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An online volunteer management staff development plan

FROM ENERGIZE

Online Seminar Trainer's Handouts

Welcoming Diversity in Volunteer Participation

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Where Are We Today?

For each type of diversity in the left column, work across the chart and identify the characteristics of each group of people in your organization (the next 3 columns) as they are today. Then in the last column, identify what types of diversity are not represented (particularly characteristics/dimensions you'd like to tap). You may also want to consider the diversity of your client/consumer group in relation to your paid and unpaid workforce.

Types of Diversity	Frontline Volunteers	Board Member Volunteers	Paid Staff	Who's missing?
Gender				
Ages				
Race and Ethnicity				
Languages Spoken				
Levels of Education				
Professions/ Occupations				
Physical or Mental Disabilities				
Have had personal experience with our cause/service				
Income Levels				
Sexual Orientation				
Number of years with our organization				

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Dimensions of Diversity

Workforce America!: Managing Employee Diversity as a Vital Resource
by Marilyn Loden and Judy B. Rosener (McGraw-Hill, 1990)

Primary Dimensions

Primary dimensions of diversity are: "those immutable human dimensions that are inborn and/or that exert an important impact on our early socialization and an ongoing impact throughout our lives. They represent the core of our individual identities."

- Age
- Gender
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Sexual Orientation
- Physical Ability

Secondary Dimensions

S*econdary* dimensions of diversity are: "mutable differences that we acquire, discard and/or modify throughout our lives."

- Language
- Religion
- Education
- Profession
- Geography
- Marital Status
- Parental Status
- Military Status

Lee Gardenswartz and Anita Rowe have added:

Organizational dimensions:
- Departments
- Divisions
- Locations

Societal dimensions:
- Media
- Social norms
- Political affiliation

Issue or Opportunity?

Creating a work environment where diversity is valued does NOT mean making different rules for each person or group. The challenge is making everyone feel valued while encouraging unique approaches and skills.

—Tracy Brown, "Breaking the Barrier of Bias"

When we view diversity as an	
ISSUE	**OPPORTUNITY**
We perceive it to be a . . .	
• Challenge • Problem to be solved • Something to be fixed	• Resource • Path to excellence • Something interesting or expansive
And we get . . .	
• Quick fixes • SWAT team approach • Debate • Silo approach • Representational programs	• Long-term solutions • Collaboration • Dialogue • Partnership • Innovation

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The following two articles discuss the question of diversity on nonprofit boards of directors. We include them here for two important reasons. First, many of the same principles apply to recruiting volunteers more broadly. And second, board members are volunteers.

Each of these articles is reprinted with permission from The Best of the Board Café.

Footnote: The Best of the Board Café *compiles articles from the* Board Café*, a newsletter from CompassPoint with more than 44,000 subscribers. Copies can be purchased at www.compasspoint.org or at www.amazon.com.*

The Diversity Issue

One thing we know about diversity: cookie-cutter solutions don't work, because the situations are so . . . well, diverse. Consider, as just a few examples, the following situations:

- A summer Shakespeare Festival board, currently all white, would like to recruit people of color as one way of helping them expand their audiences to minority communities. Although everyone on the board likes the idea of a more demographically diverse board, several board members can't see why a minority community leader would be interested in raising money for this organization (which is the primary activity of the board). What practical steps can and should this organization take in board recruitment?

- A family service agency adds an AIDS program to their extensive list of services. Up to now, this agency's clients have been 80% white and 20% Native American; statistics haven't been kept for the percents that have been gay, lesbian or heterosexual. But more than half of the clients in the new AIDS program are either Native American or gay (or both). How might and should the board use this information to inform their board recruitment needs?

- A deaf counseling organization has a requirement that 80% of board members be deaf, and that *all* members must be fluent in American Sign Language (ASL). Because so few people outside the deaf and deaf-serving community are fluent in ASL, it's been hard to find board members with the political clout the board wants. For example, the Mayor wants to join the board, but is not fluent in ASL.

- A Filipino senior organization finds itself serving more and more people who are not Filipino. Some of the initial non-Filipino clients came because their spouses were Filipino, but now the agency's reputation for quality care is attracting people from a wide range of racial and ethnic backgrounds. In fact, a Spanish-speaking counselor was recently hired to strengthen the work with Latino families. Some board members want to bring on Latino and white board members, while other board members find strength in the organization's Filipino focus, and worry that the organization's volunteer base and focus will be diminished if that focus goes away. In addition, this organization has a policy that 50% or more of the board must be age 60 or older; some of the younger professionals on the board are concerned that this standard limits the fundraising potential of the board.

The call for diversity in nonprofit organizations grew out of a legitimate concern that many nonprofits serving minority communities had few if any staff or board members from those same communities. How, asked community members from communities of color, can you know the needs and perspectives of our communities when you don't have any of us working as providers, managers, or serving as board members?

In today's nonprofit sector, diversity has several different dimensions, including:

- Diversity among clients, patrons, members;
- Diversity among staff, board members, volunteers;
- Diversity based on specific demographic characteristics, including race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, location, etc.
- Diversity based on characteristics specific to the organization's constituencies (examples: adoptive parent, HIV status, immigration status, survivor of domestic violence, and so forth.)

Looking at the nonprofit sector overall, it's also clear that there's a role to play for organizations that are for and in a specific community, such as Russian organizations, African American organizations, organizations of mental health patients, or organizations of nurses advocating a particular cause.

There is no "right" answer on diversity that is appropriate for all organizations. The discussion about diversity is itself an important process through which a board can consider in what ways diversity may be important in achieving its mission.

Sample Policy Statements on Diversity

Following are some approaches to diversity on nonprofit boards, and sample policies that can act as a starting point for your own board's discussion.

1. A "**mission reason**": Diversity serves the mission. To help ensure that the perspectives of people utilizing services are reflected in planning and operations, organizations should have on their boards members of the communities being served, including clients, customers, and volunteers. (It's hard to imagine an effective board working with people with disabilities with no members with disabilities, a Chinese community center with no board members who are Chinese, or a theatre board with no members who attend the theatre.)

Examples

- "We will strive to have two or more members of our board be parents whose children are residents in our treatment program."
- "As one way we ensure our organization is responsive to the diverse community we serve, we are committed to a board that includes individuals from different racial and ethnic communities, different genders, ages, sexual orientations, and physical disabilities."

2. A "**business reason**": Diversity is a good business practice. An organization's board should include individuals who bring contacts, sensibility, and knowledge related to the communities served.

Examples

- "To help us reach and reach meaningfully the Latino population we want to serve, we are committed to a board that is 40% or more from the Latino/Hispanic community,"
- "Because our organization seeks to serve a racially diverse spectrum of low income families, we strive for board composition that is racially and ethnically diverse."

3. A "**responsible corporation reason**": Every organization is responsible to its community. Even beyond an organization's client population, today's diverse communities need diverse organizations as community building blocks. As employers and managers of public spaces, organizations have a responsibility to the greater community.

Examples

- "In line with our commitment that our staff and board reflect the larger community we serve, we will strive to have our staff and board have racial and ethnic composition comparable to the civilian labor force in our area."
- "We are committed to making our facilities accessible to visitors and employees, to ensuring that our website follows designs and practices for accessibility, and to providing sign language interpretation, large-print materials, and other supports to enable us to serve the broadest segment of our community."

4. **A definitional reason**: Ethnic-specific, gender-specific organizations, and other organizations focused on specific groups, should clarify and articulate their policies (whether and how to diversify) as part of their missions or their strategies for working with their communities.

Examples

- "Because our organization is built on the idea of self-help for the immigrant Central American community, a board composition of 100% Central American immigrants is an important aspect of how we do our work."
- "We expect that the composition of the board of our Arab American historical society will be predominantly Arab American, but we have no restrictions on race or national origin, and we recognize that others can play valuable roles in advancing our organization's mission."
- "As a group advocating for the advancement of women in science, we see a board composition of 100% women as a component of our mission."

Discussions about diversity are difficult to hold. The topics of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation evoke deeply felt, complex emotions, and participants in the discussion frequently have quite different points of view. These discussions, though they may be difficult, are an important part of the way a board develops its values and vision, and provide a unique platform where individuals can develop their own thinking.

There is no single right answer on diversity that is appropriate for all organizations. The discussion about diversity is itself an important process through which a board can consider in what ways diversity may be important in achieving its mission.

Walking the Talk Audit™ [NonProfit Version]

Do we do the things we need to do to demonstrate our commitment to diversity and inclusion?

In our organization we:		True	False
1	Have a statement or policy that describes our commitment to diversity		
2	Include diversity as one of our core values		
3	Link diversity to our primary mission		
4	Distinguish between diversity and EEO/Affirmative Action		
5	Have an employee or board member whose primary job is to focus on diversity and inclusion		
6	Hold all leaders accountable for diversity in their areas of responsibility		
7	Hold all employees and volunteers accountable for supporting our commitment to diversity		
8	Conduct diversity-related training on a regular basis		
9	Include diversity in our staff orientation		
10	Include diversity in our board / volunteer orientations		
11	Have diversity-related goals and objectives for the organization		
12	Include diversity-related objectives in individual employee performance plans		
13	Have a diversity page or section on our website		
14	Have a well-organized and well-communicated process for resolving complaints or concerns that are diversity-related		
15	Participate in diversity-related community events		
16	Host or sponsor diversity-related community events		
17	Are considered a diversity best-practice agency or organization by others		
18	Have a Board of Trustees that represents the ethnic mix of our community or clients served		
19	Have a Board of Trustees that is evenly balanced by gender		
20	Have more than 5% of our employees or volunteers with visible disabilities		
	SUBTOTALS (#1-20)		

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Walking the Talk Audit™ (continued)

In our organization we:		True	False
21	Treat diversity as a problem or issue to be fixed		
22	Receive diversity-related complaints from clients or members on a regular basis		
23	Do not have a diversity council or steering committee		
24	Have never offered diversity-related training for employees		
25	Have never offered diversity-related training for volunteers		
26	Make all diversity training we do offer optional		
27	Equate diversity with race and gender more than anything else		
28	Experience a lot of diversity-related conflict between employees or volunteers		
29	Have higher turnover for employees or volunteers who are different from the majority (by race, gender or sexual orientation)		
30	Do not have an executive level leader who is considered a champion for diversity		
	Subtotals (#21-30)		
	+ Subtotals (#1-20)		
	TOTAL		

What do your audit responses tell you about your organization or yourself?

- What are you doing well?
- Where is there room for improvement?
- Were there any surprises?

Notes:

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Achieving Inclusion Model™ Diversity Trends LLC	
awareness What do I need to know, or understand, about diversity and inclusion?	**alignment** What do diversity and inclusion have to do with this organization's mission or priorities?
action What are specific things I can do or say to demonstrate awareness and meet my goals?	**accountability** What will I be responsible for achieving and within what time frame?
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10 Action Steps

1. Set targets related to the diversity of your volunteer population that are fully aligned with diversity of the client population served.
2. Examine your assumptions about who volunteers and why they volunteer.
3. Assess your existing recruitment tactics to evaluate whether or not they are inviting to people from different identity groups.
4. Review your orientation and task assignment processes. How do you welcome new volunteers (or volunteers who are assigned to a new area of responsibility?)
5. Examine your existing recognition programs. Do they celebrate the contributions of volunteers in both big and small ways? Do you have structured opportunities for both public and private recognition?
6. Involve volunteers who represent different identity groups to provide input into your policies and processes.
7. Develop more comfort discussing diversity. Don't be afraid to ask questions.
8. Partner with professionals with Human Resources, Marketing and Public Relations experience to ensure your recruitment materials and processes will be effective for a wide variety of people.
9. Access materials and resources already in use or available through other departments in your organization that may have existing diversity-related initiatives.
10. Align your diversity-focused efforts with strategies being used to address diversity-related challenges with staff, the Board of Trustees, client services or community relations.

Developing acceptance requires you to get out of your comfort zone.
—Lenora Billings-Harris

What You Must Do If You Want to Transform Diversity into Inclusion[1]

If you were to have a heart-to-heart conversation with someone you were inviting to be a part of your organization (as an employee, board member, program volunteer or client), he or she might tell you to:

1. Examine your assumptions . . . about diversity, about people like me and about your reasons for inviting me to your organization.

2. Tap into my passion, purpose or perspective as well as my race, gender or ethnicity.

3. Prepare everyone for hearing, and welcoming, different perspectives and experiences. Don't invite me if you don't want a different perspective.

4. Tell me about the landmines and sacred cows within your organization. Provide the rationale for existing policies and practices. [Don't set me up for failure.]

5. Give me something meaningful to do.

6. Don't expect me to represent the views, opinions or experiences of all people in my identity group.

7. Don't label me as a difficult . . . or as a troublemaker because I have presented a different perspective or challenged the status quo.

8. Give me honest and direct feedback.

9. Speak up when others ignore, disrespect or discount me, or the contribution I am making.

10. Come into my world the way you expect me to come into yours.

[1] These 10 tips are adapted from the e-book, "More Diversity Please: Tips for Recruiting and Retaining Greater Diversity on Your Board of Trustees." ©2007, Diversity Trends LLC

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Resources and Further Reading

Books and Articles

Ballard, Patty B. and Gregory Smith. *Navigating Diversity: An Advocate's Guide Through the Maze of Race, Gender, Religion and More* (BookSurge Publishing, 2008).

Brown, Tracy. 71 *Ways to Inspire Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion*. (Brown Bridges Press, 2010).

The California Endowment. *A Manager's Guide to Cultural Competence Education for Health Care Professionals* (2003). http://www.calendow.org/uploadedfiles/managers_guide_cultural_competence(1).pdf Although this free downloadable booklet focuses on health care, its frameworks and well-annotated publications list is helpful to people in many fields.

Ellis, Susan J. *The Volunteer Recruitment (and Membership Development) Book* (Energize, 2002). Contains a special section on recruiting for diversity. http://www.energizeinc.com/store/1-128-P-1 *(Don't forget to use your* Everyone Ready *discount code. Your discount code, which you will need to enter upon checkout in the bookstore, can be found on your* Everyone Ready *Main Page.)*

Planned Parenthood Federation of America. "Diversity Continuum: Indicators of Success," in *e-Volunteerism*, Vol. I, Issue 3. A tool for assessing how an organization ranks when it comes to diversity—unique in integrating standards for volunteer diversity alongside the same standards for employee diversity. *(Access* e-Volunteerism *via the link on your* Everyone Ready *Main Page. Go to the Archive to locate this article).*

Volunteer Canada. *Volunteer Connections: Creating an accessible and inclusive environment.* (2001). Free download at http://volunteer.ca/files/AccessEnglish.pdf (Focused on people with disabilities, but the concepts can apply to other target groups.)

Web Sites

Sites with links to many resources on diversity and volunteering, covering a variety of countries and many dimensions of diversity:

- **Energize Online Library:** http://www.energizeinc.com/art/subj/div.html
- ***e-Volunteerism* archives** *(Access* e-Volunteerism *via the link on your* Everyone Ready *Main Page. Visit the Archive and click the link for the subject index to find articles on Diversity).*
- **OzVPM** for information on Australasian and indigenous populations: http://www.ozvpm.com/resourcebank/resource_diversity.php
- **Resource Center** of the Corporation for National and Community Service (US): http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/volunteer-member-staff-management/diversity
- **Volunteering England:** http://www.volunteering.org.uk/Resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/equalopportunitiesdiversity/

National Bone Marrow Program
www.marrow-donor.org
This program reaches out to prospective donors of bone marrow and blood cells. They're unusual in having developed distinct programs for African-Americans, American Indians, Hispanics, and Asians. If you go their section on Donor Materials, you'll see publications designed for each group, along with links for more information on how NBMP develops partnerships in each community.

Race Matters
www.racematters.org
This website has hundreds of links to articles and press on various subjects related to race. They are sorted into three categories: "Ideas for action," "Good information," and "Personal journey," and you can search the site as well.

US Census Bureau (Outside the US: Check your own country's census agency for similar tools)
www.census.gov
You can map your neighborhood for demographic information such as race, ethnicity, age, household income, and other factors. We looked up the hometown of Oscar winner Jamie Foxx, for example, and mapped African-American and white populations. The green shading to the right shows percentage of residents who are African-American. On the left side of www.census.gov, go to Data Tools, then Online Mapping Tools, then Thematic Maps.

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Tracy Brown is President of Diversity Trends, LLC, a consulting and training firm based in Dallas, Texas. Since 1991 her company has helped clients nationwide design successful diversity strategies and develop skills that support inclusion.

Tracy is known for her experiential workshops and engaging keynotes. She is the author of eight books including *Breaking the Barrier of Bias* and *71 Ways to Demonstrate Commitment to Diversity*. As an author and consultant Tracy has made appearances on many local radio and television programs. She's also been interviewed or featured in *Money Magazine*, BLR Reports, *HR Insights*, *Texas Business Monthly*, *HR Magazine*, *Heart and Soul Magazine* and other publications.

Community service is a core value for Tracy. She has served as a volunteer leader for more than a dozen community-based organizations involved in health care, the performing arts and improving life for previously homeless or disadvantaged individuals. She is one of the creators of the Dallas Dinner Table process, which brings people together in small groups to increase understanding about the impact of race and racism in the daily lives of local citizens. And she was a member of the founding faculty for the NonProfit Leadership Certificate Program jointly developed by the Center for NonProfit Management and Southern Methodist University.

Tracy is a popular presenter for The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP). She has been invited to present at the International AFP conference three times and has spoken for more than a dozen chapters and regional conferences. Additional nonprofit clients have included American Heart Association, American Hospital Association, Society for HR Management, League of Women Voters, Lupus Foundation, AIDS Arms, California Hospital Association and The ARC.

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