

Volunteerism in America: Facts & Trends

According to the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, **the number of Americans volunteering their time and talent is on the rise.**

A survey conducted by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, a non-profit financial service institution, used telephone interviews with over 1,002 adults to draw conclusions about volunteering in the U.S.

A total of 57% of Americans volunteered for a charitable organization in 2004, a rise from numbers in 2003.

The survey also explained that **50% of Americans believe volunteering is more beneficial than donating money** and 36% feel that time and money are equally valuable donations.

Additionally, volunteers described their **motivations** to serve:

- 75% cited **personal moral values** as the main factor for their volunteerism
- 47% said they were motivated by opportunities to **gain new experiences**
- 42% felt obligated to volunteer because they themselves had **benefited from volunteer work in the past**
- 39% said volunteering was a way to **meet new people**



Why People Volunteer

Why Do People Volunteer?

| | |
|---|-----|
| A family member or friend would benefit | 28% |
| They were asked | 43% |
| Ad or media information | 6% |
| Their organization was involved | 41% |
| Sought out activity on their own | 21% |

NOTE: An astounding 85% of those asked actually did volunteer, according to "Giving and Volunteering in the US," Independent Sector.



Other Reasons Why People Volunteer

There are unlimited reasons why people volunteer. Knowing people's motivations to volunteer can help you understand the kind of care and management they require to be satisfied and successful in their volunteer role. There are times that the motivations of the volunteer may not align with the needs of your organization. In this case, it is critical to know what the volunteer's intentions are to find a solution.

The following are a sampling of reasons why people volunteer. How might each of these affect your volunteer placement choices?

| MOTIVATION | AFFECT ON PLACEMENT |
|--|----------------------------|
| Altruism | |
| Belief in the cause | |
| Public recognition and visibility | |
| To be with other people | |
| Professional contacts and networking | |
| To learn a new skill, knowledge, work experience | |
| To work through personal problems | |
| To increase self-esteem | |
| Self-actualization and achievement | |
| Reward | |
| Creativity | |
| Access to a particular group of people | |
| Free food and other resources | |
| Power | |



Recruiting for Diversification

SELF ASSESSMENT: STRENGTHS AND NEEDS

Much comes to mind when people hear the word ... Diversity.

What does it actually mean? Simply stated, Diversity = Difference. When considering recruitment, every organization or agency has a diversity of needs, therefore every organization needs diversity. The first step of recruitment is understanding your organization, in other words, assessing your strengths as a program and understanding your needs.

Use the following to begin to understand your organization's strengths and needs:

| STRENGTHS | NEEDS |
|---|--|
| <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>HOW CAN THESE STRENGTHS SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR VOLUNTEER CAPACITY?</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> | <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>WHAT SKILLS CAN VOLUNTEERS BRING THAT WILL SUPPORT YOUR MOST PRESSING NEEDS?</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> |



Developing Volunteers into Champions

In addition to bringing champions to your program from outside your organization, champions can also come from your current volunteers. Volunteers are often the best champions as they are already invested in your organization and believe in what you do to readily spread the word and add credibility to your work.

Use these questions to consider your current volunteers and identify ways to develop them into champions.

1. Which of your current volunteers is most suited to becoming a champion for your organization?
2. What support are they currently providing for the organization?
3. What role(s) would you like to see them take on in your program/organization?
4. What additional skills/information would they need to effectively take on that role?
5. How can you find out what they'd like to do for your organization and bring together your wishes and theirs?



Champion Development Worksheet

Identify existing volunteers and sources already within your circle of influence that have the potential to become champions for your program. Use this worksheet to plan your approach.

| POTENTIAL CHAMPION | INTERESTS | NEXT CONNECTION OPPORTUNITY | STRATEGY FOR APPROACH |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
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