

Many nonprofits have a policy or decision-making body responsible for guiding the organization. When conflict emerges among these groups, there is a tendency to dispense with acceptable protocol and civility. Individuals involved may seek to speed discussion, exaggerate, mislead others, make accusations, or resist compromise and desire the status quo (Zander, 1993). The behaviors exhibited by individuals involved, particularly at the decision-making level of the organization, will be seen by others. Talking about the conflict with friends, colleagues, and neighbors (potential stakeholders) will only damage organizational reputation and cause individuals to not become involved. Whether an individual is directly involved in the conflict or not, an individual may avoid, or actually leave, the organization due to the negative environment that exists (Merrill, 2000).

MANAGING CONFLICT

Managing negative conflict in the organization must be done with compassion and understanding of greater organizational issues. Volunteer administrators must fully understand the issue(s) so that they may focus on exploring options and agreeing on a plan of action with all parties involved, rather than blaming, intimidating or destroying an individual's self-esteem (Gunderson, 1998). Relying on the same strategies to resolve all conflicts in an organization will likely be unsuccessful as there are going to be different individuals involved, unique situations, and multiple variables leading to the conflict.

There is virtually no way to assure that a volunteer administrator will not experience negative conflict during their tenure. Volunteer administrators must address negative conflict in an effort to contribute to a positive reputation in local communities. Volunteer administrators should consider

- implementing consistent volunteer selection policies and procedures focusing on an individual's skills, knowledge, abilities and interests as they relate to the position responsibilities;
- requiring orientation to the organization's mission, vision, and values; and ongoing educational opportunities that enhance a volunteer's ability to effectively serve clientele;
- developing feedback opportunities that allow volunteers to evaluate their experience(s) as well as allowing the organization to evaluate the volunteer's service;
- providing access to resources, including supervisors, that have the skills and abilities to facilitate conflict resolution between individuals and/or groups;
- implementing ongoing communication strategies, including verbal, written, and electronic, that provide all volunteers with the necessary information in a timely manner to perform their service responsibilities, especially during times of organizational change (Fisher & Cole, 1993), and especially for those serving "off-site" (McCurley & Lynch, 1996);
- monitoring communication and interaction between volunteers/staff to insure accurate information is relayed, using effective methods;
- providing opportunities for volunteers, especially those serving in a competition-based program, to meet and interact, in an informal environment so that they may become better acquainted with other volunteers in a non-competitive environment; and
- providing opportunities for paid staff and volunteers to gain knowledge and skills to facilitate and bring resolution to negative conflict situations.

CONCLUSION

Negative conflict is inevitable in any community-based organization engaging volunteers to deliver programs. The risks associated with ongoing, negative conflict may ultimately lead to a decrease in new volunteers; loss of current volunteers; decrease in service recipients as caregivers seek other, more supportive environments; financial support from donors and other funding agencies; and decreased opportunities to collaborate with other community-based organizations.

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Content

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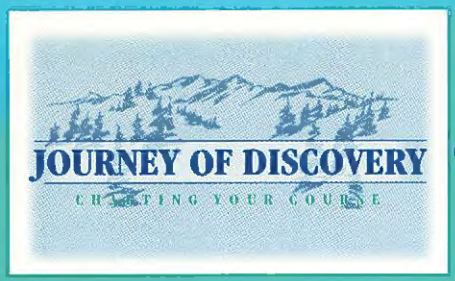

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