Editorial

Happy Holidays!

As I move closer to the holiday season and get swept up in all of the last-minute gift-buying and cookie-making it is easy to imagine there must be more efficient ways to do all I need to do. Will the gift-wrapping service at the shopping mall save me some precious hours? Do I really need to do all of my baking from scratch? Then I start to wonder if those time-savers will result in the same quality as when I do those things myself. Will I spend even more time cooking a new batch of cookies when I decide the store-bought ones are just not good enough? Managers of Volunteer Resources often face similar dilemmas. If we invest in a new volunteer management data base will it be worth the financial outlay over the long term? How do we maintain quality processes with limited resources? Are there better ways to do the numerous tasks that help us manage volunteers effectively?

Our last issue of the journal for 2015 focuses solely on Efficiencies for Managers of Volunteer Resources. Rachel Stoparczyk offers three simple guidelines that can help managers be efficient by setting boundaries around the support they provide. Florence May and Tammy Parent look at the use of technology and suggest that we spend time considering all of the costs and strive for a system that actually helps build brand, efficiency and relationships with partners and volunteers. Tony Goodrow urges us to equate spending volunteer time with our approach to spending money. He stresses that more volunteer hours is not always better. Stephanie Robertson introduces the importance of metrics

and evaluation and suggests that measurement creates transparency and helps to ensure the most impactful efforts.

Marina Dawson and Lee Jones offer us exciting ways to do more with less and to use resources in creative ways to ensure quality programs. Ruth Vant provides us with a series of cautionary tales profiling inefficiencies. She hopes to inspire us to take a careful look at what we are doing currently so we can replace what is not working with better and more efficient methods. Denise Blair has provided us with a book review of Good to Great and the Social Sectors, with the hope that the holiday season provides a little time for us to catch up on some important and useful reading for our sector.

We hope you will be inspired by the tips, guidelines and creative solutions and will carry this spark into the new year with you. We hope that the holiday season is full of peace and joy and that 2016 is an efficient and effective year for all of you!

Tracey Foster, Editorial Team

Measuring employee volunteering

by Stephanie Robertson, Calgary, Alberta

If want your Employee Volunteer Programs (EVP) to be successful, measurement needs to be built in up front when you are thinking about what needs to be accomplished. You need to know which metrics matter at the start, so you can accurately measure at the program's end. For instance: were employees' needs met; were community needs met; were employees engaged; and was there brand recognition?

Making the case for an EVP and delivering successful programs means knowing what to measure, and how. It also means having the infrastructure in place to support all aspects of the program. Following are a few questions that every company should ask itself when planning for success with their EVP.

Who and what will your EVP benefit?

An EVP can be created for a number of reasons. It can be everything from solving business objectives such as raising employee morale or creating higher-functioning teams, to building your employees' skill sets or leveraging your employees as a way to do good in the community. These outcomes are very different and require different indicators and data collection methods. The following examples from http://www.lbg-canada.ca/about-us/index.htm LBG Canada participants highlight these outcomes:[i]

- LoyaltyOne set a business objective to build teams across different business units. Their Organizational Development, Culture and Engagement department used team-based volunteering opportunities to accomplish just this objective.
- Manulife paired up with Capacity Canada, a nonprofit that matches professionals to nonprofit boards, to develop an EVP with the purpose of building employees' leadership skill sets.

- First West Credit Union puts a significant amount of energy into food security. To bolster these efforts, volunteer initiatives often utilize employee time to create a bigger impact in this community investment priority.

An EVP can address outcomes for more than one stakeholder, but to measure impact, clarity about the outcomes is needed at the outset.

Who would you like to attract?

According to employee engagement experts, Realized Worth, volunteers fall into three stages: *tourists, travelers, or guides* [ii]. Each stage requires a different degree of coaxing that can be best reached by using different tactics. Tourists are not sure if the experience is right for them and will respond best to basic tasks.. Travelers are at the second stage and have begun to feel that they belong and are ready to take on leadership responsibilities and tasks requiring increased commitment. Guides will build relationships with community partners and create initiatives that will make a splash. Knowing how these stages apply to your team as volunteers, and as employees, will help manage expectations and outcomes.

To understand if employee outcomes are being met, identify your target employee, understand their barriers and address them and then track the outcomes.

Are you asking your employees where and how they want to give time?

Employees are the life of your EVP, and should have the opportunity to contribute to how the program is created and implemented. Your EVP may align with a corporate community investment initiative or it may be open to organizations supported by individual employees. This will play well for some, and poorly for others. It is important to note that there is no right answer here. Understanding what best suits your company's culture and is most likely to contribute to your desired outcomes should dictate the strategy. There is no magic bullet for striking a balance between the two, reinforcing the need for measurement to make a case for your leadership and for your employee base.

In the end, employees are the fuel for your EVP. Asking the right questions is key, but more important is the feedback your employees provide. A company cannot cater to everyone's interests. By using a participatory approach and an engagement strategy beyond the volunteering initiative itself, employees are more likely to understand and support a program, even if it does not align with their interests personally.

How should you design the metrics?

Once you understand your stakeholders and associated outcomes, as well as the motivating factors and constraints of employees, the metrics will become increasingly clear. Make them specific and measureable and leave opportunity for qualitative feedback. You may come across unanticipated outcomes that colour your EVP's story.

Do not be afraid to ask direct questions. Create the space for honest feedback. For example Cenovus asked the question, "Do you feel more satisfied with your role at work while participating in the In the Lead program?". If your employees know you have success, at the forefront of your mind, they will know that constructive feedback will be welcomed.

Get measuring!

Though a game plan for measurement should be determined up front, it is not too late to start on your existing EVP. Measurement creates transparency, clarity about objectives and ensures that your energy is contributing to the most impactful efforts. Measurement benchmarks can include number of volunteering hours during work hours or during non-working hours and corporate grants linked to employee volunteering.

What is your outreach strategy?

An EVP should rely on a variety of outreach methods to attract participation. Often those people surrounding volunteer management professionals have been tapped on the shoulder one too many times. An EVP can and should rely on the team driving the initiative, but also the volunteer 'guides' within the company, engaged managers and general employees.

Adjust as needed

Although EVPs exist, few are designed to have the greatest positive impact for the company, let alone the employee or the wider community. Companies that do not meet the goals of their volunteering program often fail to consider all three stakeholder perspectives of the volunteering program, that of the community, employee and company.

The success behind any EVP is constant evaluation. Employees, community needs and corporate resources are always changing. It is important to measure the effect of the program against these changing factors. When an EVP is failing to meet the goals or needs of one or more of the three stakeholders, the program should be adjusted based on monitoring and evaluation findings.

By knowing what matters to all stakeholders and determining your metrics up front, your employees, community and company will benefit from an impactful Employee Volunteering Program.

Stephanie Robertson is the CEO & Founder of SiMPACT Strategy Group – the facilitator of LBG Canada. Stephanie has been working in the areas of social impact management, CSR, community investment and SROI (a tool to present the value of social results achieved, in financial terms) since 1998. The LBG Canada program supports community investment, employee volunteering and creating value through access to metrics, effective management techniques and tools to enhance stakeholder reporting.

Creating efficiencies in volunteer management

by Rachel Stoparczyk, Ottawa, ON

Being an efficient manager of volunteer resources requires daily effort. A typical morning starts with an ambitious to-do list, but is quickly interrupted by staff seeking support for last-minute emergencies, volunteers calling in sick or just stopping by to share the latest news of their families. If you work with a large team of volunteers, perhaps in a health care setting such as mine, you have likely experienced days where not one item gets crossed off the to-do list. You scratch your head and wonder where the time went, pleased you helped manage a crisis or two, but possibly questioning whether your involvement was actually necessary.

The key to being an efficient manager may lie in setting some boundaries around the support you provide. Three guidelines are helpful:

- know who you work for
- coordinate, do not supervise
- Focus on priorities

Who do you work for?

Embrace your organization's mission and remind yourself daily who your clients are. Here is a tip: they are not the volunteers. Volunteers are an essential part of the team, helping you and all the other staff towards a common goal such as creating a better quality of life for the individuals you serve - your clients.

When deciding on priorities, consider whether the latest project coming across your desk supports your organization's mission. Volunteers often come to us seeking support for new project ideas. We certainly want to encourage creativity and engage volunteers by tapping in to their unique skills and talents. However, we must be pragmatic. Will the new activity benefit clients? Or, is it a pet project whose main beneficiary is the volunteer who is eager to see their idea come alive? If the latter is true, you may soon find yourself working for that individual and neglecting your real clients.

The same principle applies to the application process. If your screening requirements and minimum commitments are grounded in the needs of your clients, you will have an easier time saying no to unwanted volunteers. Will it add value for your clients to have a corporate team visit one-on-one for

three hours, never to be seen again? No, but maybe the same team can help clean up a neglected garden so clients can better enjoy it. Is the volunteer who is actively job-seeking likely to give a return on the investment you are making to screen, orient and train her? If no, focus your energy on those who will.

Too often, we feel we must give everyone a chance in order to encourage a culture of volunteerism. Volunteerism is based on helping others and unless those others are really going to be helped, do not run yourself in circles trying to fill the needs of the volunteers (e.g. padding a resume, fulfilling a course requirement). Share some tips for where they might find a better fit in the community and wish them well. You need time to focus on the applicants who will improve the quality of life of your clients.

Coordinating vs. supervising

What is the manager-to-staff ratio in your organization? How does that compare to the staff-to-volunteer ratio in your volunteer services department? If anyone in your organization thinks you alone are supervising hundreds of volunteers, it is time to change your practices and educate your colleagues.

Correct any staff member who refers to these hundreds of people as "your volunteers". Correct this misunderstanding as often as necessary and provide some important facts:

- Volunteers are part of a team, including staff, students, and others who are here to support your agency's mission and serve your clients.
- The coordinator of volunteer services no more supervises every volunteer than the director of human resources supervises every employee.
- When a staff member requests a volunteer to help out in their program, they are assuming the responsibility of supervising the volunteer.
- It is the coordinator's job to provide the necessary tools and information to support those staff that are responsible for supervising volunteers.

Empowering staff to supervise volunteers requires management buy-in, strong policies and procedures and, quite often, a cultural change within the organization. It may mean a lot of up-front effort for volunteer services but this will pay off in efficiencies down the line. Volunteers will naturally go to their staff supervisor for day-to-day support such as scheduling changes. Staff will take responsibility for following up with volunteers about policy breaches. Volunteer services, like human resources, will act in a consultancy role, providing support and guidance as needed. This will allow you time to focus on developing the volunteer program to better meet client needs.

Some practical efficiencies are required to make this happen. Create a report that will generate volunteer and supervisor contact information to share at the start of each placement. Attach this to an email template outlining expectations for when to contact whom and be sure to include a position description that clarifies the volunteer's role for both parties.

Focus on priorities

An important key to efficiency is to set clear priorities. To best serve your clients, your work must be tied to the organization's strategic goals. Take time to analyze your current program, seek input from others, determine long-term goals and define some shorter operational plans. Share this plan with your management team, your board of directors or whoever's approval and support you need to move forward. Let this plan guide your decisions for committing to any new initiatives.

If this seems heady, fear not. You are surrounded in this sector by generous colleagues who are often very willing to share planning documents not to mention policies, training materials and standard forms. Connect with others through your local association or volunteer centre, then beg, borrow and steal to build an efficient and effective client-centered program.

Rachel Stoparczyk, CVA, is the Coordinator, Volunteer Services at The Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre in Ottawa.

Choosing an efficient and effective online volunteer management system

by Florence May, Indianapolis, Indiana and Tammy Parent, Ottawa, Ontario

"What do you seek in an online volunteer management system?" is the first question in our fact-finding meeting with potential clients. The leadership's reply typically includes elements of the following response: we are seeking a product that enhances our brand, integrity, efficiency, partnerships and relationships with our volunteers.

Our follow-up session is with the manager of volunteers. This person is responsible for one of the organization's most valuable assets: the relationship with the volunteer team. The discussions with the managers of volunteers tend to be less aspirational and more focused on the following challenges:

• "My boss doesn't understand how much time it takes to recruit, register, schedule, coordinate, train and manage our volunteers."

• "We have a system but it wasn't designed for volunteer management. It was the least expensive option."

• "We need the volunteer management tools to do the work efficiently and effectively."

Managers of volunteers want to do their jobs efficiently with tools they can operate effectively. They want the organization to look good in the process and also want to look professional. The reality is that it is difficult to ascertain the differences in the numerous options on the market today. The promotions for products sound very similar.

The following article will help your organization differentiate and enhance your brand, integrity, efficiency, partnerships and relationships with your volunteers while using your financial and personnel resources appropriately.

The technical playing field

Five years ago there were a dozen online volunteer management systems in North America.

Today every technical service provider claims to have registration and volunteer management options. Your database provider, your e-mail provider, your ticket system provider and many others try to repurpose their existing software to force a volunteer management solution. They can sell the additional services to you cheap or even provide them for free with your existing contract.

If your organization manages a very small number of volunteers and has limited reporting needs, this solution might work. Unfortunately, decisions are often based simply on price and not on the loftier needs addressed in the opening paragraph: brand, integrity, efficiency, partnerships and relationships with our volunteers.

The old adage "you get what you pay for" often applies as organizations end up with an online system that:

• frustrates the volunteer as the process does not match the organization's purpose,

• infuriates the manager of volunteers with lack of functionality,

• does not create efficiency for the organization and

• leaves the organization looking weak and disorganized.

The shopping list

Step one: Identify the features and functions needed to be successful. Make a checklist and identify which items are a priority and which are nice to have.

Sample volunteer management system features and functions list
http://www.theregistrationsystem.com/library/ .

Step two: Discuss the system purpose. Note this actually should be step one but most people are more comfortable starting with features & functions.

What type of volunteer management system will support your organization's purpose?

• Ongoing activities. Every day? Set schedule at set location? Same hours? Small number of volunteers daily? (e.g. food bank, hospital)

• Event based. Specific periods of time? Multiple locations? Numerous positions in the same time period? Large numbers of volunteers in shifts? (e.g. championships, endurance, festivals)

• Community hub or recruiting. Need to match volunteers to geographic interest-based requirements.

• Enterprise. Central organization with numerous supporting organizations. (e.g. cause based, Special Olympics).

Step three: Understand what level of account management support is needed.

• Account management. Does the company provide an assigned account representative or a pool of account reps?

• Account services. What services will you need from the account rep? Consultant? Task? Technical? Only tech support? No support?

• Access. How can you access support? Phone? E-mail? Chat? Forum? When is support available (days/hours/holidays)?

Step four: Valuation

• Tasks. Break down the tasks that consume the most time (e.g. recruiting, scheduling, communications, group coordination, check-in, reports, and management).

• Staff time. Do a time study. How much time is your manager of volunteers spending doing administrative tasks manually?

• Program pain points. Determine which tasks are causing the most pain.

• Staff turnover. Is your organization's manager of volunteers position a revolving door?

Step five: Before you sign the contract.

• Operator. Who is going to operate the system? Has this person bought into the selection?

• Demo. Has your manager of volunteers participated in a full-product demonstration?

• Priorities. Understand that no system is going to give you everything you want. But the volunteer management system should be able to handle the majority of your top priorities.

• References. Have you checked references?

• Continuity. If your manager of volunteers leaves the organization will the system continue to provide your organization with the volunteer database, history of activity, activity schedules and templates for the future?

Return on investment

The final question. Is your organization putting a band-aid on your volunteer management needs or investing in the future of your program?

Volunteer management systems should be measured in the broad return on investment (ROI), not just upfront expenditure. Review the guidelines above and consider all costs. The system needs to do more than just functions; it also needs to build your brand, integrity, efficiency, partnerships and relationships with your volunteers.

A few years ago a client told me, "The day we bought this volunteer management system was the best day of my working career. It was a clear message that my organization believes my job is important and that they want me to have the tools to do it properly. I was ready to move on just like my predecessor, but the system changed everything."

Florence May is President of The Registration System LLC (TRS). Prior to taking this high tech role,

she managed operations and volunteer services for major events including the host committees for the United States Grand Prix, American Association of Museums and the National League of Cities. Florence is a frequent speaker on volunteer management best practices at industry conferences and a regular contributor to the International Festival & Event Association magazine.

Tammy Parent is Senior Account Manager with TRS. Prior to serving as a technology consultant to major nonprofits and event organizations, she served as the Director of Volunteer Services for Ottawa Bluesfest and Ottawa Folk Festival. Tammy has also served as a college instructor and speaker on professional volunteer management topics.

Spending volunteer time like money

by Tony Goodrow, Burlington, ON

Many organizations in the volunteer sector harbour the notion that more volunteer hours reported is always better than fewer hours. The factors that influence this could include a belief in the organization that each hour represents a cost savings in terms of money not spent or funders that ask for a reporting of hours and imply that more is better.

The Relative Impact ROI model challenges this notion. In this model, an increase in hours <u>might</u> be a positive indicator, but it might very well be a negative one instead. What matters is what was accomplished compared to what it took to make that happen.

Let us consider the following example. It is fictitious and greatly simplified, but it illustrates the basic concept.

Reforest the World engages volunteers to plant trees. A new leader of volunteers was hired in 2012 and in that year she reported 100,000 volunteer hours. Table 1 illustrates the reported hours since then.

Table 1

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015
Hours	100,000	90,000	80,000	70,000
Wage Replacement Value	$2m	$1.8m	$1.6m	$1.4m

This limited view of the value of volunteer engagement is only looking at half of the picture. It is treating volunteer time as the reason the organization exists rather than as something that must be spent to help the organization achieve its mission. Treating time as something we spend is well understood in our everyday lives. Think of expressions such as, "I spent a lot of time organizing this event", or "My daughter spends every spare hour she has playing guitar". The flaw in the more-hours-is-always-better-than-fewer-hours approach is that it fails to recognize that we are actually spending volunteer time.

It does not matter that the volunteer time is being given, or donated, to the organization. When we spend money donated to us we do not spend any more than we need to. Should we not spend volunteer time in the same way?

Let us go back to our example. In Table 2, I have added two more lines that help complete the picture. Sadly, in most of the reporting around volunteer engagement that I see, the hours it takes to accomplish something is not reported in a way that it can be compared to the accomplishments.

Table 2

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015
Hours	100,000	90,000	80,000	70,000
Wage Replacement Values	$2m	$1.8m	$1.6m	$1.4m
Number of Trees Planted	5m	5m	5m	5m
Cost of Volunteer Time/Tree	$0.40	$0.36	$0.32	$0.28

Notice that the same output is accomplished (5 million trees planted) each year, but each year more ways were found to spend fewer volunteer hours. How did the manager of volunteers do this? Maybe she provided better training or better tools, or maybe she got better at scheduling so volunteers were never waiting for more shovels or trees to arrive. The point is that she got the same thing accomplished and spent less doing it. If those tree planters were paid staff instead of volunteers, she would likely be looking forward to a salary raise!

It is an understatement that people who choose volunteer management as a career truly value their volunteers and the time they give, but it appears that the sector has evolved to put practices into place that actually devalue volunteer time.

Fundamental to the Relative Impact model, and to truly value volunteer time, is the notion that we spend volunteer time like money. There is nothing wrong with spending as much as we need to get

something done, but we ought to be diligent in ensuring that we spend only that much, and no more. Spending above what we need, in money or time, is wasted. Where money is not spent on something that does no extra good for an organization, it can be spent on something else that actually does help the organization achieve its mission. The same is true with volunteer time. Where volunteer time is not spent on something that does no extra good for an organization, it can be spent on something else that actually does help the organization achieve its mission. If there is simply nothing else that volunteers can do for us with those extra, unspent hours, then there is still no good reason to spend them. What implicit value is placed on volunteer time if we spend it on things that are of no value to our organization?

Consider another example, this time a fast food drive-through.

From noon to 2:00 p.m. Betty collects the money in the first window and Simon hands out the food from the second window. When things slow down at 2:00 p.m., Simon goes home and Betty, who has been cross-trained, collects the money and also hands out the food. A total of seven hours is spent in the drive-through.

Think about what this might look like if the drive-through was run by some volunteer organizations. From noon to 2:00 p.m. Betty, the Cash Window Volunteer, would collect the money and Simon, the Food Window Volunteer would hand out the food. After it slows down at 2:00 p.m. Betty would still be the Cash Window Volunteer and Simon, the Food Window Volunteer, right through until 5:00 p.m. A total of ten hours would be spent in the drive-through.

Why is it that the fast food restaurant uses seven hours when the volunteer restaurant uses ten hours? Plenty of research has demonstrated that we work towards what we are rewarded for. Restaurant managers are rewarded for spending as little as they need to get the job done. Managers of volunteers seem to be rewarded for spending as much volunteer time as they can.

Once an organization has adopted a philosophy of spending volunteer time as if it is money, it is ready to move on to the next phase in the model, which extends beyond the scope of this article, placing beneficial values on the accomplishments of volunteers and comparing those to the cost of the volunteer time.

Tony Goodrow of Better Impact Inc. is the founding Chair of the Carpenter Hospice in Burlington, Ontario and has been recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, received the June Callwood award for volunteerism and is one of only three recipients of the designation of Patron of Burlington.

Enhance Volunteer Program Efficiencies with a Volunteer Engagement Team

by Lee Jones, London, Ontario

The Canadian Code of Volunteer Involvement (2012) identifies the "dedication of personnel to the administration of the volunteer program" as vital to the engagement of volunteers. The National Occupational Standard for Managers of Volunteer Resources (2012) identifies nine major tasks: develop volunteer services, promote volunteer services, conduct volunteer recruitment, provide volunteer orientation, maintain volunteer records, perform administration tasks, manage volunteer performance, recognize volunteer contribution and engage in professional development. Within these are more than 400 sub-tasks. The average number of tasks for an occupation in Canada is more than 125. These daunting figures necessitate a streamlined and efficient process to create the conditions for an effective volunteer program. Establishing a Volunteer Engagement Team (VET) to support the volunteer management professional is a viable option for nonprofits aiming to establish, maintain or build a valuable volunteer program.

A VET requires the leadership of a qualified volunteer management professional to maintain the integrity of the program and meet best practices and standards, such as those in the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement. All too often, volunteer management professionals find themselves in a reactive position with little time to build or maintain the vital underpinnings of their program or to initiate strategic and sustainable growth. When skilled volunteers take on some of the sub-tasks within the volunteer management role, this allows for more efficient use of staff time. It also helps streamline the program and increase its capacity to contribute to mission delivery.

Identify the need

The creation of a VET begins with an assessment of the existing volunteer management program to identify strengths and weaknesses. A VET can provide support with a variety of sub-tasks including drafting or updating policies and procedures and role descriptions, creating and/or delivering orientation and training, providing expertise and support in database management, facilitating recruitment and recognition activities.

Identify the skills and recruitment targets

Volunteers with skills in areas such as human resources, adult education, database management, and volunteer management can make viable contributions. To attract highly skilled volunteers to VET roles it is important to be explicit in role descriptions and recruitment messages about the benefits to the volunteer and their employers. Skilled volunteers value opportunities to gain experience in leadership, mentoring, creating innovative solutions and having an impact on nonprofit organizations and their communities. Employers welcome opportunities for their employees to stretch their skills, try on leadership roles and represent them as contributors to their community. You need to get buy-in from volunteer members to invest in the mission so they can then authentically ask others to do the same. It is vital to get this right. When screening, interviewing and selecting candidates ensure that they

understand the stage of development of the team. Target people interested in pioneering and building something new.

Ensure a productive team

The composition, function, vetting and accountability protocol of a VET will look a little bit different in every organization. All of these elements come together under the Terms of Reference - the blue print for the team's initial iteration. Key points within the terms of reference include the official team name, roles, term of membership, formation details, team goals, deliverables, jurisdiction and governance, resources and budget allotment and communications details. Clearly established expectations of deliverables and operational boundaries ensure the team stays on task and helps define space for creativity and innovative solutions.

The efficient functioning of the VET is reinforced by the development of an annualized plan with specific tasks and timelines. The inaugural plan should include the developmental tasks of establishing the team and each role, as well as establishing the role of the VET within the organization.

When setting up meetings with the VET, consider the use of various platforms. Meeting in person at first is paramount to the building of a sense of team. Once the team environment is established, use online methods for occasional meetings to reduce travel time and help professionals fit their volunteer commitment into busy schedules. Utilize online storage to ensure easy universal access to the most up-to-date version of all your team documents including meeting minutes.

Ensure connection and integration with others in the organization

The final step is introducing the organization at large to the team. It is important that all Board members, staff and volunteers understand the role of the VET. Change is sometimes welcome and other times interpreted as disruptive or confusing. Take as many opportunities as possible to introduce the VET to the organization through communiques from senior leadership, newsletters, social media, meetings and events.

Reap the rewards

Once the VET is in place, whatever areas were identified for support (e.g. risk management, recruitment, training, placement, record keeping, communication or recognition) will become more streamlined and efficient. Increased efficiency in the volunteer program will translate to increased capacity for mission delivery on the part of staff and volunteers.

Lee received her Volunteer Management Certificate from Humber College in 2004, and in 2014 became a Certified Manager of Volunteer Resources through PAVR-O.

Lee has provided volunteer leadership with Habitat for Humanity and the Canadian Cancer Society. In 2012 she edited a manual on volunteer management for the Pillar Nonprofit Network. She is now a volunteer management consultant who offers consulting in volunteer program creation and enhancement. Her recent clients include the Hamilton Naturalists Club.

Five easy ways CharityVillage can help with your volunteer management needs

by Marina Dawson, Vancouver Island, BC

Although perhaps best known for our nonprofit job board, CharityVillage offers a wide range of free resources to help nonprofit professionals, including managers of volunteers, do great work within their organization. And because managing volunteers is such a vital and integral role in the running of a successful nonprofit, many of our free resources support the important work done by managers of volunteers.

Here is a quick list of free tools and services that can help you make the most of the CharityVillage website.

Post free volunteer and event listings

Are you looking for a great volunteer to join your team? CharityVillage hosts a busy volunteer board where you can post all of your volunteer opportunities - for free! With the ability to indicate the geographic region (including flexible for your online volunteering opportunities), as well as the duration of the position and the skill set required, you can carefully tailor your listing to target the right audience. You can also choose to post your listing in English or French, or use the bilingual option.

An added benefit is that, through our partnership with LinkedIn, any skilled volunteer listings posted on the CharityVillage site will also be automatically added to LinkedIn for free. These postings will appear on LinkedIn among relevant job postings, helping you to reach an even wider audience of qualified volunteers.

In addition to volunteer listings, organizations are also encouraged to post their upcoming events, for free, in our event directory.

Register for a free webinar or watch a recorded session

We understand that in a cash-strapped sector, finding affordable professional development opportunities can be a challenge - especially if you are not located in a major urban centre. With that in mind, CharityVillage offers a free series of monthly webinars hosted by subject matter experts. Although the webinars cover a wide variety of topics, many of these sessions will be of interest to managers of volunteers.

All of our webinars are recorded and made available on the CharityVillage website, so that you can watch any of the presentations at a time that is most convenient to you. You can also watch any of our past webinars that you may have missed, including our Getting the best from your volunteers using the SAVE approach and Best practices for behaviour-based interviewing.

If you do not want to miss any of our upcoming webinars you can also sign up to whenever a new session has been announced.

Browse our vast library of free articles and sign up for Village Vibes

Located in the Topics section of our website, our collection of articles covers a variety of subjects including volunteer management. Some of our recent articles have explored such topics as keeping potential volunteers engaged with your organization, the most effective tool for motivating your volunteers and how to gracefully end a relationship with a volunteer.

You can stay on top of all of our latest content by subscribing to our free weekly enewsletter, Village Vibes, which rounds up all the new content posted to our website, the latest nonprofit news from across the country and links to excellent resources and blog posts from around the web. Village Vibes is also the home to our popular Newsbytes feature, where we list all the latest headlines relating to Canada's nonprofit sector.

Research professional development opportunities

Whether you are looking to grow your own skills or to help your volunteers brush up on theirs, the eLearning section of our website will be of interest to you. In addition to our own low-cost online eLearning program, which includes a course on volunteer management, we also have a lengthy list of post-secondary programs focused on fundraising, nonprofit management, volunteer management and other subjects relevant to the nonprofit sector. If you are looking for something more casual we also have a calendar of professional development events happening in cities across Canada.

Visit our Directories section to add your organization, search for funding and more

Did you know you can add your organization to our list of nonprofits and charities from across Canada? We maintain a nonprofit directory, organized by subsector, and we are always adding new organizations from across the country. Just email us with your organization name, website URL and a brief description of your mission and/or services, and we will be happy to add your organization to the list.

Also popular in our Directories section is our Funder Directory. Here we list sources of funding available to Canadian nonprofits and charities, including foundations, corporate programs and government initiatives.

Finally, you may want to check out our Special Awareness Days calendar, where we list the many awareness months, weeks and days that happen throughout the year. This is a great place to check to ensure you are on top of upcoming important events such as GivingTuesday, the International Day of Volunteering or National Volunteer Week.

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How to be more INefficient

by Ruth Vant, Ottawa, Ontario

"Learn from your mistakes". We have heard that many times. And the large field of volunteer management is rife with opportunities to learn.

There are many anecdotal stories – some are horror stories – about organizations implementing what looked like good ideas, but which were misguided. There are many ways to be more <u>I</u>Nefficient. Take a moment to ponder the following true tales from several different volunteer organizations. Determine whether similar things may have crept into your work. Now is the time to identify a potential problem and turn it around.

- **The meeting culture**. How often have you attended a meeting that felt like a waste of time? Even if some goals were solidly achieved, could the same outcome have happened with fewer people, less time around the table or even connecting with others via teleconference or email? This concept can also be extended to orientation, training, information, reporting and update meetings held with volunteers. Are you using your time, and that of your volunteers, effectively?

- **Losing track of the mission statement**. Working towards the mission lends itself to creative thinking. Sometimes we get side-tracked by well-meaning individuals who want to follow exciting new directions, which are not necessarily in line with the organization's mission. The enthusiasm of such a volunteer can be quickly thwarted when their idea is presented to senior management, who recognize that it is either not within the parameters of the organization or not on the road to fulfilling the mission statement. If this problem is not noted and reversed, it can lead to a situation in which the organizational direction actually changes.

- **Reinventing the wheel**. Lots of time and energy is spent creating programs or procedures, sometimes for things that have already been developed elsewhere. Technology makes it easy to research how other organizations do the same or similar things. How much easier would it be to customize something rather than to start from scratch? An example: several regions comprising a national organization agreed to focus fundraising efforts for a fun run each year. Since each region operated independently, each also developed their own procedures for handling details such as registration, receipting, publicity, prizes and activities. It was years before they realized they could have created just one set of procedures, mostly borrowed from other successful similar fundraisers. When they did, it resulted in saving money as well as both volunteer and staff time.

- **Ignoring history**. There are often strong reasons why something is being done (or not being done) a certain way. Before making changes, it may be enlightening to find out the historical perspective. An example: a volunteer program had been in disarray for a couple of years and a new manager of volunteer resources was hired to sort it out. She was very experienced and knew she had the skills and knowledge to rejuvenate the program. She decided it would be best to begin with a clean slate and not look at how things were done in the past. Two longstanding volunteers tried to explain why the volunteer workshops were always held in the basement of the church next door instead of in the large room in their office building. But she did not want to

hear "how it used to be", and rescheduled the location for all the workshops. The result: she learned, too late, that the church warden had been a strong supporter and donor to the organization. She inadvertently insulted him, losing his support in the process, and also alienated the two volunteers.

- **The tail wagging the dog**. Implementation of almost any program results in some changes to the initial plan. But caution is required when the method of implementation becomes more important than the objective. An example: a new software package was being sought to keep track of volunteer hours so that service awards could be presented. This awards program had been in place for several years and was a respected cornerstone of the volunteer recognition program nationally. The least expensive new software could not be manipulated to count the volunteer hours as had been done manually for years, and the software consultant recommended to senior management that the awards program be modified to fit the software. The result: the awards program could have been changed, with consequential negative feedback from the volunteers, but senior management recognized this was a case of "the tail wagging the dog", and a different piece of software was purchased.

- **Reactive policy development**. Every manager of volunteers needs to have appropriate policies in place. Often, an adverse event prompts us to react by developing policy to prevent it from happening again. However, caution is required when doing this. An example: at a book sale fundraiser, one of the volunteers responsible for sorting books helped out by "watching" the cash box when a fellow volunteer took a short break. It was later discovered that money had been stolen and the volunteer responsible had a history of theft. The staff, in an attempt to keep this from happening again, created a screening policy that required every volunteer, regardless of their role, to obtain a police records check. The result: fewer people agreed to do one-off volunteer jobs (such as sorting books), there was an increase in the administrative details and there was a backlog of volunteers waiting for their police records checks to be completed. Proactive policy development would have resulted in a screening policy that matched levels of screening with the volunteer role.

- **Keeping part of the truth hidden**. When recruiting volunteers, we sometimes keep less desirable parts of the position under wraps until the individual appears comfortable in their volunteer role. "By the way", you say nonchalantly one day, "the expectation is that you will provide this service for four hours a week, every week", or "unfortunately, you will have to pay for your own transportation and parking". But this may backfire. People might walk away from volunteer positions because they either cannot work within the parameters of the new information or because they prefer working with someone who is openly honest with them.

- **Reliance on a super volunteer**. A volunteer who wants to do it all, has all the right skills and is totally competent and reliable. A dream volunteer, right? Not necessarily. This perfect volunteer is often given an increasing amount of freedom and responsibility, leaving nobody who actually knows what is happening. An example: a volunteer-driven newsletter was handled completely by one very competent gentleman for several years. But health issues forced him to leave his volunteer role. The result: a scramble to discover exactly what he did and to find someone to

take over. In actuality, four people were recruited to fill in all the roles that this super volunteer had taken on.

- **The halo effect**. See that volunteer over there? The one with the halo? She can do nothing wrong, and everything that comes out of her mouth is pure genius. But be careful. It is very easy to judge an idea by who presents it rather than on its own merits. An example: an organization brought on a volunteer board member who was very charismatic and appeared to have the best interests of the organization at heart. Every idea she presented was almost instantly agreed upon and implemented. Nobody thought to thoroughly question the implications of a radical change she suggested: one in which the organization was formally divided into two separate functions. The result: the plan looked good on paper but it led to the breakdown of years of positive communication from the grassroots to the national level and it almost bankrupted the organization. This charismatic board member was asked to leave, and the organization had to work hard to rebuild what had been lost.

- **Playing along with the volunteer stereotype**. All volunteers are good, honest, reliable people, right? Unfortunately, no, not always. An example: a large parenting conference was being planned, and each time the board met and the volunteer conference chairperson gave her report, it appeared everything was not just on track, but thriving. However, as the conference date was looming, one of the board members noted they still had not received a registration package. That is when the conference chairperson broke down and admitted that she had not done any work towards the conference because she was a terrible procrastinator. She did not want to upset anyone on the board so she just borrowed reports from the previous year to present to the board. The result: there was no conference that year, but board members learned to ask more probing questions. This situation could have been much worse, since the volunteer's behaviour was actually fraudulent.

Do you want to be more efficient? Begin by looking at how you are working currently. Identify inefficiencies and then replace them with better methods. No matter how you look at it, being more efficient will make everyone's job easier.

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Good to Great and the Social Sectors:

Why Business Thinking Is Not the Answer by Jim Collins - Book review

by Denise Blair, Calgary, Alberta

Are you looking for an uplifting and practical tool to engage leaders and board volunteers in a meaningful forward-thinking conversation? Try Jim Collins' monograph, Good to Great and the Social Sectors. At just 35 pages it is a quick read with compelling thinking, crisp graphics and tangible real life

examples. Building on his best selling business book, <u>Good to Great</u>, Collins provides a framework of five good-to-great principles uniquely crafted for the social sector.

1) Defining "Great": Calibrating success without business metrics

Greatness in the social sector is measured by superior performance that makes a distinct impact over a long period of time. It is not about a Return on Investment (ROI), it is about how much of a difference we make relative to our resources. Collins, using a real life nonprofit example, shows how to measure impact by gathering compelling evidence in creative ways.

2) Level 5 leadership: Getting things done within a diffuse power structure

A Good to Great Level 5 Leader must be motivated for the cause, not self, and have the will to do whatever it takes. Collins suggests that this is common in the social sectors where humility is coupled with strong professional will, and because of this he also believes that true leadership is even more apparent in the social sector than in the business sector. This leadership is especially important in the social sector where a diffuse power structure, distinct from the business sector, requires leaders to inspire people to follow even when they have the freedom not to.

3) First Who: Getting the right people on the bus within social sector constraints

It is not always easy to promote or fire people, especially when relying on volunteers. Collins suggests creating a pocket of greatness where you can have an influence. This concept is filled with hope and optimism implying that impactful change can happen anywhere. When it comes to building a team, be selective, ambitious and provide meaningful opportunities to attract the right people and discourage the wrong ones. Time and talent can compensate for lack of money but money can never compensate for lack of the right people.

4) The Hedgehog Concept: Rethinking the economic engine without a profit motive

The Hedgehog Concept is comprised of three concentric circles: what are you passionate about, what are you best in the world at and what drives your resource engine – how to use time, money, brand. The resource engine was renamed from economic engine to more accurately reflect the social sector as resource driven instead of profit driven. The question asked is how do you develop a sustainable resource engine to deliver superior performance relative to mission. Collins suggests that the complexity of economic structures in the social sector increases the importance of this principle and the need for deep clarity of how these three circles work together.

5) Turning the Flywheel: Building momentum by building the brand

This is a simple concept that speaks to momentum: how success breeds support which builds success, and so forth. Brand reputation is important, as potential supporters have to believe in your mission and in your capacity to deliver on that mission.

Collins, appreciating the challenges and strengths of the social sector, urges nonprofit organizations not to strive to be more like business, but more appropriately to simply strive to be great. Read it today and you will be well on your way from good to great.

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