

Fully Developing Your Volunteer Workforce

Volunteers are at the heart of both the work associations do and the value associations provide to the professions or industries they represent.

The Research: *MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL VOLUNTEERISM: Opportunities for Enhancing Association Volunteer Management Systems*, ASAE Foundation. Get the full report: <http://bit.ly/2naRWx9>

The Question: “What components of a volunteer management program lead to mutual benefit between the association and the volunteer?”

The Research Pool: 1,100 associations and 25,000 members

5 Key Findings:

- 1 | Members are more satisfied with their volunteer experiences than staff are with the performance of volunteers.
- 2 | Most associations don't do volunteer evaluations, either to assess the quality of their experience, or to measure the quality of their work; only 10% describe this as a strength!
- 3 | Most volunteers (55%) say they are involved primarily for their own professional development. They often need to be oriented, even taught and led to place more value on their task and the value of the output of their volunteer work.
- 4 | Staff firmly believe that volunteering drives member loyalty, yet only a small proportion of their members typically volunteer.
- 5 | Among member non-volunteers, only 9% are extremely or very engaged and 48% are not very or not at all engaged, while almost 60% say they want to be more engaged. If volunteering is the key to increasing engagement and filling an unmet need, somehow volunteering needs to grow sharply without overwhelming staff.

The Definition: Mutually Beneficial Volunteering System

A system in which the *volunteer* makes a meaningful contribution to the mission of the organization and the *management process* makes a meaningful contribution to the professional development and personal satisfaction of the volunteer.

- Collaborative & Symbiotic [Staff and volunteers recognized as a fully integrated component of the organization; Staff and volunteers view each other as trustworthy, dependable partners.]

- Satisfying [Volunteers experience both personal and professional satisfaction]
- Optimized [Volunteer skills and capacity are well-matched to the roles they are asked to fulfill]
- Valuable [Delivers meaningful, measurable value to the mission and the organization]

6 Elements of MBVS:



What drove volunteer satisfaction?

quality of staff who serve as liaison/coordinators of their activity

receptivity of staff to give their input appropriate consideration

the quality of **orientation/introduction**

quality of their **volunteer leadership**

ability to **debate/discuss** issues

time and timing matter—**convenience and a reasonable commitment** required, but fundamentally, volunteer management principles closely resembles HR principles.

What makes volunteers happy is a lot like what makes employees happy. This happiness when managed properly should result in greater productivity, retention and recruitment of future volunteers.

Mutually Beneficial Volunteer System: Scoring Tool

Staff answer using 5-point scale:

5 = Always True

4 = Usually True

3 = Sometimes True/Sometimes Untrue

2 = Usually Untrue

1 = Never True

0 = NA/Do not use...

Volunteers answer using 5-point scale:

5= Strongly Agree

4 = Agree Somewhat

3 = Neither Agree Nor Disagree

2 = Somewhat Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree

0 = NA/I did not receive...

Avg columns list average of scores for staff and volunteers respectively. Diff column displays staff score minus volunteer score.

JOB DESIGN - MEANINGFUL WORK

| | Staff | Avg | Volunteers | Avg | Diff |
|----|---|-----|---|-----|------|
| a1 | Our volunteers understand how their jobs fit into the big picture/mission. | | I understand how my job fits into the big picture/mission. | | |
| a2 | Our volunteers know what a job well done looks like. | | It is clear to me what a job well done looks like. | | |
| a3 | Our volunteers know what kind of resources are available to help them do their jobs. | | I know what kind of resources are available to help me do my job. | | |
| a4 | Our volunteers' jobs are designed to fit their schedules/availability. | | The volunteer job I am asked to perform fits my schedules/availability. | | |
| a5 | Our volunteers can perform their jobs regardless of where they are. | | I can perform my volunteer job regardless of where I am. | | |
| a6 | Our volunteer jobs take advantage of the SKAs most likely possessed by our volunteers. | | My volunteer job takes advantage of my skills, knowledge and abilities. | | |
| a7 | Their job responsibilities are clear to our volunteers. | | The responsibilities of my volunteer job is clear to me. | | |
| a8 | The amount of time that will be required to complete their jobs is clear to our volunteers. | | It is clear how long will it take to complete my volunteer job. | | |
| a9 | Our volunteers believe they have the skills, knowledge and abilities required for their jobs. | | I believe I have the skills, knowledge and abilities required to do my volunteer job. | | |
| | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | |

RECRUITMENT/SELECTION - RIGHT PERSON FOR THE JOB

| | Staff | Avg | Volunteers | Avg | Diff |
|----|---|-----|--|-----|------|
| b1 | Our volunteers are aware of the opportunities available. | | I was fully aware of the volunteer opportunities available. | | |
| b2 | We make a personal/one-to-one ask for volunteers. | | I receive a personal/one-to-one ask to volunteer. | | |
| b3 | Our volunteers understand how to get considered for a volunteer position. | | I know what I have to do to be considered for a volunteer position. | | |
| b4 | We acknowledge our volunteer applications in a timely fashion. | | The association acknowledges my volunteer applications in a timely fashion. | | |
| b5 | Our volunteers understand the selection criteria and process by which positions are filled. | | I understood the selection criteria and process by which volunteer positions are filled. | | |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|---|--|--|
| b6 | Our volunteers believe the selection process and criteria by which positions are filled is fair. | | I believe the selection criteria and process by which volunteer positions are filled is fair. | | |
| b7 | Our volunteers know who decides if they get a job. | | I know who decided if I got the job. | | |
| b8 | Our volunteers are informed they did or did not get the job in a timely fashion. | | I was informed in a timely fashion if I got the job one way or the other? | | |
| | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | |

ORIENTATION/TRAINING – NEED TO KNOW

| | <i>Staff</i> | <i>Avg</i> | <i>Volunteers</i> | <i>Avg</i> | <i>Diff</i> |
|----|---|------------|---|------------|-------------|
| c1 | Our volunteer orientation provides a good understanding of the scope and purpose of our volunteer jobs. | | My orientation provided a good understanding of the scope and purpose of my jobs. | | |
| c2 | Our volunteers receive sufficient training to perform their jobs successfully. | | I received sufficient training to perform my volunteer jobs successfully. | | |
| c3 | Our volunteer training is delivered in a timely fashion. | | The training was delivered in a timely fashion. | | |
| c4 | The training is tightly focused on the knowledge and skills required to perform the jobs as defined. | | The training was tightly focused on the knowledge and skills required to perform my volunteer jobs. | | |
| c5 | The training is available on a schedule that is convenient for our volunteers. | | The training was available on a schedule that was convenient for me. | | |
| c6 | The training is available through multiple channels (online, classroom, real time, asynchronous). | | The training was available through multiple channels (online, classroom, real time, asynchronous). | | |
| c7 | It is clear to our volunteers when they have successfully completed a training program. | | It was clear to me when I successfully completed the training program. | | |
| | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | |

MANAGEMENT/MENTORING – ONGOING SUPPORT

| | <i>Staff</i> | <i>Avg</i> | <i>Volunteers</i> | <i>Avg</i> | <i>Diff</i> |
|----|--|------------|--|------------|-------------|
| d1 | Our volunteers have a supervisor or mentor who provides guidance as needed. | | I have a supervisor or mentor who provides guidance as needed. | | |
| d2 | The supervisors/mentors helps our volunteers navigate the association’s unwritten rules and understand the cultural norms. | | My supervisor/mentor helps me navigate the association’s unwritten rules and understand the cultural norms. | | |
| d3 | The supervisors/mentors helps our volunteers identify their most appropriate roles. | | My supervisor/mentor helps me identify the most appropriate roles for me. | | |
| d4 | The supervisors/mentors helps our volunteers move forward in their volunteer careers. | | My supervisor/mentor helps me move forward in my volunteer career. | | |
| d5 | The supervisors/mentors helps our volunteers adjust their expectations and/or performance when things don’t go as well as hoped. | | My supervisor/mentor helps me adjust my expectations and/or performance when things don’t go as well as I had hoped. | | |
| | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | |

ASSESSMENT – CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

| | <i>Staff</i> | <i>Avg</i> | <i>Volunteers</i> | <i>Avg</i> | <i>Diff</i> |
|----|---|------------|---|------------|-------------|
| e1 | It is clear to our volunteers when they have done their job well. | | It is clear to me when I have done my job well. | | |
| e2 | Our volunteers understand the criteria by which their performance is evaluated. | | I understand the criteria by which my performance is evaluated. | | |
| e3 | Our volunteers know who conducts their evaluation. | | I know who conducts the evaluation. | | |
| e4 | The evaluation provides feedback our volunteers can use to improve their performance (if needed). | | The evaluation provides feedback I can use to improve my performance (if needed). | | |
| e5 | Our volunteers receive performance feedback in timely fashion. | | I receive performance feedback in timely fashion. | | |
| | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | |

RECOGNITION & REWARD – EXTRINSIC/INTRINSIC

| | <i>Staff</i> | <i>Avg</i> | <i>Volunteers</i> | <i>Avg</i> | <i>Diff</i> |
|----|---|------------|---|------------|-------------|
| f1 | Our volunteers feel their work is recognized and appreciated. | | I feel my work is recognized and appreciated. | | |
| f2 | Our volunteers receive personal recognition for their work. | | I receive personal recognition for my work. | | |
| f3 | Our volunteers receive appropriate recognition before their peers. | | I receive appropriate recognition before my peers. | | |
| f4 | Our volunteers receive recognition in a timely fashion. | | I receive recognition in a timely fashion. | | |
| f5 | The recognition our volunteers receive reflects their personal interests/needs. | | The recognition I receive reflects my personal interests/needs. | | |
| f6 | The recognition our volunteers receive reflects how well they did my job. | | The recognition I receive reflects how well I did my job. | | |
| | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | <i>Sub-Total (Average)</i> | | |
| | Overall Average | | Overall Average | | |

MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL VOLUNTEER SYSTEM: KEY ATTRIBUTES

Using the HR model as a theoretical construct, each association to survey staff and volunteers on parallel factors to determine gaps and explore options. Key attributes to assess include:

JOB DESIGN – Meaningful Work

- Fit to mission – How does this fit into the big picture?
- Goals – What does well done look like?
- Resources (Human and Other) – What kind of help/tools do the volunteer get?
- Flexible – Is this job structured to fit the volunteer’s near and long-term schedules/availability?
- Accessible – To what extent can volunteers perform this job regardless of where they are?
- Fit to members – Does this job take advantage of the SKAs most likely possessed by the volunteers?
- Tasks to be performed – What will the volunteer be doing?
- Time required to complete tasks – How long will it take?
- SKAs required – Does the volunteer have what it takes?
- Appropriate – Should we hire for this job?

RECRUITMENT/SELECTION – Right Person for the Job

Volunteer Profile Registry

- Is there one?
- Is it tied to job descriptions?
- Does it list current openings?
- Does it detail the selection criteria/process?

Outreach

- One-to-many (web/email/SM)
- Many-to-many (volunteer to member, member to member)
- One-to-one (volunteer to member, member to member)

Who selects?

- How do they decide?
- What if no one makes the grade?
- D&I? Noah’s Ark or best qualified?

ORIENTATION/TRAINING – Need to Know

- How steep/long is the learning curve?
- To what extent does the O&T focus on the bare essentials?
 - Activity-specific
 - General org info
- Are there multiple options (times/channels/etc.) volunteers can use to get up to speed?
- How well does the system track volunteer turnover and bring newbies up top speed?

MANAGEMENT/MENTORING – Ongoing Support

- Does each volunteer have a supervisor and/or mentor?
- What, if any, training does the supervisor /mentor receive?
- What is the ratio of volunteers to supervisors/mentors?
- How are performance issues addressed?
- What is the volunteer’s recourse when things aren’t as expected?

ASSESSMENT – Constructive Feedback

- Who assesses?
 - Self (i.e. the volunteer)
 - Supervisor/Mentor
 - Other(s)
- How often?
 - Weekly
 - Monthly
 - Quarterly
 - Semi-annually
 - Other
- What are the criteria? How are they scored?
- How are the evaluations recorded and stored?
- How often are the evaluations reported? To whom?
- How is underperformance addressed?
- Who reviews the assessments/assessors?

RECOGNITION & REWARD (Extrinsic/Intrinsic)

- How are volunteers acknowledged?
- Is the acknowledgement generic or personal? Public or private?
- To what extent does the acknowledgement differentiate between “just showing up” and “doing a great job”?
- How soon after the performance of the activity is the performance recognized/rewarded?

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