

## Recognizing Management Volunteer Successes

*In their Working Paper Series, **The Dynamics of Volunteer Involvement: Preparing an Organization for Volunteer Leadership**, Dr. Francis Dane and Dr. Stephen Mullen share proven tactics which should be helpful as you recognize the successes of your management volunteers.*

Volunteers, even management volunteers, need to be recognized for competent performance. Besides promoting them to a trainer role in the organization, recognition may include certificates of accomplishment or service, a public 'pat on the back,' or simply feedback on the level of their competence. Recognition should be based on your careful analysis of what motivates the individuals.

Some volunteers are motivated to obtain work experience in anticipation of obtaining a paid position. The supervisors of those volunteers should be prepared to provide letters of recommendation, contacts for paid positions, and other assistance to the volunteer. When hiring volunteers, assure them that those motivations aren't just acceptable, but they are good ideas. That is, encourage new volunteers to benefit from their contribution to your organization. Chances are some of you will have emphasized this benefit during recruitment. He or she may perceive a lack of encouragement after the volunteer makes a commitment to your organization as a breach of promise.

Most volunteers want a challenge, an opportunity to attempt something new without risking their career or livelihood. Encourage them to attempt new activities, while simultaneously assuring them that the attempt is more important than the result. That is, assure the volunteer that you will not throw him or her out of the organization simply because he or she tried something new as was unable to do it. Allow volunteer leaders to accept challenging new activities, by changing their assignments when they want a new challenge.

The motivations for volunteering are as varied as the people who become volunteers, and discussion of every possible motivation is well beyond the scope of this work. Diversity of motivations implies a diversity of the ways recognition can contribute to the volunteer's continued motivation. The most effective way to motivate volunteer and paid staff alike, however, is through example. If you, as a policy maker, do not appear to be motivated and enthusiastic about your organization, you cannot expect those you employ to do any more. Try these additional suggestions for recognition and motivation.

### Partial List of Recognition Strategies

smile	ask for opinions	provide coffee	provide baby sitters
train well	hold meetings	allow participation	promote growth
respect opinions	encourage being different	consult	recruit well
be appreciative	talk to people	be friendly	buy pizza
solicit suggestions	remember birthdays	be flexible	challenge
award plaques	say hello	provide a nursery	have a party
plan well	be sincere	say thank you	plan social events
cooperate	listen	know your job	smile even more
reimburse expenses	ask for reports	be pleasant	learn names
explain things	discuss	be sensitive	notify media
be an advocate	persuade, don't order	say please	be surprising
have a picnic	maintain safe conditions	be informal	



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*Volunteerism for the Next Generation*



Motivation is not something that can be done to someone; it's a continuous process similar to an infectious disease. You can catch the flu from someone simply by being exposed to their germs. You can also catch motivation from someone simply by being exposed to their motivation. Become a carrier.

The key to motivation is respect. Respecting others lets them know you appreciate their contribution to your organization, and also lets them know you consider their potential for contribution to be greater than their current level of performance. Respect poses a challenge to others, a challenge to live up to the respect shown to them.

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