At The Heart

The New Volunteer Challenge To Community Agencies

by
Nora Silver

Preface by **Marlene Wilson**

F Cerone Pitts

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To my grandparents,
>who through their ceaseless efforts taught me what it meant to help others and to work for social good,

To my parents,
>who showed me how and taught me never to give up,

To my children, Jed and Mara,
>who through their strong sense of "fair" and "right" in the world, constantly remind me why.

And to a volunteer that I have not met —
>a city attorney, who on his lunch hour, after work, and even on his birthday, visits with people who are dying. Because, after all, he will have another birthday, and they may not.

It is through his work, and that of others like him, that I remain inspired by, committed to, and proud of us all.

Nora Silver

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To the eight agencies with whom we worked — for their ability to plan and to dream, and to try something new. It is agencies like these — which provide countless, crucial services day in and day out yet take the time to sit back and examine their practices and risk change — that will open the door to the future.

And — saving the best for last — to the hundreds of staff and volunteers and clients who put themselves

"on the line" every day and who still took the time to share with us their experiences, their knowledge, their perspectives, their doubts. (Yes, to you, Janet, a Director of Volunteers: you feel that you are floundering and yet produce some of the most competent work I've seen.) It was truly your inspiration that fed the work and me and that kept this project vital and meaningful.

To you, the people in the agencies, I would like to leave one last thought. When I was working within nonprofit agencies, whether as staff or volunteer, I was always, as you are probably now, painfully aware of how much we had yet to do and how little time and resources we had with which to do it. I found no time to reflect on our accomplishments or on the process. Later, as a consultant to nonprofit agencies and in the PAVE project, I was constantly reminded how much we *do* and with how much competence, belief, enthusiasm, and sometimes, pure grit. Please — remember to take the time to applaud your fine work, and accept this book as an offer of appreciation to you.

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Preface

An established company which in an age demanding innovation is not capable of innovation is doomed to decline and extinction. And a management which in such a period does not know how to manage innovation is incompetent and unequal to its task. Managing innovation will increasingly become a challenge to management, and especially to top management, and a touchstone of its competence.

Peter Drucker,
Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices

We are living in a time of enormous change which is impacting all aspects of our lives — at home, at work, in our communities, and in the world at large. These changes have also affected the very heart and soul of nonprofit agencies...the volunteers. Who is volunteering, why, and how are dramatically different today than they were even a decade ago. And yet far too many voluntary agencies and organizations are still looking at the volunteer as the problem instead of examining their own systems, attitudes, and processes. These often need to be creatively revamped in order to be appropriate to today's changed realities. It is important that we recognize that Drucker's warning is as appropriate for nonprofits as it is for corporations.

The first step in creative problem-solving is to clearly understand and articulate the problem and that is what this book does so well. The research on which it is based provides some clear, concise, and tremendously helpful information concerning the growing discrepancies between today's new volunteers (employed people) and

outdated agency volunteer program management systems. As nonprofits have sat by bemoaning their problems and waiting for "things to get back to normal," the gap between rapidly growing needs and dwindling resources has escalated. On the other hand, the author found that those agencies which were offering volunteer programs that were "highly organized in a flexible manner" were thriving.

The eight issues identified and discussed in this book provide a new and extremely helpful addition to the existing literature in the field of volunteer administration. They provide a sound basis for understanding not only why change is essential in many volunteer programs, but also what kind of specific change is indicated. The research has been presented in a practical, readable, and engaging style. As a result, it is not just interesting, but can be very helpful in bringing our field into the 21st century.

It has been aptly observed that no one likes change but a wet baby. It is understandable that organizations as well as people resist change. The key is not to try to fix what is still working well, but if it isn't working, to have the courage to do something about it. The challenge would seem to be somehow to strike a balance:

• between the need for change and stability
• between efficiency and effectiveness
• between people and programs
• between the past and the future.

The future of voluntarism may well rest on how well nonprofit organizations respond to these issues relating to today's new volunteers. One of the truisms we have long acknowledged is that "There is no PR better than a satisfied volunteer and none worse than a dissatisfied one." So the challenge is clear...the ball is now in the court of the nonprofit agencies.

As Rollo May stated in his book Courage To Create:

We are living at a time when one age is dying and the new age is not yet born....We are called upon to do something new, to confront a no-man's land, to push into a forest where there are no well-worn paths...to leap into the unknown.

This book gives us some tools to begin to forge some new paths in volunteer management.

Marlene Wilson
Boulder, Colorado

Section I
Background

Chapter 1 Introduction

The Problem

The future of community organizations, and the independent sector as a whole, depends on the future of our volunteers. Right now that future is at risk. It is not for want of volunteers. It is not for want of good organizations providing good services. It is for want of the capacity of these good organizations to utilize people well.

The people volunteering have changed over the past ten to fifteen years. Economics and politics, the women's movement, and the search for meaningful participation in our communities have sent women out to work and have brought new and newly-working volunteers into community service. The percentage of traditional volunteers — non-working women — has decreased, and the new volunteers are men and women, 56% of whom are working people (Independent Sector, 1986).

Volunteer centers across the country and the community agencies they serve are reporting difficulties in recruiting, maintaining, and utilizing this new group of volunteers. Volunteer centers, in particular, have felt the effect of the gap between the large pool of potential volunteers and the organizations' difficulties in finding and keeping them. We know only too well the frustration of referring a volunteer to an appropriate agency, only to discover three weeks or three months later that "something didn't work out" and the volunteer is no longer with the agency. We have seen some organizations misuse volunteers. We have seen generally good voluntary agencies struggle to adapt to the pool of new volunteers. We have wrung our hands, blamed the economy, cursed agency personnel, trained agency staff,

provided consultation to directors of volunteers — and we are still running headlong into the same problem. How do we assist our agencies to incorporate these new working volunteers? How do we help them in this transition? How do we understand one agency's success and another agency's failure? How do we pinpoint the factors that impact those outcomes, and what can we do about them?

The Organizational Approach

This book offers a new perspective to meet a new challenge — the challenge for community agencies to utilize the "new" working volunteer. This book is new and different because it looks at volunteers and volunteer programs from an organizational perspective. It offers a larger, "systems" approach to the problem, looking at the changing volunteer environment and the adaptations that organizations are employing to meet this challenge. This approach concentrates on the fit between the agency and the environment, the volunteer program and the agency, and the volunteers and the volunteer program.

Community organizations are groups of people that provide services to people. People are the common organizational denominator. Volunteers are people central to community organizations. Volunteers are part of the history and the structure of community agencies. Volunteers thread through agency issues and often reflect key organizational themes. Because volunteers are an integral part of organizations, they sometimes become the people with whom organizational issues and conflicts are played out.

We are suggesting that volunteer programs and volunteers often symbolize the heart of the agency mission and organizational dynamics, and the heart of organizational issues. It follows, then, not only that a comprehensive understanding of the system of the organization will clarify the reality of the volunteer component; an understanding of the volunteer component will likewise reveal the workings of the total organization.

The Research: P.A.V.E.

This book is based on a 20-month research study called the P.A.V.E. Project: Promoting Agency/Volunteer Effectiveness. The project grew out of the concern we all share about the gap between the available, new, working volunteers and the nonprofit organizations' struggle to incorporate them. We began with the real need of nonprofit organizations and we used eight diverse agencies with volunteer programs to conduct the study. The research, therefore, was rooted in the realities of current agency challenges and actual organizational life.

Yet life — and organizational work — is full of surprises. We began the PAVE Project looking for the factors in each agency that constituted aids and barriers to that organization's utilization of working volunteers. We hoped to discover some specific guidelines and accommodations that might help fill the gap between the available working volunteers and the actual usage of volunteers in nonprofit organizations. Our preconceptions were few, and not setting out to confirm or disconfirm any hypothesis, we asked probing questions. Exploratory research such as this often generates interesting ideas. The PAVE Project brought forth both larger questions and more inclusive answers than we had anticipated.

We studied each of the eight agencies, both as an organization and as a volunteer program. We pulled on each thread of the organization and examined it. Then we looked at how the threads fit together, until we obtained a full picture of the weave of the organizational fabric. It was in the context of the full piece of cloth that we felt we could find some understanding of the volunteer program and the inherent aids and barriers to its full utilization of working volunteers. We looked at the organization's purpose, its history, its structure, its leadership, its reward system, its technology, its organizational culture. We studied the volunteer program purpose, history, structure, leadership, reward system, technology, demographics, and organizational culture.

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Each agency was unique. Each agency had emerged from a complex interaction between the environment in which it grew and worked, its internal people, and the organization it developed to adapt to the environment. Through an in-depth analysis of these external and internal factors, we strove to make sense of the organization that had emerged and the volunteer component that had grown within it.

In terms of the specific problem we were examining — the changing environment of the volunteer pool and the adaptation of the nonprofit organizations — we discovered that each organization had developed a strategy — however productive or self-defeating — to respond to the environmental change in volunteers. This strategy appears to be based on the particular organizational pattern of each agency — its historical and environmental factors, its prior experience, its interpretation of the problem, its characteristic problem-solving techniques, the personalities, skills, and styles of its organizational members, its own unique organizational culture.

Yet despite the differences among agencies, by the time we began analysis with our fourth and fifth agencies, we started to notice some common patterns. Ultimately we emerged with eight major issues that help to explain the difficulties that agencies have encountered so far in incorporating working volunteers. These issues became the findings of the research and the basis for recommended strategies to address the problem.

The Findings

The Eight Organizational Issues

Change	Professionalization
Boundaries	Developmental Stage
Community	Agency Work and
Diversity	Organizational Culture
Gender	

We have come to believe that through the analysis and work with these issues, an organization will be able to understand and adapt to the changing volunteer environment. And since the future of nonprofit organizations may well rest with their ability to attract and utilize volunteers well, these issues may impact the very survival of nonprofit organizations in a changing and challenging environment.

The Aim of This Book

This book is written for people and organizations dependent on volunteer effort, and for volunteer centers committed to helping these agencies. Its aims are: to help you to assess the organizational aids and barriers to the effective utilization of working volunteers in nonprofit organizations; to help volunteer centers to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the organizations with which they work; to help the organizations maximize their strengths and modify their weaknesses. This book is written for all nonprofit professionals — volunteers and staff, volunteer center personnel, nonprofit organization executive directors and directors of volunteers, organizational consultants to nonprofit agencies — who seek to improve their utilization of volunteers, particularly the "new" working volunteers of today and tomorrow.

This book may provide you with a fresh look at the problem: a new organizational perspective, tools for assessment of the problem, and suggested strategies for solutions. This book is by no means the final answer, but it offers a new perspective and holds the promise of looking at key organizational factors that up until now have eluded us and caught us unaware from behind.

This is a "hands-on" approach, based soundly on almost two years of organizational research, organizational theory, and actual work experiences of the consultant and the volunteers and staff interviewed. This book may provide you with a system for understanding the problem and may give you the tools with which to work to improve it. It is not a simply "do this and that

will happen" approach. It will not tell you where to recruit volunteers or how to write an appropriate job description. You may find excellent information on these topics in books such as The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs by Marlene Wilson.

This book will give you "the larger picture" that has recently emerged — of the gap between volunteers and voluntary agencies, a context in which to understand the problem and the conflicts, and some clues to help you make important decisions about how to address a solution. It may challenge your thinking and upset your preconceptions. But it may also make sense to you.

This material has been presented in preliminary form at regional, state, and national volunteer conferences. The findings have been shared with volunteers, directors of volunteers, staffs, executive directors, and experts in the field, many of whom have added their perspectives, insights, suggestions to the work. The response from participants in workshops and conferences in which this material has been presented has been consistent: the findings fit with your work experiences and your observations. Some of the information "feels" familiar to you — yet somehow new and different. It provides you with the words, the concepts, and the framework with which to begin to discuss the answer with others in the field, and to impact where it counts — on the front line, in the agencies that strive to provide community services with volunteers.

The issues may challenge your creativity, your inventiveness, and your practical problem-solving skills. "What," you say, "more work for me to do?!" I am convinced that our choice now is to either ignore the problem and allow it to impede us every step of the way, or to "take it on" and solve it. The choice is yours. But I would like to invite you to join an ever-increasing number of people in the volunteer field deeply committed to keeping our volunteer spirit and potential for change alive. You are not alone. Help us use ourselves and each other well. The quality of life in our communities may depend upon it.

The Format of the Book

This book is organized to lead an agency, or to help a volunteer center assist an agency, to assess its volunteer program. The book will help you to evaluate organizational functioning on the eight issues found to be key to the effective utilization of working volunteers and to develop strategies that will help modify these organizational factors to work *for* the agency in adapting to the full and creative utilization of volunteers.

Section I defines the problem of the gap between the "new" volunteers and the community agencies. This section explores the historical emergence of the problem and the current need for organizational adaptation to the changing environment of volunteers. This section explains the PAVE Project so that the reader may understand the goals and design of the research and the context from which the findings emerged.

Section II introduces the organizational context for understanding volunteer programs in community agencies. Each of the eight key organizational/volunteer issues is explored in a separate chapter. Each chapter is divided into three parts: (1) an explanation of the issue, (2) the issue as it affects the organization and the volunteer program and volunteers, and (3) adaptive strategies to increase the effective utilization of working volunteers. Section II concludes with a summary chapter on the centrality of volunteer issues and a chapter on the structural and leadership issues that impact the usage of volunteers.

Section III presents the step-by-step process by which a consultant can assess a volunteer program in a community agency. This section describes how to enter an organization, contract with the agency, gather the information, present the findings, and assist the agency to decide upon, plan for, implement, and evaluate a plan of action. Section III closes with a chapter on the surprises and pitfalls you can anticipate in the process and

how to address them.

The Appendix includes forms and tools to be used in the assessment process. A list of references is supplied for your information and future use.

Chapter 2 Statement of the Problem

Volunteers have always been the lifeblood of community-based organizations in this country. The history of the United States is a history of volunteers recognizing community needs, organizing to meet those needs, and effecting social change (Ellis & Noyes, 1978). From early barn-raisings and childbirths, neighbors banded together in "the new world" to help one another accomplish tasks necessary for survival that one could not achieve alone. Towns grew and consolidated. Shared community concerns called forth the organization of citizens into groups and associations to address emerging needs — for transportation, shelter, communication, health and safety, education, labor, recreation, law enforcement, social welfare. Local groups added an organizational context to the previous neighbor-helping-neighbor model.

As the country continued to expand, new challenges brought forth new levels of voluntary effort. Population increases, including immigration, introduced new community needs and challenged the resources of newly-forming organizations. The advent of industrialization not only exacerbated declining urban conditions but also created new work and social structures and new groups of people in need. Immigrants from other countries and migrants from rural communities swelled the ranks of urban areas, and disenfranchised people crowded streets and overwhelmed new institutions. Agricultural communities, too, felt the impact of a changing way of life.

Thousands of community agencies sprang up to meet increasing needs. The government formally recognized their adjunct contribution to governmental services by

granting tax-exempt status to nonprofit organizations in 1894 (Manser & Cass, 1974, p. 40).

The emergence of larger problems that crossed community lines stimulated the formation of regional and national organizations. By the early 1900s, labor organizations, agricultural associations, public health committees, educational associations, governmental bodies, and court systems had been established, spanning geographical regions (Ellis & Noyes, 1978, chap. 6-7).

Throughout the 1900s, the number of community agencies multiplied, and together they grew to form a new "third" or "independent" sector. By 1984, the independent sector constituted 5% of the national economy and employed 9.5% of the nation's paid work force (Independent Sector, 1986, p. 25).

Today there are 821,000 tax-exempt and church nonprofit organizations (Independent Sector, 1986, p. 20) and an estimated six to seven million community organizations (Manser & Cass, 1974, p. 42). Nearly half the people fourteen years or older in this country volunteer. According to Americans Volunteer 1985, a poll conducted by Gallup for Independent Sector, 48% of the population volunteered an average of 3.5 hours a week. This volunteer force contributed a total of 16.1 billion hours of work a year, to total an estimated $110 billion contribution — an increase of 27% over 1980. The 1987 J.C. Penney survey also found that 48% of adults in this country volunteer.

Although volunteerism and the nonprofit sector appear to be healthy, vital, and productive, they are currently being challenged by significant changes in our communities and our world. Old community problems persist and new demands are added. Poverty, discrimination, and unemployment continue. Teen pregnancy, substance abuse, domestic and street violence, AIDS, nuclear safety, and environmental pollution surface and present a new set of challenges.

As a nation we are beginning to discover that we have not only limited frontiers, but limited natural resources and limited economic resources as well. We

are forced to make difficult choices. Politically we have opted for decreased funding for the nonprofit sector. Between 1982 and 1987, "federal spending in areas of interest to nonprofit organizations declined a cumulative total of $84.3 billion" (Salamon & Abramson, 1986). The proposed Congressional budget for FY 1988 set federal support for nonprofit organizations (excluding Medicare and Medicaid) at an inflation-adjusted value that fell 26% below that of 1980 (Salamon & Abramson, 1987).

The nonprofit sector tries to adapt by doing more with less: less funding, more need; more requirements for fiscal and program accountability, fewer resources with which to meet these requirements. And as organizations struggle to continue service levels and to meet new needs, they confront yet another challenge — that of human resources.

The people available to help with the work have changed. The number of traditional volunteers — women homemakers — is dwindling, and fewer are available to volunteer their 20 hour weeks or their regular Tuesday from 9:00-5:00. The world has changed for them, too, and over half of all women now work, either part-time or full-time (Women's Equality: A Community Responsibility, 1986, p. 4) From a combination of factors — including economic necessity, the increase of single-parent households, access to new fields, raised consciousness, demand for equality, and professional growth — women have emerged into the paid workforce.

Women have not, however, vanished from the volunteer workforce. Fifty-one percent of the women in this country currently volunteer on an average of 3.5 hours per week (Independent Sector, 1985). But as they have returned to work, the availability of their time and the focus of their interest have changed.

So, too, men have expanded the volunteer pool and in 1985, 45% of all men volunteered (Independent Sector, 1985). In 1984, for the first time, roughly equal numbers of men and women in Alameda County,

California, called local volunteer centers to volunteer their time in community organizations.

The volunteer pool, then, looks different in 1988 from the volunteer pool of ten years ago. There is a majority of working people and almost equal numbers of men and women. Adults of age sixty-five and over are a significantly larger percentage of the population, and we are just beginning to recognize their potential volunteer contribution. Teenagers are involved in community agencies and families are seeking to volunteer together. Corporate volunteering is encouraged and work groups call community agencies to offer their services.

WE HAVE MORE POTENTIAL AND ACTUAL VOLUNTEERS AVAILABLE THAN EVER BEFORE. So what is the problem? The problem is, how do we deal with them? And the answer, apparently, is *NOT WELL ENOUGH.*

By all reports, volunteer centers are continuing to receive requests from community citizens to volunteer and requests from community-based organizations to recruit volunteers. Volunteer centers, however, are reporting a mismatch between the two groups of requests. A local volunteer center in Alameda County, California tracked volunteer requests from nonprofit organizations during 1983-84 and noted that 65% of the agency requests were for skilled and unskilled clerical and maintenance jobs during weekday, daytime hours. Organizations appear to be still looking for the traditional volunteer of the past — a nonworking woman who can type and do office work and come into the organization one or more days a week during "regular work hours." Volunteers, on the other hand, are men and women who are working and are generally more available in the evenings and on weekends and may not be at all interested in typing and filing. New studies reveal an increasing commitment to short-term and occasional volunteering (J.C. Penney, 1987) and an increasing interest in fundraising, religious organizations, and social change efforts (Independent Sector, 1985). Volunteers are executives, secretaries, truck

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drivers, nurses, scientists, welders, and accountants who are often looking for some way "to help others," "to give back to the community" through meaningful participation in community action. They may require not only a new set of hours but a whole new set of expectations, recruitment methods, training, policies, procedures, supervision, evaluation, feedback, and recognition.

Agencies report having difficulty adjusting to these new volunteers (Statements of Need in PAVE applications) — not all agencies, but enough that volunteer centers note that one of the major issues in volunteerism today is the gap between agency requests and the new volunteer availability and interests (King, 1987).

Understanding the Gap

The last ten years have witnessed a tremendous growth in the field of volunteerism. Local volunteer centers have grown in numbers. Regional volunteer groups have formed. National and federal government volunteer organizations have originated and have merged. Mass advertising campaigns for volunteerism have been launched. Experts in the field of volunteerism have emerged. Books have been written and training programs in volunteer management have begun.

By now we know — or have access to information that tells us — that volunteer organization and management is essential to the effective usage of volunteer workers. We have come to expect detailed job descriptions, reimbursement for expenses, adequate training and supervision, appropriate appreciation and reward for our work, and responsible personnel practices and procedures.

Yet many agencies are still not employing these practices. Among those that are, some are not meeting with success in their volunteer components. So what have we missed?

THE ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECT. The nonprofit sector has grown and professionalized. Nonprofit

organizations have matured and systematized. Volunteers have diversified. But the three have not grown at exactly the same pace or in exactly the same way, so that organizations and the people who are sought to work in them may be "out of sync." And it will ultimately be up to the organizations not only to adjust to the changing community needs for their services, but also to respond to the changing personal and professional needs of their volunteers.

As a result of the PAVE study, we have become convinced that the solution lies in developing highly organized and flexible agency structures and organizational cultures that can meet the changing environmental demands of a new group of available volunteers. It is up to the organizations to design a structure, create a culture, and provide supportive leadership that are able to integrate the volunteers we so desperately need. Quite simply, we believe that those organizations that can accomplish this will survive, those that cannot are at risk. For volunteers, after all, are still the lifeblood of our community organizations.

Chapter 3 The PAVE Project

The Design

The original intent of the PAVE project was to study organizational aids and barriers to the effective utilization of employed volunteers in community organizations. The project was conceived by Betty Stallings, the Executive Director of the Valley Volunteer Center in Pleasanton, California, in response to her perception of the emerging gap between working volunteers and nonprofit organizations and her commitment to do something about it. The project became a joint effort among the Valley Volunteer Center, The Volunteer Centers of Alameda County, myself as an organizational consultant, and the San Francisco Foundation, which believed in and funded it. The premise was that by studying a small number of agencies in depth we might discover some clues about what makes some organizations more able to attract and keep working volunteers, and what organizational factors tend to mediate against success with working volunteers.

Working with a volunteer advisory group, we designed agency criteria for participation and invited applications from 650 nonprofit and public agencies in Alameda County, California. Alameda County had the benefit of containing urban, rural, and suburban communities. It encompassed two areas of new corporate business park development and promised an influx of potential working volunteers. From the 650 organizations notified about the project, 100 made further inquiry, 52 submitted formal applications, and 8 were chosen to participate. The basis of the selection was a combination of factors: agency need and complementarity of goals, organizational ability to participate, and diversity among agencies. The advisory group con-

structed a 14-category grid in order to choose agencies with different characteristics. Basically the assumption was that the greater the differences, the more we could discover, the more widely applicable the results would be, and the more significant any similarities we might find among agencies would be. The different variables on which we sought diversity among the agencies were:

- geographic location
- geographic area served
- principal service provided (education, health, arts, recreation, criminal justice, religion, crisis intervention)
- legal status of agency (private nonprofit, public)
- age of agency
- size of budget
- source of funds (private, government)
- client population served (age, ethnic, gender, special populations)
- traditional/non-traditional affiliation with other organizations
- volunteers: numbers and number of programs
- percentage of employed and unemployed volunteers
- Director of Volunteers: time on program per week
- nature of current volunteer program
- statement of need for project

A brief sketch of each agency reflects these differences:

BERKELEY SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL is a seasonal outdoor theatre group, 13 years old, serving the Bay Area on a mid-size budget. As a private non-profit arts and education program, BSF has a midsize Board, a volunteer usher group of 600 each season, a court-referred group of volunteers to build sets and sew costumes, and a new "Friends of the Bard" fundraising and relocation group. BSF faces a major relocation effort requiring community support.

DUBLIN HIGH SCHOOL is a 17-year-old public high school in a middle-class suburban community, using 24 parent volunteers in music and sports fundraisers and as tutors, with the principal serving as volunteer

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coordinator and wanting to diversify the volunteer program to improve communication between teens/school and community.

HOME FOR JEWISH PARENTS is a 36-year-old program with a large budget, serving two counties with a 115-bed residential and outreach program for seniors. It is affiliated with a regional organization; average client age is 89. Volunteer program is long-standing and is composed of 275 volunteers, mostly women and seniors. It requests PAVE to "help move the [volunteer] program from the 1950s into the 21st century."

KALEIDOSCOPE ACTIVITY CENTER is a recreational program for developmentally disabled children, 4 years in operation with a small budget. Volunteer usage has been minimal with poor results and restructuring is needed in the volunteer program and the agency.

SAFETY OUTREACH SERVICES is a University of California at Berkeley Police Department crime (sexual assault and domestic violence) prevention project with one paid staff member and 25 volunteers with high turnover. The program is two years old, government-funded on a small budget, and serving a 23% Asian population. A major program expansion is planned.

SALVATION ARMY BOOTH MEMORIAL CENTER is an inner-city, comprehensive program serving primarily black teens who are pregnant, with an inter-racial staff, operating on a large budget. Program is 60 years old with a recent major reorganization. Only volunteers are interns and BMC wants to "re-think" its volunteer program in light of program expansion and need for community-based Advisory Council.

SERRA RESIDENTIAL CENTER is a 10-year-old residential program for developmentally disabled adults, operating in a developing area with largely government funds, and affiliated with a national religious organization. Some "activity" volunteers accompany residents on trips, and a traditional Auxiliary operates a flea market. A total of 72 volunteers operate under the Activity Director giving 5-10% of her time for volunteer coordination. The Center cites a need to re-examine its volunteer program in light of fundraising needs and ex-

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pansion to transitional housing in the community.

VESPER SOCIETY HOSPICE is a private health care agency, one program of an international organization, operating a nonresidential hospice program with 38 mostly-employed volunteers supplementing staff services. Regular program planning, as well as dramatic program expansion and goal of financial self-sufficiency require program re-evaluation.

The project was conceived as both organizational research and technical assistance to the agencies. The steps involved in each are charted:

Steps In Agency Technical Assistance

A. Application
B. Interview
C. Contracting
D. Information-gathering for Agency Profile
   1. Interviews
   2. Observation
   3. Review of Archival Information
E. Agency Profile: written analysis of agency's volunteer program and organization
F. Presentation of Agency Profile and Feedback
G. Planning for Organizational Change
H. Implementation
I. Evaluation

Steps In Organizational Research

A. Analysis of common organizational issues among agencies that act as aids/barriers to the effective utilization of employed volunteers
B. Presentation of preliminary findings for discussion
C. Summary of organizational issues and volunteer program models

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D. Evaluation of research model
E. Development and distribution of project findings and training materials on aids/barriers to the effective utilization of employed volunteers in community organizations

The contract with each agency was negotiated with the agency director and approved by the Board of Directors (or comparable governing body) in an effort to ensure full agency participation and commitment. A copy of the contract is contained in the Appendix. The consultant met with staff, board, and other volunteer groups within the agencies to explain the project, elicit concerns and suggestions, negotiate plans, and stimulate interest and commitment.

The data collection phase, leading to the presentation of the information in an agency profile, included a three-pronged approach. First, individual interviews were conducted with board, staff, volunteer, and client members of the agencies. In some cases, group interviews were also included. The basic interview schedule can be found in the Appendix. Second, the consultant assumed the role of an observer and attended board meetings, staff meetings, volunteer orientation and monthly meetings, client review sessions, and various program activities, including a play by the theatre group, a class of the residential treatment center, home visits to clients, recreational activities, tutoring sessions, and client intake sessions. Third, the consultant reviewed archival information from each agency: articles of incorporation, by-laws, personnel policies, volunteer training manuals, brochures, public relations and marketing materials, long-range planning documents,

salary schedules, mission statements — in short, written material for internal and external use that generally revealed both the formal aspects of the organization and their form and style of communication and representation.

Adaptations of the Design

As in all good work with people and groups, design and organization is important, but flexibility is essential. As the project progressed, from January 1986 through October 1987, it was modified by our findings in four major ways.

The first modification was to the orderly progression of steps outlined earlier. The project was designed on an "action research" model, meaning that the results are "fed back" to the system for response and modification. This dynamic model permits the outside consultant to become a temporary part of the system being studied and allows the inside personnel to step back and look in at the system in which they exist. Action research creates the opportunity for an exchange of information and a more open flow of communication.

In the PAVE project, the action research model allowed for a lively exchange between agency members and the consultant. The vitality of the exchange affected the order of the process. Through the interviews conducted, for instance, information and ideas emerged that spurred some agencies to make changes early in the process. In some cases, the mere process of asking questions increased the internal awareness of agency issues and motivated attitudinal change and responsive action. In one agency, the agency profile generated such debate that numerous meetings with different agency groups were conducted, and five agency profile drafts were necessary to incorporate divergent points of view.

The project design, then, was modified by the individual dynamics of each agency. There was thus a sacrifice in the uniformity of process among agencies, which the consultant believes was ultimately justified by

the practical applicability of the information for the agencies and by the rich material obtained thereby for the research.

The second modification occurred as our original emphasis on exclusively working volunteers was expanded to include all volunteers. Basically we found no instance in which an agency dealt extraordinarily well with non-working volunteers and experienced problems only with the shift to working with employed people. There was much more consistency in an agency's treatment of their volunteers, so that those that dealt effectively with working volunteers, dealt effectively with all volunteers. Although this may be a gross simplification, in the agencies with which we worked, it appears to be more true than false. Working with volunteers requires flexibility — be they working or non-working — and those agencies that were flexible and attentive to volunteers' needs were more sensitive to and able to adjust to changes in the volunteer pool and the volunteers' requirements. Also, most of the agencies (with one major exception) worked more with working than with non-working volunteers. So, the two groups — working and non-working volunteers — were coupled naturally in the organizational environment and the project adjusted to study them together in their natural settings.

The third change involved a movement from external to internal focus. The premise of the project was that the change in the nature of volunteers is directly impacting the nonprofit agencies. However, it became clear that this impact is not being felt uniformly. There are internal, organizational factors that mediate the effect of the environmental change. Therefore, the project began to look more closely at those internal organizational dynamics that interacted with the external changes to create volunteer program successes and failures.

The fourth major shift was one from the study of the structural elements of the agency to the cultural factors. What began to stand out in each of the agency profiles

was that the organizational climate had much more to do with the incorporation of volunteers than had been given prior attention. Volunteers were not only integrated into a structure of an agency, with lines of authority and leadership and accountability, but they were also socialized — whether well or poorly — into a new culture. The organizational culture of the agency emerged as a key factor influencing the success of the volunteer program in the organization.

Section II
The Eight Issues

Chapter 4 The Context

A Conceptual Model

Volunteers work in volunteer programs that exist within organizations, in communities that make up our culture and our world. Volunteers have been part of the history of community agencies; they are a vital aspect of current programs; and volunteers will be necessary for the future survival of agencies. Because volunteers work within the broader context of organizations and communities, and because they have had and will have a significant role in the history and development of community agencies, the nature of volunteers and volunteer programs must be studied within the context of organizations and environments.

A Spatial Model

Volunteers are part of the agency program. Non-profit agencies are part of their communities: their locale or service area and the larger service community. Volunteers, then, exist in the environment of the agency and the environment of the community. The community, in turn, is part of the larger culture and the world.

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This sounds simple but quickly becomes complicated when we consider the implications. World problems and national and regional politics impact communities and services and ultimately the people who provide those services and the people who receive them. Volunteers work not only to provide services to their constituents but also to shape community quality of life, to define community needs and to shape community values, and to commit available resources to solve world problems.

Volunteers exist within the context of the organization, the community, the larger culture, and the world. It follows, then, that volunteer participation must be understood in the context of these environments.

A Time Model

Volunteers are part of the history of nonprofit and public organizations. Volunteers founded many of the movements for social action in this country — from the fight for independence to labor unions to child labor legislation to abolition to women's suffrage to civil rights to vigilantism to current movements for free choice in abortion, nuclear disarmament, AIDS research, shelter for the homeless, relief from world hunger. Volunteers have defined community needs, spurred action for social change, and organized groups and agencies for community action and service provision.

Past   Present   Future
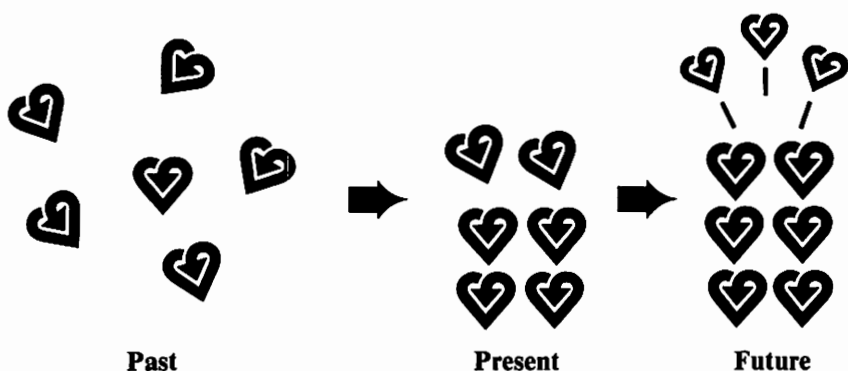
Volunteers are an integral part of nonprofit organizations' present reality. Volunteers determine organizational policies and future directions. Volunteers work in agencies and provide services to people in their communities.

Particularly in this era of decreased governmental funding for community agencies, volunteers not only constitute community and national boards that allocate resources but also make up a growing force of people-power upon which we rely to continue the provision of service. Volunteers are part of the present — and the future — of nonprofit organizations.

The Community Organization

Community organizations — public agencies and private nonprofit organizations — are governed by volunteers. Elected public officials, school boards, community oversight and advisory committees govern public agencies. Voluntary boards of directors govern nonprofit organizations and are in fact the only legally required body of a nonprofit organization.

These volunteer groups are the link between the organizations and the communities in which they exist. Boards of directors are charged with holding the agency in trust for the community. They are expected to represent the community to the agency and the agency to the community. The agency is held accountable to the community through the board of directors.

Community   Agency

The Importance of the Larger Context: Volunteers at the Heart of Organizations

Community service organizations are organizations of people that provide services to people. People are the key factor and groups of people are the key organizational factor.

Volunteers historically have been the group of people that keep community agencies community-based. Organizationally, volunteers often lie at the heart of the agency and reflect the heart of agency issues. Volunteers and volunteer programs may serve the function of representing the heart of the agency mission and work and they therefore often reflect the heart of the organization's dynamics.

The eight issues to be explored in the following chapters describe key organizational issues and the ways in which these issues affect volunteers and volunteer programs. Contextually, however, the interaction between volunteers and organizations is dynamic: not only do the organizational issues affect the volunteers, but the volunteers also affect the organization, and both affect and are affected by the larger environment. The broad context of this interaction must be kept in mind as the backdrop before which the volunteer/organization dynamic unfolds.

Chapter 5 The Constancy of Change

The Issue

"Doesn't anything ever stay the same around here?"

"Just when we get a program up and going, the funding (or personnel, need, licensing requirements, etc.) changes and we have to cut it back!"

"Our cause was 'in' last year and this year it's 'out' — we just can't continue services without funding."

"With cutbacks, the volunteer program is the first to go."

"S/he no longer works/volunteers here."

I'm sure you could add some choice quotations of your own.

The impact of constant change is pervasive at all levels of volunteer programs and the organizations in which they operate. Working in the nonprofit sector for years, I, like you, have both heard and voiced the familiar chants.

We have learned from our research that although we regularly bemoan the constant changes in volunteers, agencies, and communities, we have yet to appreciate the full scope of the change and to adapt our programs accordingly.

Recalling the spatial model of the environment in which volunteers live, we can see the multi-level changes that impact us. World issues such as starvation, threat of nuclear war, terrorism, AIDS, nuclear power safety, international arts and music exchanges,

emigration and immigration, international sports events — all challenge us to work together on problems that span national boundaries.

In the United States, a new era of post-industrial scarcity has dawned and we are beginning to acknowledge that there are limits to our natural resources, our economic wealth, and our ability to assimilate new people and new views. This era of limited resources has introduced the necessity to set priorities and make difficult decisions.

One of our societal choices has been to limit government spending and to decrease governmental support of the nonprofit sector. Governmental funding for nonprofit organizations, for instance, was reduced by 26% between 1980 and 1988. Shifting economics and politics have led nonprofit organizations to adopt a more sophisticated business stance: increased fundraising; fiscal accountability and self-sufficiency; program expansions and contractions; agency mergers; fee-for-service models; increased agency and board liability; coalitions and networking with like agencies; increased strategic and corporate planning; more formalized personnel policies and practices.

The need for the original PAVE research was, of course, stimulated by a change in the demographics and availability of volunteers. Sixty-seven percent of the agencies that applied to PAVE indicated they were undergoing organizational change — program expansion, move to a new facility, organizational restructuring. In their applications, under the requested "Statement of Need," organizations commonly noted their need and motivation to respond to their changing environments — funding changes, new programs, new opportunities, new ideas:

> "[Our organization] is at a point of transition right now. We are preparing to start several innovative programs within the next two years. The changes will require major growth and reorganization."

"[Our center] is working on a Strategic Long-Range Plan for the next five-year period. If approved in its present state [the center] would be seen as a resource to the entire field..."

"Changes brought about by the acceptance of [our cause] in general have brought sophisticated demands that are increasingly burdensome to an all-volunteer program."

"In recent years there has been a general increased demand for our services and a specific need in South County."

"This is an important turning point in the development of this community organization."

Organizational change was often cited as a factor in the agency's need to re-examine its volunteer program:

"A decrease in staff over recent years has caused some of our programs to be absolutely dependent upon volunteers."

"The spectre of fiscal cutbacks, and our everpresent desire to serve more people, are pushing us towards putting even more emphasis on volunteers. We have tentative plans to consolidate and systematize volunteer recruitment, training and supervision through a new Assistant Director position this spring. How do we go about this in the best way possible?"

"We are also in a period of great change. This is the agency's 10th year and we are electing new Board members in March and April. An old administration has recently left and we are in the process of starting 'new projects.' One is a pledge drive and the other is children's programs. Our Board is becoming increasingly involved in fundraising and we would like

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'new' people to assist in these efforts. Also due to funding cutbacks we would like to find volunteers to assist in the office.''

The pervasiveness of change was brought home dramatically over the course of the twenty-month project. During the initial information-gathering stage, for example, two Executive Director positions and two Director of Volunteers positions were vacated and filled. By the end of the project, 10 of the original 18 key agency staff involved in the initial contract with PAVE had left their agencies. Over the course of the work, three agencies bought or sold their facilities or property. Three instituted major new programs. Two constructed new legal entities: one a for-profit component, one a community support organization. Four were involved in facility renovation. Seven experienced significant budget cuts or increases. Four instituted staff restructuring, including new positions, new teams, new lines of authority. One organization experienced an employee strike that lasted many months.

When we add together world changes, changes in the national economy and politics, changes in regional and community needs and demographics, the changing nonprofit sector, the changing demographics of volunteers, and organizational changes, we see that we are looking at a constantly changing kinetic sculpture that makes up the volunteers' world.

The dilemma is often oversimplified to the question of whether or not the organization changes. The reality, however, is that organizations do change — whether by choice or by chance. External environmental changes affect agencies and when the environment changes, by definition so does the organization. Even if the internal organization appears to stay the same, if its environment has changed, then the organizational-environment relationship necessarily shifts, so that the organization looks different:

One agency program in PAVE, for instance, had developed a team model that had been operating well for a number of years. However, a similar program in another part of the county closed and the organization began receiving referrals from a different community 10-20 miles away. Simultaneously, the client load increased significantly and the nature of the clients changed also. Having previously provided services to primarily elderly people, the program was now faced with addressing younger clients with AIDS. The important point here is that even if it had wanted to stay the same, the organization now existed in a changed environment. Some change is beyond the control of the organization and is inevitable in our fast-moving world. So the question becomes not whether or not an organization *will* change, but *how*.

Organizations develop characteristic response patterns to changing needs and environments. These patterns become engrained and influence the organization's response to new stimuli. One organization in the study, for instance, characteristically shifted into an intensive planning process when confronted with new information or change. Another was likely to react quickly by embracing new available monies and dissolving or instituting new programs with short response time and trial-and-error problem-solving.

The organizational response to change is a significant factor that affects the organization's reaction to the changing volunteer environment. One organization — one that has developed organizational strategies to sen-

sitize it to environmental changes — was quick to recognize the change in volunteerism — and to construct a volunteer program to respond to the change. Volunteer trainings shifted to Saturdays to accommodate working volunteers, and the training program was streamlined to sixteen hours — two Saturday trainings.

Another organization, one that is struggling to maintain its facility and its reputation, recognized that its volunteers were aging and that new, younger volunteers were not being recruited. Although it voiced the need to attract and incorporate younger, working volunteers, it was unable to construct new strategies to do so. The organizational pattern of "holding onto" past successes and mechanisms prevented successful adaptation to the environmental change. Two Directors of Volunteers attempted to modify the volunteer program, and both ultimately failed to do so because the volunteer program remained enmeshed in the organization's "holding onto" its old ways.

Two additional points must be made explicit here. One — change is not new. However, the rate of change has accelerated to the point that constant adjustments are required. Two — the reality of constant change necessitates that we design plans and systems not just for the moment but for the changing nature of the world. Until we can accurately predict the future (and far be it from me to claim such hope!), we cannot plan future programs. But we can build into our current agencies and designs the capacity and mechanisms that will allow them to shift with the changing environment.

Change and Community Organizations

Like all groups and institutions, nonprofit organizations must adapt to external and internal changes in their environments in order to survive. Like other organizations, nonprofits are subject to an organizational pressure to stay the same, to maintain the status

quo (Waddington, 1977, pp 97-102).

Exacerbating this tendency toward homeostasis is a very human tendency for most of us to try harder to maintain stability in the face of massive changes. Quite simply, we seek some calm in the storm. Organizations do the same. You have heard this tendency expressed in the familiar chant: "Because that's the way we've always done it!" Acknowledging, then, the organizational tendency toward homeostasis and the rapidly changing environment, we can see better why organizations sometimes feel as if they're coming apart at the seams.

Change and Volunteer Programs

In volunteer programs the pressure to maintain stability and sameness can result in antiquated job descriptions, daytime-only volunteer programs that exclude volunteers who work from 9-5, the expectation of "once a volunteer here, always a volunteer here," and "it was good enough for me, it's good enough for you." In the PAVE research, we found progressive agencies fighting to maintain women's auxiliaries that required daytime attendance, 24-hour residential programs that disallowed volunteers working other than 9-5 when supervisory staff were on-site, and potential volunteer programs aborted for fear that new volunteers might bring in divergent and threatening points of view.

The opposing pressure to change, however, has become overwhelming. The cadre of traditional volunteers of the past — women homemakers volunteering 20 hours a week forever — is diminishing. Few volunteer programs have been able to maintain adequate numbers of traditional volunteers to continue even the previous level of service. The increase in numbers of older adults volunteering offers hope for many agencies, but requires increased attention to needs for socialization and reimbursement for expenses and transportation (J.C. Penney, 1987). Model projects which include unemployed people as volunteers and

secondary school interns as volunteers present new challenges and concomitant adjustments.

Most of the agencies with which we worked recognized the need to modify their volunteer programs to adapt to the environment. One had made a successful transition. Some had made steps in that direction. But most were floundering, not knowing exactly what to do.

Change and Adaptive Strategies

Volunteer programs may be limited in their ability to change in and of themselves. They exist within organizations and, to be successful, must plan change within the larger organizational context and in a manner consistent with organizational strategies. On the other hand, because volunteers come from the community and because environmental change is often initiated by a shift in community needs or requirements, sometimes the volunteer program is the first arena in which the organization feels the stimulus for change. Volunteer programs are then faced with initiating organizational change strategies and with becoming the vanguard of organizational adaptation.

What are the strategies that seem to have worked well for our agencies? The general thrust of these strategies appears to be to construct *a volunteer component that is highly organized in a flexible manner.* All *information is documented:* shifts in client population, actual volunteer hours and tasks, volunteer training procedures, logs of staff requests for volunteers, seasonal patterns of requests, current volunteer availability and special skills of individual volunteers. *Information is organized to be readily available.* In the worst scenario, if the Director of Volunteers disappeared tomorrow, a new person could come in, review the files, and obtain a current and relevant picture of the program.

Information must not only be obtained and organized, it must also be communicated — regularly. Given the

environment of constant change both within the organization and outside it, information quickly becomes outdated and must therefore be updated frequently. Among the agencies in the PAVE study, those whose volunteers felt themselves to be a part of the agency often received regular monthly in-house newsletters that contained timely information about the organization and its current programs, updates on professional and personal achievements of the staff and volunteers, and agency needs and volunteer opportunities. (One such newsletter cleverly contained blank volunteer time sheets to be completed and returned.)

Volunteer meetings elicit a mixed response. One agency surveyed current volunteers and found that 76% felt the need for regular volunteer meetings, but over the past year attendance at monthly meetings had hovered at 20-30%. It appears that volunteers need to obtain information, receive in-service training, and meet for mutual support, but that constraints on time may limit the number of meetings per year that are practical. Monthly meetings may work well for some agencies but may be too frequent for others, which might fare better with quarterly meetings and monthly newsletters. Volunteer meetings do have the strength of incorporating individual volunteers into the volunteer group, and with frequent turnover in staff and volunteers, meetings may become more important as a socialization factor.

Given the change in volunteer programs, the volunteer group, and the volunteers' job tasks and personal lives, *regular review and feedback of job performance and satisfaction* is critical. Agencies must provide for at least yearly review of the volunteers, the volunteer program, and the agency from the volunteers' perspective. The volunteer needs feedback on his/her performance, and the agency needs feedback from the volunteer on the appropriateness of the volunteer program and the fit between the agency and the community, of which the volunteer is a part.

Just as with paid staff, the agency has with its

volunteers a "psychological contract." A psychological contract is "an unwritten set of expectations operating at all times between every member of an organization and the various managers and others in that organization" (Schein, 1980, p. 22).

> Many of these expectations are implicit and involve the person's sense of dignity and worth. We expect organizations to treat us as human beings, to provide work and facilities which are need-fulfilling rather than demeaning, to provide opportunities for growth and further learning, to provide feedback on how we are doing, and so on. . . . The organization also has more implicit, subtle expectations — that the employee will enhance the image of the organization, will be loyal, will keep organizational secrets, and will do his or her best on behalf of the organization (that is, will always be highly motivated and willing to make sacrifices for the organization)" (Schein, 1980, p. 23).

Personal, professional, and organizational needs change over time and necessitate *a review of the fit between the volunteer needs and the organizational needs* in order to assure a reasonable fit and a reasonable fulfillment of the contract.

It was a volunteer who pointed out to us the need for *regular negotiation of the volunteer commitment or contract.* As he remarked: "You can begin to feel indispensible, given the impression of agency desperation. This is bad for the individual. When it becomes a sense of duty, your motive decreases. Your motive is the challenge, *desire* to do it. That's when you feel like contributing." We must be able to applaud our volunteers' contributions as they leave our agencies and move on to other commitments. It is not our failure that volunteers leave agencies — they never promised us a lifetime. Yet, if we fail to make explicit a given time commitment and if we repeatedly neglect to review that

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contract, we imply an expectation of "once a volunteer here, always a volunteer here." Volunteers can then exit only through death or disagreement. We literally "kill off" successful volunteers rather than honor them and their work with the agency.

Much as the brain appears to assign a particular function to more than one part of its structure in order to protect against total disability from injury to a specific area, so we must prepare our volunteer programs for the predictable turnover of directors of volunteer programs. Entrusting *all* information and expertise for the volunteer program to one and only one staff person is as wasteful as having only one person in the organization familiar with the budget, the emergency procedures, or the client needs. Yet many agencies regularly delegate any and all information and work with volunteers to the Director of Volunteers. This absolute specialization not only risks the development of an "us and them" attitude, as expressed in the too-often heard statement "take care of *your* volunteers," but also jeopardizes the continuance of the volunteer component over time. Directors of Volunteers do not stay forever, any more than Executive Directors, other staff persons, or volunteers do. *Program information therefore must be shared with other staff and volunteers.* With the information held by others in the organization, when the present Director of Volunteers leaves, the information is not lost to the system and the new Director of Volunteers can be trained and informed by his/her colleagues — other staff and volunteers.

Another important strength that comes *from the sharing of responsibility for the volunteer program is the "ownership" of the program by the organization.* Others in the organization grow to have a stake in the success of the volunteer component and the volunteers roughly in proportion to their *involvement in its design, implementation, and people.* The more people in the organization are working toward the success of the volunteer program, the more likely that success becomes.

Chapter 6 Volunteers at the Boundaries

Are the following scenarios familiar to you?

- A new volunteer comes to an organization from work, dressed in a three-piece suit. She enters a social service agency office in which all the staff are sitting around in jeans. She is eyed suspiciously.
- A new volunteer is welcomed to the office and sits down at a staff person's regular desk. Silence.
- A volunteer enters a nonprofit organization and walking around the office, notices a sign on a door that reads, "STAFF ONLY."

The preceding are examples of boundary issues, and boundaries are part of all groups and organizations.

The Issue

People join together in groups, and in so doing form a common purpose and meaning, a shared set of values, group processes, symbols, and a group culture. In essence, a group can be defined as two or more persons with a common goal. To become a group or an organization, people draw together and distinguish themselves from others. A group emerges from the broader community by developing its own set of rituals and procedures, which include rules for membership — whether explicit or implicit. Yet groups and organizations — particularly nonprofit organizations — exist in the larger community and world and must interact with it. Therefore, the boundaries between the organization and its environment must be permeable. No organization is an island. But each organization develops — through its history, its purpose, its people — its own

"tautness" of boundary. Some organizations are loosely-bound and easy to enter, provided a new member shares the commitment to the basic cause: Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, Parent-Teacher Associations, museum supporters, library associations. Other organizations maintain stricter criteria for membership: age, ethnicity, education, lifestyle similarity, likeness in problem solving style, dress, degree of seriousness or humor, attitudes toward responsibility. Organizations may be aware or unaware of their criteria for admission, but either way, the criteria operate as boundaries to cross in order for new members to join the organization.

Generally we become aware of boundaries when we inadvertently step over them. Have you ever been in the situation of walking up to join a group of people talking and suddenly the conversation stops? For those of us who have had the experience of being the "wrong" race, gender, physical appearance, age, height — we know that feeling of walking into an invisible glass wall.

Boundaries are not all barriers. But most boundaries do involve a "crossing over" from one environment with one set of rules to another. Take immigration to the United States. From most other countries in the world, people must cross an ocean to enter the United States. A boundary exists between the ocean and the land. Yet the boundary is permeable — one can cross over it. Barriers exist in the form of immigration laws and money to secure transportation to traverse the waters. One can physically cross the boundary, but one must also negotiate the barriers.

Boundaries and Community Agencies

In nonprofit organizations there are many boundaries — the physical boundary of the facility, the boundary of service area, the boundary of the services provided, the funding/financial boundaries, the boundaries between people inside the organization and outside it.

Organizations respond differently to boundary issues. You have only to witness agencies confronted with new

service providers moving into *our* area of service, or agencies competing for limited community funds, or agencies offered a loaned corporate executive — to observe the different reactions of organizations to others at their boundaries.

The boundary that applies to *people* in the nonprofit sector is particularly important because most nonprofit organizations are service organizations and generally the service is provided by people. In nonprofit organizations usually the regular staff is inside the organization and the larger community is outside of it. Volunteers live at the boundary between the agency and the community. They are expected to represent the agency to the community and the community to the agency. Board members in particular are expected to face both "in" and "out." Most volunteers live in the community, work elsewhere in the community, and cross the agency/community boundary regularly.
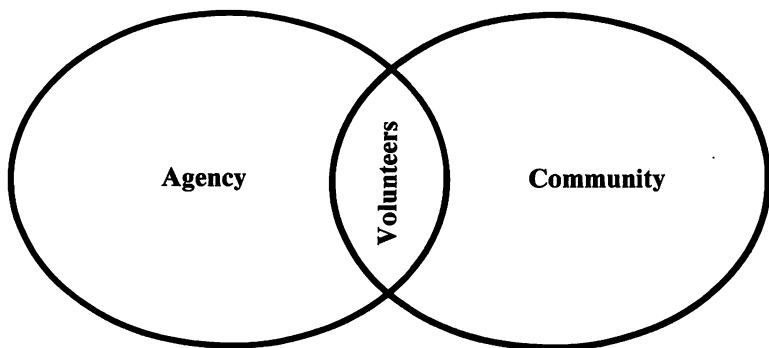
Boundaries and Volunteer Programs

Boundary issues are often applied to volunteers. Questions such as, "Who is inside and who is outside the agency" or "How much and what information is allowed 'out to the volunteers' or 'out to the community,' " and "To what extent is the agency responsive to community issues" — all reflect boundary issues. Because volunteers are the people who exist on the edge of the agency, the agency's stance toward boundary

issues is often embodied in its stance toward the volunteer program.

One organization in the study, for instance, recognized its need to become more a part of the city in which it was located. Although its clients came from all parts of the Bay Area and beyond, the organization became aware of its need for city permits, city funds, and community support in general. Its facility sat at the edge of city limits and back behind a long driveway. The need for increased visibility and community relations served to move the agency to "open up" its boundaries to the community, and as part of that effort, to re-examine its volunteer program. Having relied primarily upon friends and former staff to provide volunteer coverage, the organization began to look to a broader-based volunteer program that would recruit and incorporate local citizens into the organization. The general "opening" of the boundary translated into the opening of the agency to volunteers.

Another organization, having recently undergone a major revamping, experienced itself as young and vulnerable. It existed within a larger nationwide service network within which it felt like the fledgling child. It felt the need to protect its new, emerging identity and integrity. Major organizational effort was channeled into staff team-building and protection of the staff from the larger organization by the director. Boundaries for admission to the group were taut. Interviews for new staff members were multi-staged and multi-leveled: selection of new personnel was serious business. This organization received numerous calls from potential volunteers and volunteer groups, but the agency staff was reluctant to bring in new volunteers for fear that they might: be "looking down rather than eye-to-eye with the clients" or "want to get their hands on [a client] that's in trouble." One staff person expressed concern about letting "untrained, unscreened people loose on our clients." Thus the boundary between the agency and the community was protected through the regulation of incoming staff and volunteers. New in-

terns were screened and admitted — about half of whom failed and half of whom became paid staff. They either left the organization or entered it as staff, but they were not allowed to remain on the boundary as volunteers.

Boundaries and Volunteers: Internal Boundaries

Boundaries also exist within organizations: between the administrative staff and the service staff; between the Board and the staff; between one program's staff and another; between one agency site and the next; between staff and volunteers: and among volunteers — policy-making and direct service, advisory and maintenance.

Volunteers also exist at the boundaries within the organization. Look at most organizational charts:

Board of Directors

Director — — — — — — — Advisory
Board

Staff Positions
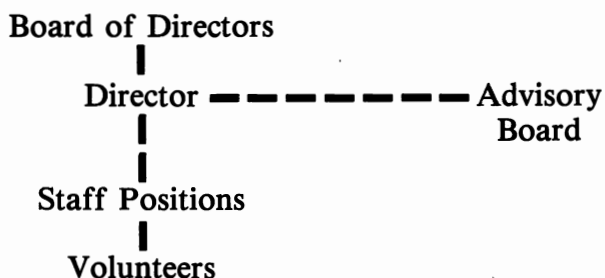
Volunteers

Volunteers flank the organization: they are at the top of the organization in the Board of Directors; at the side of the organization in advisory groups, task forces, community action groups; and at the bottom of the organizational chart in direct services, clerical, maintenance, fundraising, public speaking, and community relations. They are therefore often seen as "at the edges" of the organization and outside the inner circle.

A third organization in the study maintained major financial assets from its sale of two large facilities. Financial information was carefully guarded and was "at the heart" of the agency's functioning and decision-making. When a volunteer in the agency was

asked to do fundraising for the organization, he asked to see a financial statement in order to be knowledgeable in his fundraising position. He was directed to the finance office, where he was told that the budget was confidential and could not be made available to him. He was kept "outside" the internal boundary of the organization.

Boundaries and Adaptive Strategies

As boundaries will continue to exist between organizations and their environments, and within organizations, what can we do to minimize their functioning as barriers? By and large, *the issue of boundaries is a spatial or structural issue and must therefore be addressed through structural solutions.*

First, *organizations must educate their volunteers about the current structure of the organization.* As a consultant with the project, I was amazed to discover how many organizations had organizational charts that did not reflect their current functioning, charts that did not include their volunteers, and otherwise adequate charts that sat in a back drawer to be used for funding purposes only. How can we expect volunteers to "fit into" the organization if we do not provide them with a map of where they are to go? How can volunteers be clear about staff roles — and staff clear about volunteer roles — if these roles are not clearly defined in relation to one another? People are not able to truly join into an organization when they are kept in ignorance about the basic nature of that organization.

In addition to being given an overall picture of the organization, *volunteers must also be afforded clear information about and access to lines of authority.* In most of the organizations studied, volunteers were told who to go to if they experienced a problem, although there was sometimes confusion about when to go to the department supervisor and when to go to the Director of Volunteers. But few organizations directed volunteers on how to introduce suggestions for new ideas or how to explore opportunities for expanding job areas.

Boundaries are two-edged. *Just as we must communicate "inside" information to volunteers, so we must also listen to "outside" information from them.* We so often miss the opportunity to discover, for instance, new, growing areas of community concern, or the image of our agency in the community, because we have not learned to structure in a mechanism through which our volunteers can communicate this information within the organization. Yet our very agency survival often depends upon our knowledge of this information. Volunteers often hear community attitudes and "horror stories" as well as praise of our organization from community residents — the usefulness of which is lost to us unless we build in mechanisms to hear it. I have seen public relations committees and community relations task forces chaired by and composed of volunteers which effectively permeate the organizational/environmental boundary and open the agency to a wealth of information and resources.

The Director of Volunteers often functions as the key person on the boundary between the volunteers and the staff and the rest of the organization. I have come to picture this position as the pivot on a basketball team — setting up plays and integrating coordinated action among players toward a common goal. It is often the Director of Volunteers who represents volunteers to staff and staff to volunteers; who communicates with both parties. In this sense, the Director of Volunteers stands on the boundary between staff and volunteers. This aspect of the position is often under-represented in the job description and stated expectations of the Director of Volunteers. The Director of Volunteers is the manager of a group of personnel and the liaison among agency programs. *The Director of Volunteers is a manager, an administrator, and should be so represented on the organizational chart and in the salary schedule and specifications of the job:*

```
                    Executive Director
                           |
          -----------Assistant Director-----------
         /          /      |       \          \
   Program    Director    Program  Program  Program
   Director   of Volunteers Director Director Director
      |          |            |        |        |
   Program    Volunteers    Program  Program  Program
   Staff                    Staff    Staff    Staff
```
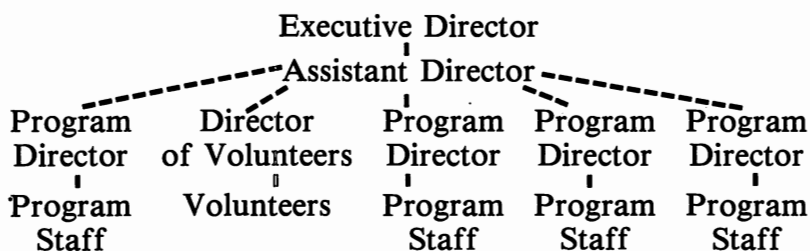
One of the chief functions of the Director of
Volunteers is to serve as an advocate for volunteers
within the organization. *It is — or should be — the job
of the Director of Volunteers to give voice throughout
the program to the expectations, needs, and perspec-
tives of volunteers.* The person in this position, or a
delegate, should sit on program committees and pro-
gram design task forces and should constantly bring at-
tention to questions such as "How are volunteers to be
integrated and used in this component," "How are
volunteers to be trained and supervised," "How are
volunteers in this service area to be integrated with the
overall agency personnel," "How are volunteer needs
to be met." The Director of Volunteers should gather
information from the volunteers about their experiences
in the organization, their suggestions for improvement,
their visions for the organization, and s/he should com-
municate this information to the decision-makers in the
organization.

Another function of the Director of Volunteers is to
represent the larger organizational picture, goals, and
issues to the volunteers. *The Director of Volunteers
should be assuring the communication of all pertinent
organizational information to volunteers.* Especially
because volunteers constantly cross the boundary be-
tween the organization and the community, it is essen-
tial that they possess up-to-date, accurate information
about the agency. How else can volunteers represent the
organization well? I have been appalled by how often
we deprive volunteers of the overall agency picture and
pertinent — yes, and sometimes sensitive — organiza-
tional information. We often confront the lack of

organizational information imparted when we ask our volunteers to do public speaking on behalf of the agency, only to learn from the volunteers that they have been uninformed about agency problems and plans. I have seen volunteers in the awkward position in which an organization "secret" becomes public, the volunteer's neighbors and friends ask for more information or a sympathetic perspective, and the volunteer is completely stumped, having been kept in the dark. When volunteers learn new information about the organization in which they work from the newspaper or community word-of-mouth first, they receive the clear message that they are "outside" the agency. In this age, information is power and deprivation of information leads to exclusion and powerlessness. We need to ensure organizational communication of information to our volunteers if we strive to bring volunteers within the agency boundary.

Keeping in mind the constant change within and between the environment and the organization, the communication of information cannot be a one-time undertaking. *Information must be forthcoming regularly* — not just once in the initial training. *It must be an organizational task to keep volunteers informed and current.*

I recall visiting one of the agencies in the study on a day during which an agency staff person was terminated for having become involved in a sexual relationship with a client. The staff, of course, was buzzing with the news. I happened to arrive at the point at which the Director of Volunteers was mulling over how to present the dismissal to the volunteers. I do not know what she ultimately decided, but it became clear to me that at the point at which a personal matter causes an organizational change, the volunteers are entitled to the information, just as are the staff. The alternative, it seems, is much worse: to leave volunteers outside the boundary between organizational information and ignorance, and to leave the volunteers wondering about the mystery of agency change and agency

loyalty to its personnel. Denial of information is a sometimes invisible barrier that keeps volunteers outside the organization that seeks to include them. We simply cannot deprive people of information and expect them to perform well in their jobs.

Chapter 7 Community and Communities

> What emerged...was the understanding that becoming one's own person, while always a risky, demanding effort, takes place in a community loyal to shared ideals of what makes life worth living. Sharing practices of commitment rooted in religious life and civic organizations helps us identify with others different from ourselves, yet joined with us not only in interdependence and a common destiny, but by common ends as well. Because we share a common tradition, certain habits of the heart, we can work together to construct a common future.
>
> (Bellah et al., 1985, p. 252)

The Issue

The traditional U.S. community as many of us thought of it is dying. Industrialization dealt a blow to small, stable communities in which families worked and lived together with a sense of common purpose and interdependence. People flocked to urban areas for jobs, leaving behind their extended families and their roots. Men went off to work and women remained home, both sacrificing their cooperative family work on the farm for economic survival. The new industrialization tore at traditional family and community ties in a pervasive and widespread manner.

Today many of us have moved far from our families and our places of birth. Immigrant ghettos of the late 1800s and early 1900s have given way to middle class strivings to assimilate into the larger culture. New im-

migrant communities, of course, continue to form, but their cohesiveness is tenuous, as young people struggle to adopt popular culture and break away from the continuity provided by their cultures of origin. Although strong community ties and a shared sense of meaning can still be found in various pockets of the country, quickly-changing mores and the lure of the well-communicated American dream threaten our traditional sense of community and meaning.

Community and Nonprofit Organizations

In this environment of loosening ties to the past, to the community of origin, to the symbols and substance of shared meanings, the nonprofit sector offers an alternative. It represents a counterbalance to the pursuit of profit, the concentration on economic and psychological independence, and the alienation and bureaucratization of public life. The independent sector offers opportunities for personalized action, for commitment to community values, for community service and responsibility, for social change through concerted action.

Half of all Americans volunteer their time, most of them in nonprofit organizations. They cite the desire to "make a difference," the pull to "give back to the community." They say, "It isn't just coming here for pleasure, it is doing something worthwhile," "To hand them that hand at that moment — you've done something that no one else has done for her" as motivations for volunteering. Paid staff in nonprofit organizations often see their work in community service as an alternative to working in the business world and as a chance to find meaning, an opportunity for more personal interaction with others, and a forum to act on their commitment to social values and change.

On an organizational level, the agencies with which we worked reflected this commitment to community. Organizational mission statements and statements by those interviewed echoed the theme of people working

in concert to improve the quality of life for the community and its people:

> "The purpose of the Festival [is to] enrich the cultural and artistic life of the community."

> "In the early 1970s three families began meeting in each other's living rooms to share ideas on a future for their adult children diagnosed as developmentally disabled."

> "No single person or profession can grasp or respond adequately to this spectrum of needs. For this reason the hospice is a team composed of various disciplines, of professionals and lay workers, of those paid and those volunteering, who cooperate in providing skilled and intuitive care."

The sense of community in nonprofit organizations is expressed in the image of the group banding together for "the cause," "to fight the good fight," to take responsibility for our brothers and sisters, to carry on a tradition of people helping people, to work in a spirit of cooperation and teamwork, to support community life.

Nonprofit organizations often resemble small communities of their own. You will recall that when we discussed the issue of boundaries, nonprofit organizations, just like other groups, develop cultures and standards of their own that define the group or organization. One cultural theme that resounded through our work with our agencies was the emphasis on "the community," "the team," or "the family" of the agency. There appears to be an ethic of team playing and cooperation within nonprofit organizations. Staff and volunteers see themselves as good people working together to provide a service, to correct a social ill, to improve the overall quality of life, through a personalized team effort. Representatives of almost

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all the eight agencies described the "family" or the "team" of their agency as a major organizational theme and as an attractive feature for potential volunteers. The volunteers interviewed mentioned the team atmosphere as an incentive to join the agency:

> "I have an association with the greatest people!"
> "To come into the office is like coming into someone's family."
> "There are no shut doors. The important thing is that I don't feel excluded..."
> "To feel like family...a more intimate kind of place."

This value on team effort serves to highlight similarities within the group and to promote co-operative effort. It can draw people in to belong to a group that provides meaning and community. Group norms develop and newcomers are socialized into the organization and feel a part of something "meaningful" and "bigger than myself."

However, as in other communities, over time there emerge communities within communities: sub-groups, in-groups, and out-groups. Many nonprofits began with a small group of people — often volunteers — who knew each other and worked together closely. The "community" of the new agency was composed of an identifiable and familiar group of individuals. As most organizations have developed, they have grown in size and their personnel has diversified by function. Sub-communities have cropped up — of "old" staff, of founding members, of volunteers, of management staff.

These sub-groups have developed additional norms of their own, and insiders and outsiders to these sub-groups within the organization are identifiable. As the groups develop, they adopt rituals of their own. These rituals serve to maintain group cohesion and commitment. But rituals that serve one community within an organization can also serve to exclude others — often inadvertently. The in-group of a community-based

organization can mask the existence of the out-group. The closer-knit a community in the organization is, the higher risk it runs of excluding others. Sub-groups or communities develop trust among themselves, and informal as well as formal mechanisms for communicating information that can become highly ingrown and exclusive. Rarely does this occur by design or through malice: it is more often a "sin of omission."

So — what's the problem? Isn't this the developmental course of most groups and organizations? Certainly this is "the way" of group or organizational life.

Yet the strength of the ethic of the nonprofit sector and nonprofit organizations as the stronghold for a community sense has a pervasive influence on organizational culture. The strong emphasis on community demands that people work together in harmony. Differences among individuals and among sub-groups are often denied, minimized or at least unspoken, because they are threatening to the organizational self-concept — for the other side of the coin of community is the reality of exclusion. People by definition become a group or community when they join together in contrast to numbers of others who remain outside the group.

During the course of the PAVE research, I attended one organization's regular weekly team meeting, during which they reviewed client cases. This is an organization that is particularly committed to teamwork and is rich in ritual. The weekly team meetings include food prepared by one member of the team and introductions by all participants. The organization is a program that ministers to the dying and their families. It has a strong base in a Protestant religion but identifies itself as Judeo-Christian. At this particular meeting, one of the chief agency administrators began with a memorial to a recently deceased member of the Board of Trustees. He introduced a Christian eulogy with an explanation that the deceased's commitment to the program was deeply rooted in his Christian faith. All gathered were invited to join in a Christian prayer in tribute to the man. This

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ritual clearly held meaning for the vast majority of team members, who participated enthusiastically in the prayer. Yet I was simultaneously aware of the silence of others and struck by the fact that of the five who refrained, four represented the only ethnic and religious (Jewish) minority members of the group. Within the team, there stood revealed at that moment a sub-group or out-group formed by their exclusion from a ritual that drew the in-group together.

Because of nonprofit organizations' strong commitment to community and teamwork, it is painful for many to see and to acknowledge the subdivisions within the team or group. To witness exclusion strikes at the very heart of the nonprofit cultural norm of inclusion in community. Yet ignoring such subgroups dismisses the existence of real differences and issues, and sacrifices the richness of individual differences to the conformity of community.

Community and Volunteer Programs

The strong emphasis on community in nonprofit organizations means that for volunteers and volunteer programs to succeed, they must become an integral part of that community. In fact, we found that those agencies with *the more successful volunteer programs had structural and cultural ways of including the volunteer programs and volunteers into the larger community of the nonprofit.* Some accomplished this by structural methods: having the head of a volunteer group sit as a member of the agency Board of Directors, having volunteers participate on committees and in team meetings, having the Director of Volunteers report directly to the Executive Director on the programs and personnel (volunteers) s/he supervised. Agencies also attended to the cultural aspects of community: department volunteers were included in departmental social functions, volunteers were part of staff trainings and staff social events, volunteers joined staff and clients on outings and agency celebrations.

Community and Adaptive Strategies

Assuming that volunteers must be included in the community of the agency, it behooves us to *pay attention to mechanisms of socialization and initiation.* One agency, for example, includes as part of its initial volunteer training a segment on the importance of the team in-service delivery and the place of volunteers on that team. The same agency begins the team-building process early by including staff members and long-time volunteers as trainers in the volunteer training. Another has the staff and current volunteers screen potential new volunteers and the new volunteers attend staff meetings in order to become part of the team.

But inclusion is only part of the solution, for the reality is that even well-socialized and integrated volunteers are not exactly the same as staff. Volunteers may have different concerns, motivations, problems, commitments, and time availability. Volunteers *are* different and as such have the potential to form a community of their own within the larger community of the nonprofit. Therefore *the building of a volunteer group within the nonprofit seems appropriate.* Volunteers probably cannot be included in all staff or agency functions, because of limits of time as well as differences in focus. Yet volunteers seek a sense of community and team effort in their volunteer work and perhaps this must also be accomplished through a volunteer community. In our research, volunteers repeatedly indicated their need or desire for more contact with other volunteers. They indicated a need for socialization as well as problem-solving of commonly-encountered issues. Coupling these two motivations might indicate a need for us *to construct opportunities for volunteers to get together that are both social and educational.* One agency is exploring the scheduling of quarterly dinners for volunteers that will include some time for informal socializing and a segment with a facilitator on problem-solving situations suggested by volunteers in attendance.

Part of the inclusion in the community of the agency has traditionally meant annual volunteer recognition/

appreciation events. I, like you, have seen some of these work well and have attended some that lacked life or lustre. Perhaps if viewed from the perspective of inclusion in the community, the issue of volunteer recognition may become clearer. All of us like and need to feel acknowledged and recognized in our own right as part of the group. I suspect that *successful volunteer recognition events may be those that are designed in a manner consistent with the community culture.* One particularly successful event at one of the PAVE agencies involved an on-site dinner cooked by the staff, who served the volunteers and presented humorous skits written and acted by the staff about the volunteers. I am not suggesting this event for all agencies, but I believe that this agency's culture of "family" and emphasis on food and humor made this event consistent with the agency culture and therefore successful. Each agency might look to its own rituals and community norms to devise an appropriate event. I, for instance, look back on a crisis agency I directed, and think now — why didn't we covertly schedule *all* our phone volunteers for phone duty (phone calls were call-forwarded to their homes) on a certain night and call them all in and surprise them with a party? It would have been a natural outgrowth of our emergency service and a *fun* crisis to offset the very serious life and death calls they usually received. Sometimes we need to look to the obvious — the cultural norms that are meaningful to our community.

Chapter 8 Diversity

The Issue

Ours is a pluralistic society which attempts to assimilate diverse peoples and cultures. We may differ in our judgments of our success or failure as a "melting pot," but our history is replete with stories of our struggle to integrate our differences. New England "witch hunts," the Civil War, abolition, women's suffrage, the Civil Rights movement, immigrants' self-help groups, urban ghettos, class distinctions, vigilante movements, refugee resettlement programs, and political sanctuary groups attest to our continuing difficulties in integrating our diverse populations. The enactment of complex and intricate laws and the presence of oversight groups mark our struggle: the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Nineteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution; 504 Regulations for equal access for the disabled; Affirmative Action Guidelines; the proposed Equal Rights Amendment; the American Civil Liberties Union; Common Cause. Cultural diversity and differences among us are an essential aspect of our history and an inherent part of our current cultural reality.
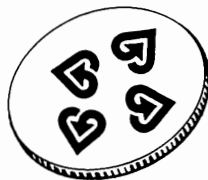
Diversity and Community Agencies

Our community agencies are part of our larger culture and reflect our struggle to deal with diversity. Community agencies develop not only an internal community or a team, but also an attitude toward differences or diversity. In some ways the issue of diversity is the other end of the continuum or the other side of the coin from community.

Community   Diversity

The recognition of diversity may be inherently difficult for nonprofit agencies, which generally have a strong emphasis on community, fairness, equality, and cooperation. Anyone who has ever worked in a small nonprofit that makes all decisions by consensus will recognize how difficult it is for a person in that setting to hold a divergent point of view.

Organizations differ from one another in their tolerance for diversity, and it is our assertion that an important organizational characteristic is the manner in which the agency deals with uncertainty, ambiguity, and diversity. Some organizations maintain taut boundaries between "us" and "them" in order to limit the amount of different information, people, technology that can penetrate the borders. Some agencies "kill off" internal differences in an effort to maintain harmony and community. Other agencies establish elaborate structural procedures to "manage" differences. Still others "get stuck" when decisions become complicated or when differences emerge — or worse yet, in their eyes — conflicts arise.

Diversity and Volunteer Programs

In our experience with the PAVE project, we began to notice a correlation between the way an organization handled diversity in general and the way the same organization handled its volunteer program and volunteers. In one agency that prided itself on its multicultural staff, substantive cultural and/or stylistic differences were denied. (I feel here an ethical obligation to note the courage and commitment displayed by this agency in trying to construct a multi-cultural staff team

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in a culture and a world that provides few successful models.) Cultural differences are difficult for most of us to discuss. Often the substantive areas of the differences — differences in attitudes and values having to do with family life, intimacy, sexuality, dependency, the work ethic — strike deeply at our cherished beliefs. Even the different languages that we speak betray different values and emphases. These are not easy issues to address. And this agency, this multi-cultural staff, had difficulty surfacing differences among them. Potentially volatile subjects were side-stepped. And so were volunteers. This agency was mandated by its parent organization to involve community volunteers as advisors. This is the same agency that received an average of two to three calls per week from potential volunteers. Yet they had no direct-service volunteers, and few community volunteers on their advisory board. It was their attitude toward differences as threatening that defined their attitude toward volunteers and that stopped them from constructing an effective volunteer program. They voiced their worries about volunteers:

> "Will they have a philosophy different from ours?"

> "Will they impose their beliefs on our clients?"

> "Will they be 'off-the-wall' and imposing with their suggestions?"

> "Will we be able to limit their say if we bring them in?"

Their fears about volunteers paralleled their fears about their internal, unspoken differences. This is the kind of situation in which the organizational issues are reflected in and played out through the volunteers.

Volunteers are particularly vulnerable to the assignation of being "different." First, in many nonprofit organizations, the number of staff is small and the volunteers often outnumber the paid staff. Most agency staff members operate in the same field — be it gerontology, domestic violence, education, art. They possess

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similar training and often come from similar back-
grounds, are of a similar age, and have been similarly
socialized into the philosophy, vocabulary, and culture
of their professions.

Volunteers are more likely to be diverse: by their
sheer numbers; by their lack of career concentration in
the field in which the agency operates; by their varied
tasks — from policy-making to fundraising to main-
tenance to clerical to research to one-time projects in
tasks that range from fence-repair to financial audit.
Volunteers are likely to be more diverse than staff in
background, age, training, function, and culture. And
if an organization views differences as a threat, it is
likely to see volunteers as both different and threatening.

Some organizations welcome diversity or recognize
that different skills are needed for a particular project
or period of organizational growth. One of the agencies
in the study found itself in this position. In the past
there had been a rift between a "purist" clinical ap-
proach to their service and a more "generalized" busi-
ness approach that included an emphasis on budget,
fundraising, and corporate support. They had also
struggled with recruiting new board members from out-
side their discipline. It was striking to us how this
group — though it had shown flexibility in its past —
at the point of a new venture, was able to find new,
diverse board members fairly quickly. Their recognition
of their need for diversification spurred an expansion in
their volunteer recruitment.

Volunteer programs reflect organizational needs and
issues, and we discovered that if you want to learn
more about the unstated internal issues of an organiza-
tion, it is a good idea to try looking at the attitudes
toward and the characteristics projected onto volunteers.
One agency, for example, was becoming ingrown in its
staff and volunteers and was looking to new sources of
funding, a new facility, and generally a future of hope
and revitalization; it similarly looked to new volunteers
as the answer. Hope was a central agency issue: this
became clear from the agency's hopes regarding the

volunteer program and its investment in new volunteers.

It is not simply the case, however, that volunteers "hold the projections," hopes, and fears of the agency staff. In addition, there is a reality to the perception that volunteers are "different." They *are* different from staff. Organizationally they are not trained or socialized in the same way, they often have other organizations that claim their primary work allegiance, they are not subject to the same cultural group pressures or organizational constraints. They are more independent of the organization, and often their standing in the organization is more ambiguous and uncertain. These real differences can raise the organization's collective anxiety level, particularly if the organization does not generally deal well with uncertainty and ambiguity.

Working — particularly business and corporate — volunteers appear to be particularly prime targets for organizational projections. Throughout the PAVE research, and in our years of work experience, we have heard many fears expressed in reference to business/corporate/professional volunteers. We are sure you have heard them, too:

> Will a loaned executive come in and try to change things or take over?
>
> Do we really want to let businesspeople on the board? They can't really understand or appreciate the way we do things here!
>
> Will an M.B.A. — or an L.C.S.W. or an R.N. or a C.P.A. or a Ph.D. — bring a different viewpoint or a different way of doing things?

In part these reactions are to our own community agency projections onto working volunteers. You are familiar with the stereotype: a man or a woman in a three-piece business suit, cold, rigid, "professional," who marches into our warm, comfortable, caring agency, looks at "the bottom line" of profit and expenses, criticizes our lack of cost efficiency, orders us to overhaul our systems, violates our culture, and takes over our organization. No wonder we balk at such an

imagined possibility!

Although our business and corporate volunteers rarely fit the mold we have constructed, they *do* often bring different perspectives, new ideas, and new methods of accomplishing tasks. Sometimes they also present us with new information from the community: the community concept of our organization, emerging community needs, new challenges, and the suggestion of different goals. In order to survive, we need this information. In order to maintain the status quo, we do not. Our ambivalence about change and diversity translates into our resistance to working volunteers, many of whom "hold up this mirror" to us and from which we turn away. Our response is a bit like "killing the messenger" whose message upsets us.

Diversity and Adaptive Strategies

We can serve our agencies well by *helping them examine their attitudes toward diversity and volunteers*. This attitudinal self-appraisal should be a preliminary step in the volunteer program assessment. It should precede intervention efforts, such as bringing on new volunteers, that might otherwise be subject to the agency's projections of being "different" and threatening. Attitudinal change is hard and slow work. We cannot expect change overnight. However, we found a few mechanisms that were helpful in bringing about increased receptivity to diversity:

Humor is an attitude and a mechanism that can help us to tackle difficult issues adaptively. At PAVE, we found ourselves confronting cultural stereotypes and deeply-valued beliefs and prejudices which were barriers to new volunteers. We found that humor helped keep issues alive and in perspective, and was essential to helping an agency work with its attitudes toward diversity.

Organizational reward of innovation is a helpful mechanism by which to acknowledge differences and the possibilities of improving our organizations through new ideas, perspectives, and procedures. Organizational

reward of innovation sanctions the expression of new and different ways of doing things. It provides a formal, acknowledged mechanism to appreciate diversity, and it provides a framework within which diversity can be encouraged.

Recognition and integration efforts serve the function of acknowledging different contributions and integrating them into the organizational culture. We need to publicly appreciate people's contributions — their suggestions, their work, their unique viewpoints — and, particularly if they are different or risky, to bring them into the organizational fold. We may, for instance, recognize a corporate work group's painting our facility at an agency party that includes all organizational members. Such an activity acknowledges the unique contribution of the group and also highlights how this effort contributes to the overall organization and how the volunteer group work adds to the daily work atmosphere of the staff, other volunteers, and clients.

Appreciation of our diversity may be a particularly challenging task to nonprofit organizations, which have prided themselves on the building of community and team effort. Yet it is precisely our diversity — our willingness to act on behalf of "the ignored" in our society, the underprivileged, the overlooked, the "different" — that is at the root of our commitment to social welfare and social change. Our world and our communities would be poorer indeed if it were not for our work. Likewise, our organizations and our individual lives will become monolithic, ingrown, and stagnant, if we do not enrich them by our capacity to embrace our diversity and our different neighbors — our working volunteers.

Chapter 9 Gender: Men and Women of the Nonprofit Corporation

The Issue

In this country, when a baby is born, the first fact noted about the child is whether he is a boy or she is a girl. With such designations, we each enter a world in which gender is a pervasive and deeply-felt aspect.

The issue of gender affects us at all levels. Recent theory and research in psychology and sociology suggest that one's perceptions, judgments, attitudes, values, and behavior are informed by one's socialization by gender. Landmark books such as Mothering (1978), In a Different Voice (1982), and Women's Ways of Knowing (1986) explore some basic differences between women's and men's development and experience of life. The timeliness of these explorations, and the extent of their impact, is noted by Gilligan:

> At a time when efforts are being made to eradicate discrimination between the sexes in the search for social equality and justice, the differences between the sexes are being rediscovered in the social sciences. This discovery occurs when theories formerly considered to be sexually neutral in their scientific objectivity are found instead to reflect a consistent observational and evaluative bias. Then the presumed neutrality of science, like that of language itself, gives way to the recognition that the *categories of knowledge are human constructions*. The fascination with point of view that

has informed the fiction of the twentieth century and the corresponding recognition of the relativity of judgment infuse our scientific understanding as well when we begin to notice how accustomed we have become to seeing life through men's eyes. (p.6) (Emphasis added)

Gender is an omnipresent issue that we experience at home — in our families of origin, our intimate relationships, our friendships, our parenting, and at work — in our relationships with colleagues, supervisors, employees, mentors, vendors, and clients. The issue of gender affects us everywhere and at all times.

Gender is a particularly poignant issue in contemporary U.S. culture. As we become aware of inequities, our reactions to them run high. The women's movement has kept issues in front of us: issues such as pay equity (women still earn only approximately 60 cents for every $1.00 that men earn), equal job opportunity, equal gender representation in government, reproductive rights, parental leave and childcare, violence against women, and the passage of the E.R.A.

Precisely because of its pervasiveness — its influence on all of us in all spheres of our lives — gender is a sensitive issue. It begins to affect us the moment we are born, and it continues to color our perceptions, our actions, and our experiences throughout our lives. The pervasiveness of the gender issue, however, does not make it easier to discuss. On the contrary, it is our assertion here that its constant presence — and its influence even in our language — makes it all the more difficult to talk about. Furthermore, our difficulty in discussing the issue further aggravates the gender problem itself.

Gender: Men and Women at Work

Historically, our country began with the influx of family units and the emergence of small towns and communities. A primarily agricultural economy required the participation of all family and community members working together toward common goals. Although there

were tasks performed primarily by men, work done largely by women, and jobs delegated to children, the commonality of the goals and the presence of all working in the same place — be it farm or small town — provided a basic unity and community for the participants.

As industrialization supplanted the agricultural economy, however, the division of labor became more pronounced. Men left their homes and farms and went off to work in factories and businesses and later worked in communities sometimes different from the communities in which they lived. Women stayed home and assumed responsibility for more of the community activities. Men's and women's work arenas were different and there was less overlap between their tasks. The unity of community life gave way to increased specialization, diversification, and separation.

Over the last two decades, further economic changes have affected our work and the nature of our workforce. From economic necessity, more women have joined the paid workforce: wives and mothers contribute to basic family income; single mothers support their families; divorced and widowed women return to or begin work; young, single women pursue careers.

The women's movement came of age during this era of economic change. Women workers organized and began to demand equal opportunity and equal pay. Training programs appeared: re-entry programs for older women, apprenticeship programs for young women, re-training programs for women seeking to change work fields, training programs for women in non-traditional work areas. More and more women entered the work force: in 1950, one-third of all women worked, and today more than half of all women work (Women's Equality: A Community Responsibility, 1986, p. 4).

Women not only joined and re-entered the workforce but struggled to break into traditionally male fields — medicine, science, finance, transportation, skilled manual labor, film. Women strove to advance in their fields: corporate women ventured to move up the ranks

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of management, and women in government and politics aspired to higher-level positions. Women have made progress in all these areas. But the road has been rough and the ceilings have been hit (Women's Equality: A Community Responsibility, 1986).

On an organizational level, our institutions reflect our cultural definitions and values, and therefore male/female issues are alive and well within them. Organizational consultants are beginning to recognize the power of gender in organizations. As one organizational psychologist has been known to assert, "Gender will be the major theme in organizational development for the next five to ten years" (Bergquist, personal communication, November 9, 1985). And in the for-profit world, books such as Men and Women of the Corporation (1977) and Games Mother Never Taught You (1977) have exposed and examined deeply embedded and powerful gender themes in the business world. The recent attention to the importance of mentors and the difficulty women encounter in securing them is one example of the gender issue.

Gender and Community Agencies

Against this chorus of political awareness and action, and recognition of the gender issue in the corporate/business world, the silence over gender issues in the nonprofit field is deafening. Little is said about gender themes in the nonprofit sector, in part because the idea of different treatment based on gender goes against the nonprofit self-image of community and equality. In addition, in the nonprofit world, a world that prides itself on righting wrongs and correcting injustices, to acknowledge inequality within its own ranks is heresy. Gender issues are not discussed openly in today's nonprofit agencies, and yet gender issues abound and affect the experience of organizational life in nonprofit agencies.

Women, for instance, have seen opportunity in the nonprofit sector. Particularly in the social services, women in this country have had a long history of participation and have not had to break into a new field.

Because women have been around longer, more women have been able to work their way up to top management positions. Just think about the number of women managers you have seen in nonprofit organizations versus the number of women you can identify in top management positions in corporations. Women in management positions in nonprofit organizations have gained experience in finance, budget, marketing, planning, public relations, personnel, program management and evaluation. The nonprofit world has offered women opportunities for training and advancement. Some women have been able to transfer these skills to the for-profit world.

The nonprofit sector continues to offer opportunities for social change, equality, community — and alternative structures and culture to the for-profit world. The emphasis on community, diversity, fairness, justice — have all influenced the development of a nonprofit culture that is aligned with the traditionally-linked "women's world" of care, nurturance, and community. The nonprofit sector, being more aligned with home, family, and community, has been more open to women. This is not to say that there is not a ceiling for women in the nonprofit sector. In my observations, the number of women directors of small nonprofits is greater than the number of women directors of large, national or international organizations. The discrepant salaries of men and women directors and the numbers of each on large organizations' Boards of Directors reflect similar differences. From them, one can surmise the presence of a subtle but effective "weeding out" of women as one moves up the ladder of finance in the nonprofit sector.

As the third and smallest sector, the nonprofit world has held neither the power — financial or personal — nor the prestige of business or professional life or of government office. As profit remains our culture's mark of success, the nonprofit world stands as second class in a business or financial sense, and therefore has been more available to the people in the work world who are, by pay and position, second-class: these people are women.

Yet the nonprofit sector grows in power: financial power and status. It assumes a larger portion of the national economy and constitutes a significant part of the service industry that is projected to occupy more of our labor force. As the nonprofit sector has become more structured, businesslike, and lucrative, it has become more attractive to men. Opportunities for men in the nonprofit world have paralleled increased opportunities for women in the business world. But the nonprofit sector is one area in which women have been able to gain credibility and power, and I am suggesting that as long as women lack equal power in the for-profit and government worlds, women will seek to protect their gains in the nonprofit sector. Differential status based on gender will continue to fuel the gender issue.

Gender and Volunteer Programs

Men and women in this country have always been volunteers. In the beginning, men and women worked together on their farms and in their communities helping their neighbors in the areas in which they specialized. Men helped each other building homes, barns, and fences; protecting their homes and lands; organizing over safety and fire protection; administering criminal justice; designing government bodies; and participating in civic affairs. Women assisted each other in home-making tasks: welcoming new community arrivals, quilting, weaving, sewing, canning, childbirth, and childcare. Men initially were the teachers of our children and the overseers of our public health. They were our doctors, our nurses, and our public health officials. They constructed our school systems and our prisons. Women worked for social reform: for better conditions for incarcerated and confined people, for care of neglected and abused children. Men organized to reform working conditions and to institute benefits for families of injured or killed workers. Men began voluntary libraries. Women began services for delinquent youth. Men worked on transportation systems and women were the first postal carriers. Both men and

women fought in wars, but men primarily battled on the front lines, while women organized the hospitals, supplies to soldiers, and "home campaigns" for goods — boycotting, rationing, and supplying materials — and morale. The campaign against slavery was waged by men and women. Women took the lead in women's suffrage and in temperance movements (Ellis & Noyes, 1978).

There have always been both men and women involved in volunteer work. But there have also been bastions of male and female volunteer activities. Men have held more voluntary government posts. PTAs have been traditionally more peopled with women. Boards of Directors of large, national nonprofit organizations have been predominantly male. Direct service volunteers in smaller, social service agencies have generally been female: docents in musuems, tour guides in zoos, volunteers in hospitals, crisis line workers, teachers' aides in schools have been women working traditional 9-5 hours.

The division of voluntary labor has paralleled the division of labor in the workforce. Also, as men's work hours became more standardized and regulated, their time available for volunteer endeavors became more concentrated in evening hours and weekends. Women were more available during weekday, daytime hours, and they assumed the majority of daytime volunteer duties.

As the economy shifted and the women's movement emerged, more women have entered the job market, but they have also retained their volunteer commitments. Today 51% of all women in this country volunteer, but they are not as generally available weekdays 9-5, and with their increased skills and interests, they demand different consideration and rewards from their volunteering. Organizations such as the Junior League prepare women for board membership. As more women enter the world of finance and business, they are sharing these skills with the nonprofit world and becoming more involved in fundraising.

Yet volunteering is a sensitive political issue for

women in this era when women are struggling for pay equity and equal career opportunity. The 1971 National Organization for Women resolution on women volunteering helped to surface the complexity of the issue. NOW's official position basically was that women volunteering for social action is acceptable, but women volunteering for other unpaid work contributes to the continued financial exploitation of women and the undervaluing of their contributions. Whether one agrees with this position or not, one must, I believe, acknowledge the cogency of the argument that as long as women are unequal in paid jobs and status, work without pay will continue to be suspect as being of equal value.

Shifting economics and the women's movement have changed the world for men as well. As the barriers for women into the work world have been challenged, so too has the entrance for men into the world of community service and the nonprofit sector. Men have always been involved in community service, but traditionally men have "stayed with the power" in civic responsibility and policy-making positions. I have seen no statistics to compare men's past volunteering — in social services and health and education, for instance — with men's current volunteering in these areas. But having been in the nonprofit field for eighteen years now, I have witnessed an increase of men in areas that in the past appeared to me to be dominated by women. I have noted, for instance, that in my twelve years of raising children and attending various PTA and school events, there are many more men present and involved in the volunteer activities having to do with their children's education. The first day of school, for example, is no longer a women-and-children-only event. Men have been entering new areas of volunteer activity. In six of the eight PAVE agencies, 19 to 39% of the direct service volunteers in the eight agencies in the PAVE project were men. But just as women have run into barriers in the for-profit world, men have run into barriers in the nonprofit world.

In half of the agencies studied, there was both a history and a current reality of different volunteer groups identifiable by gender: women's auxiliaries, women-only direct-service volunteers. In one organization, for instance, the Women's Guild had been renamed simply The Guild. The 53-member Guild Board of Directors now included 2 men. But the essence of the group had not changed. Still the Guild was the women's domain and the Board of Directors was the men's. The Guild members provided direct services to the clients, planned client programs, raised money to improve the facility, and published a newsletter on agency news and volunteer activities. The agency Board of Directors set and reviewed policy, determined agency budget, set direction for the agency executive, and established program standards. For this residential agency, the female Guild functioned as the mother and the male Board functioned as the father of the organizational family. This is not an uncommon model for nonprofit organizations and some version of this model exists in many agencies to this day. Even some organizations that pride themselves on intercultural and inter-generational programs still maintain hidden barriers between expectations of men and women working in the agency. These barriers may be largely unconscious.

The most poignant example of the gender issue in the PAVE study occurred one evening in an agency board meeting that a male volunteer intern in the project and I attended. As a residential facility, this agency had developed a ritual of the board dining together on-site just before the formal board meeting. The meal was prepared by the regular agency cook, and the board members dined in the newly-redecorated dining room. Especially for an agency that viewed not just its residents but also their families as clients, this ritual seemed an appropriate and homey touch. One-third of the board was composed of parents of residents, and the meals together probably served to join them more closely to their children's residential home and to bring all the board members into more genial contact. The board was a functioning group of community, parent,

and affiliated parent organization members that was looking to expand its membership and was having more or less the usual problems of recruitment.

Upon entering the dining room, the PAVE volunteer and I were introduced to other early arrivals and were welcomed by them. We sat down together at a table with a few male board members and two women administrative staff, and I recall feeling warmed by the group and the atmosphere. Although composed mostly of board members fifteen to thirty years my senior, it seemed a group that I, or others of younger ages, might feel good about joining.

And then two women board members got up and served the dinner to the men. What had begun as a warm "breaking bread together" turned for me to the traditional delegation of women to the kitchen or expectation of women serving coffee at the office, and I felt alienated from the group. I did not feel comfortable sitting and being served, nor did I feel comfortable joining the women serving the men. I could only wonder if others — potential board members visiting the board, for instance — had been likewise affected by this gender separation in an otherwise inviting volunteer community. Lest anyone reading this think that this is clearly an anachronistic pattern of an out-of-date agency, I hasten to add that the management staff of this agency was at the time all female and fiercely assertive, independent, and contemporary. These are not people who would in their personal lives feel obligated to wait on men. Yet none of them noticed this behavior in this agency, and I would suggest it is because of the unconscious gender dynamics that occur all around us constantly.

Within the volunteer world, there is a subtle history of separation by gender. Men and women have performed different functions and developed different cultures. The changes in the volunteer field, however, are keeping the gender issue in front of us: men volunteering, and volunteering in different positions, *may* instigate a change in volunteer culture. More women on

Boards of Directors and fundraising may do the same.

With diverse volunteer opportunities now attracting men and women to different positions, the gender balance or reality of the nonprofits of the past may be shifting. We already hear rumblings of it currently:

from a new male volunteer to a female Director of Volunteers:

> "Don't expect me to lift all the heavy bundles and to move all the furniture!"

from women administrative staff:

> "We don't want to go for a loaned executive. We need the expertise and the help, but we're likely to get a man who will come in and try to take over and change the way we do things."

from an all female Board of Directors:

> "If we bring in a man, we may have to relinquish some of the power we've fought so hard to gain. Is it really worth it?"

Last year I attended a number of workshops and state and national conferences on volunteerism. Attendance was overwhelmingly female — female directors of agencies and volunteer centers, female Directors of Volunteers. Almost all these were women, despite the numbers of men and women volunteers being almost equal. No one mentioned the gender issue or noted the obvious. But I noticed an interesting phenomenon. One of the prominent women leaders in the field was providing training on the use of social power, leadership styles, and creative management; and one of the top men leaders illustrated his points about the changing field of volunteerism through his humorous use of stories about his children and his family life. Something is happening in the volunteer world that is stirring up the old notions of gender separation, and it behooves us to begin discussing the differences in culture that these changes may bring forth.

But by and large the gender issue remains unconscious and the issue of gender is rarely mentioned

directly. In organizational work we are trained to listen for the unsaid and to look for the obvious. In the PAVE research, gender emerged as "the great silence." Gender appears to be one of those invisible, unacknowledged issues in the world of nonprofits and the field of volunteerism.

Yet change in the world may be challenging our silence. I remain hopeful and optimistic about our ability to confront the gender issue — as did the agency whose board dinner we attended. Following the women's serving dinner, I presented the agency profile. With trepidation, I noted the effect of that incident on me and its potential impact on the board's ability to attract new volunteers. I'm not sure what reaction I expected, but I do know that I was unprepared for and encouraged by the response that occurred. The president of the board — an older man — stood up, praised the report, and thanked me for my insight and my work. And then he concluded, "I think the least we can do at this point is to begin by having the men clear the tables."

Gender and Adaptive Strategies

To deal with gender issues is to touch people's most basic identity, identifications, perceptions, atitudes, values, and behavior. To deal well with gender issues in an organization requires *skills in sensitivity, observation, process consultation, and intervention.* Gender is not an issue for which one dons combat attire, confronts "the enemy," parades an air of superiority, or demands immediate implementation of sweeping new changes.

Before an agency can commit to and implement change, it must accomplish some preliminary objectives: to assess where it currently is, and to begin discussing the issue in terms of where it is, where it would like to be, and the aids and obstacles to getting there. *An agency must first develop a current gender profile, focusing on structural as well as cultural signs.* Structural signs include: the numbers of men and women in

board, staff, and volunteer components; the numbers of men and women at different levels of the organization (managers, supervisors, line workers); the number of male and female clients and any special needs/requests for male and female volunteers. Cultural guideposts include the tracking of who does what in the organization — both in the formal and informal systems. Who are the leaders — both positionally and personally? Who is rewarded for what behavior — and are different behaviors rewarded for men and for women? Note in particular who handles the money, who prepares the food, who handles the technology, who maintains the physical facility, who organizes the social events — any activities that are culturally laden and have been traditionally delegated to men or women. Study the agency rituals for "male" and "female" themes, and look at the agency history for the roots of gender issues.

After analyzing the organization, look at the volunteer program. Are the structural and cultural gender themes the same in the volunteer program as they are in the agency? Does volunteer recruitment, orientation, and placement differ by gender? Does promotion within the volunteer ranks vary with gender? Are there exclusively or predominantly men's and women's volunteer groups — whether by title or in reality? Are some volunteer groups "controlled" by the exclusion of others — and, if so, how? Is there other diversity in volunteer groups — by age, and ethnic background, for example?

You may find that the gathering of this information will generate discussion within the organization. All the better, for remember that one of the objectives is *to open up communication and discussion about the issue.* Roughly, information and communication lead to awareness and awareness leads to action. In addition, in the PAVE project we found humor and patience to be necessary ancillary skills.

One aspect of the communication effort is *to allow people to be exposed to each other and to discover the*

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richness that comes from diversity. Part of the adaptive
strategy is an exercise in experiential education. A
helpful mechanism to employ is *the convening of a
mixed group — of men and women from different or-
ganizational groups and levels — to study the issue and
to propose specific recommendations to address it.* This
group can be charged with the tasks of assisting in
gathering the information, helping to analyze it, com-
municating the information within the organization,
recommending strategies for change, implementing the
strategies, and assessing their impact.

A crucial concept to keep in mind in any gender in-
tervention effort is the two-fold view suggested earlier:
*attention must be focused on structural as well as
cultural aspects.* For example, written policies on affir-
mative action or equal employment opportunity are
useful to the extent that they modify structure and
organizational membership as well as open up oppor-
tunities and influence culture. Recalling our earlier ex-
ample, it is meaningless to re-name The Women's Guild
to The Guild if the numbers of men and women mem-
bers and leaders do not significantly shift.

Rosabeth Moss Kanter, in Men and Women of the
Corporation, cites three types of change efforts with
which to impact gender differentials in corporations:
opportunity-enhancing efforts, empowering strategies,
and number-balancing strategies. Under number-
balancing strategies, she eloquently explains a point that
I think we in the nonprofit world also need to
remember:

> But number-balancing should be the ultimate
> goal. Organizations with a better balance of
> people would be more tolerant of the dif-
> ferences among them. In addition to making
> affirmative action a reality, there would be
> other benefits: a reduction in stress on the
> people who are "different," a reduction in
> conformity pressures on the dominant group.
> It would be more possible, in such an organi-
> zation, to build the skill and utilize the com-

petence of people who currently operate at a
disadvantage, and thus to vastly enhance the
value of an organization's prime resource: its
people. (pp. 283-4)

Chapter 10 The Mass Impact of Professionalization

•*Marketing and Public Relations for Nonprofits*

•*Strategic/Corporate Planning*

•*Capital and Donor Campaigns*

•*Cost and Fund Accounting for Nonprofits*

•*Fee-For-Service*

•*National Labor Relations Board Guidelines and*

•*Personnel Practices*

•*Liability and Insurance*

•*Corporate and Working Volunteers*

•*Leadership and Management Skills*

•*IRS Guidelines on Lobbying and Political Activity*

•*For-Profit Businesses for Nonprofits*

Anyone who wants to assess the current state of nonprofit organizations and the challenges that face them needs only to look at a list of popular training programs to identify issues in the nonprofit field today.

The Issue: Professionalization and the Nonprofit Sector

Community service organizations have their historical roots in the religious tradition of service and good deeds. Helping one's brothers and sisters was seen in the beginnings of our country as a religious obligation

and a path to reward in the life beyond death (Ellis & Noyes, 1978, chap. 3). A shared meaning was supported by community work and commitment to community values. From this tradition, community service organizations arose, steeped in the values of service, sacrifice, and adherence to a greater good.

As the populace struggled with the ever-present issue of separation of church and state, and as community needs became more complicated and pervasive in the face of wars, disease epidemics, and economic depression, the government began to assume responsibility for more social welfare, education, arts, recreation, health, and criminal justice programs.

But the government could not do it all, and the U.S. spirit of individualism and community control periodically limited the government's involvement in community concerns. In 1894, the government formally recognized voluntary groups' contributions and granted tax-exempt status to nonprofit corporations. This action acknowledged the government's dependence on local organizations to carry out its community service function to local groups of people. In essence, the government was saying that nonprofit organizations were doing the work of government, and that rather than collect taxes and centrally administer all community services, the government would in essence "pay" the nonprofit organizations to deliver services by allowing their tax dollars to remain in the community. This concept is elusive but significant and it can be conceptualized as follows:

Model 1: Government provides services directly
Taxes → Govt. → Programs → People

Model 2: Government subsidizes community agencies to provide service
Taxes   Govt.   Nonprofit Programs → People

Professionalization and Community Agencies

With the emergence of the nonprofit sector and government support, community agencies drifted further from their for-profit colleagues. Nonprofit organizations emerged as a "protected class:" they obtained government funding in exchange for an ethic of non-competition for profitable dollars and the control and protection of government regulation. The private and government sectors assumed a "big brother" role and the nonprofit sector developed a culture of compliance, sacrifice, gratitude, and service.

At this point in history, however, governmental support of nonprofits and public agencies is decreasing, and financial support from the private sector is not taking up the slack (Salamon & Abramson, 1987). Nonprofits are being forced to compete for limited dollars. They are required to demonstrate fiscal accountability, cost-effectiveness, and program safeguards. Licensing regulations are more imposing and insurance requirements and liability are significant burdens. As the environment provides limited resources, nonprofits are needing to generate new income and to expand and contract program services. Long-term and strategic planning is necessary. Marketing and public relations are essential. Can you name the last week in which you did not receive an appeal for donations from a nonprofit — to save the whales? — to feed the homeless?

In essence, nonprofits are needing to adjust to a changed environment, and this shift involves a professionalization of the nonprofit culture. Nonprofits are required to act more like their for-profit counterparts, and nonprofit organizations have become increasingly complex. The old days of all staff and volunteers sitting around the table — or the floor — stuffing envelopes are rare anymore. Organizational structures are differentiated: Executives Directors hire and fire staff, financial staff control money, program managers supervise people and programs, and direct service workers have front-line, hands-on, client responsibility. People have different functions, responsibilities, authority, and pay. Job specifications require education and professional training along with experience. Employee perfor-

mance and program performance are monitored and evaluated. Programs have their own budgets and in some cases fund development requirements. Program planning is required. Separate programs and facilities are added to the one-service, one-office operation. Policies are set, reviewed, and applied. Procedures are standardized: from emergency evacuation to check-writing to dismissal procedures to client intakes and evaluations. Nonprofit organizations are looking increasingly like their for-profit counterparts.

Professionalization and Volunteer Programs

The major emphasis in the field of volunteerism for the past 10 to 15 years has been on the professionalization of volunteer programs. Marlene Wilson's The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs, first published in 1976, was a landmark in the move to upgrade and professionalize volunteer management.

Volunteer programs now contain — or at least know that they need — managers, program structure, volunteer policies and procedures, volunteer training and evaluation, volunteer recognition. Job descriptions, training manuals, time sheets, and evaluations now paper the files of the Director of Volunteers. Proper management of volunteer programs requires that the Director of Volunteers have authority within the organization, supervisory skills and training, and an adequate budget to administer the program. Volunteer time is computed and becomes a line item in the agency budget. Volunteer participation is required by many funders, including United Way and many federal and state funders. All of this is a far cry from the days when an agency staff member would pick up the phone periodically and call in some friends and neighbors to help with the task at hand.

There are now training programs for nonprofit Directors of Volunteers in local colleges and private non-profit management training institutions. Networks of Directors of Volunteers have formed. Volunteer centers

across the country have regional and state associations. A relatively new national agency, VOLUNTEER, appeared in 1979, as formerly separate volunteer organizations merged. National and state conferences are held, drawing hundreds of professionals involved in the management of volunteers. Innovative corporate/non-profit councils are forming and creative volunteer projects are being piloted, such as a midwestern project with the unemployed as volunteers, and the IRS's corps of volunteer tax preparation advisors. Local volunteer centers are experimenting with new ways to incorporate working volunteers in nonprofit organizations: in work group projects, in family volunteering, as technical advisors to nonprofit staff.

The professionalization of nonprofit organizations and volunteer programs has been neither an easy nor a completely welcome change. Although there has been some internal push for professionalization, much of the pressure has come from the outside — from a changing economic and political environment and requirements by funding sources.

The need for increased professionalization has met with mixed response from the nonprofit organizations. Professionalization has meant increased bureaucratization: hierarchical agency structures, vertical lines of authority, separate program components. Professionalization has also meant increased ''corporatization,'' with nonprofits having to attend to corporate articles, By-laws, personnel policies, budget, strategic planning, financial audit and reporting, stringent program review, competitive markets, needs assessments, marketing, mergers, expansions and contractions, lay-offs and RIFs.

Nonprofits may be gaining in efficiency and cost-effectiveness, but they may also be losing their historical culture — a culture based on community, cooperation, and people. Nonprofit people are not altogether pleased with this change. We hear it often in staff complaints:

> ''I work more and more with paper and less and less with people.''

"Our agency now makes decisions on the basis of funding availability and a master plan rather than client need."

"We have become so bureaucratized — so many committees and task forces and administrators to pass decisions through — that I'm not sure we could respond to a new community need if it dropped dead in front of us!"

"The agency director spends so much time outside of the agency — on funding, in meetings, in community relations — I don't know her as a person anymore!"

Nonprofit organizations bemoan their losses even as they enjoy the benefits of the new professionalization. They are in conflict, both organizationally and personally, about the effects of increased professionalization.

Now, picture, if you will, a new group of corporate or working volunteers entering an agency in such conflict. Working volunteers are vulnerable to being perceived as "the enemy." They take on the projections of the agency as "the bad guys." They embody the symbols of the corporate values and the increased professionalization that threatens the culture of the nonprofit organization. They often become the target or the scapegoat for nonprofit resistance to the increased professionalization and feared depersonalization. Agency staffs thus often *create* the competition, authoritarianism, hierarchy, and prejudice that they fear the volunteers will bring into the agency from their corporate working environments. This often appears as a sort of reverse snobbery: "We are the good guys who know how to help people. You are the bad guys all consumed with profit and greed and an inflated sense of importance and superiority to others — like us and our clients." Have you ever witnessed the response of a nonprofit staff, sitting around in jeans, informally processing the events at the end of a 9-5 day, when presented with a corporate volunteer who comes in at 5, in a business suit, ready to get to work? Have you seen

the group reaction of a nonprofit staff to a business volunteer consulting with the agency director on personnel policies or fiscal procedures or marketing plans?

There is an irony in this scenario. The nonprofit staff fear that the corporate volunteer will come in and take over or change the culture and working environment of the nonprofit organization — or possibly even worse, steal the staff jobs! Yet the corporate volunteers, in interview after interview in the PAVE project, explained their attraction to the nonprofit culture as a pull toward community and cooperation, a desire to be part of the culture, a need to participate in a shared meaning and venture, a desire to become *part* of the agency and its people — not to *change* it.

I have been particularly struck by working male volunteers' explicit desire to work on behalf of their communities by providing direct services to people through the agency work, and by the continuing assumption by nonprofit organizations that the potential male volunteers — whom they too often assume to be accountants, researchers, businessmen — want to work in their area of expertise within the agency — balancing books, conducting needs assessments, overseeing fund development. The male volunteers themselves — both professional and working people — express the desire to provide direct services to agency clients. They often seek a personalized work experience, in direct contrast to their more depersonalized and overspecialized paid work jobs. Many nonprofit organizations seem to miss this point and therefore to mismatch potential volunteers with agency volunteer positions. And the volunteers leave.

Although this misperception occurs with volunteers in general ("Will they take over or do things differently?"), it appears to occur more often or more forcefully with working volunteers — and more powerfully still with volunteer working men. This fear, of course, is intertwined with the gender and diversity issues explored earlier. Together, these issues interlock to form a powerful barrier to the inclusion of working volunteers in nonprofit organizations.

Professionalization and Adaptive Strategies

Nonprofit organizations need first to recognize their ambivalence about increased professionalization. There is, of course, no turning back the clock to the "good old days" of less diversification and more harmony. Having been involved in nonprofit organizations during the '60s and '70s, I, like you, may sometimes need to be reminded that "the good old days" were not always romantic. The trade-off was a lot of ambiguity, inefficiency, frustrated effort, job insecurity, and even poorer pay and benefits. Clients suffered from our internal focus and our lack of sophistication in working with other agencies and other sectors. But regardless of our past — or our remembrance of it — organizations and people simply do not progress backward and we are immersed in the '80s and face-to-face with the '90s. Increased competition for limited resources, complex organizational structures, changing environments, and calls for innovation are but a few of the challenges that lie on the horizon.

Nonprofit organizations, if we are to survive and succeed, must exist in the present and look to the future — out of necessity, if not by choice. But we must also maintain our roots to our past, and many people in most organizations in the PAVE study expressed the concern that increased professionalization might threaten the basic meaning and culture of their organization.

It may be seductive for those of us who like to take risks and are attracted to change to discount the voices of those whom we label "resistant" and "regressive" in the face of increased professionalization. Yet I think we would do better — serve our organizations and our people better — to conceptualize professionalization as one of a number of challenges that we need to meet. I think that a more pertinent point is that *we need to pursue professionalization within the nonprofit culture of community*. We need not — and indeed cannot — shed our past to pursue our future. Nor can we effec-

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tively silence or bully into submission the other voices in our organizations. We need to attend to those voices in our agencies that are concerned with keeping an historical sense of mission along with increasing our organizational ability to fulfill our promise.

We must help an organization to "own" this internal conflict and to hear these different voices — the voices of change and the voices of continuity. By attending to both voices, we will not become scattered by change or so entrenched in maintaining the status quo that we reject the inclusion of new people — in particular, working volunteers, whom we tend to decorate with our projections and our fears.

Our organizations will become, by necessity, increasingly professionalized whether or not we integrate new, working volunteers into our agencies. But if we seek to utilize these new working volunteers as rich resources for our organizations and our clients, we will have to do so by opening our organizational mission, history, philosophy, and culture to them in order to maintain continuity, and by attracting and keeping them through more sophisticated, diversified, professionalized methods. Our increasing diversification should serve us well in this regard, but our agencies will be able to make use of differentiated methods in their volunteer programs in direct proportion to their ability to professionalize in the agency overall. In the PAVE project, the agencies that were struggling — or had struggled and come to resolution — with the issue of increased professionalization were those agencies that also had developed innovative and successful methods of differentiating their volunteer programs to integrate working volunteers.

Some organizations had successfully *subdivided agency tasks into parts, so that different volunteers or groups of volunteers could assume one piece of a larger job.* Piece-by-piece renovation or maintenance tasks appeared to be particularly amenable to such methods. But so, too, are grant-writing, fundraising, client outings, special events, and even some client services. One agency examined its overall program of "recreation and culture" and divided it into trips and outings

that could be delegated to different volunteer groups. Another looked at fundraising possibilities and recognized that the drain on agency staff and board could be alleviated by the infusion of different groups of volunteers into separate events, thus providing new blood, a fresh look, and new energy to each project.

A method related to the subdivision of jobs is *the development of seasonal tasks.* Most organizations have some yearly or seasonal "flow" to them. It is also true that most organizations seem to gallop from one job to the next without looking at the overall track. Management by crisis, as we have learned, is a costly way to do business — it eats up people and other agency resources. Some organizations have taken the time to chart out yearly calendars and to spread events more evenly throughout the time. This method has the advantage, for instance, of not scheduling your major fundraiser concurrent with a major grant application deadline or the time of highest client load with the renovation of the plumbing system! It also allows *the Director of Volunteers to anticipate times of need for volunteers and to recruit, train, plan, and schedule accordingly.* Recruitment and training, then, can precede times of high volunteer need. One recreational program, for example, can anticipate a greater need for summer volunteers, when the children are on site all day and the staff generally take vacations — and can therefore schedule volunteer recruitment and training for the spring. A seasonal arts group can "shift into gear" with volunteers in anticipation of their performance season. An agency looking forward to its 100th anniversary celebration can use this event as a recruitment for volunteers, a welcoming of new volunteers, or a workplace for current volunteers. Seasonal tasks hold many attractions for working volunteers. Generally they are time-limited, they can be assumed in toto by one work group as its annual contribution to the agency, or a volunteer group may develop a procedures manual for the job which is passed on to another group the next year.

Volunteer programs which seek to involve diverse

groups, such as working volunteers, must also look to *the diversification of volunteer groups.* Just as many agencies offer different programs and house different program staff, agencies can construct different volunteer components. Advisory groups, direct service volunteers for each program, fundraising volunteers, public speaking volunteers are examples of differentiated volunteer groups. Such differentiation is particularly effective in allowing for the infusion of workplace volunteer groups and in capitalizing on people's strengths and interests.

Another application of the notion of differentiation of volunteer groups is *the creation of "levels" of volunteering.* The idea of "levels" of volunteering includes such designations as entry-level volunteers, supervisory volunteers, and mentor volunteers. One PAVE agency, which recognized the agency need to increase the number of expert personnel and the need to challenge long-time volunteers, looked to constructing a level of mentor volunteers. These long-time volunteers were to help train new volunteers, to accompany entry-level volunteers on their first assignments, to take on complex tasks that included the involvement and supervision of other volunteers, and to assume the responsibility for specific tasks previously administered or carried out by the Director of Volunteers. Many benefits issue from the creation of levels of volunteering: providing continuing challenge, renewal, and recognition for long-time volunteers; providing new volunteers with more supervision time and peer support; relieving the burden of some tasks on the Director of Volunteers; and raising the job of the Director of Volunteers to a clearly supervisory position.

Along with the diversification of volunteer tasks and groups, the organization must simultaneously attend to the need for standardization of the volunteer program, for increased professionalization means not only differentiation but also integration. *Volunteer policies and procedures must be developed, prepared, distributed, and updated.* These policies should be standardized throughout the different volunteer groups and programs

so as to be clear, transferable, and equitable. A volunteer manual that explains volunteer policies and procedures should be in the hands of each volunteer.

Volunteers must also be integrated into the overall agency, and I have found no better way to accomplish this than to involve volunteers in the agency planning function. *Volunteer inclusion in agency planning* recognizes the professionalism and commitment of our volunteers and the need of our agencies to listen and be responsive to community concerns. Using volunteers in planning assures volunteer representation within the agency and makes good use of agency personnel. As we can anticipate our continued and possibly increased need for planning, we can help to ensure adequate personnel resources to meet this need by including our volunteers in the process. Furthermore, we know that increased involvement leads to increased commitment, so we can assume that volunteer participation in planning might foster volunteer retention.

The increased professionalization of our nonprofit organizations calls forth a challenge to professionalize our volunteer programs and to utilize our volunteers in a professional manner, including planning, diversification, standardization, and integration. Our increased professionalization challenges our skills to balance our past roots and our future directions, and our techniques for differentiation with our methods of integration. Professionalization requires new strategies to accomplish both new and time-honored goals.

Chapter 11 The Developmental Stage of Organizational Adulthood

The Issue: Developmental Stage of Adulthood and Organizations

Organizations, like people, are unique, and the differences between organizations can be immense. We have all noticed the tremendous differences between people. On a group level, these individual differences seem to multiply geometrically, so that group interaction becomes complex and varied. On an organizational level, the possible configurations become even more numerous and complicated by different structures, subgroups, tasks, and numbers of people.

Yet intertwined with all the differences, there is a common thread — a developmental progression — that organizations share in common regardless of whether they are offering services to clients with AIDS or producing widgets. Organizational development includes a movement from simple to complex. Anyone who has been married and subsequently had children can appreciate the enormity of the move from a two-person system to a family of three or four or more. The tasks, the interactions, the complexities virtually explode. In organizations, growth also means increased complexity:

> "A social organism is like an individual
> organism in these essential traits; that it
> grows; that while growing it becomes
> more complex; that while becoming more
> complex, its parts require increasing

mutual interdependence; that its life is immense in length computed with the lives of its component units...that in both cases there is increasing integration accompanied by increasing heterogeneity."
(Spencer, as quoted in Lawrence & Lorsch, 1986, p. 213)

Organizational development, however, is not simply linear and orderly. It is also cyclical and dynamic — like the waves of the ocean, there are times of ebb and flow, growth and consolidation, change and stability. Organizations experience periods of heightened differentiation — such as the addition of new programs, units, and offices, and other times of increased need for integration — redefinition of organizational mission, and standardization of personnel and fiscal practices.

To further complicate matters, organizations proceed through these stages not only as a whole, but also in parts. Groups, or departments, within organizations develop at different rates, and these internal differences add to the overall organizational complexity.

Organizations are large groups of individuals. Like individuals and groups, organizations move through developmental stages as they grow. By studying groups, organizational psychologists have found that there are four or five recognizable stages through which groups progress as they come together around a task. Two conceptualizations — the first by Theodore Mills, and the second by Bruce Tuckman, follow:

Stages of Group Development

Mills	Tuckman
1. The Encounter	1. Forming
2. Testing Boundaries and Modeling Roles	2. Storming
3. Negotiating an Indigenous Normative System	3. Norming
4. Production	4. Performing
5. Separation	

Developmental Stage of Adulthood: The Nonprofit Sector and Community Agencies

Like organizations, fields of study or work also develop. Just think about the development of public health or computer technology or communications or the shipping industry. Now look at the field of community service or the development of the nonprofit sector. We have covered some of the changes — economic and political — impacting this field. We have recognized its increasing diversity of people and the movement toward professionalization. And on another level, there is the development of associations and organizations, such as Independent Sector, that track and impact progress in this field. The nonprofit field is becoming more highly organized. As the field negotiates new challenges and forms new systems to meet these challenges, the nonprofit sector may be seen as currently in Stage 3 of Mills' or Tuckman's systems: the stage of developing internal norms.

Within this field, nonprofit organizations are riding the tide of increased differentiation. While working fast and furiously to develop and implement organizational structures and strategies that will enable the organization to respond to an increasingly changing and diverse environment, nonprofit organizations are struggling to maintain a continuity with their past and an adaptation to their present and future. Applying the concepts from adult development, it appears that this organizational adaptation is a task analogous to the developmental stage of young adulthood, during which time young people attempt to master two major tasks: intimacy and competency — or as Freud identified them, love and work.

Nonprofit organizations currently appear to be struggling with the dilemma of achieving a balance between "the personal" and "the professional." These are not, of course, mutually exclusive or opposing tasks, any more than having an intimate relationship and going to

work are (though sometimes they may seem to be!).
But they are different threads that weave together to
enrich the fabric of our adult lives. In nonprofit
organizations today, there appears to be a struggle to
maintain "the personal" — the attention to individuals,
individualized treatment plans for clients, employee
motivation, the sense of community; and to balance the
personal with the professional — hierarchical organiza-
tional structures, accountability, management by objec-
tives, sophisticated fiscal procedures, standardized per-
sonnel practices, client program planning. Nonprofit
organizations are working hard to balance the warp and
woof of these two threads, as are their corporate col-
leagues. Management by walking around, organiza-
tional innovation and renewal, employee excellence can
all be seen as manifestations of an attempt to balance
or bring into closer weave the personal aspects of the
work environment with the professional organizational
aspects.

Adulthood often signifies a time of juggling different
tasks or needs and of bringing different themes into
balance. We read much these days about balancing work
and leisure time, home responsibilities and work com-
mitments. Another balancing act for nonprofit organi-
zations has emerged in the realm of change or progress.
The world is moving fast and nonprofit organizations
are working to keep up and be responsive to changing
community needs. The for-profit organizations are fac-
ing challenges of diversification, specialization, and in-
tegration of organizational focus. Likewise, the
nonprofit organizations are struggling to balance needs
for change and stability. Nonprofit organizations are
working hard to define and refine their organizational
mission: mission statements, and organizational goals
and objectives are reviewed and re-worked. Nonprofits
are undertaking more needs assessments and planning
procedures in order to adapt to their changing en-
vironments and to maintain some focus and integration
in their work. They are attempting to build flexibility
into their programs and organizational structures in
order to be able to respond to the changing field in an

organized manner. Integration and differentiation. Stability and change.

Nonprofit organizations are also recognizing their interdependence. Just as young adults first struggled in adolescence to "break away" from their families and form an identity of their own — then to establish themselves as separate and independent adults, only to soon recognize, in young adulthood, that no one exists in isolation or is purely on his or her own — nonprofit organizations have emerged from their young dependence or protected status, cared for by governmental parenting. They have struggled with asserting their independent status in the world, through early stages of financial development and organizational self-definition. Nonprofits are now learning a very difficult but very adult lesson — that they do not and cannot stand alone. They must work well with government and the private sector in order to survive. Individual nonprofit organizations must also work well with each other, in order to gain clout and to work effectively for their clients, their causes, and their organizational survival. Interdependence is a reality in organizational life just as it is in adult growth and development. The nonprofit sector and the organizations that constitute it are face-to-face with the challenge of interdependence that has emerged from their two hundred year history. Currently, nonprofit organizations are being challenged to "come into adulthood."

Developmental Stage of Adulthood and Volunteer Programs

Nonprofit organizations' volunteer programs are beginning to recognize that they must balance the personal and the task aspects of their work, their continuity and their change, and their interdependence with the other organizational programs, the external volunteer environment, and the volunteers themselves.

Coming into their maturity, volunteer programs are being challenged to socialize their volunteers into increasingly complex organizations, to formalize their

policies and procedures and yet to maintain a humane and personalized character, to bring together diverse people into a common volunteer component, to construct a volunteer program that is at the same time highly organized and highly flexible. Directors of Volunteers are expected to be both skilled managers and interpersonally competent supervisors, who provide a liaison between the volunteers and the different programs and people of the organization. Volunteer programs are coming into their adult years.

Volunteers — particularly the new working volunteers — are challenging nonprofit agencies to become mature, adult organizations. Working adults generally juggle multiple responsibilities — to work, to community, to home. In order to do so much work in so many areas, adult volunteers must be organized, mature, reliable, flexible, and adaptive. They seek to volunteer in organizations that appreciate these qualities in them and that promote these qualities in their volunteer work. Volunteers are looking to be treated as competent, independent adults, and they are attracted to organizations that honor this psychological contract.

There appears to be some correlation between agencies that are mature organizationally and agencies that treat their staff and volunteers as mature adults. One agency in the PAVE study, for instance, was struggling with forming its own identity, and was immersed in an organizational style of adolescent self-discovery and rebellion. This is an organization that also feared new volunteers coming in and taking over and diluting the organizational philosophy. They were concerned about the issue of confidentiality and believed that volunteers could not be trusted with client information. They wanted to closely regulate volunteer attitudes and work and to protect their clients from anticipated volunteer overprotectiveness, sympathy, coddling, and condescension. Their attitudes and concerns about volunteers might have been appropriate for 13-year-olds, but were inappropriate for adult volunteers. Their attitudes toward volunteers paralleled their organizational stage of adolescence.

Another organization seemed to attract young, needy teenagers as volunteers, whom the staff described as being "like having more clients, more kids." This organization had no training or orientation program for volunteers, and had only vague job descriptions. It therefore attracted roughly the volunteers they sought: unskilled people who will flounder around. And that's what they got.

Another agency wondered why it was not attracting working volunteers for evening and weekend hours. The local volunteer center reported that when they referred working volunteers to this organization, the potential volunteer waited days or weeks for a return call and was then told that the agency would try to come up with something for the volunteer to do and would then be in touch. More days and weeks passed, and eventually the potential volunteer would be back at the volunteer center asking for a referral to another agency. Adult volunteers expect, and are entitled to, timely and respectful treatment.

By contrast, a fourth agency in the PAVE study targeted recruitment of working and retired volunteers, provided weekend trainings, and supervised volunteers in a mature and responsible manner. Volunteers were assigned to a task, and initially offered the option of undertaking it by themselves or co-working with a more experienced volunteer or staff member. They were asked some version of "What do we now need to provide you in order for you to accomplish this task successfully?" Their first experiences were reviewed with them by the Director of Volunteers to assess both the effectiveness of the work and the satisfaction of the volunteer with his/her assignment. Future assignments and plans were made in light of assessments of past experiences. This responsible, adult program model had no difficulty attracting — and keeping — responsible adult volunteers. Volunteers in this program were recently surveyed. Seventy-nine percent responded to the survey. Of these, 95% reported "personal satisfaction in doing my job," 95% endorsed that "volunteers are adequately recognized for their contribution," and 86% reported "my

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volunteer job is challenging to me." One hundred percent of the respondents felt that they "received adequate training for my job."

Developmental Stage of Adulthood and Adaptive Strategies

Indications of an organization's ability to treat its volunteers as adults are found in the agency's ability:

- to design tasks that can be done during "adult" hours — evenings and weekends, in addition to weekdays 9-5
- to provide an appropriate level of training in an appropriate time frame and in a reasonable number of hours
- to give volunteers the information necessary to complete the task and then to allow them to function autonomously
- to assign to volunteers *real* tasks that are both necessary to the program and meaningful to adult workers
- to recognize and adapt to the fact that adult volunteers at different ages and stages have different needs, such as seniors seeking socialization from their volunteer work, middle years adults satisfying their developmental need to "pass on" their knowledge and skills to the next generation, and re-entry women looking to gain employment skills and re-training
- to attend to the personal as well as professional needs of the volunteer
- to design a range and progression of volunteer jobs that continually challenge a volunteer's development
- to provide realistic assignments in a realistic time frame
- to provide skilled supervision and consultation to volunteers
- to provide adequate organizational support, structure, and guidance to the volunteers

- to allow the volunteers flexibility and discretion in performing their tasks with their own individual style
- to display respect to the volunteers and the volunteer program by seeking volunteer input and feedback to the organization through designing and utilizing appropriate organizational mechanisms, such as volunteer participation on committees, task forces, needs assessment projects
- to construct a volunteer program that is organized and stable but that also allows for change and adaptation

It appears that volunteer programs in nonprofit organizations will be able to work well with adult, particularly working, volunteers to the extent that they operate responsible, adult programs. Such organizations attend to the adult balances between the personal and the professional, change and stability, and interdependence.

Chapter 12 Agency Work and Organizational Culture

The Issue: Organizational Culture

Can you remember going to your first day of school? You entered a new building, walked down seemingly endless hallways, went to a strange room, and sat down at an unfamiliar desk. You met a new adult, your teacher, who welcomed you, and you found yourself in the midst of many new children. The rituals — whether you were to talk or listen, when to get up and sit down, what materials to use and how to use them, who talked to whom and how, whom you were to play with and in what way, what you were to do when the various bells rang, how you were excused from the classroom or the yard — all of these customs were new to you and different from your daily life at home. For many of us, this was our introduction to the power of organizational culture.

Every group develops a culture of its own — rules, structure, practices — that characterizes the group and pervades its every behavior. No one sits down and maps out these rituals. They simply emerge from the group interaction over time. Organizational culture has been defined as "a learned product of group experience" (Schein, 1985, p. 7). The culture is most apparent to us when we first enter a new group, and as we assume membership in the group, we are assimilated into the culture and it becomes "second nature" and invisible to us. We adopt the group's rules and procedures to such an extent that we cease to be aware of doing so — or even that there *are* codes of behavior

and attitudes. Yet this group culture is powerful and pervasive.

It permeates all aspects of group functioning and influences the behavior of all members of the group. It defines *what* we will do, *how* we will do it, *who* will do it and *where* we will do it, and it provides the rationale for *why* we will do it as well. Group culture is a powerful determinant of our perceptions, our attitudes, and our behavior.

Organizational Culture and Community Agencies

We have talked at some length about the nonprofit culture — a culture based on service and community. We have discussed current changes in nonprofit organizational culture — diversity, professionalization, gender issues.

In addition to the nonprofit sector's reflecting a culture of its own, each nonprofit organization develops its unique culture. This culture evolves from the agency's particular history — its purpose, its people, its program, its environment. A significant ingredient in this organizational culture is the nature of the agency work. In the PAVE study, many elusive dynamics became clear through recognizing how the agency work influenced the organizational culture.

As a consultant, I first became aware of this organizational culture factor through my stomach. I began to realize that whenever I went to visit one agency in particular, I always became hungry. As one who frequently runs from one task to the next and forgets to eat, it took me a while to realize the significance of this phenomenon. But one day, driving out to the agency, I began to look forward to the coffee I knew I would be offered. In fact, I was going to a team meeting at the agency, and this meant not only coffee, but a nutritious and attractive tray of healthy finger foods for all to share. Now, usually I would accept the coffee and decline the food in favor of notes to be taken and organizational dynamics to be observed and

recorded. But soon I found myself at the tray of food, with a staff person suggesting that I just had to try Amelia's homemade jam. As I sat down, it finally dawned on me that I was being offered more than just food. I was being initiated into the organizational culture.

This particular agency is a hospice program that provides a comprehensive program to people who are dying and their families. One aspect of the program is an emphasis on nutrition. Quite directly, food = life. Now, no one sat down and decided, "We provide nutritional counseling to our clients and we recognize the importance of healthy eating, so therefore we should provide snacks for our team of volunteers and staff at all possible occasions." Food simply began to appear, and team members began to organize taking turns bringing it, and soon meetings were scheduled around lunch and coffee breaks, and volunteer recognition became a dinner, and so on. The nature of the work — and nutrition as one aspect of it — became an integral part of the organizational culture. To break bread with the team was to join in ritual with them — to become part of the community.

Another agency — a residential program that claimed as its clients not only the individual in residence but also the family unit — placed a strong emphasis on family. In the first meeting I attended, a new administrative intern was introduced first as so-and-so's grandson. By my third visit to the agency, it was discovered that my friend's former sister-in-law, who resided 3,000 miles away, was a second cousin to one of the volunteers at the agency! Family ties are the underpinnings of this organizational culture, and the emphasis on family affiliation is pervasive. As another manifestation of this ethos, in interviews with staff and volunteers, the agency director was sometimes described as the "Dad" of the staff.

The theatre group, for me, was the most foreign culture to enter. It took me months to recall that I had had many years of college coursework in the literature

in which they specialized. Yet I felt ignorant and slightly out of place. Their bread and butter was production, and this was a new area to me, which often brought forth startling realizations. This organization, for instance, was at the time involved in public hearings for a new site. Most organizations will orchestrate their presentations at a public hearing, so I was not surprised to see the scripting or hear the assignment of roles. But afterward, an intern with the PAVE project described the hearing to me as if he were analyzing a performance. A member of the organization critiqued the assignment of roles and the quality of the individual performances. The entire hearing was described as a drama of conflict and passion. Subsequent events reflected the same emphasis. In a recounting of the visit by a potential funder to the agency, the lovely presentation of food and service by the volunteer group was highlighted. A gracious community relations event was staged by this group when they were re-locating to a new community. Presentation is important and drama occurs both on and off stage: "All the world's a stage..."

Another agency — one that teaches parenting skills to its clients — was parental on many organizational levels. The director protected the staff from the board, the staff protected its clients from volunteers. Issues of protection, trust, and dependability were paramount. These same issues came into play in the construction of a volunteer program: in the fear of volunteers revealing confidential information, in the issue of whether the organization could trust the volunteers, in the concern that volunteers would not be dependable, in the fears that volunteers would be invasive.

Organizational Culture and Volunteer Programs

The organizational work influences the culture of the agency and the character of the volunteer program as well. Many of the volunteers of the residential programs

were relatives of agency clients. Hospice volunteers were noted for their ability to nurture others and their receptivity to the staff's "dark" humor that counterbalanced the deadly seriousness of their task. At a recreational program, the volunteers most appreciated were those who knew how to have fun and to play. At a program fostering independence for its residents, volunteers were sought who could function autonomously.

One of the conclusions from the PAVE study is that volunteer programs, to be successful, must be compatible with the agency's organizational culture and an integral part of that culture.

There has been recent attention in the field of organization development to the importance of organizational culture. Edgar Schein, in his book Organizational Culture and Leadership, has developed the thesis that it is a prime task of the leader of an organization to manage the organizational culture. Applying this concept to volunteer programs, it becomes the job of the Director of Volunteers to manage the volunteer culture. Since the Director of Volunteers is also a middle manager, s/he also is the liaison between the volunteer program and the larger organization. S/he therefore becomes the link between the organizational culture and the volunteer culture and it is his/her job to bring the two together. Some Directors of Volunteers do this job well. Others do not attend to it. Rarely do we make explicit this expectation and almost never do we provide training or supervision to the Director of Volunteers on how to accomplish this task. Yet if we want volunteer programs to succeed, we will need to highlight this aspect of the Director of Volunteers' job.

We expect volunteers to "fit in," yet we often leave them on their own to discover just exactly what they are to fit *into* and how they are expected to do this. This type of trial-and-error training is costly in time and people. It reminds me of doing marriage counseling and hearing repeatedly that one partner expected the other to read his/her mind, anticipate his/her needs and desires, and "just know" how to fulfill them. Few of us are mind readers, yet we expect our volunteers to

know what we want and how to do it. To complicate matters, we often try to hide our organizational dynamics (which we sometimes see as "secrets") or our "dirty laundry" from our volunteers. We train them on how we would *like* our agency to perform and tell them precious little about how it actually works. To the extent that we withhold or disguise the organizational culture from our volunteers, we set them up for failure.

Organizational Culture and Adaptive Strategies

Many of the PAVE organizations recognized the need to inform and introduce new staff with reference to the culture of the organization. These agencies explained to new or potential staff what makes the agency go, the "feel" of working there, and the interpersonal expectations, in order to ascertain the "degree of fit" between the person and the organization. I found the Executive Directors of these organizations to be perceptive and articulate about the organizational culture of their agencies. After all, they are the managers of the culture.

Yet this socialization was rarely extended to volunteers. I would therefore suggest that *the Director of Volunteers be initiated into the position of manager of organizational culture by the agency director and be trained and expected to manage this culture in regard to the volunteers.* When developing agency profiles for the organizations in the PAVE study, I used to ask myself this question: "What would a new volunteer need to know to fit in and perform well here?" After a while it occurred to me that this is what Directors of Volunteers need to ask themselves and answer for their volunteers. Directors of Volunteers need to assume the task of socializing the volunteers into the organizational culture.

The job of socialization should begin in the planning and recruitment stage: The Director of Volunteers must develop a clear notion of the organizational culture and volunteer needs, in order to determine a profile of the

volunteers that will be compatible with the tasks to be done and the organizational culture to be entered. *The Director of Volunteers should be communicating not only the skills needed to volunteer for the agency, but also the personality style, attitudes, and beliefs necessary to succeed in the agency.* Marketing approaches and materials should be carriers of this organizational message. Volunteer job announcements and job descriptions should contain information about the attitudes and skills required for successful job performance. Examples I have seen include: "Must be comfortable with issues concerning death and dying," "Must be able to work well in a group situation," "Flexibility imperative," "Must be dependable and able to work independently," "Sense of humor required," "Commitment to ending domestic violence," "Commitment to teamwork important."

Volunteer orientation and training need to be conceptualized as socialization processes and initiation rites. *The training program should include a component on the organizational culture.* The hospice program, for instance, contained a segment on "the team concept" that covered issues of trust, communication, reciprocity of responsibility, preparation, matchmaking, respect, and common goal. These issues tell a volunteer not just *what* the agency does but also *how* people in the agency are expected to do their jobs. *A formal mechanism for the initiation of new volunteers into the agency is helpful.* At a battered women's shelter in which I once worked, for example, because the confidentiality of the location was central to the residents' safety, the volunteer training was held at another location. At the last step of the training, however, volunteers who had successfully completed the training and been accepted to staff the emergency crisis line on diverter (call-forwarding) to their homes were then brought to the shelter facility to meet the staff and formally join the organization. Coming to the shelter became a symbolic entrance into the organization and its culture.

Organizational culture, however, is not static: it shifts with the addition of new people, programs and times.

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New volunteers contribute to the organizational culture, just as they are affected by it. Therefore, the inclusion of new volunteers is also an opportunity for the expansion or growth of organizational culture, and the recruitment of new volunteers can be a means by which to influence the organizational culture in light of the organization's needs. In this way, the recruitment of new kinds of volunteers can modify organizational culture, and the inclusion of working volunteers can help us to expand our diversity, our professionalism, and our community. Working volunteers, particularly those working outside our field, can infuse our culture with a broader base. Working volunteers from the community can help us to maintain a bridge between our organizational culture and that of the communities which we seek to represent and to serve.

I have heard it said that more people lose their jobs for their inability to get along with others than for their inability to perform the tasks of their jobs. I cannot assess the accuracy of this assertion, but I have seen and I have heard from volunteers and staff that many volunteers fail to work into organizations not because they are incompetent but because they do not function appropriately in that particular agency or system. I am suggesting that we fail our volunteers — and our agencies — when we do not provide them with a "map" of our organizational culture. We ask them to operate in the dark and we are surprised when they stumble and fall. We cannot remove all the obstacles, but we can at least let our volunteers know where they are and how best to tackle them. We would want no less for ourselves. And if we need to be reminded how tricky it can be to negotiate a new system, just recall the feeling you had as a child on the first day of school. Let us help make the path smoother for our volunteers.

Chapter 13 Volunteers at the Heart of Organizational Issues

The eight issues we found that impact volunteers and volunteer programs in nonprofit organizations — change, boundaries, community, diversity, gender, professionalization, developmental stage, and organizational culture — emphasize the interplay between volunteers and community agencies. We began our study with the theoretical knowledge that volunteer programs are part of organizations. We emerged with a fuller notion of how this interaction occurs and in what ways it influences the organization's ability to adapt to the particular challenge of integrating the "new" working volunteers.

In many ways, our findings exceeded our expectations. We discovered more variability among agencies than we had expected to find, yet we also found diverse agencies struggling with similar dilemmas. We recognized that the issues we uncovered may have broader implications for the agencies — implications that reach beyond the particular problem of utilizing working volunteers. In retrospect, this realization should have come as no surprise, but in reality, it did. We had anticipated more concrete findings — such as the need for flexible scheduling or targeted recruitment efforts. We were struck by the broader issues or barriers that were intertwined with the agencies' attempts to integrate working volunteers. One cannot, for instance, talk about new recruitment strategies without touching on the organization's dynamics around change and diversity. Flexible

scheduling brings up the organization's feelings about boundaries and professionalization. We found that without addressing these larger issues, organizations were unable, or hampered in their efforts, to employ creative solutions to utilizing working volunteers.

Furthermore, the broader issues we uncovered led to a more general conclusion — the recognition that the current volunteer challenge to nonprofit organizations may highlight broader agency issues. Increased professionalization, for example, will be a challenge to most nonprofit organizations whether or not they utilize the "new" volunteers. Change will be a constant factor in organizations regardless of their responsiveness to the changing volunteer environment.

It is significant that major organizational issues emerged from a study of organizational adaptation to volunteer utilization. We can look at this dynamic now and say, "Of course this should be so": volunteers are an integral part of community agencies. Why should they *not* reflect organizational issues? The volunteer/organizational dynamic is three-dimensional: volunteers mirror organizational issues, organizational issues reflect volunteer involvement, and volunteer and organizational issues interact to create organizational adaptation to the environment. Although we did not begin the research with this hypothesis, we were led to the conclusion that *aids and barriers to the utilization of working volunteers mirror larger organizational issues. This is so because volunteers, because of their historical and current centrality to nonprofit organizations, lie at the heart of agency issues.* It may follow, then, that if we want to understand an organization and its environment, we can look to the volunteers and the volunteer program for some clues. In the past, in the present, and, presumably in the future, volunteers lie at the heart of agency issues.

Chapter 14 Structural and Leadership Issues

In order to be organizationally effective, volunteers and volunteer programs in nonprofit organizations must have power and leadership. "Power is the *capacity* to influence, and leadership is the *process* or act of influencing" (Burke, 1982, p. 129).

A charismatic person in an organization can accumulate and exercise power. A charismatic person who heads a program in an agency can establish power for that program. However, in order for a program to hold power over time and over changes in personnel, *a program must have organizational power, and organizational power emanates from organizational structure and leadership.* Power is the *capacity,* but leadership is the *action.*

Board as Lead Volunteers

In the PAVE study, we learned that two measures of the power of a volunteer program were the degree of leadership of the board and the board's recognition of itself as a volunteer group. The Board of Directors provides leadership to the organization: it sets overall agency policy and assumes fiscal responsibility for the organization. As the board is ultimately legally responsible for the agency program, it is also responsible for the volunteer component. The board has the power to authorize the construction of a volunteer program, and it has the responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of that program. The board can — and should — call for program objectives, established policies and procedures, professional management, involvement and recognition of volunteers, and adequate budget for the volunteer

program. This is one of the tasks that legitimately falls to the board, and the board must assume ultimate responsibility for the volunteer program in the agency.

In the PAVE study we noticed an interesting correlation between the degree to which board members recognized their volunteer status and the priority given to volunteers in the agency. When board members recognized that they were volunteers, they actively assumed the role of models for other volunteers in the organization. This attitude can be expressed as: "I am a volunteer. There are other volunteers in this organization at other levels. I am in a position of authority to ensure inclusion of volunteers in this agency. In addition to this being my job as a policy-maker for the organization, it is also in my own self-interest to assure good treatment of volunteers."

Boards of Directors have the positional authority to empower volunteer programs in their agencies or, conversely, to model an attitude which can be described as "benign indifference." By their actions, *boards establish an attitude toward volunteerism in their organizations.* Even by doing "nothing," they are saying something. In this situation, neutrality is akin to indifference and promotes the message that volunteerism is unimportant in the organization.

The board is a legally required volunteer entity and it sets the tone for the legitimacy of a volunteer component in a nonprofit organization. In the PAVE study we discovered that if one wants to build a strong volunteer program, one must first look to the lead volunteers — the Board of Directors. The volunteer program must have some power and authority, and there is no better place to begin to exercise authority than at the top.

Administrative Leadership

In the PAVE project, one example of the power of leadership stands above all others. Having selected the eight agencies to participate in the project, we called a contracting session in which we brought together the

executives of the agencies in order to elicit executives' hopes, fears, and concerns, and to hammer out a common contract between the agencies and the project.

Of the eight agencies, six sent their chief administrators — by and large, Executive Directors. One agency sent the Program Director and another sent a staff person who worked with volunteers marginally. We noted this difference in agency representation and wondered what effect it might have on the agency's participation. We hypothesized that the attendance of the chief administrator signalled the organization's commitment to the project and, conversely, the absence of the chief administrator indicated less organizational commitment to the project — and possibly to the volunteer component within the organization. We resolved to hold our suspicions in abeyance.

Within six months, the two organizations whose executives had not attended the meeting withdrew or were withdrawn from the project. One agency decided that it could make only a three-month commitment to the project — a commitment that fell short of the 18 months the contract required. The other organization repeatedly failed to fulfill the commitment it had made to have a staff person available to coordinate the project.

By contrast, those agencies whose chief administrators attended the contracting session and remained involved with the project communicated their organizational support of the volunteer program study to their staff and volunteers. This organizational support resulted in high visibility of the project and the volunteer program and led to some dramatic and effective strategies for improvement of the volunteer components.

This situation brought home a crucial point: *the commitment of the administrative leadership of an organization is necessary to raise the volunteer program to priority status.* Without the leadership behind it, a volunteer program — no matter how well organized and potentially viable and valuable — simply will not have the organizational power necessary to progress and develop.

Authority: The Volunteer Program

Given an organizational leadership that values and promotes volunteerism, an agency must next extend some of this authority to the volunteer program itself if the program is to be successful. *Volunteer programs must have the organizational authority to act.*

One signpost of the authority granted to the volunteer program is its placement on the organizational chart. Study the differences between these two organizations:

Organization 1

```
                          Executive Director
Mgt.
Team        Pgm.        Dir. of      Pgm.        Pgm.
            Mgr.         Vol.        Mgr.        Mgr.
            Staff        Vol.        Staff       Staff
```

Organization 2

```
                          Executive Director
Mgt.
Team                     Assistant Director
          Pgm.        Pgm.        Pgm.        Pgm.
          Mgr.        Mgr.        Mgr.        Mgr.
          Staff    Staff   Dir. of    Staff      Staff
                            Vol.
                            Vol.
```
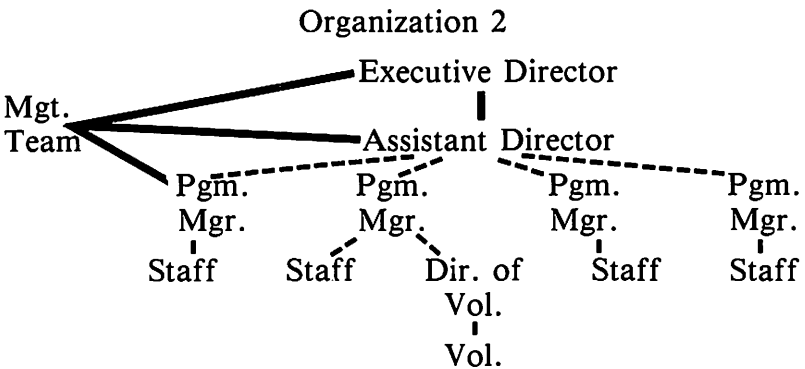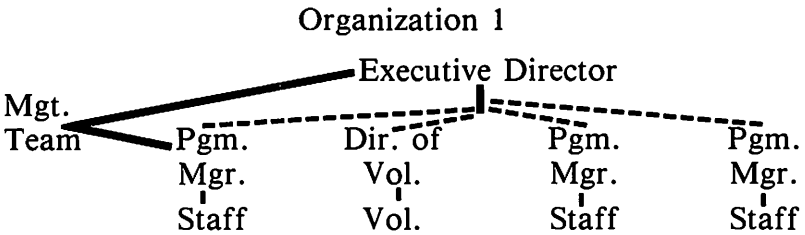
In the first organization, the Director of Volunteers has direct access to the Executive Director and is part of the management team. The person in this position derives authority from the level s/he occupies in the organization. In the second organization, the Director of Volunteers has to go through two managers in order to reach the top decision-making person, and the volunteers themselves are four levels from the seat of organizational power. It does not take much imagina-

tion to speculate on which volunteer program has more authority to make recommendations, to interact with other programs, to make and implement decisions, to evaluate program effectiveness.

In one of the PAVE agencies, the person whose task it was to coordinate volunteers was primarily the Director of Activities. Five to ten percent of her time (she and the Executive Director cited different percentages) was allocated to directing volunteers. She was a member of the management team and reported directly to the Executive Director, but she was also the least-educated and lowest-paid manager. This organization sought to expand and empower its volunteer program. However, five to ten percent of the lowest paid manager's time on the volunteer program reflects an organizational message about the prestige that the volunteer program commands in the organization and stands in contradiction to the overt message of expansion and empowerment.

By way of contrast, another organization had a Director of Volunteers who, though part-time, had the organizational authority to act. She was a manager who reported directly to the director. This person also provided her volunteer expertise to other programs within the larger parent organization. Thus she was someone whose authority to assess programs and to make and implement recommendations was organizationally sanctioned. As a result, her work was able to be effective and to influence many aspects of the organization.

Director of Volunteers as Middle Management

The Director of Volunteers is a middle management position. The person in this position is a supervisor of personnel and a manager of program. The volunteer program, by virtue of its contribution to other programs, threads through the service programs. Much as personnel or finance or public relations departments function at a level that supercedes separate program services, so too does the volunteer component.

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The Director of Volunteers must manage the volunteer program in relation to the larger organizational goals and objectives, policies and procedures. S/he is accountable to the Executive Director or the overall program manager of the organization. S/he is the liaison between the overall agency program and the volunteer program within the organization. *It is the job of the Director of Volunteers to hold the volunteers and volunteer program accountable to the organization and the organization accountable to the volunteer program and the volunteers.* S/he is an advocate for the volunteers to the agency and for the agency to the volunteers.

In our experience in the PAVE project, it became clear that those Directors of Volunteers who first appreciated their middle management position and then functioned in ways that were appropriate to this position, were those who were most successful in securing an organizational position for their volunteer programs and their volunteers. Observable behaviors of these middle managers included: their promoting a sense of organizational responsibility in their volunteers by keeping them informed about and accountable to organizational goals, their advocacy of volunteerism in all program plans and services, their insistence on personnel policies that addressed volunteers, their firing volunteers who undermined organizational goals or violated agency standards of care, their working with program services managers on the treatment of volunteers in their programs, their training staff on working with volunteers, their consulting with the Executive Director on the board aspect of the volunteer program, and their including board members in volunteer appreciation events. It appears that the more Directors of Volunteers assume this middle management posture, the more effective they will be in their organizations and the more effective their volunteer programs and volunteers will be as well.

Communication and Information Systems

One quick way to assess the status and integration of a volunteer program in the organization is to track the information that travels to and from volunteers and the communications mechanisms that carry the information.

Information is power. Volunteers who are not getting information — and who have no way of giving information to the organization — are relatively powerless in an organization. Even in providing services to agency clients, volunteers without information cannot be totally effective.

Communications systems are those mechanisms — both formal and informal — that carry the information. Some organizations rely almost exclusively on informal mechanisms: word-of-mouth communication that generally means one gets information depending on who one knows. Volunteers, because they are generally on-site less time than staff and because they generally do not develop the close personal ties with staff that come from day-to-day working and lunching together — are left on their own either to be exceptional, by developing a close relationship with a knowledgeable staff person or — more often — to be excluded from the informal agency "grapevine."

Formal communications mechanisms that included volunteers were rare in the agencies in the PAVE study. One agency produced an informative monthly in-house newsletter for volunteers and conducted a yearly questionnaire of volunteers. Another agency sponsored quarterly volunteer meetings that both dispensed and elicited information from the volunteers. But by and large, organizational mechanisms to carry information to and from volunteers were missing. In the extreme, one agency had volunteers on the volunteer list who had had no communication with the agency for years!

Just as one cannot give "informed voluntary consent" without receiving necessary information, one cannot make a commitment to an organization without be-

ing knowledgeable and informed about the organization. People simply cannot be a part of an organization if they do not know what they are a part of. *In order to include volunteers in an organization, the organization must assure adequate communications mechanisms* — be they newsletters, surveys, meetings, committees, task forces, telephone calls — *and the flow of information both to the volunteers and from the volunteers.* Formal methods are especially valuable because of the high turnover of personnel, the often off-site work of volunteers, and the importance of accuracy and consistency. There are few more potent ways to let volunteers know that they are part of the organization and important to its functioning than to let them know what is going on and how they are involved in it.

Reward and Recognition

Have you heard the story about the woman who runs into her friend and proceeds to describe her children to her friend? She says:

"Oh, my daughter — she's doing so well! She married a man who is so good to her. She doesn't have to work, he gives her plenty of money to spend, to decorate the house and herself. She takes good care of her health and looks — new clothes, exercise classes, beauty treatments. She looks wonderful!

But — oh, my daughter-in-law! She does nothing, the lazy good-for-nothing. She lives off my son! She squanders his hard-earned money on her clothes. She walks around the house all day just thinking about how she can spend money! And then she goes out shopping and fussing over her looks — she's a disgrace!"

Volunteers too often feel like daughters-in-law. And organizations promote this feeling when they fail to

recognize their volunteers' work and to acknowledge in a public manner their contributions and their value to the organization.

All people need acknowledgement and appreciation — staff as well as volunteers — and reward systems are important organizational mechanisms for recognition. In the PAVE project we saw agencies that took great care to implement financial reward systems for their staffs. Pay and promotion are certainly appropriate rewards for a job well done. But volunteers do not receive pay and rarely see promotions, so organizations are thrown back on their own creativity and resources to design reward and recognition systems for volunteers. In most of the PAVE agencies, there was no formal volunteer appreciation mechanism. In only three of the agencies was there an annual volunteer recognition event, and in one of these agencies, the volunteers were expected to pay for their own meal!

It has been well established that praise and rewards are powerful reinforcers, motivators, and determinants of future behavior. The field of behavioral psychology has taught us that reinforcement must quickly follow the behavior in order to be effective. Yet volunteers are still asked to provide services regularly, without reward or recognition. The once-a-year model of volunteer recognition works about as well as the gold watch for twenty-five years of paid work. It is not that people do not appreciate these rewards. It is simply that they are not enough. *If, in fact, our volunteers are important to us, we need to communicate their value to us clearly, regularly, and publicly through formal organizational mechanisms.* Personal "thank-you's" are important, but so, too, are organizational methods of reward.

Budget

Most nonprofit organizations now have detailed agency budgets, including line items for specific expenditures such as personnel, telephone, insurance, and training. Many organizations also prepare program budgets for individual agency programs. Agency ex-

ecutives know that s/he who sets and controls the budget sets agency priorities and administers agency policy. If a program or an agency function is important, that fact is usually reflected in the agency budget.

Volunteer programs are not free. In fact, I now cringe when I hear agencies planning to incorporate volunteers as a "no-money-outlay" way to get "free help." Volunteer programs do "make money" for the agency, and this fact should be reflected in agency budgets under income in a line item for volunteer time, such as: ____, ____hours valued at $____/hour, totalling $____, ____income/ year. But volunteer programs — just as any other program worth doing — require some expenditures: training monies, volunteer expense reimbursement, liability insurance, materials, recognition events, salaried staff managers. Yet few Directors of Volunteers are provided with a budget for their programs, and as a result they often end up operating in the dark, feeling like the poor relative of the organization, begging for pennies.

If the volunteer program is to be a legitimate part of the organization, it must be granted financial status as well as fiscal accountability. If we are serious about incorporating volunteers, we must "put our money where our mouth is" and budget for our volunteer programs.

Section III
The Process

Chapter 15
How to Enter an Organization and Assess Its Volunteer Program: Methods and Tools

Who Are You? — Entry

Organizational assessments can be conducted by external consultants — people outside the agency — or internal consultants — people within the agency. External consultants have certain advantages and disadvantages, as do internal consultants.

The external consultant may have more objectivity or distance from which to view the situation in its larger context, but s/he may lack the inside view and the trust of the agency members. Therefore, credibility and sensitivity may be key issues for an external consultant: s/he will first need to establish trust before s/he will be allowed entrance into the organization.

The internal consultant may have the advantage of knowledge and experience in the agency, but s/he may have the disadvantage of blindness to the organizational norms or bias toward a certain point of view. The internal consultant is likely to be more trusted as a person but more suspect as a professional consultant. Key issues for an internal consultant may be the establishment of his/her role and credibility.

A volunteer center person who is assessing a nonprofit organization may be in the best position of all: s/he is not inside the agency yet is not outside the volunteer/nonprofit field. S/he knows firsthand what it

is to be part of a nonprofit organization. S/he has the expertise to analyze a volunteer program, for, after all, volunteer center personnel have been doing just that for years.

Whether you are an inside or outside consultant, you will need to make clear and explicit with the agency who you are, including your responsibility and authority, your skills and affiliations, and any biases with which you enter the agency. You will need to establish professional credibility and interpersonal trust.

Negotiating the Contract

This brings us to negotiating the contract. No matter how much a part of the organization you are, no matter how much you have worked with this agency in the past, you will need to negotiate the parameters of this assessment project.

With whom? - The people

Your first step will probably be to ascertain with whom in the organization you are to negotiate the contract. This is usually not simple, but it is crucial. In the PAVE project, we negotiated our agency contracts with the chief agency administrator, and we required board approval of the contract. As a rule of thumb for consultants, it is wise to negotiate "with the top" — the people or person in power and in charge, the people who have the authority to make decisions, to act, and to commit agency resources.

At the same time, you will need to work closely with the Director of Volunteers, and, therefore, this person should be involved early in the contracting process. Our procedure in the PAVE project was to first ask for a completed application signed by the Executive Director and approved by the board. On the application, we asked for the name and telephone number of the Director of Volunteers. In our first interview, we generally met with the Executive Director and Director of Volunteers to gather information and to ascertain the appropriateness of the assessment for this agency at this time. We sought the commitment of the Executive

Director and the Director of Volunteers to the project. Next we negotiated a formal contract with the Executive Director and required formal board approval of the contract. Following the acceptance of the contract, we began to devise an assessment plan with the Executive Director and the Director of Volunteers. Our first interviews took place with the Executive Director and the Director of Volunteers, as the managers of the agency and the volunteer program.

Furthermore, because we needed the cooperation of staff and volunteers, we met with the board, staff (the management staff in larger organizations and the full staff in smaller agencies), and the volunteer group(s) and presented to them the goals and methods of the project. It was important to us that they know why and how this project was being done and that they were being asked to share the responsibility for it. We needed information from them and, ultimately, their cooperation in order to implement any recommendations that emerged. We also wanted to communicate the message that the volunteer component is an agency-wide program that necessitates the involvement of all personnel. We felt that the more staff and volunteers were involved with the project from the early stages, the more stake they would have in its success. We also hoped that involving people with the PAVE project might lead to their increased commitment to the development of the volunteer program.

What? - The content

The content of the contract negotiation should include the following:

- an *overview* of the purpose and usefulness of the project
- *project goals and objectives,* including an explanation of the process; time line; time, money, and resources committed by the organization and the consultant.
- *project consultant:* name, telephone number, availability, organizational affiliation, expertise, a review of others who might be working on the pro-

ject, if any, and in what capacity. As much as possible, the consultant should also make clear his/her working style: role, interpersonal style, cognitive and affective style, degree of flexibility, style under pressure and in conflict situations. It should be made clear that the organizational consultant will be on-site and needs to be introduced to agency personnel so that they know who s/he is and what s/he is doing.

- *agency:* designation of one person to oversee the project and possible task force with which to work.
- *specific questions, concerns, hopes, fears* of the agency in response to the project. PAVE used a joint contracting session for agency directors and incorporated expressed concerns into the contract.
- *organizational situation:* any major organizational changes planned or anticipated? How does this project fit in with organizational goals and current tasks? You will want to know, for instance, if the Executive Director is planning to reassign or dismiss the Director of Volunteers or if the agency has set the volunteer program as an agency priority this year. Remember, the volunteer program does not exist in isolation and any major organizational changes will impact both the project and the volunteer program.
- *responsibility and confidentiality:* You will want to make clear to whom the report will be presented. With some minor variations, the PAVE agency profiles were presented first to the Executive Director and Director of Volunteers together, then to the Board of Directors, the staff as a group, and the volunteer group(s). We felt — and feel — that it is important that those who participated in the project reap the rewards and have the opportunity to benefit from the information. It is also important that the profile receive a wide audience for maximum utilization of its findings. There is always the danger that such a report may be read by one person and filed away on a shelf — or, worse yet, become an agency "secret." Although the information should be held *in* the organization and strictly confidential (see Chapter

17: Confidentiality), it should be openly accessible *within* the organization. The audience for the report also must be determined *before* the report is compiled and the information-gathering begins. Only then can the consultant accurately inform those interviewed or observed about the future use of and access to the information and address their concerns about confidentiality and usefulness of the information they share.

Contract negotiation as a source of information

The early stage of contract negotiation provides information not only to the agency but also to the consultant. Although as a consultant you are establishing the preliminary groundwork for the project, you will also have the opportunity to gather initial impressions of the agency:

How does the agency respond to the prospect of self-analysis?

What is the agency's first response to "an outsider" and how does it feel to you to enter this system? (You may obtain some sense of a new volunteer's experience.)

What is the agency's initial response to anticipated change and innovation?

What appears to be the priority of the volunteer program in the organization?

How widely shared is the "ownership" of or the responsibility for the volunteer program and the volunteers?

Do the staff and volunteers work quite separately or are they well-integrated and accustomed to working together?

How is information about the PAVE project communicated?

What are the agency fears/concerns/hopes for the project? (These issues most likely imply similar concerns about the volunteer program and the volunteers.)

How fully are concerns expressed — and

how are they responded to by the
management?

Who is informed about and included in the
project and who is not?

What aspects of the organization are you
granted open access to, and what parts of
the agency are withheld?

Pay attention to these early impressions — and write
them down. They may change or be modified over time,
but after the initial entry, you will have become, to a
degree, part of the system and will not again have the
opportunity to experience the agency fresh — as a new
volunteer might. This is useful information that should
not be lost. As a consultant, you can hold the informa-
tion "in trust for" the organization, use it later
diagnostically, and share it with the agency for its
knowledge and self-assessment.

The goals: hidden agendas

There are many reasons for an organization to par-
ticipate in a volunteer program assessment, and each
agency will have its own motivations. A word about
"hidden agendas" is in order here. It is important that
these motivations be made explicit. Most of the agen-
cies in PAVE clearly expressed a desire to respond to
the changing volunteer environment for reasons of sur-
vival, economic necessity, continuation of service
delivery, program improvement.

Less frequently expressed motivations included the
need to establish greater visibility in the community, the
recognized tie-in between volunteer donations of time
and donations of money, the desire to include cor-
porate volunteers in order to gain greater access to cor-
porate funds, the desire to qualify for grant monies
that required the participation of volunteers, and the
desire to be more financially competitive with like
organizations through the expansion of volunteer help.
In some instances, idiosyncratic needs emerged — often
slowly and indirectly: the hope that the PAVE project
might directly or indirectly lead to foundation grants

for the volunteer program, the hope that the PAVE consultant might become the Director of Volunteers for the agency, the hope that the PAVE assessment might "kill off" a troublesome volunteer component, the hope that the consultant might bring out agency issues that were hidden or controversial. One organization recognized its internal ambivalence toward volunteers and hoped that the PAVE consultation might clarify the issues behind its stance. Another agency harbored the hope that the PAVE project might lend legitimacy to a politically controversial new program.

It is crucial that the consultant ferret out the implicit as well as the explicit goals of the organization for the project. Some of these will be compatible with the consultant's goals for the project, and some may not be. There may be goals with which you, as a consultant, cannot comply. One such situation occurred in the PAVE project. As difficult as the initial disagreement can be, it is far better to tackle it up front than to find oneself in a serious ethical dilemma later. It is important to negotiate these differences and to arrive at joint goals toward which all can work together. These goals may change over the course of the project (see Chapter 17: Out of sequence or "Help! It's working!"), but evaluation at the end will be impossible unless the initial goals are clear and progress toward them tracked and reviewed.

Gathering the Information

Now that you have defined your position in the agency and established the contract under which you will be operating, you are ready to begin work. Your first task is to map out a plan for gathering information. At PAVE we found that task best accomplished in a meeting with the Executive Director and Director of Volunteers. The initial plan was then modified by suggestions from staff, board, and other volunteer groups in meetings at which we presented and discussed the project goals and method.

The challenge you will face in gathering information is developing a *comprehensive* picture of the organization. We learned through the PAVE project that people and organizations are generally quite willing to share information with you (see Chapter 17: The most commonly asked question: Resistance) and that the challenge for you as a consultant is to assure representation of different aspects of the organization and to gather information in a way that makes it meaningful and usable.

At PAVE we relied on an organizational concept called "triangulation" to meet the challenge of information-gathering. The idea behind triangulation is that any one source of information is likely to be biased or incomplete in one way or another; two sources of information are likely at some points to conflict or to leave questions unanswered; three sources of information assure a fuller picture and often resolve the questions or inconsistencies that arise from only two sources. There are many rich sources of data from organizations, among them: interviews, observation (including participant-observation), questionnaires, surveys, and archival information (written agency documents).

We chose a three-pronged approach that included: (1) interviews — individual and group, (2) observation of agency functions, and (3) review of archival information. Each method has its strengths and weaknesses:

Source of Data	Advantages	Disadvantages
Interview	• provides a wealth of information • stimulates people's involvement in project	• interpretation of data can be highly subjective • can provide an unwieldy amount of information • self-report can be too biased

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Observation	• provides particularly rich and lively data • offers a "feel" for the agency atmosphere volunteers are likely to encounter • can offer a broader picture of agency work • agency "actions" can be more accurate than members' "words"	• provides data that are vulnerable to subjective interpretation of consultant • provides data that are difficult to analyze • provides diverse views that are challenging to consolidate
Archival Information	• generally documents agency history, mission, goals, purpose, legal standing, plans • reflects the agency's more formal aspects and "public face" • offers objective and available information • provides the "flavor" of the agency	• documentation may be missing or spotty • formal organizational information may be inconsistent with informal aspects

Interviews

In the PAVE project we conducted interviews with 93 people. The interview schedules, which are what we call the questions asked, were constructed by the PAVE consultant in conjunction with an organizational consultant from the PAVE Advisory Committee and a group

of interns working with the project. Copies of the schedules are included in the Appendix. There are two interview schedules: the agency questionnaire for all individuals interviewed, and the questionnaire for managers. The schedule for managers was designed in part to gather specific baseline information on the current volunteer program: number of volunteers and demographic data on them, history of the volunteer program, marketing and recruitment, and expectations of volunteers. The agency schedule was designed to elicit more subjective data about the functioning of the current program, its strengths and weaknesses, organizational aids and barriers to the utilization of volunteers in the agency, and future ideas for the use of volunteers. You will note, in reviewing the schedule, that the questions are broad and simple, but that under each question there are variables for the interviewer to explore should the person interviewed not spontaneously address these particular points. The interview schedules worked well. They elicited the information we sought, and people told us they felt comfortable with the questions asked. Later in the project, a group questionnaire form was developed to be used in a particularly large staff group. This form is also included in the Appendix.

A word on who to interview and how to interview: who to interview will, you recall, be planned in your meeting with the Executive Director and Director of Volunteers and modified in your meetings with staff, board, and other volunteer groups. The basic rule to remember here is to interview individuals at different *levels* of the organization and in different *programs* or aspects of the organization. You will want to make sure to interview staff and volunteers, including board members. You will want to interview people who have been in the organization for years and some who are newcomers to the agency: at PAVE we made special effort to interview people who were exiting the agency and people who were just entering it. You will want to interview people from different programs and offices. You will want to make sure you interview both men

and women, and individuals from different age groups and ethnic backgrounds. If there is a formal or informal "agency historian," you will want to make sure you interview that person. You will also want to interview agency clients. You get the picture: you cannot interview everyone, but you want to make sure to cover a representative sample.

"How to interview" is a subject for a whole other book. I am assuming here that you have some experience and possibly training in interviewing. If not, I would refer you to books such as Effective Helping: Interviewing and Counseling Techniques (second edition) by Barbara Okun, and to workshops in interviewing that are offered by many community colleges and non-profit training centers. The particular interviewing skills of which I was most cognizant in the PAVE project were:

Create a safe environment. Make sure you secure a private office or space to interview people so that privacy and confidentiality can be assured. Introduce the project and its goals in the beginning in a clear and concise manner. Let the person know that you are interested in his/her unique viewpoint and that all information will be kept confidential. Confidential here means that although you may use an individual's idea or even a direct quotation, the *source* of the quotation or idea will not be divulged. Let the person know what happens with the information from here and how and when it will be available to him/her. A good way to begin the interview is with a neutral question such as, "How did you come to this agency," "How long have you been here," or "What is your position and job duties?" At the end of the interview we asked if there was anything else the person would like to add and how the interview had been for them. We wanted not to overlook any important data, and we wanted to bring closure to the person's experience of the interview.

Listen. This always sounds so easy, but in fact is a difficult skill to master. It takes practice. It may be helpful to remember that you are there to *seek* informa-

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tion, not to give your own viewpoint, educate the person, or make friends. You will want to be as neutral as possible in your reactions to what you hear. Your statements should be limited to gathering more information and encouraging further exploration. Your responses are both verbal and non-verbal, so do remember to attend to your body language as well. Head-nodding, "uh-hm," and "Tell me more about that" are examples of effective ways to encourage an interviewee in a neutral manner. Another effective tool is silence. Patience is imperative in interviewing, and giving the other person time to think and decide what to say is a skill you will find worthwhile.

You are also listening for the "unsaid" and this is one of the most elusive skills of all. Nonverbal "fidgeting," avoidance of eye contact, gaps in a story, discrepancies between remarks, increased tone/volume/ affect are but some of the indicators of the unsaid. The more interviews you conduct, the more attuned you will become to listening for the areas you expect to be covered. If, for instance, an interviewee discusses the volunteer program at length and never mentions the Director of Volunteers, you will note that fact. If those interviewed all refer to potential volunteers as "she," you will recognize the exclusion of men. If staff talk about volunteers as if they were only on-site Monday-Friday, 9-5, you will notice the exclusion of evening and weekend volunteers. Listening for the unsaid is a skill you will develop through increased familiarity and experience with the interviewing process and with volunteer/agency issues.

One final word on interviewing: be prepared to meet interesting people and to be affected by their experiences and their perspectives. I do not think that you can come away from such interviews without being deeply moved by people's life experiences, their beliefs and commitments, their perceptions, and their contributions. What we heard at PAVE was a testament to the power and meaning of community service and a tribute to the humanity of its member staff, volunteers, and clients.

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Observation

You will have devised an observation plan in concert with the Executive Director, Director of Volunteers, and staff and volunteer groups. The question we found most helpful in probing which events to attend was: "If you wanted to make sure that I got a full picture and a real feel for the workings of this organization, what would you suggest I observe?"

We found certain "standard" observation events: a meeting of the Board of Directors, a meeting of the staff, a meeting of the volunteers, at least one client service delivery effort, a tour of the facility, and some informal "visiting" time at the main site, observing the flow of people and tasks.

We found the staff and volunteer groups to be particularly helpful in pointing out other agency aspects to observe, and the group brainstorming of this question to be most productive. As a result of these suggestions, we attended: volunteer orientations, a thrift shop set-up, an afternoon recreational program, home visits with client families, an agency program presentation, a play, a public hearing, and one client birthday party.

In observation, we attended to the following:

- purpose of the event and the match between the purpose and the event itself
- structure of the event and the degree of flexibility
- demographics and interpersonal style of participants
- leadership and degree of autonomy of workers
- communication and information patterns: who talked to whom and about what
- rules and regulations governing the event
- rituals
- individual activities and team activities
- cultural norms
- participants' degree of involvement and responsiveness

Each event is, of course, unique, and there will be particularly striking features that you cannot predict. My advice is that you note — on paper — your impres-

sions both of the event and its participants and your personal reactions. I developed a habit of taking extensive notes that I then reviewed and revised one to two days later, when I had more distance from the event. I found it to be particularly important to note any aspect that seemed confusing, contradictory, or mysterious. Often those aspects that did not make sense to me at the time became significant — or at least understandable — in light of information gathered subsequently. Recall that the observation source of data is very rich, but highly subjective, and may need to be "grounded" in the two other sources of data to be usable.

As with interviewing, in observation you will develop skills with experience. We learn often by contrast and comparison — and the more experience you have with different events and organizations, the more you will discern the variations among them and the roots and the implications of those variations. You will note, for instance, that a Board meeting in one organization is a rather "one-way" affair, in which the Executive Director imparts information to the Board according to his/her agenda and the Board nods its approval. You will attend a Board meeting in another organization which is facilitated by the Board President and is composed of reports from different committees and involves lively discussion and debate within the Board. You will attend Board meetings without agendas, that are so haphazard that you will not be able to figure out what is happening. And it will be largely through the contrast among different agencies' events that you will become attuned to different organizational norms.

Also, as you become familiar with different events within one organization, you will begin to notice the similarities in style among them — and, too, key differences.

As you will be touched and moved by interviews, you will also be affected by agency events in which you participate and observe. Please note that as soon as you join an event to observe it, you become a participant in that event. Your presence will influence the event and you, in turn, will be influenced by it. "Pure" observa-

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tion is impossible, and the ways in which you affect and are affected by the activities become further information about the system (see Chapter 17: You are part of the system).

I do not know how to prepare you to absorb the emotional impact of these observations in a way that maintains a stance of acute awareness and detached observation. I can tell you that there were some evenings I returned from work full of joy, and others when I dragged home full of despair. The play, for instance, lifted me out of the mundane world and I seemed to float through the next days. A visit with a family who had just learned that their father was dying and who were struggling to make arrangements to keep him at home left me in tears — not only for their pain but for their hope and their openness to the help they were accepting from a very kind and competent staff person. Be prepared to be touched by your experiences in your agencies — and know that good organizational consultants are not necessarily those who remain aloof and detached, but rather are those who allow their human responses to be part of the information they assess. I found this vulnerability to be personally challenging and personally fulfilling, and I wish for you a similar experience.

Archival information and unobtrusive measures

The official documents of an agency provide you with an outline of the organization. Beginning with the Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws, you will learn about the legal status of the organization, its structure, and its original intent and membership. The information is analogous to the framework of a house: it is important to know how the house is situated and laid out in order to make sense of its furnishings and decor.

I would caution you not to make the mistake I almost made of assuming that this information is standard or uninteresting and therefore easily dismissed. A few examples should make the point. In one PAVE agency I learned that the organization was both a public agency

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and an incorporated nonprofit organization, which was at the root of its dual image of being open to the public but selective or exclusive. Another organization was a nonprofit that held a $20 million corpus from the sale of former holdings. Its tax-exempt status was being questioned by the IRS, and during the project, the agency underwent a major reorganization into for-profit and not-for-profit components that affected all aspects of the organization. An understanding of the basic structure and intent of an organization is critical to an analysis of that organization and its component parts.

Written documents often provide you with "the public face" of the organization. Brochures, funding proposals, newsletters, press releases, newspaper articles, and external audits are rich sources of information about how the agency represents itself and how it is viewed by others.

The history of an organization can be traced in a chronological review of documents: brochures produced at different points in the organization's history, scrapbooks, minutes of board meetings, yearly financial statements. The production of certain documents at certain times can signal history in the making: the first personnel policies, new fundraising efforts, new licensing reports. Both the content and the method of presentation — how formal or informal, costly or economical — reflect something about the agency, its style, and its organizational issues or focus.

Volunteer aspects are also reflected in the agency documents, such as the By-Laws, which define the composition of the volunteer board. I learned to note the number of board members required and the officers and committees mandated, and to check these requirements against the current reality. Many boards, for instance, function with fewer members than are called for in the By-Laws, and they may be unaware of this discrepancy as a reflection of their underutilization of volunteers. One organization gave a clear and powerful message about its valuing volunteerism in its mission statement, which included: "...a team composed of various disciplines, of professionals and lay people, of

those paid and those volunteering, who cooperate in providing skilled and intuitive care...''

Archival information is a rich source of data that should be compiled for further analysis in conjunction with interview and observation data. To give you a view of the scope of archival information available to you, following is a list of the materials we used in studying the eight PAVE agencies:

By-Laws	Salary Schedules	Job Descriptions
Articles of Incorporation	Fundraising Appeals	(staff and volunteers)
Mission Statements	Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes	Program Evaluations and Plans
Organizational Charts		
Financial Statements	Policies and Procedures Manuals	Licensing Reviews
Brochures		Press Releases
Personnel Policies	Volunteer Training Manuals and Materials	Agency Scrapbooks
Long-range Plans (past and current)		
Newsletters	Client Evaluations (of agency services)	
Funding Proposals		
	Volunteer and Staff Lists	
	Volunteer Program Forms	

In general, we began with the By-Laws, Articles of Incorporation, Mission Statements, organizational charts, financial statements, brochures, personnel policies, and long-range plans, in order to provide us with an organizational ''map'' of the agency structure. Volunteer materials were gathered in an early and extensive interview with the Director of Volunteers. Other documents were suggested to us by agency members or requested by us in order to answer questions that emerged or to fill in gaps in our understanding of the agency.

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It was through our thorough review of these documents that we learned, for instance, that one organization had neither a current organizational chart nor active committees of the board. Another organization had no written volunteer materials: no job descriptions, policies and procedures, training materials. A third organization, in the midst of extensive personnel changes and organizational re-structuring, had produced revised personnel policies each of the last three years. One organization, with hundreds of staff and volunteers, had no personnel policies.

Another source of data that is related to archival information is that which is called in social science, "unobtrusive measures." These constitute data that can be collected without the consultant's intruding upon the organization, and generally they are both accessible and evident. At PAVE we quickly learned the importance of attending to the obvious: agency facility and decor, bulletin boards, libraries, technical equipment, office and desk arrangements, traffic patterns, meal and break provisions, parking arrangements. We noticed, for example, if a facility was well-marked or difficult to find. One agency had a particularly interesting bulletin board that was kept current and informative. Another organization, situated in an institutional-looking building, had taken great care to decorate the interior in a warm, homey, welcoming way. A third agency had plaques on rooms, art work — even on a calculator — to indicate the person who had donated it. Some agencies had a centrally located "volunteer desk," while others housed the Director of Volunteers in a separate building. One organization had paintings of its founding fathers on the walls, and one could not escape the authority of the statement made by the large portraits. One of the most poignant examples of an organizational message about the separateness of volunteers struck me when I phoned the agency one day and heard the person on the line answer, "Hello, volunteer speaking." I had a personal fondness for the weekly morning team meeting of one organization, when all the staff and some volunteers were present. I was reminded of the tone of the group

even before I entered the building — by the smaller economy cars in the parking lot, filled with bumper stickers, stuffed animals, and equipment for clients.

Archival information and unobtrusive measures are the written and physical clues in our environment that provide us with extensive information about the atmosphere and that affect us — and our volunteers. By attending to them, we can glean a wealth of information about our organization — information that is often "invisible" to the organization itself because of its members' daily familiarity with and acclimatation to it.

Chapter 16: What To Do With the Information Once You've Got It

Preparing the Agency Profile

Preparing the agency profile involves two tasks:
(1) analyzing the information you have gathered, and
(2) presenting your analysis in a written form that is understandable and useful. These tasks are presented together because in actuality they occurred together in the PAVE project.

We purposely did not design a pre-set format for our agency profiles. A pre-set design would have made comparison between agencies on similar variables easier. However, we felt that individually designed profiles were more appropriate to our goal of technical assistance to the agencies: the more individually tailored the profile, the more appropriate and helpful it might be to the agency. Nevertheless, a common format did emerge that included roughly the following sections:

Summary Statement
Agency Purpose
Agency History
Organizational Structure
Organizational Leadership
Organizational Culture: Major Themes
The Volunteer Program:
    Purpose
    History

Structure
Components and Demographics of Volunteers
Leadership
Culture: A Comparison with Agency Culture
Recommendations

The Summary Statement appeared first in the profile
but was actually written last. It answered the question
that I posed to myself after all the other sections of the
profile were developed: "If I had to summarize in one
sentence the overall agency theme or challenge at this
point in time, what would it be?" The summary state-
ments often had to do with the current environmental
challenges to the agency:

> "[This] is a young agency that, following its suc-
> cessful struggle for survival, is now grappling with
> its growth and emergence into the larger communi-
> ty. This 'growing up' and 'moving out' into the
> world is causing the agency to redefine itself."

> "The central issue is that of aging — aging of the
> residents, of the volunteers and supporters, of the
> physical plant, and of the organizational structure.
> [This organization] must face the challenge of the
> translation of its past into a more integrated form
> that will carry it into its future."

> "The transition which took place at [the agency] in
> the fall of 1983 resulted in a new program, the
> growth and redefinition of which continue to be
> the central organizing principle of [the agency]."

Not all profiles contained summary statements: I
came to this device mid-way through the project, and in
some cases the dynamics of the organization defied
meaningful brief summarization. So, if you find that a
summary statement does not clearly emerge from the
material, don't worry about it: it is helpful but not
essential.

The purpose of the organization can generally be
found in the archival information: Articles of Incor-
poration, By-Laws, brochures, mission statements. Do
look for the most current statement and compare it to

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past versions to distinguish the current aim and focus of the organization and any changes in mission that have occurred. Ask yourself if the purpose statement is clear and understandable, or vague and muddled. Is it too obtuse or too concrete? Could you re-state the mission in your own words? If not, it is probably not clear to you and will not be clear to others. Did interviewees allude to the agency purpose, and were their understandings consistent with the written statement, or discrepant? Did the group as a whole agree on the organization's purpose, or were there differences of opinion or focus? Does it contain a philosophy as well as organizational goals? Does it provide guidance for those within the organization and vision for the future of the agency? Also, compare the stated purpose with the actual agency programs and work you observed. Ask yourself if they appear to be consistent. Is the agency doing what it purports to be about? Could you have ascertained its purpose from the data you gathered and the agency functions you observed? Start looking for key words. Mission statements, in particular, are usually carefully tooled and their language often reflects the guiding principles of the organization. Phrases such as the following, from PAVE agency Mission Statements, reflect certain attitudes and carry significant connotations: "to assist and support," "a structured, accepting environment," "coordinating and cooperating with other agencies," "to live in an environment where they can expand their individual independence," "attain a full and dignified life."

The purpose section of the agency profiles generally ran from one to three paragraphs and all profiles contained this section.

The history of the organization was gathered from written documents, interviews, and physical data such as framed documents and agency scrapbooks. Some organizations have written histories in the form of a fact sheet or purpose statement. Others have written histories in their board training manuals or in sections of funding proposals. However, sometimes you will be the first person to develop this piece of agency

documentation. You will find relevant data in a chronological review of agency material: yearly financial statements; long-range plans; organizational charts; program plans, evaluations, budgets; funding sources; staff and volunteer lists; board minutes. The history section of the agency profile ranged from a long paragraph to a page.

Interviewees, particularly agency and volunteer program managers, will provide a more subjective and comprehensive view of the development of the organization. Here is where your interviews with an "agency historian" and long-time staff and volunteers will inform your understanding of the organization's development. This presentation of the informal history of the agency will be invaluable to you. It will tell you not only "the inside story" of the organization, but also *how* the organization effects change. In one organization in the PAVE project, for instance, the history was described as a continuing drama of charismatic people in leadership positions instituting change. In another, several major ruptures during the organizational history suggested that this particular agency developed through dramatic crises often triggered by external pressure from outside sources: funders, licensing agencies, external audits. How an organization has changed in the past will give you useful clues about how it is likely to change in the future — through what impetus and by what means.

Organizational myths are a significant and powerful part of organizational history. Myths have the power to influence organizational development: whether the events they describe actually occurred in reality or not, they *happened* for the agency and are part of its reality. Be alert to significant stories, agency "heroes" and "villains," and significant points in agency history. Include key myths in the agency profile. You will find that not all agency members share this information, and it will contribute to their knowledge and understanding of the agency.

We noticed that even agency members familiar with the stories or myths often had not appreciated their

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significance or their influence. Sometimes the presentation of an organizational myth will free the agency members to talk about it and to integrate it into the organization in a new way.

Organizational structure will generally be documented in an organizational chart. It may be worthwhile to note how accessible this document is and how widely circulated. In one PAVE agency, the Director of Volunteers had never seen one and, in fact, the Executive Director had difficulty locating it. Upon finding it, he noted that it was out of date. One can surmise that this was an organization that either cared little about structure or was very conflicted about it. Some organizations have different organizational charts for different purposes: internal guidance, external presentation, funding proposals. Note these differences. One organization which was in the midst of a major reorganization had twice in the past year revised its organizational chart. The new version was displayed prominently on a poster board on the wall, signalling an agency accomplishment.

In examining the organizational structure, you will want to notice a variety of features: how pyramidal or "flat" the chart is, whether or not there is a management team, how the volunteers and volunteer groups are represented, whether the Director of Volunteers is charted as a manager, how the various program components are integrated, how centralized or decentralized decision-making is, how information and communication flows both "upward" and "downward," and "across" organizational lines.

The structural design of an organization is a blueprint for the paths of agency action. The structure of an organization should facilitate its work. Look to see how practical the structure of the organization is for the work it does. If, for instance, the agency provides emergency or crisis services, note to what extent the basic structure allows for quick decision-making and action. If a client in the organization receives services from different program components, is there a mechanism for coordination of these services, such as a case

manager or service supervisor? One important judgment you will need to make is about the degree to which the agency utilizes the structure. Are decisions made by the process reflected on the organizational chart? Do people utilize the lines of authority and communication? Is there an informal structure that is supportive of the formal structure — or does the informal structure operate in opposition to the formal structure? You will observe how decisions are made about the contract. Is the process consistent with the organizational chart? You will hear stories and observations from the people you interview. Do they reflect the agency as represented by the organizational chart, or do members report that the agency actually operates in a different way? One exercise we found beneficial was to sketch the organizational chart we would have surmised the agency operated on from the other information we gathered — and to compare this hypothesis with the actual organizational chart. Differences between the two often highlighted significant areas of conflict or confusion. Another helpful question we asked ourselves was: "If I were a new member of this organization, would it be clear to me who to go to for what, or how to get ideas or actions implemented?" A good organizational chart should provide such guidance.

Your basic aim in this section is to present a picture in words of how the agency operates. Generally we accomplished this goal in a one-page statement.

Leadership should be analyzed in terms of its form and style. In relation to the form, is authority centralized or decentralized? Does the leadership function vary according to the task at hand? Do different components have their own managers or leaders? Is the leadership consistent with the organizational structure? Have the leadership position(s) changed over the organizational history? In regard to style, we asked the agency and volunteer managers directly about their leadership styles, and we heard corroboration of or disagreement with their descriptions from those interviewed. We also observed the leaders in action and noted the degree of fit between their stated style and

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their style in action. There are different categorizations of leadership styles available (such as authoritarian and participative), but we found it more helpful to describe the style rather than to label it.

Some agency profiles contained a separate section on leadership; others described the information as part of the organizational culture or organizational history. Operating from the assumption that the leader both manages the culture and reflects it, we often included a subsection on leadership under the section of the profile that seemed most appropriate for the particular agency. In one organization, for example, a central aspect of the organizational culture was its ethos of professionalism. One manifestation of this ethos was reflected in the often-noted personification of professionalism by the organization's leaders. Therefore, we included the leadership style under the organizational culture section on professionalism. In another organization, the issue of leadership was a prominent aspect of the history of the development of organizational structure, so the analysis of leadership was included in the background or history section. The point to remember is that leadership is a central aspect of the agency and should be covered in some section of the profile, if not in a separate section of its own.

Organizational culture constituted the bulk of the agency profile, and ranged from three pages to eight pages. A description of the organizational culture will call forth your keenest powers of observation and organization. Basically you are looking for the major current organizational themes. Sometimes these themes are historically based in the agency, and sometimes they are new aspects of the organization. Sometimes they are obvious and acknowledged, but often they are subtle, pervasive, and covert. The rule of thumb we used was to search out repetitive or "overdetermined" themes. We assumed that if a theme was central and important, we were likely to see and hear that theme reflected in different aspects and voices of the organization.

An example might serve well here. One organization, we concluded, had as a central aspect of its culture an

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emphasis on "the personal." We saw this theme reflected in many aspects of the organization: in the introduction of new agency members by their personal backgrounds and affiliations; in the plaques on the paintings on the walls, noting the contributor of the gift; in the highly personal information staff and volunteers shared with and about each other; in the description of the history as the tale of different individuals; in the emphasis on the individual person in a given organizational position rather than on the position itself; in the sparseness of organizational structure, such as personnel policies, and the reliance on individual decision-making; in the organization's questions about the personal life of the consultant.

All the data you have gathered will give you information about the organizational culture, and you will look for the repetitive themes, especially those coming from all three of the major sources of information: interviews, observation, and archival information.

Two often-overlooked sources of data bear special mention. The first is the language or vocabulary of the organization, particularly the key words it uses. In one organization, we heard numerous references to "independence:" as a goal for the agency clients, as a fiscal goal of the organization, as a description of the different programs of the organization, as a management and work style of the staff, as a characteristic of the volunteers. In another organization, "the team" held a central position in the organizational culture and we heard constant references to it — in response to questions about who made decisions, who did the work, how the agency was organized, with whom the volunteers worked. Key words will lead you to what is important and central to the agency culture.

A second subtle reflection of organizational culture lies in its humor. Since Freud, we know that we will often say in jest what it is difficult for us to say in seriousness. The humor in an organization often revealed to us the "pressure points" of the organization. One organization had a "silly" sense of humor that seemed to erupt periodically in reaction to its daily seriousness.

This organization had a strong emphasis on hard work and professionalism and expressed its humor intermittently in a break from the daily seriousness of its work. The humor at these times was likely to be silly and somewhat embarrassed. The one particularly funny staff member was also the staff member seen as the least professional — an indication of the inverse correlation for this agency between humor and professional competence.

Common Issues. The eight organizational issues that compose the second section of this book grew out of the major themes noted in the organizational cultures of the PAVE agencies. Although each agency profile had been individually developed, and each organizational culture section gleaned from the particular agency, there emerged the eight common issues: change, boundaries, community, diversity, gender, professionalization, developmental stage, and organizational culture as agency work.

In a process parallel to looking for theme repetition within an agency in order the uncover organizational culture, we found the eight issues overdetermined for the group of PAVE agencies as a whole. These eight issues, then, can serve as a guideline for your organizational analysis of the agencies with which you work. Study how your agency tends to respond to change. Look at the permeability of the boundaries between the organization and its community, and within the organization itself. Look for the agency's sense of community and its response to diversity. Track the variable of gender throughout the agency: the gender membership in different agency groups and the different attitudes. Study how the agency has responded to the increased environmental pressure for professionalization, and how it balances "the personal" and "the professional." At what developmental stage is the agency and the volunteer program, and how is that stage reflected in its treatment of volunteers? Become familiar with the agency work and look at the many ways that work is reflected in the organizational culture. You will still need to develop an individualized assessment of the

organizational culture, but the eight issues will provide you with themes that are likely to emerge.

Volunteer Program. You will study the volunteer program also in terms of its purpose, history, structure, leadership, and culture. You may make this a separate section or (particularly if the volunteer program is small or young) incorporate your volunteer analysis into the organizational analysis. Whichever way you organize it, you need to be alert for the "degree of fit" between the volunteer program and the organization in terms of these variables. Is the purpose of the volunteer program complementary to the agency purpose? Does the history of the agency contain a history of volunteerism? Are the volunteer program structure and leadership consistent or discrepant with the overall agency form and style? Is the organizational culture of the volunteer program in harmony with the organizational culture of the agency?

Following is a checklist of the various aspects of a volunteer program at which we looked:

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM STRUCTURE: degree of centralization and decentralization; integration of different components

VOLUNTEER DEMOGRAPHICS: numbers of working, non-working, and retired volunteers; numbers of men, women, ethnic minorities; age and geographic distribution of volunteers; representation of volunteers in different programs; demographics of volunteers compared to demographics of community and agency staff

DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEERS: percentage of time worked and percentage of time on volunteer program; hours worked — daytime, evening, weekend; qualifications for the position; in-service training provided and needed; job description, salary, and organizational level; length of time at agency

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT: methods; frequency; appropriateness: degree of success

VOLUNTEER TRAINING: total number of hours, times offered, and number of training cycles per year; materials and manuals; methods of presentation; train-

ing course content; presenters; in-service training

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION: socialization procedures; integration into organization and group

SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS: feedback and evaluation; contracts; frequency; positions of supervisors

VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES: degree of fit with personnel policies; rights and responsibilities of volunteers; reimbursement policies and procedures

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM BUDGET: adequacy of budget; development of budget — by whom and process; breakdown of line items

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION: formal events; informal methods

VOLUNTEER COMMUNICATION: mechanisms of communication; information communicated; mechanisms for volunteer input to organization

PLANS AND HOPES FOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM: what the agency would like the volunteer program to be; what the barriers and aids are to accomplishing the goals; formal and informal goals; realism and appropriateness of goals; mechanisms for implementation, including person(s) responsible and time line; organizational commitment to plans.

One possibility we found through PAVE is that there may in fact be no unified volunteer program in an agency but rather separate volunteer programs or groups: board, advisory committee, fundraising volunteers, service volunteers, specific program volunteers. One organization had a central Director of Volunteers and a set of volunteer policies, but, after many months of work with this agency, we learned that there was a whole cadre of program volunteers who were not recruited, trained, supervised, or monitored by the Director of Volunteers. Such differentiation of volunteer components may be consistent with an overall organizational structure that segregates programs, but it will present certain challenges to the Director of Volunteers and to the agency, and such structures are important to note. In the agency profiles of organiza-

tions with separate volunteer components, we often handled each component separately in the profile and compared and contrasted the volunteer groups.

A presentation and analysis of the current volunteer program is important in order to gather a current and accurate picture and to establish a baseline from which to track any changes. If there have been any other studies of the volunteer program, their findings should be addressed here. Also, information from any self-evaluations or surveys of volunteer participation or satisfaction should be included in the profile. Remarks from volunteers about their volunteer experience are relevant and often worthy of quotation.

Recommendations will emerge from your analysis of the different aspects of the organization, its strengths and weaknesses, its plans and dreams and the barriers you can anticipate to accomplishing them, and its degree of fit with the current — and projected — environment.

Recommendations for agency consideration range from the specific — such as volunteer recruitment strategies — to the global — such as organizational restructuring. Examples from the PAVE project include:

- to formalize linkages among programs
- to strengthen the board as lead volunteers
- to commit agency resources (planning time, staff time, money) to the volunteer program
- to strengthen organizational boundaries
- to develop training materials for volunteer training
- to recruit a limited number of student interns
- to provide training for the Director of Volunteers
- to increase the time of the Director of Volunteers
- to create an integrated agency-wide volunteer program
- to appoint a Director of Volunteers
- to re-design the volunteer meeting schedule
- to create volunteer policies and procedures
- to expand the volunteer training to include other information, including socialization into agency culture

- to modify the volunteer program structure
- to re-design the organizational structure
- to recruit certain types of volunteers, including specific recruitment strategies
- to develop organizational mechanisms to further integrate the volunteer program into the organization
- to increase leadership support for the volunteer program
- to create a "mentor" level of volunteers
- to provide team-building with staff and volunteers
- to disband a volunteer program
- to dissolve a specific volunteer program component
- to create a task force to solve a particular volunteer program dilemma
- to create an in-house newsletter
- to provide staff training on working with volunteers
- a range of specific recommendations for particular volunteer groups.

In presenting the recommendations, we tried to limit the number (the range was two to six), to include only the essential and to present both the larger context and rationale for the recommendations as well as the specific suggestions. Thus, for example, in one organization we noted the *client* need for both male and female volunteers from different ethnic backgrounds, as well as specific recruitment strategies. In another, we cited the agency difficulties with diversity and suggested some specific work with the staff on their attitudes before the agency tried to expand its volunteer program. In one agency we pointed out the inherent structural problem that had led to the resignation of a Director of Volunteers and suggested an organizational restructuring before hiring in a new person in a precarious position.

Keep in mind that your recommendations are just that. Your recommendations should be presented in a manner that maximizes the organization's ability to understand and appreciate them. As a consultant you submit your suggestions to the agency and allow its

members to come to their own decisions regarding their merit, their importance, and their applicability.

Feedback: Tell It Honestly, Openly, and Gently

You are now ready to present your draft of the agency profile to the members of the organization. You recall that you will have already agreed upon the process: to whom it will be presented, when, and in what forum.

At PAVE we usually began with a meeting with the Executive Director and the Director of Volunteers. You will now be familiar with the people in these positions and can adapt your presentation to their learning styles (visual or auditory; participatory or lecture; immediate response and interaction or time to assimilate material and respond). Time availability will also influence your arrangements for this first presentation of the material, but we do suggest that either before or after the meeting you allow them time to absorb the information and analysis and time to respond to it. Be prepared to make amendments to the profile following this meeting. Invariably you will need to correct some information or understanding and you will need to be alert to managerial concerns, especially about some sensitive issues that the profile is likely to touch.

Your next audiences will be staff, board, and other volunteer groups. In most cases we addressed these groups in separate presentations. In some cases, however, as in one organization for which we recommended team-building among staff and volunteers, we brought together the groups in a joint work session. You will probably encounter scheduling problems and substantive concerns that will call forth creative variations in arrangements. One organization, whose Executive Director was out of town for an extended period, videotaped the PAVE presentation to the management staff. This innovative solution to a scheduling difficulty had the added advantage of creating another mode of information delivery that

could be used for training or socialization purposes. Another organization's management staff had strong reactions to the profile and we scheduled a series of meetings to address these concerns before proceeding with presentations to other groups. However you modify the presentation process, make sure that the profile is available to those people who have par- ticipated in the process, and those to whom you have promised the information.

Some guidelines about delivering the material: present the profile honestly, openly, and gently. By honestly, I mean to explain your findings in a forthright manner. Tell it as you see it and try not to be cryptic or evasive. You are there to present information and, in general, people are most able to hear information when you present it in an informative, straightforward, emotionally-neutral manner. You may have to say things which you anticipate will be difficult for the agency members to hear, but your job is to give them the information, and evasiveness or "softening" of the point is more likely to lead to misunderstanding than to clear communication.

Your openness in the presentation means that you must be prepared to modify your material. Remember — you are presenting a *draft,* not the final version. You have sampled what you hope is a representative sample of the organizational information, but you do not have *all* the information — and certainly not all the answers. The people in the organization can help you to correct information, to see a new point of view, to modify an off-target analysis, to solidify an idea, to ac-commodate a recommendation to the realities of the organization's life. Stay open to their input and sugges-tions. After all, one of your aims is to create agency ownership of the material, and you cannot do this by excluding the participation of agency members.

Gentleness — the ability to present information in a sensitive and kind way — is a skill that you will have practiced for years in your life dealings with others. Employ it here. You will be presenting a lot of infor-mation, some of which is intimate and sensitive to the

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organization and its members. Imagine yourself in the situation of having someone — say, a family therapist — come into your home, observe your performance, analyze your family dynamics, critique your interpersonal skills (perhaps your parenting as well) and make suggestions to you on how to change your schedule, organize your finances, improve your relationships, or raise your children. It is with a similar apprehension that the members of the organization are likely to face your report. You are analyzing an important part of their lives: a "home" they inhabit, their interpersonal work relationships, their area of expertise, their professional self-image, and sometimes their livelihood. The people in the organization are likely to feel defensive and protective of their organization and themselves. Frankly, I like to see a certain amount of this attitude: it indicates an investment and a sense of personal responsibility for the agency. It means that people identify with agency functioning and will protect its integrity, and you will need this type of commitment to execute any changes or improvements.

The counter-balance to this apprehension is people's desire to be informed and involved, and we found this to be a strong motivation in our agencies (see Chapter 17: Resistance). In addition, you have been working with these people and have probably been able to create trust in yourself and the process throughout the information-gathering phase.

You can help people hear the information by being sensitive to their apprehension and attentive to their concerns. You must also give them time by pacing the presentation and response time, and by allowing them a mechanism for input. You will find that some people will not speak up in a group setting, and it is my judgment that you must allow them an alternative, individual approach (perhaps a private telephone conversation) that does not jeopardize the integrity of the group. The members of one organization with which we worked, for example, had the irksome habit of telling us information in individual interviews that they denied in the

group presentation. After agreeing to a series of additional individual interviews to check out the validity of the information in the profile, we re-convened the group only to find the same dynamic repeat itself. By remarking on this observation of different opinions offered privately and in the group, we were able to ascertain that some people were fearful for their jobs. As a consultant you will be able to work with people and information most effectively if you are sensitive to their concerns and gentle with your observations.

The feedback you receive from the agency members should be incorporated into the agency profile to produce a final version that can then be adopted by the agency. At PAVE we finalized the agency profiles after agency members had the opportunity to review the modified draft. In some instances, further changes will be necessary before you can finalize the report.

Decision-Making and Planning for Change

You have presented the agency members with information and recommendations that you must now allow them to consider and decide upon. You should offer your availability to clarify any information or suggestions. You may offer to facilitate the decision-making process, or you may be invited to observe their review of the information and their deliberations. You may ask to be informed or kept apprised of the decision-making process, but you may *not* make a decision for them. You must allow the organization to follow its own process and to come to its own decision. You are beginning now to terminate your "inside" or internal consultant relationship with them and to promote organizational ownership for their decisions and their plans. You are, in a sense, "giving back" the information to them and putting the ball in their court. You must not play the game for them.

If the agency has decided on adoption of your recommendations, or a modification of them, a plan for implementation is in order. As in all plans, this

must include: goals and objectives, person(s) responsible, time line, and evaluation. We found that many of our agencies adopted some version of the recommendations and designed a plan for implementation at the same time. One agency volunteer suggested a task force of members from different levels of the organization (board, management, staff, program volunteers) to brainstorm solutions to a particularly sensitive volunteer program dilemma. In fact, we found a volunteer program committee or task force made up of different organizational members to be generally the most productive planning, implementation, and oversight group. Other organizations assigned the task to their management staff or Director of Volunteers. Whoever takes on the task, the plan should be laid and you as a consultant may be at the point of renegotiating your contract with this group or person.

Some organizations will be capable of taking the ball from here: they may have experience in planning and implementing changes. Others will need you to work directly with them on the process or to be available to consult with them as needed. You will need to clarify with the organization your continuing involvement or your exiting the project.

Implementing the Change from the Sidelines: Empowerment and Ownership

If you continue to work with the agency to implement the recommendations adopted, you are in a position to offer your expert judgment and to facilitate the group or assist the person(s) responsible for the implementation effort. You should *not* be in the position of implementing the change effort itself unless you are a member of the agency (in which case you were working as an internal consultant). If you are an external consultant, you will act as a "shadow consultant" to a person or group inside the organization and provide them with consultation on their work. At PAVE we

found it effective to attend the first meeting of the implementation group and to offer suggestions on structure, content, and group process *when needed.* We asked to be kept apprised of the implementation effort when we were not directly involved in it.

Your chief task at this stage may be to support the organization's ownership of the plan and to empower the organization to institute its plan. As an external consultant, your job now is to begin backing away from the agency and offering your help when requested. It is a bit like offering advice and cheering from the sidelines.

Evaluating the Change

At whatever point you terminate your working relationship with the organization, you will want to evaluate your work with the agency and the success of the organizational assessment and change effort. At PAVE we found that this evaluation could be accomplished in a meeting with the Executive Director and the Director of Volunteers in which we reviewed step-by-step the process and the conclusions of the assessment, the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention, and suggestions for improvement in the process.

The organization also gained experience in a method of self-analysis, and it is important to review this process with them. By analyzing how the process worked for them and how it might be improved, you can help them solidify an assessment process which they may use in the future. This is also an opportunity to encourage ongoing evaluation and to set a future time to check in with the agency to see how they are progressing in their work.

Many of the results of the PAVE project were "soft" outcomes as opposed to "hard" data: increased awareness and attention to organizational barriers and aids, for instance. Demonstrable changes occurred in the establishment of new organizational policies and procedures: Board training manuals, volunteer orientation,

targeted recruitment efforts, revamped volunteer training, volunteer contracts, volunteer committees and task forces, intern programs, volunteer job descriptions, inservice training for staff and volunteers, training and opportunities for the Director of Volunteers. Long-term "hard" data on increased numbers, diversity, or utilization of volunteers will be available to the agencies at a future time.

The evaluation of your work with the agency is an important step: from it, you will learn and grow as a consultant. The organization will benefit from reviewing its progress, noting its gains and its current obstacles, and articulating its future plans, goals, and potential barriers. So often we forget to acknowledge our work and our accomplishments. It is important to help the agency appreciate itself and its hard work. It is also important to begin to take leave of the organization — or, if an internal consultant — to bring closure to the project.

Leaving the Agency in Its Own Good Hands

As you take leave of your agency, or your internal consultant position in it, you will notice that this stage, called "termination," arouses feelings of disengagement and loss that are difficult for most of us. You may feel sad; you may feel relieved. You may notice the organization depending on you; you may experience its members ignoring you. But you are likely to notice a difference, as the organization and you struggle to bring closure to your relationship and your work together. It is important to say good-bye, and it is important to let an agency know if and how they can contact you for clarification or help in the future.

You will leave the report with the agency and the success of the assessment and intervention in their hands. The evaluation of the project will help bring closure to the undertaking and a feeling of accomplish-

ment. The feelings and experiences you have had with the agency will become part of their history and a part of your personal growth and experience.

Chapter 17 The "Glitches" In the Process: The Wonderful Surprises and What To Be Alert For

Out of Sequence or "Help, It's Working!"

The assessment design is constructed as a neat, orderly process: entry, contract negotiation, information-gathering, feedback, decision-making, planning, implementation, and evaluation. In reality, however, the steps do not always occur in a controlled, sequential manner.

The basic sequence is essential and appropriate, but it will be impacted and modified by a number of factors. For one, organizations do not stand still while you are studying them. Change is a constant factor and you may suddenly find yourself working with a new Director of Volunteers with new plans and ideas, or with a new Executive Director to whom the assessment is more — or less — relevant. One organization with which we were working experienced a significant increase in client demand for services, and another added a whole new program component that necessitated the immediate recruitment and training of new volunteers. Pressing concerns often will call for immediate implementation of preliminary findings and you may find your agency instituting plans before the agency profile is prepared

or presented. In other instances, changes that were charted to be recommendations in the forthcoming agency profile will be instituted for reasons unrelated to the volunteer program assessment. In one of the PAVE organizations we had noted the lack of identification on the building and the locked front entrance as a barrier to new people. We were in the process of writing up the agency profile when we arrived one day to find the front of the building re-designed and clearly and invitingly marked. This change had occurred independent of our observations.

Another intervening factor is increased agency awareness. The mere act of the organization's committing itself to a self-study creates increased attention to and awareness of agency functioning. Beginning with the contract negotiation and continuing with the information-gathering stage, the consultant will be asking probing questions that will stimulate people's thought and analysis. Organizational members are likely to experience new observations and understanding. People in the organization will also begin discussing the volunteer program more, and increased awareness, coupled with increased communication, will lead to changed attitudes and behavior.

You may find yourself in the early stages of the assessment thinking, "Help, it's working! The organization is making changes out of sequence." They may be implementing changes before you can even prepare the agency profile. Do not panic — this type of action research is often a lively, dynamic process. Simply keep track of the changes and note them in the agency profile.

You will also find that the agency change process will be a reflection of the organizational culture and dynamics. One of the PAVE agencies, for example, characteristically worked in a planned, systematic way, and that agency moved through the assessment in an organized, sequential manner. Another agency, however — one that provided an emergency service and was accustomed to responding to environmental demands quickly and flexibly — began to institute changes in the

volunteer program spontaneously. A third agency characteristically organized its programs around the personal style of the program manager, and we found that the assessment process and goals shifted over the course of the project, as two different Directors of Volunteers assumed the position. The assessment process that evolves will be influenced by the organizational dynamics, and although it appears out of sequence with the original design, it will likely be in harmony with the agency norms.

You Are Now Part of the System: Remember To Be Affected by the Process

As you contract with the agency, either as an external or internal consultant, you will become a temporary part of the organization. Your work will be affected by the agency dynamics and your behavior and attitudes will reflect the organizational culture and system. You will become like "litmus paper," colored by the organizational dynamics.

Be attentive to how you feel and act in the organization, and use your experience as further data about the organizational culture and structure. Your experience of yourself in the organization will be a rich source of data about the organization and will provide you with information both about the system and the initiation into it. You are likely to confront organizational aids and barriers that will be similar to those that face a new volunteer in the agency.

In PAVE, for instance, I found my experience as a consultant to vary from one agency to another. In one organization I felt knowledgeable and powerful and I was greeted as "the expert." This experience reflected the organizational emphasis on hope and charismatic leadership: the organization invested its leaders with great power, trust, and authority. In two PAVE agencies I consistently felt like an outsider. Both these agencies had difficulty recruiting and integrating new

volunteers, and my own experiences with them gave me insight as to why. The agency in which I felt most comfortable was the one that constructed a plan to familiarize me with its different aspects and services. This agency also had a structured volunteer training and orientation, and experienced no difficulty in integrating or maintaining working volunteers.

The question to ask yourself is: "What is it about this system that makes me feel _____ and that makes me appear and act _____?" You may struggle to maintain your neutrality and objectivity in an organization, but you will be affected by the organizational dynamics. The question becomes not whether or not you will be influenced by the system, but rather how you will use this information to benefit your work and the agency.

Allegiances

Your own set of past and present organizational experiences will influence your perceptions and attitudes. Your former experiences as a volunteer, a staff person, an administrator will pull you to identify with one group or another in this new organization. No one comes to the position of consultant without beliefs, preconceptions, values, attitudes, experiences. Additionally, the different communities and groups within the organization will activate your biases and predispositions. No one is unbiased, and the organizational dynamics will move you to empathize with one position or group or another.

The more aware you are, however, of your biases, the less likely they are to blindly influence you and distort your work. Awareness is helpful; so, too, is your scrupulous attention to hearing from all groups or factions in the organization. The three-pronged design for information-gathering, including your plan to interview people at different organizational levels, and your observation of different agency activities, will provide you with guidance. It is important to remember not to make assumptions but rather to gather a broad base of

data. Organizational information can be used to offset or correct your preconceptions and biases.

Confidentiality

You have pledged yourself to protect the sources of interview data and to ensure the confidentiality of the agency information you have gathered. As a professional, you will have little difficulty adhering to this ethic in the abstract. The realities of organizational life and organizational consulting, however, may challenge your skill in applying the ethic of confidentiality. As you gather and disseminate information, you will be confronted with uncomfortable situations that will tax you. Examples from PAVE include: the Executive Director's private revelation to you of his/her plan to fire the Director of Volunteers with whom you have been working, a staff person's intention to quit the job and consider suing the agency, hostility between the board and the Executive Director, incompetence or negligence of the Executive Director in handling the PAVE project. You may become aware of sexual harassment, unfair or illegal labor practices, violations of agency policies and procedures, discrimination. You are likely to become aware of agency "secrets" and skeletons in the agency closet. You are also likely to hear information from and about individuals, some of which you would rather not know. You will become privy to irrelevant but emotionally charged information about people's sexual practices, diseases and terminal illnesses, occupational goals, intimate relationships, and finances.

While none of this information may be divulged, you may find yourself in a situation in which you are called upon to act and you do not know what to do. You may need to consult with another professional about a particular situation, and you may do so by disguising the identity of the organization and by securing the confidentiality of the consultation. I found it useful to inform the agencies with which I worked that I would be consulting with a member of the PAVE Advisory Com-

mittee and that the consultation, like my work with the agency, would be held confidential. It may be helpful to anticipate the eventuality of a need for consultation, and to build this understanding into the contract with the agency.

Integrity: When to Shift and When to Stand Your Ground

You may encounter instances in which you or your work is challenged. At PAVE we had such an experience in reference to the agency profile. One organization's staff questioned whether the consultant had actually conducted the ten interviews claimed, and asked for the identities of those interviewed. A lead volunteer in another organization requested that the agency profile reflect that the organizational problems cited were endemic to that type of organization. In two other situations, the agencies wanted to renegotiate contract terms that in the consultant's judgment were self-defeating and inappropriate.

It is not always easy to know when to stand your ground and when to negotiate a compromise. In the case of the first agency, I refused to divulge the identities of those interviewed, but I agreed to conduct more interviews to ensure representative data. In the second case, I added a cover sheet with the disclaimer, noting that it had been requested. In the contract negotiations with the other two agencies, I tried to effect a compromise, but ultimately could not accept the terms set forth by the agencies, for they jeopardized the inherent integrity of the assessment.

Although there are no cut-and-dried rules for when and how to take your stand and when and how to negotiate a difference of opinion, you may again find it helpful to discuss such issues as they come up with a "shadow consultant," who may offer you a more objective view, new insights, and alternative solutions.

When in Doubt, Stay Close to the Data

There are times to make intuitive leaps and times to stick close to the data. One guideline we found useful: when sensitive issues in the profile were explored or questions emerged concerning the analysis of the organization, we found it best to stick close to the information gathered and to limit our interpretation and analysis. Organizations will have more difficulty questioning the integrity of information that they themselves have generated, and you may feel more comfortable protecting the integrity of the data than defending your own views. You are, after all, basing your views on the voices of people within the organization. Part of your job is to "hold up the mirror" for the organization to see itself. You are not there to dazzle them with the brilliance of your insights and analysis. Your understanding of the organization will be useless to the agency if the agency people do not benefit from it. In a PAVE agency, for instance, it was apparent to us from the beginning that the organizational structure that had the Director of Volunteers reporting to four different supervisors was untenable. Although we suggested the correction of this structural problem, the organization was not able to see the relevance of this factor until two Directors of Volunteers had voiced it and resigned. Our systemic interpretation was lost on the organization until the reality of the loss of the two Directors of Volunteers — a piece of hard data — was presented to the agency and the agency was challenged to offer its own explanation. Hard data are sometimes more powerful and more useful than the consultant's interpretation. So when in doubt — about the information or the agency's readiness to hear it — stick close to the data.

Don't Just Do Something, Stand There!

You may anticipate that there will be times or situations in which you are lost. There may be inexplicably tense moments in an agency function you are observing, or there may be times when you are looked to for your suggestions or insights — and you are just not clear about what is going on or about how you are to intervene.

Sometimes the most difficult — and the most appropriate — action is to do nothing. It is acceptable for you to say, "I don't know" or "I am not sure. Can I get back to you?" There will, of course, be times when the situation lies beyond your skills or your experience, and in such cases, again, you may want to consult with another professional. More often, however, we found that our confusion or our reticence was the result of a lack of exposure to relevant knowledge about the agency, or the agency's unrealistic expectations of or dependency on the consultant. Frequently we discovered that the solution lay in doing nothing. You may have to be patient and to wait for some understanding to emerge. One truism which we learned is that if a dynamic is important, it is likely to happen again or to become clear later. In one of our agencies, for example, in the early stages of the process, we encountered many small difficulties in arrangements: unreceived messages, misunderstandings about appointments, rescheduled meetings. While we recognized that these incidents might be significant, we did not know how to understand or interpret them. It was not until months later, when plans began to proceed more smoothly, that we could see that this behavior was not typical of the agency but rather was an expression of its ambivalence about the volunteer program. During the process, however, all we could do was to work to clarify our expectations and to observe the agency's responses. You cannot be all things to all organizations, and if you do not know what to do, it may help to not do anything

— but continue to observe. Don't just do something, stand there!

The Most Commonly Asked Question: Resistance

It seems to be generally assumed by people with whom we have discussed the PAVE project that organizations will offer great resistance to the assessment process. While it may be true that any system resists change, it is also true that organizations are adaptive and information-seeking. Otherwise they die.

Our experience with the PAVE agencies reminded us that people and organizations possess a strong need to understand themselves and the settings in which they operate. They want to feel part of the system and they desire to be part of a well-functioning organization. They want to be listened to and cared about. People appear to respond particularly well to attention and participation in studies that will affect them.

It is important not to anticipate resistance and to thereby create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Our experience in the agencies was not one of strong resistance. While we did experience some organizational ambivalence about the assessment and about the volunteer program, we generally found such expressions to be rich sources of data about the organizational dynamics and issues. Organizational attitudes and behaviors that appear resistant can be re-framed as information that contributes to the assessment. In that regard, even when the organization says nothing, it is saying something, and your job may be to interpret its silence or its lack of action so that it may use this information for its betterment.

By and large we found that people were generous with their time and their information. They were pleased to be informed about the agency/volunteer assessment and to be asked for their opinions, insights, experience, and suggestions. They also noted their appreciation that the organization — particularly its leaders — found the

volunteer program and the volunteers worthy of study. They were pleased to be part of the process and they looked forward to being part of an organizational improvement effort.

Rather than resistance, we found cooperation, appreciation, and generosity in the people and the organizations with which we worked. The agency people were a source of energy for the project and a source of joy for the consultant. It is to these people and organizations that we owe our gratitude for the issues we discovered that may impact our ability to utilize working volunteers well. It is to these individuals and agencies that this book is offered — in appreciation for their courage, their work, and their contribution to the quality of life in our nonprofit organizations and our communities.

Appendix

PAVE/Agency Agreement

THIS IS AN AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION
BETWEEN _____

AND PAVE: PROMOTING AGENCY/VOLUNTEER
EFFECTIVENESS, C/O VALLEY VOLUNTEER
CENTER, 333 DIVISION STREET, PLEASANTON,
CA 94566.

The Valley Volunteer Center (VVC), in collaboration
with the Volunteer Centers of Alameda County, Inc.
was awarded Grant No. 860168 by The San Francisco
Foundation on October 28, 1985. The grant was pro-
vided to support a project then entitled "Effective
Utilization of the Employed Volunteer in the Non-
Profit Sector" and since renamed PAVE. Copies of the
grant proposal sheets specifying goals, objectives,
methods, and time line are attached.

Ms. Betty Stallings, Executive Director of the VVC,
is the administrator of the project. Ms. Nora Silver, an
independent contractor, is the project coordinator. Ms.
Silver is directly accountable to the VVC through Ms.
Stallings and is also to work cooperatively with Ms.
Irene Maestri, Executive Director of the Volunteer
Centers of Alameda County, Inc. Ms. Silver, as the
project manager, is authorized to represent and act on
behalf of the project in all workings with other ap-
propriate agencies.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS AGREEMENT IS TO
UNDERSCORE THE COLLABORATIVE RELA-
TIONSHIP BETWEEN PAVE AND THE PAR-
TICIPATING AGENCIES AND TO OUTLINE THE
EXPECTATIONS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE PAVE PROJECT CONSULTANT AND
EACH OF THE EIGHT PARTICIPATING AGEN-
CIES IN CARRYING OUT THE PAVE PROJECT.

THE PROJECT CONSULTANT WILL:

1. Work with each agency to develop current profile
   of the organization and volunteer program. Gather

information, present, and discuss each agency profile with key agency personnel and volunteer center directors. This information will be gathered and handled with attention to agency needs and personnel and with respect for agency confidentiality. In all phases of the project, the project consultant will work with sensitivity to and concern for management time and internal agency difficulties.

2. Explore each agency's barriers/aids to effective usage of volunteers.

3. Work with each agency to examine the current volunteer program and the relationship between organizational factors and the volunteer program. Assist each agency to examine present and alternative systems, including organizational purposes, structure, rewards, relationships, leadership, coordination, and interaction with the environment (particularly the changing nature of the volunteer environment), in terms of both the agency in general and the volunteer program in particular.

4. Work with agencies to realize projected hopes for this project:
   - to professionalize volunteer program
   - to broaden concept of volunteer roles
   - to recruit more professional/skilled/technical volunteers
   - to recruit more volunteers to aid program expansion
   - to develop strategies to mobilize and train a volunteer group that is large, cohesive, self-sufficient, and geographically spread
   - to address potential supervision and logistical problems raised by evening and weekend volunteer work
   - to discover creative solutions to addressing diverse volunteer groups and providing coordination among them
   - to examine increased costs and liability in projected expansion of volunteer program

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- to integrate volunteers into agency in constructive manner

5. Work with the volunteer centers and each agency to implement improved models. Explore tools for working with internal agency resistance. Provide training and consultation to agency people, including Board of Directors and other current and new volunteers and staff, as needed.

6. Summarize results of agency profiles, re-designed plans, and implementation of new models. Explore relevance and effects of key variables to successful volunteer programs.

7. Develop training materials on development and application of new models for other volunteer centers and nonprofit agencies. Distribute materials through local, regional, state, and national volunteer associations and coalitions of nonprofit agencies. Involve participating agencies (as desired) in presenting their programs, experiences, and findings to other organizations. Publish research findings.

8. Work with Advisory Committee of organization development consultants, experts on volunteerism, representative agency staff and volunteers, corporate volunteer coordinators and volunteers, and representative community volunteers. Advisory Committee purpose is to offer expert assistance and to provide linkage between the community and the PAVE project.

9. Supervise group of Organizational Development Ph.D. student interns (volunteers) who will assist in gathering of agency information for agency profiles.

10. Provide linkage among agencies and between agencies and volunteer centers, agencies and sources of potential volunteers, and agencies and other organizations interested in the PAVE project. Develop linkage between corporations and nonprofit agencies, including corporate recognition, recruitment of retired corporate executives, and exploration of shared benefits packages.

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11. Provide public relations on behalf of PAVE project and participating agencies. Involve agencies in outreach to corporations and media.
12. Be accessible and available to agency executives and other personnel as necessary and appropriate. Work with agency will primarily be on-site and will average approximately ten hours per month for eighteen months.
13. All consultant services will be provided to agencies without cost.
14. Follow-up services will be offered by Valley Volunteer Center and Volunteer Centers of Alameda County, Inc.

EACH AGENCY WILL:

1. In order to comply with minimal qualifications to participate in the project, provide evidence of (a) nonprofit or public status, (b) minimum of 18 months of operation, (c) formal approval by the Board of Directors (or like authority for public agencies) for agency participation in the project.
2. Commit appropriate agency time and resources to participate in the PAVE project. Resources include designating an agency person responsible to the project and an agency person responsible for the coordination of volunteers. Agency time and personnel, including all segments of the agency, will be committed to developing agency profile, exploring barriers/aids to effective usage of volunteers, re-examining and redesigning program as needed, and implementing new model. Agency time on project will average approximately ten hours per month for eighteen months. Agency will commit costs for duplicating, telephone, postage, and related materials necessary for agency use in completing above objectives.
3. Provide archival information as necessary to consultant and release materials as necessary for project use.
4. Participate cooperatively with project consultant,

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VVC and Volunteer Centers of Alameda County, The San Francisco Foundation, PAVE Advisory Council, the other participating agencies, and other community groups as necessary for the success of the project. Agency will participate in outreach/ training to other nonprofits and public relations/marketing efforts as time and interest allow.

5. Participate actively in ongoing operations of PAVE Project through activities such as negotiating agreements, reviewing drafts of materials in an interested and timely manner, attending periodic PAVE/Agencies meetings, and contributing viewpoints and suggestions to the project through the project consultant.

PROJECT CONSULTANT AND EACH AGENCY WILL:

1. Work together cooperatively at each step of project to ensure project success.
2. Share information and materials important to project success.
3. Attend to the ongoing process of the project and individual, agency, and group needs so that the PAVE project will be nurturing to participants as working professionals.
4. Commit to provide immediate feedback to each other and problem-solve together should concerns or difficulties arise.
5. Project expectations of the agency volunteer program into the future.
6. Represent the project professionally to the community-at-large.

THIS AGREEMENT IS ENTERED INTO BY BOTH PARTIES THIS _____ OF _____ , 19_____.

_____   _____
        Name   Nora Silver

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Title	Project Consultant
Agency	PAVE

PAVE: Agency Interview Schedule

QUESTION ONE: WHY WOULD A PERSON WANT TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS AGENCY?

- agency image in community
- types of people attracted to agency
- benefits of volunteering

QUESTION TWO: WHAT DO VOLUNTEERS DO IN THIS AGENCY?

- what do volunteers *not* do?
- look at all segments of agency — policy, services, administration?

QUESTION THREE: I'D LIKE YOU TO IMAGINE YOURSELF AS A VOLUNTEER IN THIS AGENCY.

PART A: WHAT ABOUT THIS AGENCY MAKES YOU FEEL AT HOME?

PART B: WHAT ABOUT THE AGENCY ALIENATES YOU?
Look for coverage of the following:

STRUCTURE

- **Organizational** stability and health?
- Organizational chart: clear lines of authority and communication?
- Volunteer program integrated into agency or separate (auxiliary) unit?
- **Role** clarity: job descriptions exist?
- Do volunteers ever move into paid staff positions? — preferential hiring for agency volunteers?
- **Budget** for volunteer program?
- Reimbursement of expenses for volunteers: mileage, phone, materials, conferences?
- Liability and insurance?
- **Physical space** — where do volunteers work — in agency only? — separate desk/area in agency?

- **Planning** — is there an agency short- or long-range plan?
- Is there a volunteer program plan? — in writing?
- Volunteer planning committee/task force/advisory board?
- **Coordination** — who coordinates volunteers?
- Coordinator seen as supervisory in status?
- Coordinator has/receives training in supervision and management of volunteer program?

PROCESS

- **Supervision/Evaluation** — is there feedback, evaluation, accountability? By whom? When/How often? Describe.
- **Recognition/Reward system** — how are volunteers recognized/thanked?
- How are volunteers/staff who work well with volunteers rewarded?
- **Training** — how is training and orientation provided to volunteers? Who does training?
- Is there a training manual?
- Is there training for staff in working with volunteers?
- Is there ongoing training?
- **Communications** — is there a policies and procedures manual for volunteers?
- Is there written information for volunteers? — newsletter? — monthly calendar? — other? Describe.
- Is there a process for volunteers to give feedback to the agency on the volunteer program? — on agency program?
- Are there regular volunteer meetings?

ATTITUDE

- **Agency experience** in past with volunteers — were there any problems? If so, how were they resolved?
- **Management receptivity** to volunteers — to what degree?

- What is the agency value placed on volunteers?
- Is there pride/priority in the volunteer program?
- **Staff familiarity** with volunteerism?
- Have staff members been volunteers in other organizations?
- Are staff familiar with different volunteer programs in similar agencies?
- **Interpersonal relationships** — what are the norms and values within agency?
- What are the interpersonal relations between staff and volunteers, among volunteers, and among staff?
- **Turnover** — what is the rate of volunteer length of stay and turnover? — same factors for staff?
- **Psychological contract** — is it being fulfilled?
- Degree of interest in assessment project?

QUESTION FOUR: WHAT DO YOU THINK NEEDS TO HAPPEN IN THIS ORGANIZATION IN TERMS OF THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM?

- what would you do with the "magic wand" of change?

QUESTION FIVE: WHAT WOULD AN EXCELLENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM LOOK LIKE ONE YEAR FROM NOW?

- try to get at structure, process, and attitude differences
- what would volunteers be doing?
- what barriers would have been overcome?

PAVE: Agency Interview Schedule
Additional Questions for Managers

QUESTION A: DESCRIBE THE HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

- when started?
- what was the original idea/initial goals?
- highlights: times program has been successful/unsuccessful
- recent changes?
- current goals

QUESTION B: HOW DO YOU MARKET THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM? HOW DO YOU RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS?

- describe successful/unsuccessful strategies
- relationship with community outreach/education
- clearly defined target population?

QUESTION C: TALK ABOUT THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS. WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

- look for psychological contract
- look for degree of clarity and the "unsaid"
- look for the "shadow side" — fears and resistances

QUESTION D: DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND HOW YOU COMMUNICATE YOUR EXPECTATIONS TO OTHERS

- look for learning style
- look for task/process preference
- diagnose room for disagreement
- look for flexibility
- look for style of conflict management
- look for reflection of organizational dynamics in leadership style

QUESTION F: PROFILE OF CURRENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM — ASK FOR #'S

TYPE OF WORK DONE

- direct client service _____
- policy-making _____
- advisory _____
- professional services to staff (lawyers, p.r.) _____
- auxiliary (volunteer org. outside of org.) _____
- interns _____
- short-term/specific job _____
- group volunteering _____

OCCUPATIONS

- working full-time ____
- working part-time ____
- student ____
- homemaking ____
- retired ____
- agency clients ____

ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS

- black ____
- caucasian ____
- hispanic ____
- asian ____
- native american ____

GENDER

- female ____
- male ____

AGE

- under 18 ____
- 18 - 34 ____
- 35 - 54 ____
- 55 & over ____

INCOME LEVEL

- low-income ____
- med-hi income ____

GEOGRAPHY: DESCRIBE

OTHER SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS: DESCRIBE

PAVE PROJECT

GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

IF YOU WERE TO IMAGINE YOURSELF AS A NEW VOLUNTEER FOR THIS AGENCY:

(A) WHAT ABOUT THE AGENCY WOULD MAKE YOU FEEL WELCOME OR AT HOME?

(B) WHAT ABOUT THE AGENCY MIGHT YOU EXPERIENCE AS AN OBSTACLE TO YOUR FEELING WELCOMED AND APPRECIATED?

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About the Author

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