VOLUNTEERISM - ALIVE AND WELL

WLCJ Distance Workshop

April 3, 2019

Debbi Green [dgreen@wlcj.org](mailto:dgreen@wlcj.org)

Renee Ravich rravich@wlcj.org

**I. WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERISM?**

It’s the act or practice of doing volunteer work in *community service*

Volunteering is multi-faceted in its importance to our society and to our synagogue. It enriches both, as well as our community as a whole. It brings us together and helps keep our synagogues afloat and helps our members develop leadership skills. Volunteers are integral to our community. There is, however, much more to volunteering than just giving back. It helps you as an individual. It is a way to feel good about yourself and to share that positive feeling with others. Because it helps you make new, fulfilling connections, that feel-good feeling generated by volunteeringhas been shown to decrease your risk of depression.

Other benefits of volunteering include creating a feeling of belonging and fulfillment, promoting an active body and mind, reducing stress, and connecting you with new friends!

For over 100 years, our sisterhood volunteers have cooked, baked, educated, sponsored, purchased, and supported their synagogues in thousands of ways.

That’s the good news. The less than promising news is that according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of 2015 (the latest information available) the volunteer rate has been dropping slightly, but steadily.

What was found in this report is that the **volunteer rate decreased** between 2014 and 2015 by .4 percentage points, from 25.3% to 24.9%.  However, the **number of hours served by volunteers nation-wide remained stable** at about 7.7 billion hours served per year– translating to almost $183 billion dollars.   \*\*\*

Basically, that means fewer people are completing the same amount of work of previous years. In our experience, this trend seems to have continued the last few years. There are many reasons: professional responsibilities, family demands, the reluctance to make a commitment, and even the last recession.

**II. WHY PEOPLE VOLUNTEER**

In order to continue the invaluable work that volunteers do each day, organizations need to find new people to help. How do groups acquire new volunteers? The first step is to understand *why* people volunteer.

1. Volunteers agree with the mission of the organization. It is our responsibility to clearly share this information and our passion for what we are doing with potential volunteers.
2. The organization meets their needs. Reasons for this are as varied as: being with people; business opportunities; networking; making a contribution to a cause; experience; or filling one’s time.
3. Volunteers value the friendships made. This works two ways. People make new friends with the volunteers who share the same values and goals. The flip side is inviting our friends outside of sisterhood to join us.

**III. THE BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING**

Perhaps, though, we should educate our members as to the benefits of volunteering:

1. Volunteers live longer and are healthier. Having meaningful activities in your life, especially as one gets older, is a benefit for one’s psychological well-being.
2. Volunteering establishes strong relationships. A recent University of California, San Diego, study found that people QUOTE “suffer feelings of isolation and sadness at least some, if not all, of the time.” ENDQUOTE There are three peak times in a person’s life where it might be serious: late-20’s, mid-50’s, and late-80’s. Working with people helps to alleviate those feelings.
3. Volunteering builds community.
4. Volunteering broadens our worldview and helps make us better people.
5. Volunteering provides a built-in support system. Who else understands the demands on your time, can provide that recipe for a busy night, recommend a summer camp, share the latest news and listen when you need it most.

1. Volunteering is good for one’s career. It is an opportunity to acquire skills you may need or meet people that will help you with your career goals.
2. Volunteering gives one a sense of purpose. As an example, if you support children’s activities, you may want to work on a Purim Carnival.
3. Volunteering is good for society. To quote **Dr Syed Muhammad Zeeshan Hussain Almashhadi,** “Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.”

**IV. WHY PEOPLE DON’T VOLUNTEER**

Volunteers are making a difference in their communities every day. The Volunteering in America data shows that 64.5 million Americans across the country volunteered to help change the course of their communities. The opportunities to volunteer are as varied as the people who are volunteering. Yet, there is much turnover in volunteers. Data from the Current Population Survey Volunteer Supplement show that about one third of volunteers tend to drop out of service each year.\*\*\*  Again, there are several reasons people *don’t* volunteer. Some reasons are:

1. They are not invited to volunteer. Personal invitations to serve are more appealing to prospective volunteers.
2. There are myths about volunteering: Non-volunteers see themselves as essentially different from volunteers.
3. Volunteering takes up too much time. Non-volunteers worry they don’t have enough time to volunteer. In fact, research shows that people who do not volunteer have more free time than regular volunteers do.
4. Organizations do not implement effective volunteer management practices. Poor volunteer management turns people off of service.
5. Most importantly, the mission/values/goals of the group or the project are not clearly communicated.

Here are some questions to ask yourself before looking for volunteers: \*\*

1. What will motivate potential volunteers to sign on to help?
2. What positive actions do members of your sisterhood take to attract and cultivate volunteers?
3. What makes for a satisfying volunteer experience in your sisterhood?
4. What policies does your sisterhood have in place to help leaders recognize and honor volunteer contributions?

\*\* From *Building a Successful Volunteer Culture*  by Rabbi Charles Simon

**V. HOW TO GET VOLUNTEERS**

How do we get women to volunteer? That is always the big question. Well, there are several ways to do it.

1. The first thing to do is to **ASK**. Yes, this seems obvious, but is often overlooked. We make many assumptions that may be incorrect. We think everyone knows that of course we want volunteers. However, not everyone knows that. As someone involved in your sisterhood it’s clear to you that of course we want volunteers. Other women are busy with their own lives and may not think about it - until we ASK! There are various ways to ask for volunteers. Your synagogue’s weekly newsletter could include a blurb indicating that Sisterhood is seeking volunteers. Relying on this alone assumes, of course, that members will actually read that newsletter and remember to respond. Or you could send out your sisterhood newsletter or email or Facebook post and hope women will respond. How has that been working for you? You could send an individual, personal email or text asking for volunteers. Better yet, pick up your phone and call someone to ask for her help. It’s much easier to ignore an email request or respond negatively. A personal request is more effective. More effective yet is asking someone to help face-to-face. This gives you a much better opportunity to explain what you are looking for. Talk to women to find out what their interests are and then tailor your volunteer requests to meet those interests.

Another very effective method to get more involvement among your members, friends, and acquaintances is to have your current volunteers invite their friends to an event. There are many women who attend one specific Sisterhood event a year and would be more than happy to be involved in the planning or day-of set-up. These women are waiting to be asked! Many will *not* volunteer on their own. Perhaps they think their help is not needed or that they do not have enough to contribute. Your job is to prove them wrong!

**Let’s explore that ask.**

When talking to a prospective volunteer always be friendly and positive. Talk about the fun you have and the good work Sisterhood does. If you know what the interests of your prospect are, try to address those. Does she enjoy attending and participating in services? Maybe you can ask her to participate in Sisterhood Shabbat or even to be the team leader for that event. Is she an avid reader? Invite her to join your Sisterhood book club. She will then get to know some of the other members and hopefully be more willing to work on events or to lead the book club. Does she enjoy knitting or crocheting? Does she have friends who do as well? Help her form a craft group. Or just offer her a ride to an event. Maybe she’ll accompany you to help set up for that event if she doesn’t have to walk in alone. Always remember that you are not only representing your sisterhood but you are representing Women’s League for Conservative Judaism as well. That means no phone calls or Sisterhood business on Shabbat or holidays.

Don’t ignore social media. When using it, there are several things to keep in mind. Do your social media sites show volunteers working together, having fun? Do you thank those volunteers publicly? Is it clear that others are welcome to join in and volunteer? Is there a section on your website or Facebook page with simple instructions as to how one can volunteer? Are there contact names and telephone numbers in addition to email addresses? Many of us would rather have an actual oral conversation than just emailing back and forth. Ask your current volunteers to share information about volunteering for your sisterhood on their social media.

Make sure your rabbis, cantor, executive director, and education director all know that you welcome new volunteers.

And remember: People like being asked to volunteer, especially if you make the ask personal.

In a recent San Diego Union-Tribune Business section, two columnists spoke about Communications. Phil Blair was bemoaning the overuse of buzzwords and phrases such as “Think outside the box” or “No need to reinvent the wheel”. Neil Senturia, who is a business mentor and receives requests for advice each day, spoke about the lack of phone numbers in email signature boxes or on web sites. The conclusion of both men is that people need to communicate with voice- either by phone or face-to-face- to have a truly valuable and productive conversation. Whatever way you use to contact possible volunteers, be sure to include your phone number so that people can easily reach you.

2. **Be specific**. “Volunteer” does not describe a specific opportunity. It just means someone is expected to work for free. You will be more successful in motivating women to volunteer if you ask them to do the specific task you need done. Help them picture the job in detail rather than expecting them to vaguely understand. Don’t start your recruitment pitch with “Volunteers needed.” Ask for people to do specific jobs. There are women who are more than happy to help in the kitchen to prepare for a membership dinner or women’s seder, but are waiting to be asked. They may be women who only attend that one event so be careful not to let them fall through the cracks. As was mentioned earlier, maybe you know a woman who is an avid reader. Ask her to lead or create a book club. That may be the only thing she does or it may entice her to get more involved in your sisterhood. Prospective volunteers will know exactly what you’re looking for if you are specific. They may be able to see themselves in your description. Ask for people to help with decorations or invitations or registration for a specific event. Many women do not want to have to attend planning meetings but are happy to have a job they can do onsite, at an event. Don’t pass those women by!

There are also specific skills that women need to do some jobs. If you’re willing to teach your volunteers how to do something, let them know that. If special experience or knowledge is needed, let that be known as well. Being specific also helps avoid the problem of mistaken ideas about volunteering. If you need someone to lead a team or work independently and all of her volunteer experience has been a corporate volunteer day, she may not understand what is needed. Be clear. Be specific. If you doubt the importance of this, think about whether you would respond to a help wanted ad that just said “employees wanted.”

3. **Focus on your volunteers’ benefits, not the organization’s needs.** You know why you need volunteers. Why do they need you? Why should I give you some of my valuable time? Why should I let you benefit from my skills?

Instead of focusing entirely on your sisterhood’s needs, think about your prospective volunteer. Focus on the things your volunteers will gain by sharing their time with you. Some of those things may include the opportunity to make a difference in their sisterhood, synagogue, or community; using their skills and talents for good; helping others; and meeting others in the community;

1. **Target People with Needed Skills** Part of being specific as mentioned earlier includes targeting certain women for certain volunteer opportunities. If I know you’re a talented graphic designer I’m going to want to ask you to work on our ad book. Maybe I would ask you to help design flyers. That would be much more helpful than putting out a general request for volunteers. If I want to plan a challah baking program I will want to ask the woman who we know is a fabulous challah baker. I wouldn’t ask someone to lead that program who doesn’t bake. In other words, for many volunteer opportunities it is important to describe the desired or expected job and outcome and match the person with the skills for that task.
2. **Stay positive.** Make people want to volunteer and participate in your sisterhood’s programs. Remember that volunteering is a recreational activity. There are many other ways your prospects could spend their discretionary time. You have to show them why they should spend that time volunteering with you. You have to make the opportunity to volunteer a fun one. Highlight the positives: learning new things, meeting new people, doing an activity with new and old friends. You want to make them understand that they’ll feel better about themselves after helping. If appropriate, invite your new volunteer to bring along a friend. She can enjoy time helping others while spending time with a friend. You don’t have to make the task sound easier than it is. Your volunteers may enjoy the hard work it may take to achieve a worthwhile goal or produce a great program. After all, if you make the job sound too simple your prospect may be insulted. She may think you think that is all she is capable of doing.
3. **Make it easy to volunteer.** Is it easy to sign up online? Are contact phone numbers easy to find on your website, Facebook page, or email? Who does a prospect call if she has a question? When someone emails or calls does she get a timely, courteous, friendly, and helpful response? Remember that a form that won’t load or an unreturned phone call can be a real turn-off.
4. **Provide opportunities for different levels of involvement**. You may find some women who are looking for something to do and are ready to really dive into sisterhood work. Others may be able to help at a single event. And, of course, there is everything in between. When someone offers to help set the table for your membership dinner, don’t immediately ask her to be the next sisterhood president! You want to appeal to different women for different tasks and different levels of involvement. Your sisterhood can provide volunteer opportunities for almost anybody at almost any level of engagement.
5. **Aim high.** Look for the best candidates for the job. If particular qualifications or schedules are necessary or preferred for a volunteer opportunity, look for women who have the necessary skills or availability. After all, fundraisers go to the people with the most money first, so why shouldn’t our sisterhoods use the same theory when it comes to finding great volunteers?
6. **Anticipate questions your possible volunteer may have and answer them honestly.** Don’t scare her away by making the work sound ominous but don’t simplify it too much either. Give an honest assessment of what is expected of her. Try to answer questions while you recruit her. Some of her concerns may be about things like the parking situation. You can assure her your parking lot is well lit and that women always leave together at night. Or maybe she is concerned that she is not capable of handling the task at hand. You can assure her that you or someone will be there to help or train her to do the job.
7. **“No” is a valid answer.** No matter how effective a recruiter of volunteers you are you must remember that not everyone will want to participate. Some women will have no interest in getting involved in sisterhood no matter what you say or do. Others may say no, but may mean not now. Don’t always assume that no is forever. Sometimes it just isn’t the right time for someone. Maybe a woman has young children and a husband who travels or works at night, so she is unable to attend evening events. That doesn’t mean she will never be interested. Don’t assume you can never ask her again. Maybe next year she will have someone available to watch those young children in the evening, enabling her to participate in your evening events. Or maybe your sisterhood will see if there are other women like her who may be available in the daytime or on Sundays. If so, you can try to program for those times. She may be able to volunteer then. You don’t always know what is going on in someone else’s life so don’t answer for anyone. Do not assume that because someone’s husband is ill she will not volunteer. Volunteering might be just what she needs. She may only be waiting to be asked! Maybe this is not a good time of year for her. For example, if she is a CPA and you ask her to work on a project in early April, she will probably turn you down. However, at a different, less busy time of year she might be happy to get involved. If a woman who is asked to volunteer says no, don’t feel rejected. Perhaps it’s just not a position she thinks she will enjoy. Don’t give up on her. If you ask her again another time for a different position you may get a different response. Remember that women may volunteer at different phases of their interests, annual schedules and life circumstances.

When you are recruiting women to get more involved in your sisterhood, be sure they are getting involved for the right reasons. You don’t want anyone to volunteer to be president just to be able to say she’s president if she doesn’t plan to BE the president. That doesn’t do you any good. In fact, it may damage your sisterhood for more than just her term. Find volunteers who want to be part of the team. Sometimes, you may have difficulty finding the right person for the job. You may be better off leaving a position open and working around that vacancy than having the wrong woman in that spot. Remember that when it’s time for nominating!

For some women, titles matter. Maybe instead of just asking me to organize a book club I would prefer to be the Literature Vice President or the book club team lead or chair. Talk to me and find out my preferences, then try to speak to them.

Before you ask me to take on a task, know what that task entails. Don’t avoid letting me know if it’s a big, time-consuming task. If you act like it’s not a big thing when it is, there could be several negative results: I may do an inadequate job. I may not do it at all and then you’re stuck. Or, either of those things may happen and you may lose me as a volunteer forever! If you tell me that you need me to be the team lead for a major event, maybe I’ll be flattered that you have that much confidence in me, resulting in my rising to the task. Then you may have created a great, new volunteer who may even be willing to take on other leadership positions - an added bonus! Find women who are passionate and want to spend their time engaging in Sisterhood activities that will benefit their sisterhood, synagogue, community, and themselves. When looking for new volunteers to work on your women’s seder, look at your list of women who attend each year. Start asking some of them to get involved in the planning, cooking, publicity, decorating, etc. for this year’s seder. You won’t know if they’ll do it unless you ask!

Also, ask your current members for referrals. If Amy helps set up for every event, you can ask her to bring a friend along next time. That friend may end up being more involved than Amy!

Remember to diversify. Various skills are needed to make your sisterhood successful. You need long-term thinkers and planners to help set long-term goals. You also need women to plan for the shorter term. Still other women are needed to do the actual work that those plans entail, like recruiting, publicizing, and getting the job done. You need women who can handle your sisterhood’s finances, and you need women to plan Judaic arts events. You need women with skills other than those the president has.

You also want to diversify in terms of demographics. Often, we find women whose children are in college or older getting involved in sisterhood. You want women at various stages in their lives. This may require more diverse programming, but that just makes your sisterhood more interesting and welcoming to all. You may want someone who can plan programs for young moms and bring those women in. Or perhaps you can find some young singles and young married women without children who share interests and have them do some programming of their own under the auspices of Sisterhood. You may want daytime programs for older members who prefer not to go out at night and others to attract working women in the evenings. This diversity will also provide new perspectives for your sisterhood to consider.

If you are specifically looking for women to join your sisterhood board, make those expectations clear. Let them know about frequency and time of meetings and exactly what is expected. More of this is covered in the distance workshop about nominating, but be honest. Do not talk someone into taking a position by telling her she won’t have to do much - unless that’s the truth.

Talk to new volunteers to learn what it is they expect to gain from participation in your sisterhood. What does that new woman plan to contribute? Does she have any special skills you need? Does she have significant time restraints? This will help you find the right spot for her. Maybe Michelle can’t get to your sisterhood meetings because they are held the night her husband works late. Is she good at using social media? Maybe she can be your social media maven from home . . .

By the way, the first suggestion in this section about finding volunteers was to ASK. An example of how important that ask is, is me. I had been involved on the boards and executive committees of a few Jewish organizations including the synagogue, but not Sisterhood, when I received a call from a woman for whom I have great respect. Out of the blue, she asked me to be programming vice president. I explained that I attended very few Sisterhood programs and hadn’t been involved. She talked to me about the position. I ended up accepting it, in great part due to the fact that she was the one who asked. My involvement with Sisterhood and Women’s League grew from there. It all began with the ask.

Remember- if you really want to get to know a prospective volunteer, ask her out for coffee or lunch. You can even include another board member. This works especially well with people new to the community. It makes them feel welcome and immediately part of the group. Do it at the convenience of the prospective volunteer, don’t pressure her, and thank her for her time.

For a Jewish perspective on volunteering today, here is a thought from Barbara Levin, one of our WLCJ volunteers:

*“In an agrarian age, gifts from the flocks and the fields meant that a portion of all a person’s work would be dedicated to the service of God. What could that mean in our post-industrial age? Each of us has been given skills and the knowledge and strength to use them for good. We have become focused on our daily "working lives," but there is so much more to be done. The need for volunteers in every community to meet the needs of those who are vulnerable in our communities still exists.”*

**VI. HOW COMMUNICATION AND IMAGE AFFECT VOLUNTEERISM:**

1. Always present your best self. Follow Women’s League and synagogue standards.
2. Market volunteering to people as a meaningful endeavor.
3. Revisit the ways you seek to involve women to meet the evolving needs of the next generations.
4. Publicity should project the positive image and values that you want people to see. Repeat key phrases so everyone knows why the organization is important and what you do for the community. When you ask someone to volunteer, she should already know what you stand for and what the vision of the sisterhood is.
5. Attracting and cultivating volunteers is hard work. People will be more likely to come forward if they are treated with respect, understand your goals, and are asked.

**VII. MOTIVATING VOLUNTEERS:**

You have engaged new volunteers who are getting involved in your sisterhood. Now you must keep them motivated and involved. Here are some tips on how to do that.

1. **How to motivate people:**
2. Explain your objectives…Participants like to know what is going to happen and why. Don’t assume that they know your objectives. Make sure they do.
3. Sell the benefits…Tell participants what’s in it for them. Explain what benefits they will derive back on the job as a result of the activity.
4. Convey enthusiasm…If you sound motivated about seeing them engaged in an activity, participants will internalize some of your enthusiasm.
5. Connect the activity to previous activities…Explaining the relationship between activities helps participants to see the common thread in your program.
6. Share personal feelings with participants…Explain why you have found the activity (or one like it) valuable to you.
7. Express confidence in participants…Tell participants that you think they’ll do a good job with the activity or that they are now ready to tackle a new challenge.

**To be a more effective motivator you must be an effective communicator.**

**VIII. RETENTION:**

There is always a natural turn-over in volunteers. People move, take on full-time jobs, need to care for parents to name a few valid and understandable reasons. Many times, though, people leave because there was a misunderstanding of expectations, they didn’t feel appreciated or no one listened to them. Following is a list of effective management practices that your sisterhood can adopt to increase volunteer retention: \*\*\*

1. Write policies and service descriptions for volunteers.
2. Regularly supervise and communicate with volunteers;
3. Offer training opportunities for volunteers. If a person is not provided with a clear understanding of the job and the expectations, she will be turned off and not return. This includes knowing the “chain of command” and how much autonomy a person has to complete the task.
4. Value every job no matter how large or small.
5. Do not expect people to do more than they agreed to do. You can ask. Conversely, they can say no.
6. Accept that some people do not want to be a committee chair or sit on the board, but may be happy to stuff envelopes or clean up after an event.
7. Keep the activities moving…Give participants a time frame in which the activity needs to be completed. Keep time frames short and move things along at a brisk pace.
8. Challenge the participants…There is more energy when activities create a moderate level of tension. If tasks are a snap, participants will get lethargic. Emphasize the importance of a challenging activity and encourage participants to really think about what they are going to do or try out new ideas.
9. Be flexible. If someone can complete her job at a time that doesn’t match your schedule or in a different way, let her do it.
10. Skills-based volunteering can bring in new volunteers. As such, be flexible about the types of opportunities you offer volunteers and assess their interests. For example, if you manage a tutoring program, you might find that a prospective volunteer might be less interested in tutoring, but might be more willing to utilize her marketing skills to help promote the program.
11. Use inclusionary and motivational language. Utilize positive words such as “we”, not “I”. Remind people of the goals of the sisterhood and how they will benefit from being a part.
12. Reinforce participants for their involvement in the activity…Show interest in the participants as they engage in the activity. Don’t stand off or busy yourself with other things. Give the impression that you are really interested in how they are doing and praise success.
13. Let your enthusiasm show…Genuine feelings of excitement and enjoyment about an activity will inspire like emotions in the participants. Your high energy level can lift up the energy level of the entire group.
14. Make sure the work is FUN.
15. Recognize your volunteers through activities such as thank you notes, public recognition verbally and/or in written programs, synagogue and sisterhood newsletters or emails and social media.
16. Just like eggs or crystal, we need to Handle With Care all our volunteers. Volunteers are a commodity that is becoming very scarce in our society. All organizations are clamoring for the available volunteer hours so few are willing to contribute. If our Sisterhoods are to continue to attract their share, and we certainly must, the use of the **HANDLE WITH CARE** label is a necessity.

If we take care to treat our volunteers as we handle our most precious possessions, we will see to it that:

* Feelings are not bruised…
* Spirits are not broken…
* Enthusiasm does not fall off…
* Concerns are not chipped…
* Hopes are not dulled…and
* Thanks are not neglected.

**IX. HOW TO LOSE VOLUNTEERS- OR WHAT NOT TO DO**

How often has someone who is highly motivated indicated a willingness to volunteer only to be ignored? Will that person volunteer again? Certainly not for sisterhood. What other actions are sure ways to keep volunteers away?

**1. Expecting Announcements to Get Volunteers**

As mentioned before, how many of you have made announcements, written articles for the Shabbat leaflets or newsletter, or given plugs at monthly meetings, with no results?  
  
People want to be asked personally- either by phone or face-to-face.

**2. Going It Alone**

Do you regularly meet with your committee chairs to brainstorm names of people who could fill open positions? Do you talk with volunteers from other groups or staff at your synagogue to identify women who may be a good fit for sisterhood? Do you call upon the other synagogue groups and offer to share responsibilities for certain programs? An example may be that Men’s Club helps with Women’s League Shabbat to greet or cater and Sisterhood assists with the World-Wide Wrap.

**3. Recruiting Life-time Individuals—Not Short-term Project Teams**

Here is an example.

Hannah was asked to be on the strategic planning committee for the sisterhood. She was told that the strategic planning committee would meet once a month for a year. The strategic plan would be presented to the Board at the end of the year and Hannah’s job would be done- and it was. She had such a positive experience that she volunteered to work with the implementation committee—which was another two-year commitment.  
  
By asking a person to complete a task with an end date, she is more likely to say yes. If she has a positive experience and would like to work longer, she will let you know. This person, if properly mentored, may even become a future leader.

**4. Assuming That "No" Means "Never"**

As stated before, timing is everything. When we get the courage to recruit someone and then she says "no," we often feel rejection. It’s not personal, and it’s OK to ask why. The person may have other things going on in her life that prevent her from helping now. Acknowledge that and let her know you will keep her in mind for a future time. She may not feel comfortable completing the particular task you are presenting. Ask if there is something else that would make her more comfortable.  
  
**5. Falling Into the BIC Trap**

Sometimes when we are in desperate need for a volunteer and need her quickly, we plead our case to anyone and everyone just to get someone to be a "Butt In the Chair." Most times the chair is better empty than filled with the wrong person who felt coerced to take the position and/or does nothing.  
  
**6. Being People Driven Rather Than Position Driven**

Another variation of the "Butt In the Chair" method is just to say, "Please come and be a part of our group. We have a great time and we need your expertise." But we don't tell the prospect what we want her to do.  
  
Ask yourself, "What positions do I have to fill to accomplish our mission?" "What do I want the team members to do?" And then look for people who can fill those positions.

**7. Ignoring the Team Members**

As mentioned above, if someone volunteers, LET HER WORK! Assign her a task if one wasn’t part of the offer. Train her in what needs to be done. Follow up once or twice.

**8. Not listening**

People feel that their contributions or ideas are not heard or considered. “That’s not how we do it” or “It didn’t work before” are words that will quickly end a good relationship with the volunteer.

**9. Chaotic Board Meetings**

Volunteers are discouraged by what happens at board meetings. They take too long, people discuss items that are best left to committees, people argue the same points over and over. If volunteers have the impression that the sisterhood is disorganized or feel uncomfortable by what is occurring, they will certainly leave.

**10. Complaining and Poor Presentation**Remember to always present a positive image

**X. What does one do when a volunteer isn’t working as expected?**

Start with asking yourself some questions.

Was the person properly trained?

Are the skills the person has the ones needed for the job?

Has the team leader communicated in a positive way?

Volunteers can’t be fired, though sometimes they need to be let go or assigned to another task. Dismissing volunteers inappropriately or alienating them can damage an organization’s reputation in the community. Do not overreact or act without thinking first. Again, communication is key. Speak to the person privately to reach a solution.

\*\*\*(The data for *Volunteering and Civic Life in America 2016* were collected through the September Volunteer Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households (approximately 100,000 adults), conducted on an annual basis through a partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Noted places include information from this report.)

**XI. HOW TO DEVELOP FUTURE LEADERS OR WHY ACQUIRING NEW VOLUNTEERS IS IMPORTANT**

HOW TO DEVELOP FUTURE LEADERS

Another constructive and exciting role for a leader is to develop team members into future leaders. The group members who want to be future leaders become your strong supporters. It is easy for you to spot those women. They are engaged and attempt to be successful in their positions.

Developing new leaders can be recognized when they exhibit specific practices such as…..

* Showing a genuine concern for the welfare of group members.
* Investing substantial time into listening to the challenges of group members.
* Investing an adequate amount of time in listening to the personal challenges of group members.
* Demonstrating by your comments that you have appreciation and concern for group members.
* Congratulating group members regularly when they demonstrate skill development and success.
* Using her position to help team members resolve bothersome problems.
* Being an effective coach by making useful suggestions for improvement and giving ample encouragement.
* Getting excited when a group member develops a complex skill.
* Being available to mentor group members who seek her counsel and friendship.

**WHO WANTS TO FLY LIKE AN EAGLE?**

To develop leaders, you must first recognize that almost everybody has a need for self-fulfillment. A subtlety, however, is that people vary in the extent of this need. You can tell people have a strong growth need when they display some of the following behaviors and attitudes:

* Asking frequent questions about why the group is pursuing a particular strategy.
* Asking frequently for more responsibility.
* Developing new skills regularly.
* Engaging in self-improvement activities such as taking courses and self-study, like the Women’s League Leadership Institute, Distance Workshops, Personal Conversations, and more.
* Talking about their future in terms of broadening their skills and acquiring new knowledge.
* Frequently asking other people questions about their jobs.
* Making frequent suggestions for improving methods and procedures.
* Rarely responding “That’s nothing new” when told about a new development.
* Eagerly taking on assignments that require developing new skills.

# I THINK WHAT YOU SAY IS IMPORTANT…

Communicating powerfully and dramatically facilitates influencing and inspiring people. A gentler type of communication is needed to help people grow and develop. A leader who uses **supportive communication** nurtures group members and brings out their best. Supportive communication has seven principles.

* Is problem-oriented, not person-oriented.
* Is based on congruent verbal and nonverbal communication. No mixed messages.
* Validates rather than invalidates people.
* Is specific, not general.
* Is linked logically to a previous message, thus enhancing communication.
* Is owned, not disowned. Take responsibility for what you say.
* Requires listening as well as sending messages.

***We’d like to end with the following poem.***

**DAY OF JUDGMENT**

Many will be shocked to find when the day of judgment nears,

that there’s a special place in heaven set-aside for volunteers.

Furnished with big recliners, satin couches and footstools,

where there’s no committee chairmen, no group leaders or car pools.

No eager team that needs a coach, no bazaar and no bake sale,

there will be nothing to staple, not one thing to fold or mail.

Telephone lists will be outlawed, but a finger snap will bring

cool drinks and gourmet dinners and treats fit for a king.

You ask, “Who’ll serve these privileged few and work for all they’re worth?”

Why, all those who reaped the benefits and not once volunteered on Earth.