The Changing Face of Volunteerism

MCN Conference Duluth
May 1, 2012
What are the benefits of engaging as volunteers:

- Young adults
- Boomers
- Men
- Communities of color
- Other
Value of a diverse volunteer core

- Better connect to the community
- Volunteers bridge to service recipients
- More and better service
- Input from a range of perspectives
- Fundraising
- Vibrant organization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Students</td>
<td>32.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
<td>41.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Adults (65 and over)</td>
<td>39.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Adults (ages 16-24)</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>38.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>21.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>20.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2010 Data from Volunteering in America
Rate of volunteering varies by age

Volunteer Rates by Age Group, 1974-2010

VolunteeringinAmerica.gov
More diverse volunteers = tapping different motivations to volunteer

- Give back, better the community
- Gain work experience
- Connect to community
- Social contact
- Expected/required
- Social inclusion
- Structuring retirement life
Why we need to change to increase diversity in volunteers

- Traditional volunteer management was designed for the generations born before 1946 and for European American volunteers.
- Volunteer systems need to be reinvented for the Boomers and generations that follow and for cultural diversity.
- There is a wealth of volunteer resources for those organizations that can attract a breadth of volunteers.
Engaging Volunteers Across the Generations
The traditionalists generation

Born 1920 -1946, grew up during the Great Depression and World War Two.

- Sacrifice
- Hard work
- Respect for authority
- Duty before pleasure
- Adherence to rules
The Boomer generation
Born 1946 - 1964

- Social cause focused
- Hardworking
- Longing for personal growth
- Self-absorbed
- Team orientation
The Boomer generation

Boomers early life experiences very different

- Post WW II prosperity
- Idealism of JFK
- Experienced protest and change
  - Civil Rights
  - Women’s Liberation
  - Vietnam War
1. Understand volunteers’ deep-seated need to have impact.

2. Focus the volunteer interview on learning the prospective volunteer’s passions, mutually designing his/her volunteer role.
3. Offer a wide choice of volunteer opportunities in all aspects of the organization’s operations.

4. Include some short term and seasonal volunteer positions to align with Boomer availability.
5. Offer skills-based volunteer opportunities.

6. Develop volunteer position descriptions that are engaging and show impact.
Best Practices

7. Move volunteers into project leadership roles.

8. Recruit Boomer volunteers by developing appealing recruitment messages, working networks and being highly visible on the web.
Best Practices

9. Change traditional volunteer supervision to leading volunteers and offering collegial support.

10. Reframe volunteer recognition to respond to the value Boomers place on having impact and being life-long learners.

11. Obtain organizational buy-in
Generation X – 1964 to 1980

As volunteers:

- Want flexible schedules
- Expect their time to be used efficiently
- More balanced between work and personal life than Boomers
Generation Y or Millennials – 1981 to present

As volunteers:
- Volunteering in record breaking numbers
- Seek leadership opportunities
- Seek challenges
- Like feedback
Recruiting Millennials

Why would a Millennial choose to volunteer time?

- Opportunity to make an impact, see real results and be CHALLENGED
- See volunteering as a part of their Work Life Balance
- Professional development and resume building opportunities
Tips from the Field: How to Get Young People Involved

- Use multiple avenues to inform them of opportunities
- Convince them that their time is important to the success of the program
- Get them to see the cause as a personal one
- Simplify the volunteer process
- Offer a variety of time commitments
Attracting Men to Volunteer
Gender Volunteer Rates in Minnesota

- Men: 32.7%
- Women: 42.2%

Gender Volunteer Rates in the US

- Men: 23.2%
- Women: 26.3%

VolunteeringinAmerica.gov
Different rates start young

Entering college,

21 percent of **men** had spent at least three hours a week volunteering during their senior year of high school compared to,

31 percent of **women**

data from the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles
Examine the stereotypes in organization about men and how volunteers might perceive those assumptions.

Think about what men might enjoy in their day-to-day lives.

Assign specific, finite tasks.
Top 4 activities for men volunteering

VolunteeringinAmerica.gov
Tips - Recruiting

- Involve men as volunteer recruiters.
- Recruit where men or at. Recruit groups that are male such as fraternities.
- Alert men to the scarcity of male volunteers and why needed.
- Connect volunteer work to financial and social impacts.
- When arrive, must see other men.

http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/practices/17139
Engaging Volunteers from Communities of Color
Success Strategies

- Culturally Competent Staff
- Inclusive
- Build on Talents
- Organizational Flexibility
- Community Outreach and Recruitment
- Meaningful Engagement

Success Strategies
Recommendations

1. Relationships matter.
2. Find a shared value (e.g. engage the family).
3. Build on the talents of the volunteers.
4. Conduct on-going internal dialogues.
5. Assess capacity to deliver.
6. Know the cultural history, background including cultural competency skills.
7. Engage the whole organization.
Activity

Share strategies for engaging:

- Young adults
- Boomers
- Men
- Communities of color
THANK YOU

For more information, please contact:
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See resources at www.mavanetwork.org