VOLUNTEER
ADMINISTRATION

Volunteer Administration

Note: Leadership Abstracts in Volunteer Administration will not appear in the remaining issues of Volume XIV. A redesigned Abstracts section will be introduced in the new journal.

To All Readers of VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION:

Some important and exciting decisions have been reached during the past few months regarding the future of VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION. Because these decisions required the involvement of three national organizations and a large number of individuals, the process took more time than anticipated. This is why you are now holding the "Fall" issue of the journal. We extend our apologies for the delay and silence, and our promise that from this point on you will see the journal grow and prosper.

This issue and the next issue of VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION will be published by the Association for Volunteer Administration. This volume year (XIV) will be completed under the present format. However, in 1982 AVA is initiating several major changes. You will see a new design for the publication's cover and inside format. The name will become the JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION. But the changes will be more than cosmetic. The quality and quantity of articles will be expanded, with every effort made to present a blend of theory and practicality. Articles will be representative of diverse program settings, geographic regions, project size, and other factors. As a professional journal, the publication will seek articles that are "timeless," so that each issue remains useful for many years as a library reference. Just as our field of volunteerism grows and develops, this journal will also mature and be seen as a central source of information about our field.

In the next issue, more details will be given about the goals and format of the new journal. The editorial structure and process will also be described. To aid in the formulation of these critical plans, a survey form is included in this issue. Please take the time to complete it and return it directly to me at the address shown on the form. Also, those of you considering the submission of articles are encouraged to send them in soon. The Editorial Committee is seeking to develop a continuous pool of worthy manuscripts so that we may select the very best for publication.

On behalf of all those involved in the decision-making of the past months, I thank you for your patience and ask you to become involved in strengthening this key journal in volunteer administration.

Susan J. Ellis
Editor-in-Chief

Academic Credit for Volunteer Work

by Kathryn L. Corbett

Recognition of volunteers by appropriate means is currently part of any volunteer management program, but why not get some academic help with a spin-off to the volunteer? It is common practice in institutions of higher learning to have student placements in many volunteer agencies. In educational jargon, this is termed "sponsored experiential learning" when carried under the aegis of the institution. Such courses were designed to give students experience with the "real world beyond the walls of academe" and to allow them the opportunity of applied theory.

Higher education in America is historically built upon the premise that the entering student is a high school graduate who is relatively inexperienced in the world and who, after the theory classes, is ready for applied courses before graduation, particularly in the helping professions. Social work and psychology with counseling emphasis have traditionally used supervised field work before the student is considered ready for graduation. Most teacher training curricula which leads to credentials has a mandatory requirement of actual teaching in a classroom with live students. These experiences take place near the end of the student's academic program, just before graduation.

In contrast, the adult desiring an earned degree in higher education often comes to the institution with a background of experience in the field, and is in need of the theory courses. The returning adult also must meet a degree pattern of prescribed courses and completion of specified credit units. Often when returning adults take the required field work courses, we see a perversion of the intent of these courses (designed for younger students) into required courses for the returnee in order to accumulate the necessary number of credits. Curricula designed for meeting the needs of older persons are sometimes termed "upside-down education." What is really upside-down is the institutional approach which requires all students to take the same courses without regard for life experience gained before the student entered the degree program.

In fact, the very reason many adults decide to return to school for a degree is past participation in volunteer work which led to the interest in certification and credentialling. It seems unjust that experiential courses sponsored by a university are legitimate credit toward degrees, while prior learning not under the

University aegis is untranslatable into credit for advancement into professional degrees. Many adults find the situation so discouraging to goals and finances—after all, those credits cost money—that they do not pursue academic aims to further their development.

Since the early 1970's, there has been a steady growth in recognition and granting of academic credit for prior learning. Termed "credit for experiential learning," the leading organization working on the program is the Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning (CAEL).[1] In addition, there are other sources of credit, such as acceptance of credit for non-collegiate courses, which have been recommended by the American Council on Education (ACE)[2] and the College Level Examination Program (CLEP). Other variations exist, but the primary purpose of this article is to discuss academic credit for volunteer experience. In this regard, CAEL is the accepted source of academic guidance in the assessment of prior learning.

The essential for establishing credit for experience not under the official, current, on-going program of courses, professors, agency placements, term time periods, etc., is demonstration of learning to correspond with learning outcomes of the courses offered by the institution. Merely having verified volunteer experience does not guarantee credit, nor is credit granted by a measure of the actual time spent in the activity. It is not comparable to work experience as such, although evaluative methods of assessment of prior learning could be utilized in work experience assessment. In other words, "seat time" in the traditional classroom and time spent in the field are not evaluated by the same yardsticks. It is the proverbial "apples and oranges" argument.

What is used predominantly for prior learning is the portfolio method, for which CAEL has provided the "how to do it" book.[3] The portfolio is rather complex and takes time to do, but the consensus of both doers and evaluators is that the exercise is well worth the time and effort. But preparation of the portfolio is not the main block to credit. Besides the unwillingness of academics to believe that anyone could really learn anywhere except in "my" class, the unstated objections include load credit, student credit, and what tends to be viewed as an overload of faculty. This can be solved to everyone's mutual benefit by the following steps:

ONE: Thoroughly examine the catalogue of the institution and decide what courses appear to be the area of learning covered by the life experience. Catalogues are notorious for obscurity, so read carefully and with imagination. Do not get discouraged by the groupings of learnings into courses and specific areas of coverage as determined by the faculty. Academic courses are only bins of knowledge which some professor once talked the curriculum committee into making into a course. They are not

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based upon divine guidance, witchcraft or otherwise, although at times one suspects they might be. By its very nature, prior learning outside the ivied walls will not be arranged in the same bins. But the learning goals of the course for the student may well be similar to those of the volunteer. Therein lies the approach.

TWO: Find out the unit value of the courses, how often they are offered, and who teaches them. Let us hope that the latter is one of the pillars of the faculty, has tenure and loves volunteers.

THREE: Set up a meeting with the professor and some volunteers who are interested in academic credit and possibly a long-term academic career program. Go prepared with knowledge of the catalogue, the professor's involvement with the program and material from CAEL. At the meeting, come up with a plan which embodies these ideas:

a. It is assumed that persons submitting portfolios will be matriculating in the institution. This assures student count.

b. The person will enroll in the professor's class but will complete the course work by portfolio. This gives the professor class enrollment and load credit.

c. ·Get the faculty to offer a course in Portfolio Preparation. (This is not an English course, nor is it a course in resume writing.) Call the course something like "Conceptualizing Prior Learning." Rely on CAEL literature for guidance in preparing the course outline, and make the course mandatory CREDIT/NO CREDIT. Portfolios are not designed to raise grade point averages.

d. Encourage faculty to attend a CAEL workshop or conference. These are excellent in content and indispensable in setting up programs.

e. Openly discuss possible credit units. It is possible to receive undifferentiated, ungraded credit— sort of lump credit for portfolio work. Many schools prefer this way. However, academic credit must have a base, so the axiom of starting with a professor is a must. Good luck in finding the friendliest professor of all.

f. Request information on the method of assessment of portfolios. The assessment of learning is a profes-

sorial responsibility, and clearly within the province of the faculty. However, all students have the right to know the standards and methods of assessment as well as the person designated to assess.

The tone of this article has been optimistic, projecting that both the volunteer and the institution will welcome this idea. From my experience, sometimes yes, sometimes no, from either source. Many faculty are "gun shy" and often think it would be easier and more respectable among their colleagues to continue the status quo, with its keystone arch of academic credit for learning within the institution. The answer lies in CAEL, which employs the most respected of academics and whose literature is highly regarded. The basic book is Keeton's Experiential Learning[4] and this publication has been followed by a series of excellent books, all issued under sponsorship of CAEL.

The other stone unturned is the definition of the position of the Volunteer Administrator. It should be that of catalyst. This is not an attempt of the Volunteer Administrator to be a field work instructor. Indeed, many of the volunteers' experiences may not have taken place in the administrator's agency. What volunteers need is assistance in approaching the institution and belief in themselves as persons whose work and life experience deserve academic recognition. The Volunteer Administrator is the pivotal person to put it together for the volunteers. By so doing, not only is volunteer work in the agency given recognition, but the volunteer is given tangible proof of the worth of his or her contributions. Such is the stuff of which good volunteers are made.

The important step is to get started. Volunteer Administrators can take important leadership roles in acting as catalysts. This is a growing area of academe and what better way to assert the worth of the volunteer than to get him/her into a situation wherein the learnings in volunteering are organized, presented and accorded academic credit?

Footnotes

[1]Council for Advancement of Experiential Learning
American City Building, Suite 212
Columbia, MD 21044

[2]American Council on Education
Office of Educational Credit
One Dupont Circle N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

[3]Forrest, Aubrey, Assessing Prior Learning—A CAEL Student Guide. 1977. CAEL Publication.

[4]Keeton, Morris T. and Associates, Experiential Learning, Jossey-Bass, 1976.

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The Development of a Multi-Departmental Municipal Social Services Volunteer Program

by Beth Fair

Picture a municipal department of social services, where dozens of programs are staffed by volunteers and many are coordinated by volunteers. New programs are being developed by volunteers to serve an increasingly wide cross section of the community. Citizen involvement is at a level at which it has never been before. There is solid support from the city administration and paid staff for the volunteer program, and all this is in the face of increasing cutbacks in the social services budget.

The impossible dream? Perhaps. And then, perhaps not. The costs and problems of pursuing such a dream can be overwhelming or even insurmountable if they are not anticipated. Here is how one city approached the dream and the problems that went with it.

THE BACKGROUND

In California, where the taxpayers' revolt and Proposition 13 became a reality in 1979, municipalities have had to wrestle with fewer fiscal resources to meet the continuing increase in the demand for services. With the current cutbacks in funding as a result of present federal fiscal policies, social services are feeling the crunch all over the country. Increasingly, people are looking to volunteers for the answer. Subsequent to the passage of Proposition 13, the City Manager of Palo Alto, California presented, along with his proposed budget cuts, guidelines for a shift in the City's emphasis "from that of service provider to coordinator and support" of services provided by others. These guidelines suggested that the time had come for citizens to assume more responsibility in providing programs for themselves, and that the City would be looking to expand the number of its present volunteer opportunities. Of course, there are reasons other than financial for the increased use of volunteers in City programs, not the least of which is a resulting increase in community involvement, support, input and awareness of the City's various program areas. It was with this background that the Director of the Department of Social and Community Services of the City of Palo Alto decided to institute a volunteer program for the entire department.

The City of Palo Alto's Department of Social and Community Services includes the departments of Recreation, Arts and Sciences, Libraries and Administration. There are seventeen facilities and a vast number of varied programs. The Administration Department provides staff support for several human services commissions and task forces. The Arts and Sciences Department operates two

theatres, a Cultural Center, two nature interpretive centers, a Junior Museum and programs in the performing and visual arts and natural history areas. The Library Department has four branches in addition the the Main Library. The Recreation Department operates two community centers, the golf course, an athletic center and nineteen parks, and provides year-round recreation programs to all age groups. Setting up a volunteer program to span the scope of this entire department was a major undertaking. More than once we heard: "Why go to all the effort of setting up a multi-departmental program? After all, we are already using volunteers in most of the facilities and we've gotten along pretty well so far."

WHY ON A MULTI-DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL?

A major reason for developing a multi-departmental program is to upgrade the quality of volunteer services in the Department. The state of volunteerism today is placing increasing demands on volunteer administrators. A standardized program covering several departments with a centralized function can help meet these demands. For instance, the centralized function can oversee the development and maintenance of uniform standards at all the facilities that utilize volunteers. Advocacy for this particular program and for volunteerism in general can be done by the centralized function. A centralized record keeping system can ensure accurate referral of potential volunteers and provide standard record keeping procedures for all facilities. A centralized function is designed to preclude the duplication of efforts by the various facilities, and to minimize the "bureaucratic shuffle" of potential volunteers.

Let's look at some of the demands being placed on volunteer administrators. We are living in a time when fewer people seem to be volunteering. Many cannot afford the time away from their jobs or their fmailies. Many no longer feel that they can "give" without receiving something more substantial than gratitude in return. They are seeking experience, exposure to new areas, skills development and access to those with similar interests. It has fallen to us, the administrators of volunteer programs, to professionalize our programs and our approach to volunteerism in general. If we are to attract volunteers, we must have a well-organized, efficiently run program that contains all the components of a successful volunteer program. We cannot afford to send volunteers on an assignment poorly trained or not knowing who their supervisor is. There must be some sort of mechanism through which citizens can come to the aid of their favorite programs. Regardless of their intention to assist these programs, if they are shuffled from one overworked employee to another, if there is no mechanism built in to utilize their time and energies, if they are not able to get the tools they need to do their job, then even the most dedicated citizen will retreat in defeat. Volunteers do not have to do the job. If they have had a bad experience they are not likely to return.

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But there are professional standards for volunteer programs and we must now realize that unless we conform to these standards, including finding the resources necessary to achieve these standards, we cannot hope to build programs that are going to attract the volunteers we need. By developing a volunteer program on a multi-departmental level we can more closely achieve the professionalism our programs need by ensuring that many of these standards will be met.

ADVOCACY: TAKING VOLUNTEERISM SERIOUSLY

Recognizing the value of a multi-departmental program is not enough, however. It is possible to end up with a program that does little more than make token efforts to pacify the demands for citizen involvement, rather than with a program that is well managed and truly complements the objectives of the department it serves. Where you end up will depend, in part, on how effective an advocate for volunteerism you are, which includes informing decision-makers of the current realities in the field of volunteerism. We are living in a time when more and more volunteers are being called for, but at the same time positions for volunteer administrators are being eliminated. Coordinating volunteers takes time and focused attention, all of which translates into costs in a municipal budget.

As administrators of volunteer programs, we may take for granted that there are some very real and large costs in administering a volunteer program. However, many people who are not familiar with the running of volunteer programs still view volunteers as free labor. City officials in a position to make fiscal decisions concerning development of a multi-departmental volunteer program must be freed from the cliches surrounding volunteerism and understand that volunteers are not an inexhaustible resource. We still hear: "just get some volunteers to do it," or "get volunteers to do it and it won't cost anything," and other cliches that simply do not reflect the world of volunteerism today. We do need to keep in mind, of course, that the objectives of local government officials are to keep the costs of public administration to a minimum and still provide as well as possible the services the electorate wants. City administrators have not been trained to understand the workings of volunteer programs. It is our job as volunteer administrators to educate them, and to tie their thinking to the reality of the current state of volunteerism today. This is our advocacy role: getting decision makers to take volunteerism seriously.

OBSTACLES: IS SUCH A PROGRAM VIABLE?

In addition to the costs of developing and operating a department-wide volunteer program, there may be several obstacles to overcome. Assessment of these obstacles is important as it may be that in a given situation the costs of overcoming these obstacles are too high. Although much can be said in favor of developing a multi-departmental volunteer program, each city and each situation is different. During the assessment stage it is crucial to ask at each step of the way: "is such a program viable in our context?" It well may not be, and if that is the case, the sooner you find this out, the better. Potential obstacles to the success of such a program are

very real and may be insurmountable. They will need to be identified, in any case, so that they can be addressed. Here are some to consider.

On the municipal level, potential obstacles to the development of maintenance of a successful volunteer program include the actual dollar cost (including salary for volunteer coordinators, money for recognition, supplies, clerical support, etc.). In an era of decreasing numbers of available volunteers, consideration must be given to such matters as providing insurance, child care facilities, mileage reimbursement, etc., which might help a potential volunteer decide for volunteering rather than against it. Admittedly, the cost of these things is high, especially on a large scale. Consider also the degree of staff time and expertise available, need for adequate space and equipment, the city's legal concerns, transportation problems, union opposition, conflicting city policies and lack of cooperation among departments.

Resistance from paid staff is certainly one of the more serious obstacles. In a time of budget cuts paid personnel may well see volunteers as trying to take their jobs. As long as this fear is present, these people will never work well with volunteers and will ultimately sabotage the program. Resistance will also arise if these people are told that in addition to their already heavy workload they are going to be expected to serve as volunteer coordinators as well. You can send these people to every workshop available on volunteer management, but they will never be an asset to the program if they are not willing and are not given sufficient time for this responsibility. A directive coming down to paid staff from above that they must use volunteers henceforth is not going to give those staff people what they need to do a good job. And again this is where many "costs" come in. These paid staff must be given additional time or be clearly freed of certain existing duties if they are to be successful as volunteer coordinators.

In addition to fearing loss of their jobs, paid staff may fear loss of control over the quality of programs. They may be unwilling or unable to devote time to volunteers. There may be lack of rewards for utilizing volunteers well or inadequate resources available to coordinate a volunteer program. Paid staff may be reluctant to view volunteers as co-workers, believing that anyone who would work for free must be incompetent, or that volunteers are more trouble than they're worth. In short, support from paid staff is crucial to the success of the program, and that support cannot be assumed to be there.

Incorporating those paid staff who would actually be dealing with volunteers into the planning process will help insure their support. If their input is requested and their concerns listened to, they will have a vested interest in the success of the program. Although it is on the higher levels of the bureaucracy that the initial budgetary decisions will be made affecting the success of the project, the workers who will be in contact with the volunteers on a day-to-day basis are the ones who will ultimately make or break the program.

There may be obstacles at the community level such as the high cost of volunteering (including transporation, childcare, etc.), feminist attitudes toward volunteerism, too few volunteers being sought after by too many groups,

family resentment, and, of course, lack of time. Last, but not least, there are the many pitfalls plaguing volunteer programs in general which if not provided for will kill even the best organized multi-departmental program. These include poor placement of volunteers, too little recognition, demeaning jobs, lack of upward mobility, poor training, unclear expectations from staff of volunteers and vice versa, lack of group feeling and shared common goals with paid staff, and lack of motivation.

Perhaps the bottom line for all of this is resources: identifying the need for them; having the city administration see the validity of these needs; and most importantly (getting beyond lip service), agreeing to provide the resources once they decide they want to develop a multi-departmental program. When city administrators realize the scope of the program and the need for some overall structure and planning, when they no longer see volunteers as free labor, the question changes from "why don't you just get some volunteers to do it?" to "how can we provide the resources necessary to develop the efficient, successful multi-departmental volunteer program we need?"

I have not listed the costs and obstacles pertinent to a municipal volunteer program to discourage those who would pursue its devleopment. I have witnessed the only slightly short of miraculous ability of a well-organized corps of volunteers to jump into a breach left by a program cut from a city budget and proceed to virtually produce the program themselves. My point is not that such a program should not be attempted, nor that it cannot succeed, but that the costs and obstacles are large and real and that cognizance of them by city administrators is a crucial and determining step in the development of such a program and cannot be stressed too much.

IDENTIFY DESIRED OUTCOMES

Every person and group involved in the planning and implementation of a multi-departmental volunteer group will have distinct ideas and opinions about the outcomes they want to see. Being able to identify these various goals and address them at an early stage will help assure the continuing support of these people. In Palo Alto, as we proceeded through the assessment stage of the process, a wide range of different goals surfaced. The department administration wanted to see the maintenance of existing programs, an increase in the number of programs and increased volunteer opportunities, all without serious demands on the budget. Paid staff wanted to know that volunteers were not out to take their jobs or demand too much of their time. They wanted adequate clerical and managerial support in the form of additional time and/or money. They wanted access to the making of the decisions that would affect them, and they wanted lots of help at minimal personal cost. The public was hoping for more enjoyable and meaningful ways to spend their leisure time, the continuance of favorite programs, more direct access to city staff and more control over city resources.

POWER: WHO HAS IT?

Power can certainly become an issue in a project of this size. Identify the source of power with which you will need to work. This will be the person or group who will give you the authority you will need to proceed. It is a common fallacy in this situation to assume that a department head, a city manager or even a city council has the ultimate authority, and that the power is concentrated in the higher levels of the bureaucracy. Not so. Certainly the position of these people in the organizational hierarchy gives them certain power to cause or prevent change. But it is the residents of the city, the electorate, who have the ultimate power (even though they may not always choose to exercise it). Anyone who has witnessed a well-organized group of citizens making demands at a city council meeting knows this is true. It helps immeasurably in the task of being an administrator of volunteers to remember that it is the concerned citizens, the volunteers in the city's programs, who hold the power, because they are the ultimate deciders of priorities and of the allocation of resources.

In any given hierarchical structure, there are those who by virtue of their position have power, and there are those who in spite of their position have power. In working with a municipal government on a multi-departmental level, it is necessary to be aware of the formal power structure of the bureaucracy, and aware of the informal structure as well. Information about the formal structure is easily accessible. The informal power structure is not often talked about, but knowledge of its working can save many hours of trying to persuade the wrong people. A trusted advisor is a key person in the informal structure. This person may have no authority, but if he or she has the trust of someone in power and can exert influence, then he or she does possess a great deal of power. Such advisors are likely to be secretaries or even custodians. Find out who these people are and make allies of them if possible.

THE TASK FORCE

Once it was decided to institute a volunteer program to span the entire Department of Social and Community Services, a Task Force was appointed which included the prospective volunteer coordinators from the Library, Recreation and Arts and Sciences Departments, as well as members of the community and the directors of the local Volunteer Bureau and R.S.V.P. The purposes of the Task Force were to explore the feasibility of such a program, examine all obstacles, and draw up a set of guidelines and recommendations for the use of volunteers in the Department. The Task Force deliberated such items as the Department's goals and objectives and how a volunteer program would support these, availability of volunteers, availability of management support, possible conflicts with existing City policies, and insurance and liability issues. The Task Force recommended that the costs of such a program need to be recognized, volunteers should be considered unpaid staff, staff resistance needs to be acknowledged and overcome, and that an inclusive Department policy on volunteers should be written to include legal issues and rights and responsibilities of the City and the volunteers.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Task Force developed outlines for a multi-

departmental municipal volunteer program. These included a program with a certain degree of centralization yet flexible enough to accommodate the various needs of the different facilities. A proper volunteer program, per se, would exist in each facility or program where volunteers are utilized. One person would be assigned in each program or facility to serve as the volunteer coordinator. Their responsibilities would include writing volunteer job descriptions and handling recruitment, training, supervision, recognition and record keeping for their volunteers.

The centralized function, which would encompass all the volunteer programs in the various facilities, would provide a centralized file for job openings and referrals, and provide record keeping of the total number of volunteers and their hours. This centralized function would coordinate large-scale recruiting events, orientation to the City structure, City-wide volunteer recognition events, and training for paid staff. A position was created for a Community Services Coordinator to oversee the work of the centralized function. This person is responsible for preparing a volunteer handbook and a policies and procedures manual, compiling a library on volunteerism, expanding the number of volunteer opportunities in the Department, obtaining necessary resources, handling public relations, and serving as an advocate for volunteerism.

The Community Services Coordinator is assisted by a Staff Volunteer Council which is comprised of the volunteer coordinators from each of the facilities or programs. The function of the Staff Volunteer Council is to recommend department policy, oversee the implementation of the project, serve as liaison between the various volunteer programs in the facilities and the centralized function, and act as problem solvers. Issues that this Council might deal with include legal and insurance matters, staff and union resistance, mileage reimbursement for volunteers, etc.

In a program of this sort, city management has the responsibility for rearranging staff priorities so that time can be devoted to volunteer management, for providing ultimate clarification on legal and insurance issues and for providing the support and resources necessary. A Community Advisory Board could prove an asset to this sort of program. Such a board might be composed of volunteers, paid staff, union representatives, the Volunteer Bureau, the school district and the community. Its function would be periodic review of city policies regarding volunteers, assistance in planning recognition events, eliciting community support and serving as advocates before city council.

USE OF A CONSULTANT

Once the outline of the project has been planned, consider the use of an outside consultant. Such a person can assist in developing plans for implementation by providing an objective needs assessment, and by serving as an advocate for the project. Picture an administration that denies the validity of the costs of a multi-departmental volunteer program or one that wants the program but is not willing to provide the necessary resources. Bringing in an outside consultant is one way to address this problem. This person can assist in convincing

a city administration of the validity of these costs by bringing to the discussion an objectivity that might not be credited to someone on the city payroll. An outside consultant should be able to ascertain the needs of various departments involved without showing special preferences to any. A good consultant can recognize problems ahead of time, lay the proper groundwork and devise a realistic timeline for implementation. Someone from outside the city structure should be able to assess the actual level of staff support, whether or not it will prove an insurmountable stumbling block, and what steps can be taken to make necessary changes. And we must not forget the sad but true fact that advice that is paid for is often listened to more carefully than advice that comes from "in house."

THE CONSULTANT'S FINDINGS

Our consultant's job was to assess the organizational climate. She wanted to find out how employees felt about their jobs, their department's responsibilities and their supervisors. She wanted to know how employees viewed personnel policies, needs to be met, volunteers and volunteerism and their impact on the organizational structure. This was done through a questionnaire sent to over 200 employees in the Department of Social and Community Services. Added to this was information gained during more than twenty in-depth interviews. From all this the consultant drew up a list of recommendations for the implementation of a department-wide volunteer program. The following are some of the highlights of the consultant's findings.

In one department recognition for employees occurred only sporadically. This could signify a potential problem as recognition is a key factor in working with volunteers. Administration employees revealed that at times their ideas were not sought or used. This warns against dampening volunteers' enthusiasm with administrative constraints. It was found in one department that assignments were not usually made in detail and that review was sporadic. The warning here is that volunteers may need somewhat more structure if they are to fare as well as paid employees in these facilities. It was generally found that employees felt their work was satisfying, which should prove helpful in attracting and maintaining solid volunteer support.

Some of the reasons uncovered as to why employees would like to work with volunteers are that volunteers are motivated, they add depth and variety to existing programs, their presence permits certain programs to exist, they increase options and decrease workload. Reasons given as to why employees would not like to work with volunteers are that volunteers are not considered committed or reliable, they require more time than is available to train and supervise, and they require space. The Libraries revealed the greatest negative response to working with volunteers, but because they were far from negative about their jobs or their sense of cooperation, it was recommended that those in the Libraries who wanted to work with volunteers be given the opportunity. Those who did not want to participate would not be expected to do so. It was felt that the unwilling employees might profit from seeing the good employee/volunteer relationshps that could be expected to develop where employees

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were enthusiastic about working with volunteers in their department.

In general, paid staff felt they could offer goodwill, knowledge and support to volunteers. They expected to receive help, companionship, new energy and a shared interest in their jobs from volunteers.

The consultant's recommendations listed several items that a good volunteer program would include. Because of the variance among the different departments and facilities, clear delineations of lines of authority, accountability and other differences must be made so that volunteers can choose a placement most closely related to their personal style. Employees' recommendations as to how the program should be administered should be heeded. It should be identified where existing resources can be shared with the community, including the local Volunteer Bureau, the schools, etc. Advice was given to address the issue of viewing the volunteer program as a program of "citizen participation" rather than one of simply volunteer "staffing." The citizen participation perspective could increase participation from sectors of the community, including schools and businesses.

The consultant's feeling was that if adequate consideration was given to these sensitive areas, the program would have a good chance of success. And how will we know when we have succeeded? We will know when we have a program supported on all levels of City structure, that conforms to the recommendations of the Task Force and to those of the consultant, and which includes a volunteer coordinator in each department or facility. And we will know when there is a written policy and procedures manual and a volunteer handbook, when training needs are identified and when the centralized aspect is fully functioning.

WHAT WE LEARNED

I think the City of Palo Alto has come a long way in laying the right groundwork for a multi-departmental program. But the implementation phase will be stretching out before us for some time to come. We have made progress in solving many of the problems ahead of us simply because we have been able to identify many of them. We have learned to be patient during the assessment stage, not to overlook any of the groundwork in our hurry to build a program. We were careful to define the problem, decide the scope of the operation, the level where it was to generate, who gives it authority, what it will produce, who will be included in the process, and how. We have learned the importance of assessing the organizational climate, including management attitudes and those of paid staff, because good volunteer/staff relations cannot exist without a good organizational climate. We have learned to look to sources of power beyond the obvious ones in our search for support for the program. We have learned that the state of volunteerism today is not what it was ten years ago. Prospective volunteers are demanding more from us in terms of the level of professionalism with which they are treated. And we have learned much more.

There are still several unanswered questions. Do we really have the support from the City administration that they tell us we have? The development of the program has been delayed many times, and for long periods. This has been because management has rearranged priorities so that other duties of paid staff were given precedence over the development of a department-wide volunteer program. If the support for volunteers from the top leadership of the City administration is merely lip service, it is not likely that we are going to see an organizational climate develop where people are eager to volunteer. There are problems whose solution is necessarily long term, such as certain negative attitudes of paid staff. We have not worked at changing these attitudes long enough to know how successful we will be ultimately, but it is clear this may take some time.

Volunteerism is part of the responsibilities and the rights of citizenship in a democratic society. It places an important value on public service and it makes city programs more accessible and accountable to all citizens. In these times of diminishing resources, volunteer programs no longer can be viewed as nice but expandable. As volunteer administrators we have the important job of increasing the credibility of volunteerism if our programs are to attain the professional standards necessary to attract and keep the volunteers we need. And when volunteer programs are seen as truly credible, then there will be more solid support than lip service from city administrators for providing the resources necessary to develop these programs. Then we will be at the point where we can look to these volunteers and volunteer programs to pick up the slack and fill in the gaps left by social service funding cuts.

The Kalamazoo Voluntary Action Center Community Leadership Development Project

by William F. Grimshaw and Claren Schweitzer

INTRODUCTION

Volunteer clearinghouses such as Volunteer Services of Greater Kalamazoo long have offered leadership training of community workers as a principal activity to give strength and direction to the agency's mission. The Volunteer Action Center (VAC) is strategically positioned and uniquely organized for providing a wide variety of leadership training to community organization members. Beyond training for supervision of volunteers, the VAC in Kalamazoo, like other VACs across the U.S., is training citizens in "boardsmanship" and "committeeship."

The needs for group leadership skills are large among community boards and committees, especially agency advisory groups, grassroots neighborhood organizations, and non-profit human service associations, such as those representing the interests of the handicapped, senior citizens, and others. The project described here is an effort to meet these needs. The effort began early in 1980 as a research project to develop a leadership training model to be delivered by volunteers to community groups in Kalamazoo County. Today, some fourteen months later, we believe we can say that the model we are about to describe can be delivered by volunteer trainers in any community. Funding for this research was provided by the C.S. Mott Foundation and the Community Leadership Training Center of Western Michigan Unviersity (the Center works in coordination with the VAC).

DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP

We begin with a basic assumption or postulate concerning leadership within small groups, the kinds with which this project is concerned: team-directed action contains within itself the most powerful motivation known for the accomplishment of truly effective team work. Team-directed action aims first at meeting member interests and concerns in the team's environment. This kind of leadership activates the resources of all a group's members in directing and conducting group tasks, problem-solving, and decision-making. Furthermore, where this kind of leadership thrives, it is coordinated, orderly, goal-oriented, and results-producing. At its core it is shared or democratic leadership.

In the shared leadership process each member participates to the fullest possible degree in initiating, conducting, and completing successfully a group task, and

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maintaining the group in good working order. So, leadership in the democratic group is a group responsibility. It is shared by all. It is a responsibility not lightly given away, given up, or taken away, else the spirit and power so unique to truly democratic group leadership be lost.

The purpose of this leadership development program, then, is to help members of organizational boards, committees, and task groups carry out group decision making, problem solving, planning, or other tasks more effectively or productively.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

What skills must members of a democratic group have and use to be effective individually and as a group? There are at least four sets of skills, taken together, that enable a group to direct its action toward achieving specific results. The first set is communication, especially interpersonal communication. The second is managing meetings, particularly the phases of consensus formation. The third set is problem solving or, alternatively, decision-making. The fourth is planning implementation of a solution or decision and evaluating its result or outcome.

COMMUNICATION

The primary skills group members require are exchange, understanding, appreciation of each other's ideas and perspectives on a given matter: interpersonal communication. These require at the minimum two specific communication skills: message-sending skills and message-receiving skills. Each of these, in turn, has its sub-set of skills.

In use, these various communication skills are acts that generate and become part of a process best described as interaction. It forms as members understand and appreciate each others' ideas, beliefs, attitudes. It influences members to trust one another as they discover there is no need to be afraid that what they contribute will be used against them. It constructs and interprets mutual support for members' contributions, interests, and resources. It gathers members' ideas and perspectives into a pattern and force. The process of generating the group thought-force enables group members to organize cooperation for the coordination of group work. This process "drives" the other three processes.

CONSENSUS DEVELOPMENT

The second of the four major sets of shared leadership skills is managing meetings or, more specifically, managing the phases of consensus formation. Customarily, the group meeting is the event at which group work is done. Group work consists largely of coordinating action

to solve problems or to reach any worthwhile goal. It is a discussion process presided over by a chairperson. It seeks congruence of members' perspectives.

Frequently, we think of the chair as running the meeting. Yet, when we examine meetings closely, we find that the chair facilitates intensive interactive communication on a topic, toward reaching a conclusion. The chair actually guides communication aimed at solving a problem or deciding on a course of action, through a series of communication phases: 1) organizing to deal with the charge; 2) digesting or understanding the charge; 3) offering information for dealing with the charge; 4) distilling of members' ideas and perspectives into a definite form and thrust to satisfy the charge; 5) resolving or settling on the group decision in response to the charge. These are the stages of consensus work. Through these stages members look for the most acceptable position for all, that which is based on objective and sound foundations. Each person seeks to accept the group's position on the basis of logic and feasibility, and in that sense "own" and support the decision, even though the decision may not have everyone's complete approval.

Parliamentary procedure is another process often used to conduct group decision-making or problem-solving. It, too, seeks the most representative decision. Guided by a highly skilled parliamentarian, a group's decision might be equivalent to a decision developed by the consensus process. Less mechanistic, formal, and technical, the consensus process focuses on intensive, interactive discussion of ideas, perspectives, feelings. Its ambience is group spirit and cohesion. Parliamentary procedure focuses on rules of order in making motions in assemblies. Its atmosphere is regard for members' rights while reaching the general will in a minimum of time, regardless of the group climate.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Groups such as boards and advisory committees usually must deal with decisions or issues related to the organization's purpose. Dealing with group interests is usually the essential work (and reason for existence) of instrumental associations.

Group problems or issues arise naturally as members try to reach some goal which they do not already know how to obtain. A problem obviously is something that requires a solution. Usually we think of a problem as being quite specific and applying to a particular situation. Problem solving is a process of finding an appropriate way to deal with a particular "new" situation.

Members find that "jumping to a solution" seldom is a reliable method for solving a problem. The more reliable approach to the "new" situation is systematic. Systematic problem solving is a step-by-step series of actions: first, to understand exactly what one needs to achieve and then, to understand precisely what must be done to achieve it.

The model we use provides development of two sets of skills: 1) problem identification skills; and 2) problem solution skills. At the core of the problem identification and problem solving activity is effective brainstorming followed by careful statement clarification and prioritization. This identifies the "discrepancies" that separate the ideal from the actual situation, in order to remove the discrepancies. As group members communicate fully, interactively, and decide consensually, their power to deal with problems grows enormously.

PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The fourth process provided in the training model is planning-implementation of a solution or decision, and evaluating its result or outcome. Both planning-implementation and evaluation are procedures that are best done together or, at least, in close relation to one another. Planning-implementation describes what the group will do; evaluation determines how well the group did it. The two are taken as systematic processes, that is, step-by-step actions to build to an outcome. The skills required to activate the process are found in the steps, and of course, in the conscious, thoughtful reasoning required by the group members, and the use of the consensus process in planning and evaluating.

TRAINING STRATEGIES

Two training strategies are used to deliver to groups the skills just described. The first strategy enables group members to acquire the skills through a process of experiential learning, using structured exercises, during a 14 to 18 hour workshop. The second strategy is peer training by volunteers.

The workshop is tailored to an organizational group such as a board or committee. Occasionally we are asked to set up a program for participants representing several different boards who would come together in a set of workshops. We have not yet turned down any such request; but we prefer to work with a team that will continue working together, because the sum of the processes facilitates teamwork. And building team-developing skills is a major benefit of the training for an integrated group.

The size of a group does not really matter much. We find the model serves up to 14 persons on a team quite well. And where more persons are involved, we try to approach them as committees, having them divide themselves into several groups. The ideal team size is around seven or nine members. In the small group, more effective interpersonal communication and therefore, interaction process can take place. This facilitates decisions by consensus.

Together with the group's leader, president or chair, we work out the logistics of workshop structure: place, time, refreshments and so on. At present we offer two workshop structures. The first option is a series of six or seven, two-and-a-half hour sessions scheduled over as many weeks, on a given weekday. Evenings seem to be preferred. The second option is two full-day workshops scheduled for a Friday and Saturday, or over two successive Saturdays. Depending on the nature of the group and its present concerns, issues, or problems, we find that 14 to 18 hours are needed to enable the group to adequately experience the model, learn the skills and processes and be able to put them to work on their own.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The ideas of experiential learning are familiar. It's learning by doing, assisted by another: an old idea. In fact, most of us learn this way. But few of us have ever been taught this way, unless it is at home, or on a job. The experiential learning process is the core idea of our leadership development strategy. Our method is to focus on a current "real" problem (one selected by the group). We take aspects of that problem situation and use them in exercises designed to enable participants to experience leadership skills and processes. Then we discuss their experiences intensively so they extract the meaning. It is a process community groups take to quickly. It is one they understand, like, and master rapidly. They say it enables them to become more effective, more productive. But, they also say it is hard work. We find experiential learning lasts because it is authentically internalized, made one's own in order to realize a personal interest or objective.

We approach experiential learning with three kinds of resources: 1) the trainer-facilitator; 2) a handbook of structured exercises that are "problem focused;" and 3) the specifications of the four major leadership processes: (communication, consensus, problem solving or decision making and planning and evaluating).

THE TRAINER-FACILITATOR

Our concept of the trainer-facilitator is that he or she is a "people person": someone who knows how to communicate empathically and effectively with members of a trainee group about their use of skills in their own organization and community situation. The trainer-facilitator guides learners in examining their own and others' resources (of experience, wisdom, expectation, skill) to deal with their immediate team problems. Each trainee, then, becomes a discoverer of those resources.

The handbook of experiential exercises provides the "track" the trainer uses to guide trainees through their discoveries, using the four major processes of communication, consensus, decision-making, and planning. The exercises are structured, real-life situations in which trainees play a part. They do not play an imagined role; they are themselves, performing a task, such as expressing a personal viewpoint effectively and making sure others understand the viewpoint. The role of the facilitator is to present the exercise, its goal, the skills and the process to be activated. Then he or she induces intensive discussion by participants of their thoughts and feelings about their experiences in the exercise. The idea of such "processing" is to facilitate the learner's personal discovery of the cause-effect connection between personal use of skills and their impact on group movement; between personal use of skills and effectiveness of one's involvement in group movement.

THE TRAINING HANDBOOK

The handbook of exercises provides exploration of the major leadership skill sets and processes together with a series of about ten experiential exercises. The exercise design is such that the core structure (a specific goal, a process, a real-life or natural experience setting, and the

discussion) is held constant in all exercises. However, each exercise has its unique content: a real-life situation or setting developed expressly for the particular trainee group. We like to custom design the exercise tasks with each group, using their environment, language, interests.

Problem solving skills and processes are given special attention. The trainer facilitates the group's selection of the problem it wishes to work on. Then, using the problem-solving exercise format, the group works to solve that problem. Sometimes this has proven difficult, but somehow all the groups to date have managed to do it. Exercise processes and contents and participant experiences are intensively interrelated to show the impact of communication on consensus, the impact of consensus on problem solving, and so on. The purpose is to enable the group to see, experience and appreciate the cumulative effect of the skills and processes. Further, the purpose is to enable them to see that it is possible and desirable for them to control their work, their ability, and their effectiveness.

Presently, the handbooks we use are duplicated typewritten manuscripts in looseleaf binders. The approximately 50 pages include introductory material, exercises, worksheets and appendices. A lot may be said for using high-quality bound textbooks and audio-visuals instead. However, our intention is to orient the handbook to the particular interest, language, and environment of each group. This puts individuals and the group in the forefront of the experience they generate: this personally-relevant, situationally-oriented, informal approach gives people a true sense of controlling the system rather than being controlled by it.

SELECTION AND TRAINING OF TRAINERS

In recruiting trainers we rely on word of mouth, former participants' recommendations, and self-selection. We seek grassroots people who want to help others learn and grow, who have demonstrated a keen interest in the community, and who are willing to give 75 to 100 hours to this kind of endeavor. We find peers-training-peers eliminates dependence on the professional or expert and enables group members to take responsibility for their self-development. Approximately 20 hours are required to train trainers. First, they learn the model. Then, in simulated training sessions, they learn to present the model and "process" the trainees' experiences.

Our strategy is to equip and motivate the volunteer trainers to train two or three groups. We expect that at least two or three of the original trainers will be able to participate in training a new generation of trainers. In this manner, the entire system can be self-perpetuating.

Our first group of trainers was trained in January 1981. Thirteen people were in that group, ranging in age from 18 to 65, and representing all walks of community life. Since the training, nine have been active, working in groups of three as a training team and training, so far, six different community groups whose members altogether total some 80 persons. For personal reasons, four of those initially trained as trainers have not been able to be active. Therefore, our present group stands today at about 77% of its original strength.

Also, we have trained nine teenage leaders to be trainers of other leaders in the Volunteen program in Kalamazoo. The Volunteens are high school students who, during the summer, volunteer their services to help senior citizens, health agencies, libraries, and so on, through the co-sponsorship of the Voluntary Action Center and the American Red Cross. With astonishing speed and command, the nine Volunteen trainers acquired the ability to train others in the leadership processes. They recently trained about 30 Volunteen committee members who are guiding the diverse activities of over 800 Volunteens serving throughout the Kalamazoo county.

TRAINERS' SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The trainers we have worked with demonstrate that they understand the dynamics of the group processes generated through use of the several sets of leadership skills. Certainly they understand and incorporate or internalize the skills into their own behavior styles quite well. Further, they become comfortable in this relatively new territory because the handbook provides them with a reliable compass, a means for determining direction through the new territory. The more difficult task for them is mastery of the art of processing trainees' experiential material. But this art, we find, is acquired over time.

The trainers point out content to trainees briefly (they don't need to lecture) and they guide trainees through exercise and discussion of their experience. Trainers find they do not have to be "experts." They do not need to have all the answers.

We suggest that a training team consist of three members. The program suggests a natural division of labor: communication, management of meetings, and problem work, including the planning and evaluation section. We have found that as one trainer presents and processes the communication initially, that trainer can then concentrate on reviewing those skills and processes with trainees as they use them in problem work. Similarly the trainer dealing with consensus can concentrate on processing the phase-work of consensus throughout the problem work activity. Working as a team, the three trainers tend to reinforce, support, and provide added resources to on eanother. This synergy becomes quite powerful for them and for the group being trained.

RESULTS

First we worked with a citizen advisory committee to the Board of Education of a somewhat rural public school district. The committee had 14 members: students, parents, teachers, principals, non-parents. The task the committee accepted from the Board of Education was "give your recommendations for improving school-community relations." This task became the problem the group was to work on, and did, successfully, although neither quickly nor easily. During the training workshop they developed a position, a consensus, expressed in outline form. Following the workshop they worked in-depth on the project. They developed a rather lengthy written report of recommendations to the Board that took them about 10 months to research, negotiate and produce. It was difficult, emotional, value-laden work because deep personal interest, conflicts and frustrations underlay the relationships between parents, community members, students, teachers, administrators. When the members of the group came together initially in the training sessions they were seriously fragmented and polarized. There was fear, anger, dismay, and apathy. Indeed, the group contained a sub-group that was manifestly adversarial to the School Board and administration and faculty. Over the months, however, they fused, moving into a partnership relation with one another, the Board, administration and faculty.

Their substantive and productive recommendations are being implemented by the Board of Education. The group's action has led to a new sense of community confidence in the schools and vice versa. Today the members of the group say they have the capacity to solve nearly any problems they may be given. They believe they have skill in the processes. They are staying intact, at their own request and that of the board. Those student members who graduated are being succeeded by other students. The two or three members who have had to resign because of other labors are still there in spirit, although others are being tapped to replace them.

Another group, a nine-member senior citizens advisory board to a city council, responded somewhat differently to the training. Their purpose in the workshops was to improve the productivity of their meetings. They had been operating quite well due to the strength of their common interest in getting a new Center facility and improving services for senior citizens in the community, and because of successive strong chairpersons. Their meeting procedure was according to Robert's Rules of Order. Our introduction of the consensus process was a surprise to them; and we suspect that out of a marvelous courtesy to us they went along with experiencing and learning the consensus process of decision making. They continue to use the consensus process, although they feel that parliamentary law and procedure is still needed to legitimate decisions on recommendations they give to the city council.

This group worked quite hard to improve their interpersonal communication, especially to get everyone to share their views. Using the problem-solving method of the model, they quite systematically dealt with a rather knotty problem they faced on the Senior Center fund management. They tightened up their agenda-development and agenda following-processes, and they are working more purposefully. This has resulted in stronger group spirit and caused the chair to loosen her reigns on the board, which in turn seems to be increasing members' sense of responsibility for what the group does.

A third group, a nine-member neighborhood center board of directors in Kalamazoo, elected to take the training in order to solve the problem of increasing neighborhood member involvement in neighborhood center activity. They were at a loss as to how to deal with apparent apathy and lack of meaningful programming. They felt they knew quite well how to work together, so they were looking for answers to questions of vitalizing the neighborhood.

The effect of the training program was to revitalize the board members themselves. They found through the training that their neighborhood work offers opportunity

rather than drudgery. They turned from being passive to being active players; from being aliens to being insiders. They found faith in the group processes of the model. Mastery of skills and processes, of course, is still to come. Finally, they felt themselves becoming neighborhood enablers rather than losers. Such is their evaluation of the "change" brought by the training experience.

A fourth group, some thirty leader-representatives of a statewide association of chapters of an organization of the blind, took the training to find ways to improve chapter meetings, especially involvement of members. The experience for most participants turned out to be a consciousness-raising one, heightening awareness of the value of strong active-listening and interpersonal communication, the utility of the consensus process and of systematic problem-solving or decision-making. And they say they are doing a better job in their groups back home as a result. These participants could convene for only seven hours for the entire program, so the learning was at the level of being informed more than experiencing. While this is not all bad, there is reason to doubt the efficacy of this particular group's experience as "training" or "learning" in any experiential sense.

The fifth group experience is that of a ten-member board of directors of a Center devoted to facilitating the independent living of handicapped persons. This board sought the training because they believed it would help them work together more cooperatively and productively. They felt that their efforts to function both internally and externally were being impeded because they were not a well-organized board.

Through the two-day workshop, they found their greatest need to be the practice of genuine interpersonal communication: truly hearing, understanding and appreciating one another's views, and on that basis building trust instead of doubt, fear and anger. Next, the participants found themselves relying on parliamentary procedures of a rudimentary kind to guide their decision-making work. Once the board members verbalized that they had to do a better job of communicating with one another, their individual responsibilities for thinking and feeling together became clearer.

After the training the group asked their President to resign. She had insisted on trying to carry the whole load, making others' decisions for them, and preventing the group from doing necessary work. We were told that the training experience, which focused attention on the responsibility of all the members of the group for the group's effectiveness, precipitated the "reorganization." Although some problems do remain, the group is now working more effectively, with a greater sense of trust and cooperation.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This case illustrates and validates our fundamental assumption concerning leadership in small groups, the kind with which this project is concerned. That is, team-directed action contains within itself the most powerful motivation known for accomplishing truly effective team work. At the core, team-directed action is shared or democratic leadership action.

This case also illustrates and validates our fundamental assumption concerning the utility of experiential learning as the optimum strategy for learning shared leadership skills. That is, when we learn by doing, facilitated by intensive discussion of what we see and feel happening as we use a skill to perform a task, we tend very quickly to authentically internalize our discoveries about our skills-handling and its impact on a given situation. Indeed, in the case we have just described, a remarkable connection was formed between the reality experience in the workshop exercise and the reality experience following the training: the "reorganization" the group effected. The group immediately and purposefully applied their newly-learned skills and processes when they got back home.

Now, looking toward a summary of this leadership training project experience, we note the following positive outcomes the training produces for groups: 1) greater awareness of skills and group processes that determine group effectiveness; 2) understanding of the impact the skills and processes have on individuals and groups; 3) sense of "control" by individuals and by the group over the events in which they are engaged; 4) improvement of group effectiveness and individual member effectiveness; 5) improvement of group productivity; 6) a positive influence by the group on the larger organizational environment or the community itself; 7) enlargement of the individual's and the group's operating ability toward handling more difficult and complex problems or issues; and, 9) greater recognition, satisfaction, and cohesion in working for the organization and the community.

Second, we ought to respond to the question, "what negative outcomes might there be in this program, if any?" There appear to be four conditions that offer problems. The first is the time required to train a group. Presently from fourteen to eighteen hours are needed depending on the skills of the trainers and the readiness of the trainees. Many board or committee members do not care to invest that much time. For this reason we are experimenting with workshops of varying time frames: five hours, seven hours, twelve hours, and so on. Eventually, we would like to find a solid seven-hour, one-day format with a follow-up consultation sometime later.

A second problem may lie in the custom-design approach of the model. We feel it is essential to put the training in the context of the group, to put their concerns in the exercises, so they work on their own content. We do not know whether agencies in other cities, using this model, would want to custom design for their clients. Custom designing is not difficult, but it does take some extra preparation. Hopefully this is a problem that can be managed relatively easily.

A third problem might lie in the availability of agency leadership to make the program successful in the community. Unless there is agency interest, commitment, and enthusiasm, programs of almost any kind can fall by the wayside. We have not found a way through this thicket, short of being interested, committed, and enthusiastic ourselves—in the hope that this is contagious.

Last, there is the problem of longevity of community groups' interest or market for the program. Most new

programs attract interest for a while, but once they seem familiar, people look for something new. Sometimes "repackaging" takes care of this. Yet really good programs somehow manage to survive in one form or another, usually until they are succeeded by better programs. So, in principle, board training of some sort is always likely to be in demand. Throughout our experience we have never had participation by a full board or committee; a majority, yes, but not all. Having all would be the ideal situation, but it is not likely to be achieved. If a solid core of the group is present, we think that is sufficient leaven for the whole. Some groups set up a second workshop for those who missed the first.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT FOR THE VAC

We do not find ourselves in a position of having to sell this program to groups in our community. They are coming to us for it. We get the feeling that groups everywhere are looking for ways to improve their effectiveness, their zip, their spirit. The VAC can meet this need. It is a relatively easy, straightforward training program that any VAC can provide, given agency interest in the idea and agency leadership to keep it moving.

Those who are responsible for agency operations may be interested to know what costs and structure are required to handle training for community organizations and groups. We organized an advisory committee to the VAC board, with representatives of the board and the community, to have overseeing responsibility for this program, including budget, management and operation. The committee is considering a 1982 projects budget that includes three categories of expense: management (a 1/3 time position); clerical (about 1/10 time); and general expenses, including training materials. We foresee instituting a modest individual incentive tuition to cover the cost of materials, and we envision a small organizational tuition (for agencies sending groups). Together, the tuitions would cover about 60 percent of the cost. The remaining 40% can be covered by a grant from one of our local supporting organizations. It is possible, therefore, to provide a significant program for enriching citizen participation in community life for almost no direct cost to the VAC.

Presently, we are designing a structure within our VAC to accommodate the training program we have described plus some other training services activity. Possibly a volunteer from the community could fill the job of training manager. It is something we are considering.

We think this leadership development program may have a place in the array of activities offered by many VAC organizations. We find it a practical, down-to-earth plan for training citizen boards and committees in the skills and processes of democratic group leadership to enable them to be more effective and productive. It works for the people who have experienced the training, and so it works for us. We hope you may want to look at it more closely to see whether it might work for people in your community and for you.

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The Role of Needs Assessment Research in the Planning and Development of Volunteer Programs

by Robert T. Sigler, Ph.D. and John McNutt

The needs assessment can be a valuable tool for the manager of a volunteer program. While the needs assessment is often perceived as a part of the program planning process, it can also aid the manager who seeks program development or revision of services provided by an existing program. The needs assessment focuses on the needs of a client group and enables the manager to identify unmet needs. New programs or program revision can be tailored to provide only those services needed by clients.

There is a tendency to assume that client needs are obvious. The volunteer program manager often uses conventional wisdom as a base for program planning and development. As a result, the program developed can be fragmented, inefficient, and fail to meet adequately the real needs of the client group.

The needs assessment does require the investment of time and other scarce resources. However, the advantage of decision-relevant information in the planning process outweighs the value of the resources invested. It is usually wiser to delay implementation of a volunteer program until the needs and available resources have been clearly identified.

Several writers have defined the needs assessment enterprise. Kaufman (1972) refers to the needs assessment process as a discrepancy analysis. The role of the needs assessment, then, is to gauge the difference between those situations that are and those that should be.

Warhiet, Bell, and Schwab's (1977) definition extends the function of a needs assessment. In dealing with community mental health programs, they define a needs assessment as "...a research and planning activity designed to determine a community's mental health service needs and utilization patterns." For these researchers, the needs assessment also looks at the existing resources in the community.

For our purposes, we will conceptualize the needs assessment endeavor as exploring both existing services and needs in a systematic manner to provide decision-relevant information for the planning development, management, and evaluation functions.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT TO PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Pharis (1976) states that "planning and evaluation are conceptually related processes in the management of

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THE RELATIONSHIP OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT TO PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Pharis (1976) states that "planning and evaluation are conceptually related processes in the management of complex organizations." Needs assessment, as the logical prerequisite to planning (or as part of the process itself), is therefore directly related to evaluation. Some models (Sumrall and Roberts, 1978, Hagedorn, 1977, Kaufman, 1972) consider both needs assessment and evaluation to be part of the planning process. Certainly, the generation of information about the current situation is important to the planner and, eventually, to the evaluator.

Planning is also a function of volunteer program management. The volunteer program manager can use needs assessment in planning, and in monitoring and controlling as well. A further planning consideration is locating resources. In this age of scarcity, fiscal resources are especially difficult to find. Both needs assessment and evaluation results can help the planner secure funding by enhancing the credibility of the volunteer program.

The functions of planning management, evaluation, and needs assessment are interrelated. It is this interrelation that makes the needs assessment essential to proper execution of other functions of the planning process.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOCUS

The needs assessment seeks to identify the availability of existing resources to meet the identified needs.

Naturally, the exact nature of the information needed will vary from volunteer program to volunteer program. As the nature of the decision to be made changes, so will the nature of the question to be answered.

A critical variable is the type of need. A finding that the target group needs tutoring and educational counseling will demand a different response than a finding that job counseling and vocational assistance are needed. The potential for such findings may be interpreted as a reason for not doing a needs assessment. A volunteer program with a one-to-one relationship thrust may feel threatened by a finding that legal counseling is a higher-priority need than one-to-one counseling. It should be remembered that, with limited exceptions, there are few needs that cannot be efficiently and effectively met by a volunteer program. A responsive program is almost always more sure to survive than a similar nonresponsive program.

Another important variable is the location of those in need. You may want to recruit volunteers from areas which are close to large concentrations of clients. You

may also want to locate stationary services, like your office, near client concentrations. You cannot take advantage of these location features <u>unless</u> you know where the clients are.

Another issue is the severity of the problem (Federico, 1980). Obviously, a simple headache is less severe than a brain tumor. In the realm of social problems, such a clear distinction is often difficult. Differentiating between severe and moderate depression is often possible only with the services of a trained psycho–diagnostician. However, a rough estimate of problem severity is usually possible. When needs vary in the amount of damage they cause and in the responsiveness to treatment, the needs must be prioritized. Volunteer programs then can apply resources to critical areas. In order to make proper decisions concerning resource utilization, we must know which client groups have the most severe problems and which of those problems should be considered first.

Incidence is also important. We must know how many people are affected. Organizing a major volunteer program for one or two individuals is usually not cost-effective. It is possible for a volunteer program to concentrate on a minor problem while leaving a major problem unattended. This misallocation of resources may reduce credibility and limit client satisfaction.

Federico (1980) notes that one issue is who defines the needs. Our perspective may differ greatly from the client's perspective and from the perspective of agency employees, concerned citizens, or political groups.

The existing services available in a community represent another significant set of issues. One might assume that because there is an agency designed to meet a need, the need will be met. This is not always the case. At times a program will not accept certain types of clients. There are also situations where no service is offered. These service "gaps" are deficiencies in a community's service delivery system which might be met with a volunteer program.

Sometimes a service is available, but not accessible to all or some of the client group. An agency on one side of town may be inaccessible to those clients who live on the other side of town and who do not have transportation. A program that is open from nine to five may not be available to employed clients. Physical barriers may make a program inaccessible to handicapped clients.

Duplication of services is another problem. This occurs when two agencies provide the same service to the same population, creating services that go unused. Considering the current economic situation, this problem may be even more serious than before. The needs assessment can prevent additional duplication or maximize use of existing duplicated services.

A needs assessment can also enhance continuity of care. Clients are often lost in the "cracks" between agencies and programs, or even within programs. Continuity of care refers to the continuous nature of treatment as experienced by a client. The lack of this quality has often been referred to as fragmentation. Strong linkages between agencies are needed to insure continuous treatment of clients and are possible when accurate

information is available. The volunteer program can be designed to provide continuity of service among existing agencies.

The planner must also consider the caseload of existing programs. If a service is available but overburdened, the agency providing the service will not accept new clients. Information must be gathered about the costs involved in expanding existing programs to meet the needs of the target client group.

Finally, some programs are underutilized because clients (and referring persons) are unaware of them. This can be due to lack of awareness of the entire program or a service it offers.

The needs assessment must examine the service delivery system in its entirety. The data developed should provide the researcher with an accurate view of the state of the delivery system. The volunteer program can then be tailored to provide the services the clients need.

The final output of this process is a statement of needs, ranked in order of priority. Naturally, priority denotes importance, and importance suggests a value judgement. In addition, a profile of existing services and their availability to the target clients is developed. From this the unmet needs of the clients (and thus the possible program services) are clearly identified. The volunteer program manager then can make informed decisions about volunteer program development.

METHODS USED IN CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Warhiet, Bell and Schwab (1977) propose a comprehensive strategy using five approaches:

1.   The Survey Approach
2.   The Rates–under–Treatment Approach
3.   The Key Informant Approach
4.   The Social Indicators Approach
5.   The Community Forum Approach

This model advocates that these approaches be used in conjunction with each other.

Anyone who has filled out a census questionnaire is familiar with <u>the survey approach</u>. The survey approach solicits information from a selected portion of the target group called a sample. Both in terms of technical skills and cost factors, the survey approach is usually the most expensive component of the needs assessment. Surveys, however, usually enable the researcher to develop a broad information base. Some of the methods used in the survey approach are mailed questionnaires, in-person interviews and telephone interviews.

Pharis (1976), in discussing survey use in mental health programs, identified four types of information that can be obtained through survey research:

1. Opinions and judgement of community need.

2. Attitudes toward mental illness

3. Individual's statements about their own conditions

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that may reveal the need for a particular type of service or provide information about specific symptoms

4. Attitudes about the quality or accessibility of existing services

Information can be gathered from clients, agency employees, recognized experts, community service programs, and the community at large. The needs assessment should gather information from each group which is involved with the targeted client group. The same instrument can be designed for several different delivery formats. You might use a mailed questionnaire for social service agencies, a personal interview schedule for clients, and a telephone interview schedule for community subjects. The advantage of the approach is the comprehensiveness and accuracy of its information. As Warhiet and Schwab (1977) contend, "the survey is one of the most scientifically valid methods when properly used."

There are technical problems in conducting a survey. It is often difficult to construct a valid instrument. Aside from the technical problems, cost is also a factor. Many organizations planning a survey would do well to consider outside technical assistance.

The rates-under-treatment approach looks at the clientele of other agencies currently providing services to the target group. The basic belief is that these persons will represent the types of clients which the agency is likely to see in the future. A criminal justice program could pull probation records or survey the characteristics of prison inmates to obtain information about the number and types of clients these agencies are likely to see.

Warhiet, et al. (1977) see this approach as being useful in terms of cost and access. they note, however, that the technique does not guarantee a representative sample, so external validity could be a problem. Pharis (1976) raises the issue of comparing data between programs. Each agency will deal with a different population even if the same class of offenders are served. The data gathered from a particular agency should be used only to make decisions about the volunteer program which provides service to clients of the studied agency.

The key informant approach looks at the problem area through the eyes of people who are in a position to know something about it. For instance, a sheriff, judge, and probation officer probably know more about crime in their communities than the average citizen.

In applying the key informant method, you determine what types of information you will need. You then select a number of persons who are knowledgeable about the area in question and send each a questionnaire. Another method is to develop an unstructured interview schedule and interview the informants. The data is then assembled and analyzed. While this method is quick and inexpensive, it does have some drawbacks. Warhiet, et al. (1977) feel that the "purposive" nature of the sample can be biased. Pharis (1976) sees the possibility of influence on the data of any vested interests of the informants. In spite of these problems, the strategy does have value.

Social indicators are indirect measures of social phenomena. For instance, crime rates, birth rates, and census data are familiar sources of social indicator data to most people. We know that crime rates do not represent all crime committed in a given area. Crimes that go undetected or that are not reported to the police often are not counted. We do assume, however, that if crime rates go up, actual crime is also on the increase.

While Warhiet, et al. (1977) point out that a low-cost flexible research design is possible with the social indicator method, more explanation is necessary than is possible here. The reader is referred to Warhiet, et al. (1977), Garn, et al. (1976) and Blum (1974) for more detailed treatment. It should also be pointed out that municipal planning departments often have sophisticated collections of social indicator statistics. A trip to such an office may prove fruitful in raw data and technical assistance.

The community forum approach is, in essence, a public hearing or community hearing. Interested parties come together to meet and discuss the problem or need. While this method does not in any way provide a representative sample group, it can draw out those with a burning interest in the issue. Breadth of information can be developed and depth of community feeling can be assessed with this approach. Meeting sites should be as accessible as possible. While data collection is difficult, it is not impossible. A good method has been developed by Warhiet, et al. (1977) using a structured questionnaire. Recording of comments is also possible.

There are some problems with this approach. Warhiet, et al. point out that negative reactions, enhanced expectations and issues concerned with the usefulness of data limit the usefulness of this approach. In addition, the information developed is not necessarily representative of beliefs and conditions in the community.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN IMPLEMENTING
A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

There are problems in conducting needs assessments to be considered by the volunteer program manager. While not intended to be exhaustive, the following list considers some of the more salient problems:

1. Political Problems. Several writers (Warhiet, et al., 1977; Sigler, 1974; Weiss, 1972; and Gates, 1980) have pointed to the political environment associated with action programs and their research efforts. Resistance may come in many ways. Access to clients may not be allowed in situations where the information is perceived as potentially damaging to the service provider. Another problem is illegitimization of the research effort. This may include questioning of the motives, competence or biases of the researchers. Where a group fears the effect of the potential information, it may respond by attacking the source of anxiety (the researcher) or by passive non-cooperation.

2. Technological Problems. The methodology of social research is not without flaw. Valid questions concerning techniques, approaches, tools and design of social research can be raised. Some concepts, such as social justice or personality change are potentially difficult to measure. While the technology of research is

improving daily, there are many things we still cannot do effectively with available resources.

3. Value or Moral Problems. If the subject (or method) of a needs assessment is considered immoral or improper, resistance may occur. Programs may create an entire class of resistant people, who were previously unaware, by conducting a needs assessment. If there is high likelihood of this happening, a non-reactive measure should be considered.

4. Problems of Resources. Resources of time and money are finite and more of either (or both) may be needed than you expect. Always leave a safety margin.

ANTICIPATED COSTS

Cost will depend on many factors. Your largest cost, if you cannot recruit enough volunteers, is personnel. Your personnel budget must include the cost of fringe benefits. If you lack the expertise to do the technical work, you may need to hire a consultant.

Printing and production costs also will be a factor. Generally, mimeographing is less expensive than Xerox or offset. If you use mailed questionnaires, you will need money for postage. Remember that you will need return postage for each questionnaire.

In the event you need to use data processing equipment to tabulate and analyze results, you should allocate money for computer time and key punching costs. You will also need to provide for secretarial services and typing.

Other expenses are office space, office equipment (typewriters, mimeo, etc.), office supplies, mileage and travel funds, and telephone costs (local and long distance). Naturally, many organizations will have all these items "in house." The total cost figure therefore will depend on the resources already available in your organization which can be applied to the needs assessment task.

SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE

Most volunteer programs lack the resources to develop, conduct, and properly analyze data developed in the needs assessment. While private businesses exist which provide these services, many programs lack the funds to purchase these services. There are paid consultants who will assist an agency or volunteer program in conducting a needs assessment. Paid consultants can be an economical alternative if the volunteer program exercises care in the type of assistance requested.

Most communities have access to institutions of higher education. Members of the faculty and doctoral or masters students can provide valuable assistance in exchange for access to the data developed. Faculty members will want to prepare articles for professional journals while students will seek thesis or dissertation data. This exchange will enrich the academic program and the volunteer program planning process.

Volunteers also can assist in the needs assessment process. Sophisticated technical skills are needed for design development and data analysis. However, the most time-consuming part of the needs assessment process is the gathering and coding of data. Volunteers can be trained to gather and code the data after effective instruments have been developed.

SUMMARY

We have covered a number of issues and approaches related to the needs assessment enterprise. Needs assessment techniques are highly useful and valuable in volunteer program development and planning. We hope the information contained here will whet your appetite for continued learning and practice.

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It Can Work: A Volunteer Services Advisory Committee

by Sharon Warner

Communication is always of major importance in dealing with any management function. With this in mind, the American Hospital Association suggests that Volunteer Services Departments establish a Volunteer Services Advisory Committee as a vehicle for problem solving and communication. In The Volunteer Services Department in a Health Care Institution, the AHA suggests:

Establishment of such a group for the volunteer services department can have many positive effects on the quality as well as the quantity of volunteer services in a health care institution.

As both a planning and evaluative body, the advisory committee is of particular value during the embryonic stage of developing a new department and in the reorganization of a department.

Grandview Hospital in Dayton, Ohio, a 452-bed osteopathic hospital with a separate ambulatory care center, has a professional volunteer structure thanks to a Volunteer Services Advisory Committee developed two years ago. The Committee provides consultation and guidance to the Department of Volunteer Services in order to achieve the most effective use of volunteers in services to patients, visitors, and staff of Grandview Hospital. This includes exploring new areas of service for volunteers, evaluating services currently provided by volunteers, strengthening the relationship between Volunteer Services and other hospital departments, and developing policies and procedures for the department.

MEMBERSHIP

The Volunteer Services Advisory Committee consists of ten to eleven members. The Committee is well-rounded, with participants having a direct relationship with and concern for the volunteer program. Members were selected and contacted personally by the Volunteer Services Director. The need for their personal participation as Committee members was explained, as well as how their department function impacted on Volunteer Services.

The criteria for selection of participants were those factors having a direct bearing on the volunteer program: (1) the cost-saving features of the volunteer program; (2) the exposure of volunteers to the largest group of professional hospital people (medical and nursing personnel); (3) the public relations image of the volunteer in the hospital and community (4) the need for awareness of

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volunteers at the upper management level; (5) the expansion of communications between major volunteer groups within the hospital; and (6) the concerns of the volunteers themselves.

With these factors in mind, the following personnel were chosen to represent the hospital on the committee: the Vice President of Finance; the Assistant Vice President of Nursing Services; the Executive Director of the Dayton District Academy of Osteopathic Medicine; the Director of Public Relations; the Assistant Vice President of Hospital Services; and the Director of Volunteer Services. Note that the department of Volunteer Services reports to the Assistant Vice President of Hospital Services.

The expansion of communications between major volunteer groups meant involving the Grandview Hospital Guild and the Auxiliary to the Dayton District Academy of Osteopathic Medicine. These two groups are fund raisers and also are dedicated to the hospital and its principles. They report directly to the President of the hospital. The Grandview Hospital Guild consists of dedicated men and women who construct Raggedy Ann/Andy dolls and sell baby pictures as fund raising activities. The Auxiliary consists of physicians' wives who operate the Gift Shop at the main hospital as well as the John Belville House Gift Gallery at the Ambulatory Care Center located south of Dayton. Proceeds from these two large gift shops are returned to the hospital for decorating and special projects. Both groups deserved to be represented on the Committee since they are instrumental in meeting some of the hospital's funding needs.

Other volunteers chosen to be Committee participants were those who dealt with visitors, patients and employees. These volunteers, one of whom had been a patient numerous times, provided the committee with different viewpoints. One volunteer selected was a Surgical Host (dealt with visitors who had friends and/or relatives having surgery), one was the "mail" volunteer (dealt with patients), and another volunteer did office work (dealt with employees). The office volunteer took minutes at meetings.

Later a second volunteer program was developed at our Ambulatory Care Center and a representative from the Ambulatory Care Center's personnel staff was asked to participate on the Committee.

The emphasis on the entire group of participants was a representation of all major areas having impact on the Volunteer Services Department. This proved to be one of the most valuable building blocks for the Committee.

ACTIVITIES

The Volunteer Services Advisory Committee met

once monthly for one hour and later once quarterly. The Assistant Vice President of Hospital Services said of the Committee: "The Volunteer Services Advisory Committee has served as a valuable forum in bringing together volunteers, the department served by volunteers, and Administration. Using this interdisciplinary approach has assisted the department in setting goals and direction within the framework of the philosophy of the Volunteer Services Department. The Committee is a valuable resource for problem solving and enhances the role of the volunteer in the hospital.

Issues discussed during the past two years of the Committee's existence included: the purpose and structure of the committee; philosophy and guidelines for the Volunteer Services Department; evaluation of assignments presently in existence (with some being eliminated); relationships between the hospital and volunteer groups within and outside the hospital; development of criteria for designing and evaluating new volunteer assignments; definitions of the techniques and strategies to be used for recruitment; and reasons for volunteer turnover.

The Committee's most valuable project was establishing guidelines for the Volunteer Services Department, detailing the philosophy of the Department as it relates to the hospital's personnel, patients, and volunters (also taking into consideration the legal aspects of all concerned). Nine months of intensive work went into these guidelines.

The first task was interpretation of the American Hospital Association's philosophy of a Volunteer Services Department:

> ...to assist the institution in the delivery of comprehensive health care to the community by obtaining and retaining an adequate number of competent and satisfied volunteers to augment the services of the institution.

This philosophy was interpreted from the standpoint of legal issues, employment rights, patients' rights, and the important role of the hospital in the community. These interpretations were arrived at by analyzing the twelve Grandview Hospital volunteer assignments being performed; by defining "volunteer" as stated by the American Red Cross, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Voluntary Action Center and the American Hospital Association; and by reviewing results of an in-house survey on volunteers taken six months previously. The research involved personal contacts with these outside organizatons, researching professional volunteer journals, reports and policies, and designing transparencies which would project these points in a clear, concise manner for discussion. Discussion then centered around finding a happy medium between patients' rights, professional medical assistance, and the volunteer's helping attitude.

The result was an interpretation of the American Hospital Association guidelines to mean: (1) obtaining and retaining an adequate number of volunteers who would adhere to the hospital's rules and regulations (quality over quantity concept); and (2) meeting the needs of the community with regard to establishing volunteer assignments for the handicapped, career seekers, the homebound, students and senior citizens.

These guidelines also incorporated the rights of volunteers by assuring them of a good experience. This was defined as providing responsible work whereby results can be seen and usefulness felt, creative learning experiences, respect as hospital contributors, and establishment of policies and procedures for safety, infection control, accident prevention, etc. With regard to legality, we incorporated adherence to local, state, and federal laws, and the recruitment and placement of volunteers in accordance with the hospital's equal opportunity, affirmative action and labor relations policies.

In concern for the rights of patients, volunteers were not to be regularly assigned to perform services indispensable to the operation of the institution. Employees' rights were considered by not assigning a volunteer to permanently perform major assignments alongside an employee working in a comparable position.

These guidelines alone justified the work of the Committee and its continued existence. The Advisory Committee's representative from the Auxiliary stated: "From my perspective, these meetings have given us all the necessity for sorting out priorities. It is necessary to deal with reality when you have a limited number of volunteers. We have gotten to know each other and have a greater sense of cooperation and respect."

Pre-meeting arrangements were carefully handled in detail. Most importantly, the motivation of the participants was maintained by proper utilization of their time, organization of the meetings, and an atmosphere of professionalism. All this contributed to the success of the Committee. Allowing for socialization during the meeting and knowing in which direction the Committee would be heading on an issue were also of prime importance.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the Grandview Hospital experience with a Volunteer Services Advisory Committee, certain spin-offs may be anticipated by others attempting this route. These include: credibility of the Director of Volunteers as a professional manager and of the Volunteer Services Department as a whole; recognition of volunteers and the Volunteer Services Department by all concerned; improvement of communication among hospital departments; alleviation of major volunteer-related problems; and responsibility being shared. These are the major justifications for establishing an Advisory Committee.

The impact on day-to-day managing included giving the Volunteer Services Director a stronger rapport with "important people" influencing the department, after only six months of being in that position. Recognition as a professional manager, awareness of where the communication problems existed, and guidelines to be used as a working tool were also of importance in the day-to-day managing of the volunteer program.

Since all volunteers were advised of the Committee's existence and progress, a feeling of "concern for them" increased and resulted in an improved feeling of closeness and cooperation. We were now working as a team!
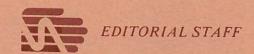
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