

Self Assessment for a Volunteer Leader/Manager

The Cheshire cat in **Alice in Wonderland** commented that if you don't know where you want to go, any road will take you there. This **Volunteerism for the Next Generation (VNG) Fact Sheet** is designed to help you understand where you are now, (your strengths and weaknesses) and identify where you might want to go if you are to develop additional leadership skills for working with volunteers.

You have already developed certain leadership skills that have brought you to this point in your career. You may have great "people" skills, or good "management" skills, or be a good organizer or communicator. You may love strategic planning and data analysis. You may be "well connected" in the community and be a good fund raiser. You may possess many of these qualities but you may want a clearer picture of where your real strengths and weaknesses are. Take some time now to honestly evaluate yourself and **use this tool for your own personal development**. This inventory can be used for salaried staff and volunteers serving in a management role.

This tool was developed by Trudy Seita, a volunteer management consultant, author, and former 4-H volunteer from West Virginia. It is based on the basic principles of volunteer management and the competencies identified in a study of top leaders (Excellent Community Leaders or ECL's) in non-profit and volunteer organizations across the country. (The study was conducted by The National Assembly of National Voluntary Health & Social Welfare Organizations, Inc. and the results were published in **A Study In Excellence** in 1989.)

Volunteer Leadership Self Assessment Inventory BY TRUDY SEITA

PLACE A CIRCLE ON THE CONTINUUM WHERE YOU ARE PRESENTLY

You may ask others to rate you on another copy of the inventory. You could then transfer their ratings to your scale with an "*", or other mark. This may give you a clearer picture of your strengths & weaknesses. (Note: The words staff/people may refer to volunteer and/or salaried staff.)

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP	I DO/KNOW WELL		I NEED TO IMPROVE		I DON'T DO WELL	
1. I feel a strong sense of personal responsibility for the success of my organization.	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I believe that trained volunteers can do any role in the organization.	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I adapt well to change.	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. I surround myself with people who have special talents that I may not have.	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I am not threatened by those who do a better job than I.	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. I learn from others.	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. I encourage others to offer new ideas.	6	5	4	3	2	1
8. I am tolerant of ideas that are different from mine.	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. I encourage creativity and innovation.	6	5	4	3	2	1



Volunteerism for the Next Generation



10. I respect those who are different from me.	6	5	4	3	2	1
11. I respect differences of opinion.	6	5	4	3	2	1
12. I recognize there is more than one way to do a job successfully.	6	5	4	3	2	1
13. I am a risk taker and will take appropriate risks for organizational growth.	6	5	4	3	2	1
14. I often speak up and share my ideas with others.	6	5	4	3	2	1
15. I will speak out even when my views are different.	6	5	4	3	2	1
16. I will stand up for what I believe.	6	5	4	3	2	1
17. I can bring consensus into a group discussion.	6	5	4	3	2	1
18. I recognize when change is needed and "let go" of those things (past practices, ideas) that prevent it.	6	5	4	3	2	1
19. I look for solutions rather than blaming others for problems	6	5	4	3	2	1
20. I manage to organize my time effectively.	6	5	4	3	2	1
21. I act on ideas and suggestions from others in a timely manner.	6	5	4	3	2	1
22. I am willing to let go of control (of people & projects) and delegate to others.	6	5	4	3	2	1
23. I give credit and recognition to those who do the work.	6	5	4	3	2	1
24. I plan time for professional improvement through seminars, reading, and networking.	6	5	4	3	2	1
25. I have a personal philosophy of leadership and strive to live it.	6	5	4	3	2	1
26. I strive to keep my work, family, social, and personal life balanced in order to be effective to all.	6	5	4	3	2	1

PLANNING SKILLS

27. I know the importance of the organization and its mission.	6	5	4	3	2	1
28. I have a clear vision of success for the organization (and/or specific project / program).	6	5	4	3	2	1
29. I can communicate this vision to others.	6	5	4	3	2	1
30. I can enlist others to follow this vision even though there may be roadblocks.	6	5	4	3	2	1
31. I ask others to share their dreams and visions for success.	6	5	4	3	2	1
32. I work to incorporate other's ideas into the planning.	6	5	4	3	2	1
33. I can set priorities for the future growth of my program.	6	5	4	3	2	1
34. I set realistic goals for myself, co-workers, and the organization.	6	5	4	3	2	1



35. The objectives I set for attaining goals can be measured (specific numbers/dates/people).	6	5	4	3	2	1
36. I understand the importance of planning and set aside time for it.	6	5	4	3	2	1
37. I involve others in the planning process.	6	5	4	3	2	1
38. I understand the budget I am working within and can be responsible for it.	6	5	4	3	2	1
39. I make an effort to keep current with issues within the organization that may affect our programs/clients.	6	5	4	3	2	1
40. I make an effort to keep current with issues within the community that may affect our programs/clients.	6	5	4	3	2	1
41. I collect information that may deal with these issues.	6	5	4	3	2	1
42. I share information with others to help in their planning.	6	5	4	3	2	1
43. I set aside time for reading in order to stay current with issues affecting my organization.	6	5	4	3	2	1
44. I constantly search for new ideas where our organization can meet community needs.	6	5	4	3	2	1

STAFFING SKILLS

45. I understand I have been given a public trust in working with nonprofit organizations and I instill this in others.	6	5	4	3	2	1
46. I have clearly written role descriptions for the positions within my organization.	6	5	4	3	2	1
47. I revise and/or create new role descriptions at regular intervals.	6	5	4	3	2	1
48. I understand the skills that are needed for a role before I begin recruitment.	6	5	4	3	2	1
49. I interview potential volunteers for an understanding of their skills, mission, and needs.	6	5	4	3	2	1
50. I recognize the value of others' time and use it wisely.	6	5	4	3	2	1
51. I have a variety of roles to offer volunteers in time commitment and skill level.	6	5	4	3	2	1
52. I work to ensure people are placed in roles that utilize and enhance their skills.	6	5	4	3	2	1
53. I offer roles that are challenging to individuals but not overwhelming.	6	5	4	3	2	1
54. I provide for or direct people to technical support they need to do a role successfully.	6	5	4	3	2	1
55. I work to help people find the resources to perform their roles successfully.	6	5	4	3	2	1
56. I work to find the right "niches" for my staff/volunteers.	6	5	4	3	2	1
57. I encourage volunteers to "bring a friend" to help.	6	5	4	3	2	1



58. I work toward presenting a positive image of my organization in my community.	6	5	4	3	2	1
59. I work to build collaboration with other community agencies.	6	5	4	3	2	1
60. I represent my organization at community meetings.	6	5	4	3	2	1
61. I can inspire others to give time to my programs.	6	5	4	3	2	1
62. I can inspire others to give money to my organization.	6	5	4	3	2	1

SUPPORTIVE SKILLS

63. I have a record keeping system for my volunteer program.	6	5	4	3	2	1
64. I keep my records up-to-date.	6	5	4	3	2	1
65. Our organization has a policy manual for staff/volunteers.	6	5	4	3	2	1
66. I understand the policies and procedures and work to ensure that new people understand them as well.	6	5	4	3	2	1
67. I work to ensure that people understand where they "fit" in the work of the total organization.	6	5	4	3	2	1
68. I provide adequate training and orientation for my staff/volunteers.	6	5	4	3	2	1
69. I provide specific directions when necessary.	6	5	4	3	2	1
70. I work to build people's confidence in their roles.	6	5	4	3	2	1
71. I share information and work to build people's skill levels.	6	5	4	3	2	1
72. I encourage people to make decisions for our programs.	6	5	4	3	2	1
73. I encourage others to take responsibility for our programs.	6	5	4	3	2	1
74. I am available as a resource for my staff/volunteers.	6	5	4	3	2	1
75. I encourage team building and allow teams self-direction.	6	5	4	3	2	1
76. I encourage teams to work together for the organization.	6	5	4	3	2	1
77. I feel comfortable letting go of control by building in controls (directions, deadlines, policies, perimeters).	6	5	4	3	2	1
78. I can take corrective action in a caring way with staff/volunteers.	6	5	4	3	2	1
79. I work with others on problems that arise.	6	5	4	3	2	1
80. I seek to problem solve rather than blame.	6	5	4	3	2	1
81. I can focus on the <i>problem</i> rather than the <i>person</i> in resolving conflicts.	6	5	4	3	2	1
82. I often give credit and recognition to others.	6	5	4	3	2	1



83. I understand that giving recognition is one of the most important things I do in my job.	6	5	4	3	2	1
84. I plan recognition according to the needs of the individual.	6	5	4	3	2	1
85. I work to make everyone feel successful in his/her role.	6	5	4	3	2	1
86. I discourage negative comments that could affect morale of staff/volunteers.	6	5	4	3	2	1

EVALUATION SKILLS

87. I listen to my staff/volunteers and encourage their input.	6	5	4	3	2	1
88. I encourage others to listen and understand each other.	6	5	4	3	2	1
89. I have an evaluation process/form in place before the project/program begins.	6	5	4	3	2	1
90. I recognize that evaluation is an on-going process.	6	5	4	3	2	1
91. I encourage all members of the organization to constantly evaluate by reflecting on what it is they are doing.	6	5	4	3	2	1
92. I plan time for staff/volunteers to share their reflections with one another and key staff members.	6	5	4	3	2	1
93. I am good at giving feedback to individuals in a positive way.	6	5	4	3	2	1
94. I am good at receiving negative feedback and evaluating it for positive results.	6	5	4	3	2	1
95. I can take responsibility for my mistakes and failures.	6	5	4	3	2	1
96. I constantly look for new ways to improve and challenge my staff/volunteers.	6	5	4	3	2	1
97. I constantly look for new ways to improve my program.	6	5	4	3	2	1
98. I believe in the goodness of people.	6	5	4	3	2	1
99. I encourage teams to evaluate themselves.	6	5	4	3	2	1
100. I conduct a formal evaluation of my key staff/volunteers annually.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Remember that this instrument isn't meant to discourage you from taking a leadership role but should help you discover your strengths and weaknesses. Your organization can help you, too, with training, written role descriptions, policy manuals, evaluation forms and recognition programs.

You may want to learn more about effective leadership by reading some of the other **Volunteerism for the Next Generation Fact Sheets (VNG)**. Or you may want to go back and review the **Volunteerism for the Next Generation Rubric**. Review the *Specific Learning Outcomes* and *Reading and Learning Activities* found in each section of the rubric. Additional general resources are also listed in the rubric. Use the **Design A Personal Growth Plan** below or the **VNG Self Assessment** posted at www.4-h.org/volunteerism to develop your own **VNG Personal Professional Development Plan** (also posted on the web site.)

Reprinted from Purple TAXI, *Self Assessment for a Volunteer Leader/Manager*, with permission of National 4-H Council.



