

Volunteer Leadership: Motivating Members into Action

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Abstract

The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE or the “Society”) provides many leadership opportunities for its members. These leadership roles occur in chapters, regions, practice specialties, task groups, committees, and councils to name a few. Volunteers in these roles can struggle with finding and leading other volunteers for a variety of reasons. The single most important reason volunteer leaders struggle is because they do not recognize that volunteer members “choose” to follow them; they cannot be forced to follow. Therefore, good leaders who lead volunteers must learn to utilize their influence to encourage volunteer participation to achieve assigned tasks or goals. This paper and presentation was developed to communicate the findings of the ASSE Volunteerism Task Force that presented a series of recommendations to the ASSE Board of Directors on improving the member experience and participation with Society and Chapter level opportunities. It also serves as a guide for personal leadership growth for ASSE volunteers or members seeking to actively volunteer on behalf of the Society. The article concludes with suggested resources available that ASSE volunteer members can explore to improve their effectiveness as volunteer leaders.

Introduction

Membership-based not-for-profit organizations rely heavily upon their volunteers to accomplish their visions and goals. Some member volunteers will lead, many more will follow in management roles, others just volunteer on small tasks, and an even larger group of members will never step up to volunteer or participate. A key to a successful volunteer-based member organization is to continue to develop strong leaders who can influence the membership to achieve the vision and goals of the organization. This article will focus on four basic concepts to help current volunteer leaders generate an active volunteer base to accomplish tasks, projects, and goals: 1) Develop a sense of purpose beyond the individual; 2) Strategically ask members to participate; 3) Use persuasion and influence to your advantage; and, 4) Facilitate intrinsic motivation.

ASSE describes its mission as, “A global member-driven association providing representation, promotion, and support for those engaged in the profession and/or the practice of safety, health and environment in their efforts to protect people, property and the environment” (American Society of Safety Engineers, 2007). Although ASSE does have a paid professional staff, they rely a great deal upon member volunteers to do the heavy lifting to achieve their vision to “...be a global champion of the safety, health and environmental profession, a global leader of the profession and a premier resource for those engaged in protecting people, property and the environment” (ASSE, 2007). An important question for volunteer leaders to answer is: How do leaders transform their membership into volunteers, influence these volunteers into essentially becoming unpaid staff, and finally how do they create and develop future volunteer leaders? President Dwight D. Eisenhower defined leadership as “...the art of getting someone

else to do something you want done because they want to do it” (Eisenhower, 2007). This is the key to volunteer leadership.

Getting Members to Participate

The growth of ASSE membership and their participation at the Chapter, Regional, and Society levels of the organization will rely heavily upon the ability of volunteer leaders to influence and persuade members into action. Therefore, ASSE must continue to grow the effectiveness of its current leaders and also identify and cultivate future volunteer leaders. This paper will serve as an initial guide for ASSE members to help identify the skill sets required to develop into an effective volunteer leader at all levels of the Society. As leadership guru John Maxwell put it, “He who thinks he leads, but has no followers, is just taking a walk”.

Defining the Problem

In late 2010, ASSE’s Council on Member and Regional Affairs (CoMRA) initiated a volunteerism task force to provide recommendations on how the Society can improve volunteerism at the local and Society levels and strengthen its volunteer pool to better serve its membership and achieve its strategic goals. There were many reasons for evaluating the volunteer management system of the Society. As a member-driven organization, work contributed by volunteers affects and is affected by the entire Society. Therefore, it is as important to evaluate volunteer involvement just as much as it is to evaluate any other component of the Society. Success in recruiting and retaining volunteers is dependent on effective support throughout the entire organization, including at the chapter, regional, Society, and international levels. The initial evaluation process of the volunteerism task force also provided an opportunity to educate all stakeholders about the elements of a successful volunteer program. Volunteer leaders are one of the key stakeholders who will benefit from the recommendations provided by the volunteerism task force in their January, 2011 report.

In general, several key elements were identified within the volunteerism programs of ASSE at the chapter, regional, and Society level of the organization. The entire recommendations of the final recommendations from the CoMRA Volunteerism Task Force are summarized in sidebar 1.

SIDE BAR 1 – Executive Summary of CoMRA Volunteerism Task Force Report: January, 2011

Volunteerism Report Executive Summary

The CoMRA Volunteerism Task Force worked diligently to produce a series of 16 recommendations for how the Society can improve volunteerism at the local and Society level to strengthen its volunteer pool, better serve its membership, and achieve its strategic goals. This Task Force has identified three main volunteerism business issues currently facing the Society that are addressed in this report:

1. What can be done to better engage members from their perspective?
2. What can be done to support participation AND volunteerism at the Chapter and Society level?
3. What can the Society do to further support and improve volunteer participation?

The Volunteerism Task Force has addressed these issues by making a series of recommendations for consideration by the Board of Directors, the Society and Councils levels, and for Chapters and Leaders. The recommendations of the CoMRA Volunteerism Task Force are summarized as follows:

Board Level Recommendations

- To better engage members the Board should establish or encourage a sense of obligation in our members to actively participate.
- To support volunteerism at the Chapter level the Board should provide a high level purpose for member participation.
- To further support and improve volunteerism at all levels of the Society the Board should provide a long-term vision of volunteerism as a goal in the strategic plan.

Society/Council Level Recommendations

- To better engage members the Society and Councils should provide standardized listings of volunteer opportunities, match the volunteer opportunities to the member's needs, improve follow-up on member inquiries or requests to volunteer, and track member participation in volunteer activities.
- To support volunteerism at the Chapter level the Society and Councils should provide best practices/skills support to volunteer leaders.
- To further support and improve volunteerism at all levels of the Society, the Society and Councils should recognize differences in volunteer groups including what motivates them, develop a larger base of active mentors, utilize the 100th Anniversary PDC to promote volunteerism, evaluate the volunteer program and engage in continuous improvement, and provide testimonials of success stories from volunteers.

Chapter/Leader Recommendations

- To better engage members the Chapters and its leadership should understand how to effectively communicate and engage with members and recognize member participation.
 - To support volunteerism at the Chapter level the Chapters and its leadership should strategically ask members to participate.
 - To further support and improve volunteerism at all levels of the Society, Chapters and their leadership should evaluate their volunteer program, engage in continuous improvement, and provide testimonials of success stories from volunteers
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Specific findings and recommendations aimed at volunteer leaders address four main points:

1. Volunteer leaders are not provided with a *vision or sense of purpose* from the Society to present to individuals on the volunteer positions they seek to fill.
2. Volunteer leaders fail to *strategically ask for participation* from members.
3. Volunteer leaders do not understand how to *facilitate intrinsic motivation* with each member that leads to a self-motivated desire to contribute.
4. Volunteer leaders do not *use simple salesmanship techniques to influence or persuade* members when presenting volunteer opportunities to them.

Volunteer leaders cannot solve all of these problems on their own. That is why the volunteerism task force provided recommendations for Board-level and Society-level actions to support volunteer leaders at all levels of the organization. Many of the resources currently available from ASSE that support volunteer leaders are found towards the end of this article.

PROVIDING PURPOSE: Organizationally, Individually, and Beyond

In his book *Drive*, Daniel Pink finds that those who participate in the service of some greater objective are more motivated, productive, and satisfied over those whose purpose is self-serving. The key is to hitch a member's desires to a cause larger than themselves. A research study of over 26,000 association members (Gazley, 2008) asked non-active members what would make them want to start volunteering right now? The top response provided was that inactive members would volunteer if they knew the volunteer opportunity was meaningful and made a difference in people's life.

ASSE continues to provide vision for volunteer leaders to rally members around a cause that makes a difference. For instance, chapter, regional, and Society-level leaders have benefited from this year's 100th anniversary initiative of ASSE. The centennial celebration has triggered a multi-year marketing effort and several national and regional events building up to the June, 2011 Professional Development Conference in Chicago. A timeline of events has been created that illustrates the impact the safety profession has made over the last 100 years on worker safety and health and the workplace. This event allows the members of the safety profession to reflect upon their impact on workplace safety over the past century and consider how they might be part of contributing to the next 100 years. Volunteer leaders need to provide members with a purpose that aligns with their desires. The benefit of this alignment with a shared purpose is a member who participates because he or she *wants* to. This is how volunteer leaders tap into self or intrinsic motivation.

What is the Vision or Cause?

Volunteer leaders must make sure that they not only understand, but can communicate and appeal to the member's sense of purpose to serve a greater cause. This is especially true of the younger generation of volunteers who are highly motivated by causes. This group of volunteers is constantly looking for opportunities to make a difference. The key is to provide a vision of your volunteer opportunity that matches this desire and engage their dedication and self-motivation to your cause.

A Clear Organizational Vision is a Must

Purpose originates at the Society level with the organization's strategic plan and associated goals. The volunteer leader must make sure that the purpose of their activity aligns with those of the Society so members will see how their volunteer role will contribute to a bigger cause. But what can be done when a volunteer leader finds that members have not progressed to the point of looking beyond themselves? Techniques for facilitating a member's vision beyond themselves will be discussed later in the article.

Ranked Reasons that Intrinsically Motivate Inactive Members to Volunteer (Gazley, 2008):

- I knew the volunteer opportunity was meaningful or made a difference in people's lives
- I knew I had the skills needed to do a good job
- The location was easily accessible to me
- I was interested in volunteering
- I did not lose income as a result
- I could be given short-term assignments
- I had more information about volunteer opportunities available to me
- I would be trained to do the work
- My employer supported my participation as a volunteer
- I would make a difference in my profession or in my work
- I was actually asked to volunteer

- I knew someone else who also worked or volunteered there
 - I could volunteer electronically or virtually
 - I was recognized or appreciated for my work as a volunteer
 - I was not disappointed with volunteering in the past
 - The organization helped me in the past
 - I was reimbursed for expenses
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A Simple Exercise to Get Everyone on the Same Page

Other problems volunteer leaders often encounter with themselves and their active volunteers involve becoming disenfranchised, unmotivated, frustrated, or not understanding how they fit into the big picture of an organization. Other times, leaders and members have different agendas and goals. To get everyone on the same page, author Daniel Pink suggests gathering members together and asking them to write down a one sentence response to the following question:

What is the purpose of our project/committee/taskforce/chapter/etc.?

Assessing all stakeholders understanding of how volunteerism aligns with a larger goal or purpose is a step that is often missed in organizations. When an assessment is performed, leaders must ask a few obvious questions about the results. 1) Are answers similar between members or are they all over the place? Do some leaders or members not even have an answer? This simple assessment may easily uncover the root cause of many problems with volunteer efforts.

Volunteer leaders will also benefit from doing the same type of assessment with Society-level leaders and staff who oversee their volunteer activities. Every volunteer activity should lead back to the organization's strategic plan. By providing a clear vision of the larger goal of volunteerism, leaders create intrinsic motivation within members to participate in activities to satisfy their desires to serve a purpose greater than themselves.

Obtaining Initial Buy-In from Members

Leadership author John Maxwell points out that organizational purpose alone may not be persuasive enough to obtain "buy-in" from members to participate when he states, "People don't at first follow worthy causes. They follow worthy leaders who promote causes they believe in" (Maxwell, 2007). He further elaborates on this point by discussing how leaders are messengers. If the followers believe the messenger is credible, then they will find value in the message. This point is illustrated by the numerous commercials viewers are bombarded with each day with athletes, movie stars, and other celebrities. Think about Oprah Winfrey and some of the messages and causes she supports. Because she supports an issue or cause, her leadership credibility influences people to follow her lead. ASSE needs their leaders to become credible messengers so that the message in the vision of the Society can be delivered to its membership. Tips for improving leadership credibility can be found in the Professional Safety Journal article on volunteer leadership published in May, 2009.

Establishing Trust

Trust is an important component when attempting to persuade someone to consider a volunteer position. However, trust is a two-way street. Leaders must be able to clearly spell out expectations of volunteer roles or positions while the member must be able to live up to the expectations of the opportunity.

Captain Abrashoff (2002, p. 63) found trust to be "...a kind of jujitsu: You have to earn it, and you earn it by giving it." However, leaders can only give trust to those who are trustworthy. A survey

performed by Franklin Covey (Covey, 2004) of 54,000 people asked them to identify essential qualities of a leader. The study listed integrity as the clear number one choice. Steven Covey (2004) defines trustworthiness in his book *The 8th Habit* as having both competency and character. Covey states, “When you develop strong character and competence, the fruit is wisdom and judgment --- the foundation of all great and everlasting achievement and trust” (Covey, p. 149).

Being Trustworthy is a Two-Way Street

Most of ASSE’s volunteer leadership positions evolve around capturing and sharing subject matter expertise in one form or another. If the Society has a member who has strong character but lacks the technical competency, the knowledge is suspect. Likewise, if a member has great technical competency but lacks character, he or she might withhold the knowledge and immaturely refuse to share. Therefore, it is essential to have both character and competency in the Society’s leaders and volunteers. Chandler (2008) noted that good communication is also necessary for building trust. If feedback is cutoff to volunteers, their minds can sometimes run wild with speculation and fears about their performance. Chandler then goes on to state, “...it is no accident that trust and communication are two organizational problems most often cited by employee surveys” (2008, p. 30).

Volunteers are driven by causes bigger than themselves. It is important for leaders to be able to provide that vision and have the skill sets to obtain buy-in and mutual trust. Volunteer leaders must balance competency development of leadership skills with character expectations and a strong adherence to a code of conduct and/or ethics to build a strong following of volunteers. Character and competency go hand in hand for building trust. The next section discusses how to properly frame and ask for participation.

Strategically Asking for Participation: Framing the Opportunity

As discussed above, volunteer leaders must first sell themselves to volunteers before presenting the message or offer to participate. Once credibility is established, the volunteer leader is now in a much better position to present volunteer opportunities for the member to consider. Yet one of the top reasons volunteer leaders fail to find active volunteers is their inability to simply ask for participation. Another problem that has been identified as a “sin” in volunteer recruitment is filling an open position with a warm body instead of fitting the role and responsibility to the volunteer. Establishing a purpose helps communicate the *what* and *why* of an opportunity, but doesn’t help members determine *where* they best fit in your cause (McKee).

Presenting the Opportunity

The ASSE CoMRA Volunteerism Task Force conducted a survey of current chapter and practice specialty leaders at the 2010 ASSE Leadership conference. One of the survey questions asked these leaders what initially happened to get them to volunteer at the Chapter or Society level. The top reason was “I was asked”.

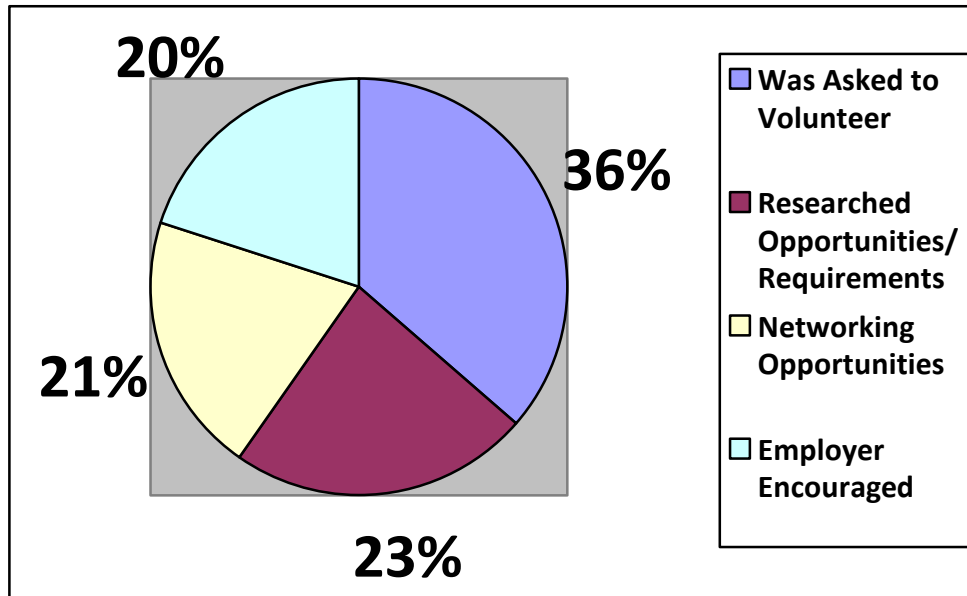


Figure 1: 2010 ASSE Volunteerism Survey Results - Why Leaders Initially Volunteered

Ask and You Shall Receive

Asking someone to volunteer is not as easy as it seems. Many leaders are apprehensive about asking for a commitment due to a fear of rejection (overcoming objections), fear of making contact with an individual he or she is not familiar with (the cold call), of just plain old fear of the unknown. Asking for volunteers does take some level of courage. Personal experience has demonstrated that piercing the thin veil of fear is crucial for leaders to be effective. As Winston Churchill said, “All we have to fear is fear itself” (Churchill (2007)).

Get Over It: Just Do It

Zig Ziglar, the famous writer and speaker on motivation made a statement which defined the acronym “F-E-A-R” as Fictitious Events Appearing Real” (Ziglar, 1986/1987). Leaders must face their fear and push through it. Good leaders do what is right, regardless of its popularity or criticism which might be received. Maxwell states that “...a leader’s courage has great value; it gives followers hope.” Captain Abrashoff (2002, p. 27) discusses leaving “his comfort zone” to have a positive effect on the Navy and the young men he lead. He found that what motivated him to pierce the veil of fear was not to squander an opportunity that was presented to him. He did not want to look back on a project or his life and say, “If only I had...” (p.28). In the book, *The Art of Woo*, author G. Richard Shell discusses how fear can sometimes paralyze individuals from asking for a commitment due to the potential for rejections. His answer: “Get over it”.

The Five Keys to Learning What Drives an Individual (Modified from Hogan, 2011)

1. Synchronize with a member using modeling, mirroring, pacing, and matching. Acting like others more than yourself will often increase engagement in deeper relationships.
2. Show true, genuine and sincere interest. Demonstrate respect. When first meeting with someone, find ways to get your message to be familiar by finding common ground.
3. Confirm you are in rapport. Are they responding to you in a positive manner?
4. Find out what values are important and learn their rules that define those values. When you ask about values you are asking them about their most deeply held feelings and thoughts. Determine

what values are related to the mission, goals, or purpose of the volunteer opportunity. When values are vague, get better definitions of what they are.

5. Ask questions to identify specific needs and the rules that define them. Determine which of their needs can be satisfied by the volunteer opportunity.
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Sugar-Coating an Offer

Volunteer leaders must develop a presentation strategy before approaching a member with a volunteer opportunity. Imagine this offer:

Volunteer Leader: "I've done my time in this position and can't seem to find anyone to dump this fiasco on to. Will you take it over?"

With a little thought, the leader could reframe this offer to be more attractive:

Volunteer Leader: "I remember you saying you were looking for more ways to get involved and do more networking. There is a position that is opening up that can provide you these benefits with only a few hours of your time a month. This is a great opportunity for you to not only get more involved and make an important contribution to the profession, but will also expose you to a larger circle of influential safety professionals. I know the ins and outs of this position so I will be able to ease you into this opportunity. Does this sound like something you would be interested in?"

No Means No – Or Does It?

Shell continues on with handling the fear of rejection by suggesting that if the other person says 'no' when you ask him to take a specific action or make a commitment, "use that as a springboard for finding out the objections that lie beneath this response. Search for shared interests and common beliefs that might provide a platform for reframing your proposal". In their book "The New Breed", Jonathan and Thomas McKee discuss strategies for recruiting and managing the new breed of volunteers that are emerging in the 21st century. One "sin" they identify in recruiting volunteers is assuming that a "no" response to an offer to volunteer means "never". In actuality, no often mean "not right now" or "not this project or position". Offering a different opportunity or asking at a different time might make all of the difference. It also increases your odds of obtaining a commitment to volunteer because you are doubling the number of times you ask members to volunteer.

Getting Past "No" - Prepare for Top Obstacles or Barriers

When a member says "no" to a request to participate, the leader must ask why. Often times the reason given is not legitimate. Consider the typical response when a homeowner is approached by a door to door salesman. We hear the pitch and think of any way to politely send them on their way. A sharp salesman gets around the quick excuse and finds the real objection to a commitment. The three top (legitimate) reasons individuals do not volunteer with associations were provide in a research study conducted by the Center for Association Leadership (Gazley, 2008). The top reason for saying "no" was that the offer to volunteer did not provide a meaningful opportunity. The second most popular reason was the member did not feel that they had the right skill set to properly perform the assignment. Leaders can increase their odds of recruiting good volunteers by anticipating and preparing for these common barriers to emerge.

Tips for Recruiting Virtual Volunteers

Volunteer leaders find that technology is being used more and more to not only manage, but recruit volunteers. Here are some tips for using technology to recruit volunteers from Jonathan and Thomas McKee's book *The New Breed* (2008):

- Communicate the philosophy of the organization and the mission or cause your volunteer opportunity serves. Make sure the member acknowledges a commitment to them.
 - Ensure that the member has the computer experience and equipment necessary to participate in the virtual world. Identify training or mentoring that might be needed.
 - Confirm that the member is intrinsically motivated to your cause. Leading virtual volunteers often requires a much more motivated member
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Facilitating Volunteerism: Enabling Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is when an individual volunteer become self-motivated by an opportunity that aligns with his or her desires to serve a cause. In his newest book *Drive – The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, author Daniel Pink (2009) finds that the traditional carrot and stick method of motivation isn't a predominant or preferred technique. He cites several research studies that show that establishing rewards or payoffs for volunteer activities is actually undermining their intrinsic motivation to the cause. Individuals are intrinsically motivated "purpose maximizers", not just intrinsically motivated "profit maximizers" (Pink, 32). He further states that research demonstrates three main elements of intrinsic motivation: autonomy, mastery or competence, and purpose or relatedness, which are described below.

Elements of Intrinsic Motivation

Autonomy is the first element of intrinsic motivation by allowing the volunteer control over the time, task, technique, and team. Research has found that autonomy increases the member's accountability to the task or role (Pink, 2009). So the first lesson to good volunteer leadership is to let go of the control and avoiding the urge to micro-manage your volunteers. Keeping volunteers accountable is different than controlling their activities and actions.

Competence or mastery is the second element of intrinsic motivation. These are described as Goldilocks tasks; not too easy, not too difficult, but challenging (Pink, 2009). Matching the position to a member's ability is very important to generate self-motivation. Members want to learn and master their roles. It is therefore important to utilize learning based goals over performance based goals. However, members must be in the right frame of mind and believe that they can learn and grow from the volunteer opportunity. Leaders can facilitate intrinsic motivation by helping the member understand that they can learn, grow, and get closer to mastering the task or role.

The final element of intrinsic motivation is a feeling or relatedness or sense of purpose to a cause, mission, or goal. We have already addressed the importance of establishing a sense of purpose earlier in the article. Intrinsic motivation flourishes when members follow their inner voice and seek out roles and projects that make a difference. The volunteer opportunity has to matter, and do so in service of a cause bigger than their selves. Lock into their personal desires and you will have a self-motivated volunteer.

Demonstrate Respect to Facilitate Self-Motivation

Garnering commitments from self-motivated members to volunteer their time also requires a leader to have respect for others. Leaders cannot force a volunteer to comply. By its very definition, a volunteer chooses to act. Maxwell found that "...when people respect you as a leader, they will follow you" (2007, p. 79). In his book, "It's Your Ship," Naval Captain D. Michael Abrashoff (Abrashoff, 2002) discusses that the main challenge for leaders in the twenty-first century is attracting and retaining "...not just

employees, but the best employees---and more importantly, how to motivate them so that they work with passion, energy, and enthusiasm” (p. 12). Captain Abrashoff, a naval officer, reviewed some exit surveys and interviews conducted by the military on why people left the Navy. The top reason he found for people leaving the military was not being treated with respect or dignity (p. 13). Dale Carnegie in his famous book, “How to Win Friends and Influence People” (Carnegie, 1936/1981), found that there was only one way to get people to do something: “And that is by making the other person want to do it” (p. 47). He found that the only way to get someone to do something was to give them something they want. Respect is something everyone seeks. Giving volunteers respect makes leaders more effective in their ability to influence them to participate in activities which achieve the Society’s goals.

Facilitating Self-Motivation

In his book 100 Ways to Motivate Others, Chandler (2008) lists many methods for motivating others into action. His first motivation tip is to understand the source of motivation. Motivation volunteerism comes from within the member. Therefore, chapter and Society leaders must learn how to get members to motivate themselves or each other. A placid or inactive member needs to be motivated by a leader and won’t motivate himself, at least the first time into volunteer roles. This is called the influence of leadership. Leaders habitually fail to use the ability to praise and inspire volunteers with the realization of their latent potentials and possibilities (Carnegie, 1936/1981). However, Chandler also recognizes the value of going after low hanging fruit by suggesting finding self-motivated volunteers. “The best way to create a highly motivated team is to hire people who are already motivated people” (Chandler, 2008). The chapter and Society leadership must recognize the need to both identify self-motivated volunteers as well to reach out and inspire those who are weakly motivated or unmotivated.

Salesmanship: Basic Skills for Closing the Deal on Volunteers

Regardless of the level of self-motivation found in members, presenting volunteer opportunities requires some level of salesmanship. As previously discussed, selling or promoting a volunteer opportunity requires the leaders to portray a sound vision which demonstrates a cause in which its members can believe. This also suggests that the leader must initially focus more on the member/volunteer’s needs than those of the chapter or Society. When a volunteer is asked to follow a leader on a project to reach a goal, they must first be able to understand the goal. Then the leader must be able to answer their question, “What’s in it for the volunteer?” This establishes several positive conditions for the leaders. First, by answering what’s in it for the follower, leader provides a value or service a member needs which can influence him/her to want to actively participate in the project. Next, answering this question is good salesmanship. Good salesmen develop loyal customers or followers. Chandler (2008) puts it as simply as he can for leaders by saying, “...this [salesmanship] simply means asking for what you want, being very direct with your requests, and having your communication centered on requests and promises.”

As discussed above, it is important for the Society to provide a vision of “value” to its leaders, and also to its membership. Maxwell takes it a step further and states, “...you can be sure that followers value leaders who add value to them. And their respect for them carries on long after the relationship has ended” (Maxwell p. 81). Therefore the Society and their volunteer leaders must also provide a means to measure or demonstrate the increased value to the individual from participating in activities which serve the Society’s goals.

Resources for Effective Volunteer Recruitment

Improving leadership and volunteer recruitment skills can be difficult. However, many of us have long commutes to and from work and jobsites. Audio and video recordings can provide an excellent venue to

increase your leadership knowledge and gain competencies. Many great books and presentations on leadership are now found in many media formats. These books and presentations can be “listened to” while traveling. Turn off the radio and turn on your leadership and recruitment training. Otherwise, make time in the morning, at lunch, or the end of the day to read or listen to books.

Finding Time to Learn Leadership

Steven Covey (2004) found that individuals who dedicate one hour a day to reading or listening to books and/or watching technical presentations will gain enormous knowledge and competency in a very short period of time. He claims you can obtain up to the 90% of what is known by those considered to be experts in that field of study in only a year. Imagine if you had 365 hours of concentrated training on a given topic. Would you have a commanding knowledge of the subject matter? Think about it.

Topics to gain leadership knowledge and competencies on include:

- Leadership
- Management
- Public speaking
- Communications
- Self-esteem
- Public relations
- Writing skills
- Marketing
- Motivation
- Salesmanship

The references listed at the end of this article provide a good starting point for those seeking knowledge on how to improve their skill sets both professionally and personally.

Passing on Knowledge and Skills

Mentoring is another strong way for the Society and chapters to build leaders. One way to access mentors is to tap into the retired past leaders. Some important leaders to include are chapter presidents, regional vice-presidents, council vice-presidents, practice specialty administrators, boards of director members, committee chairs, and taskforce leaders. However, Drucker (1990/2005) points out that far too many organizations do not provide a venue for past leadership “alumni” to continue to lead through mentoring. The Society must re-engage with its previous leaders and provide a means to mentor new and emerging leaders. Maxwell (2007) concludes his 21 Laws of Leadership with a discussion of how leaders like to leave a legacy in their positions. This is a leadership law that the chapters and the Society must not break. ASSE leadership must provide an increased platform for volunteer leader mentoring which develops emerging leaders while also providing a legacy and succession plan.

Additionally, other supporting skills such as communication and salesmanship will also solidify the effectiveness of leadership creation within all of ASSE. Finally, good role modeling and mentoring by current leaders will inspire all members of the Society and its chapters to become more active; eventually leading to the emergence of new volunteers and leaders.

Figure 2 - Strong Leadership Tips for Recruitment

- You are not alone. Use networks to help attract volunteers and ask for support in recruitment.
- Don’t just fill an open position with a warm body – develop detailed roles and responsibilities and fit the right person with the right opportunity.

- Personally contact and ask members to participate instead of less personal mass emails or postings. Many are sold by the messenger first, and then the message.
 - Influence is the strongest trait of a leader of volunteers. Strategically ask for participation by framing opportunities to meet the desires of the member.
 - No doesn't always mean no. Seek out obstacles or objections to participation and reframe the volunteer opportunity. When time is an obstacle, consider offering shorter term projects or gain commitments from members to consider future opportunities.
 - He who thinks he leads, but has no followers, is just taking a walk (Maxwell). Encourage members to follow you by knowing what motivates them, which is generally a cause or purpose greater than themselves.
 - Develop respect from volunteers and give respect back. Be trustworthy – have both character and competency. Expect the same from the member.
 - Develop a sense of obligation for volunteers – get buy-in by defining the purpose and cause of the opportunity along with roles and responsibilities.
 - Acknowledge appreciation for a volunteers efforts – people want recognition
 - Provide and demonstrate opportunities for volunteers to grow – then ask them to participate. Develop roles and responsibilities for each volunteer opportunity.
 - Mentor or provide mentors for new volunteers – help show them the way
 - Lead by example – present an image of what a successful volunteer looks like
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Conclusion

Volunteer leaders must understand the vision of the organization and tie their volunteer opportunities into causes that members can believe in. Volunteers will typically not become involved with the carrot and stick approach; they get involved because they are self-motivated. Volunteer leaders, who invest a little time and effort in matching member's desires with causes that satisfy them, will help support and facilitate conditions that leverage a member's intrinsic motivation to serve organizational objectives and goals. This win-win approach benefits the member, the leader, the organization, and the profession.

Additional ASSE Resources on Volunteerism

There are several resources available to assist leaders in recruiting potential volunteers:

- There are Professional Safety Journal articles on volunteerism and motivation at http://members.asse.org/2007/officer_central/leadershipconference.php
- Descriptions of leadership volunteer opportunities are located at <http://www.asse.org/leadershipconnection/MemberSignin.asp>
- Resources on chapter recruitment is located at http://members.asse.org/2007/officer_central/index.php
- Presentations from the ASSE leadership conference at http://members.asse.org/2007/officer_central/leadershipconference.php
- A listing of Society level volunteer opportunities at ASSE found on the ASSE homepage at <http://www.asse.org/elections/index.php>

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Other Volunteer Resources

- [The ABCs of Recruitment](#), by the Community Literacy of Ontario
- [Barriers to Volunteering: Hidden messages in your recruitment](#) from *The NonProfit Times* "On Volunteers" column
- [The Black Church](#), from the book *Pass It On*
- [But Everyone Knows...The Case for Prospective Volunteers](#) from *The Nonprofit Times* column "On Volunteers"
- [Changing Work Patterns](#) from *Count Me In!*
- [A Choice Blend: What volunteers want from organisation and management](#), by the Institute for Volunteering Research UK (2008)
- [Creative Volunteer Roles](#) from *The NonProfit Times* "On Volunteers" column
- [Decide Needed Role and Set Recruitment Goals](#) from *Mobilizing People for Marketing Success*
- [Finding Daytime Volunteers](#), from *The NonProfit Times* "On Volunteers" column
- [From Barriers to Bridges: A Guide for Volunteer-Involving Organisations](#) (Microsoft Word file), from the National Centre for Volunteering, UK
- [Getting to Yes: Strategies for Volunteer Recruitment](#), by Susan J. Ellis for *Girl Scout Leader* magazine
- [Missed Opportunities for Good Help](#) from *The NonProfit Times* column "On Volunteers"
- ["Oh, By the Way!" The Four Words that Volunteers Hate to Hear](#), by Tom McKee
- [Online Volunteer Recruitment](#), by Andrew Urban
- [Posting Secrets: How & Where to Hang Flyers On Your Campus](#), from *The Student Leader*
- [Putting Ideas into Action](#) from *An Asset Builder's Guide to Your Leadership*
- [Recruiting Volunteers](#): Factsheet from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
- [Recruiting Tips for a Mentoring Program](#) by Sheryl Nefstead and Scott Nefstead
- [The Power of Personal Relationships](#) from *Good Guys: The Eight Steps to Limitless Possibility for Fraternity Recruitment*
- [The Revolution in Recruiting](#), by Ivan H. Scheier
- [The Seven Deadly Sins of Recruiting Volunteers](#), by Tom McKee
- [12 Basic Needs of Every Volunteer](#)
From *Volunteers: How to Get Them, How to Keep Them*
- [An Untapped Volunteer Resource: People with HIV Disease, ARC or AIDS](#) from the *Journal of Volunteer Administration*
- [Virtual Volunteering Tag Lines \(slogans\)](#)
- [Volunteer Recruitment and Retention](#), by Maria De Simone
- [Volunteer Recruitment Brochures: How to tap into the marketing power of testimonials](#), by Katherine Khalife
- [What's in a Name?](#) from *A People Lens: 101 Ways to Move Your Organization Forward*
- [Why Volunteer?](#) by Susan J. Ellis
- [Writing Persuasive Recruitment Appeals](#), by Steve McCurley in *Grapevine*
- [Your "Circle of Resources"](#), from *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*

Also see the "Recruitment Insights" area of our [Collective Wisdom](#) section.

Free electronic books on volunteerism

[Appealing to Experience: Zeroing in on the Right Message](#)

From Experience Corps, this 44-page booklet discusses how to recruit seniors into volunteering (2005).

[Clever Communications](#), guide for charities who want to know more about working with the media, including volunteer recruitment, from askCharity in the UK (90 pg. PDF).

[Doing Good Well: Engaging Ad Hoc Volunteers](#), from the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre, Singapore (2008, 40-pg PDF)

[Recruiting Male Volunteers: A Guide Based on Exploratory Research \(pdf file\)](#)

Assesses factors that increase male volunteering in service programs and offers concrete approaches to overcoming barriers and designing programs that are attractive to males.

[Strategic Recruiting: Using Creative Communication Principles to Find the People You](#)

A 26-page PDF published by Community Literacy of Ontario (Canada) about creative outreach strategies for the 21st century.

[Turn Your Organisation into a Volunteer Magnet, 2nd ed.](#)

Edited by Andy Fryar, Rob Jackson, and Fraser Dyer (2007, 204 pp.)

Essays from contributing volunteer managers around the world on attracting the best and most diverse volunteers and then working with them successfully.

Key web sites with information on volunteerism

Beyond Recruitment

<http://www.nald.ca/FULLTEXT/Clo/cover.htm>

"An Online Workshop About Recruitment & Maintaining Volunteers in the New Environment" by Community Literacy of Ontario.

Celebrity Volunteers

<http://philanthropy.com/jobs/2003/03/20/20030320-881056.htm>

Several articles both cautioning about and explaining how to recruit and work with celebrities as volunteers, from *The Chronicle of Philanthropy's* "Philanthropy Careers" site.

Convio Connection

<http://www.convio.com/our-research/newsletter/>

A free bimonthly newsletter for nonprofits on how to attract constituents, drive action and build loyalty through online relationship management. Archives available online.

Fenton Communications

<http://www.fenton.com>

Approaches to advocacy communication campaigns. Click on "resources" from the home page to access their free resources.

Stronger Together: Recruiting and Working with Ethnocultural Volunteers

<http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/heritage/ComPartnE/Strongr1.htm>

Online manual by the Central Volunteer Bureau of Ottawa-Carleton (Canada) about how to make

volunteer programs attractive and accessible to ethnic minority volunteers, based on input from program managers with experience.

“Tag Lines”

<http://www.energizeinc.com/art/subj/VVArchivetag.html>

Clever phrases for recruiting volunteers into virtual volunteering assignments.

Volunteer Genie

<http://www.volunteergenie.org.uk/>

This very useful site, no matter where you are located, is a project of the [Voluntary Action Media Unit](#) (VAMU) in the UK. Volunteer Genie aims to help site visitors “use the power of the media to recruit volunteers.” Full of ideas, advice from media experts, and other free guides to develop a media strategy.

Volunteer Recruitment: Tips from the Field

<http://www.serviceleader.org/new/managers/2004/03/000213.php#3-1>

Resource guide compiled by Sarah Jane Rehnborg and Betsy Clubine with a team of volunteer professionals from around the state of Texas.