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VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT IN SPORT

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Sport and recreation organizations and events often rely on volunteer labor when providing services to their clients. Approximately 21 percent of all volunteers in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008) and 26 percent of all volunteers in the United Kingdom (Institution for Volunteering Research, 2007) volunteer in sport and recreation areas. The numbers of volunteers in large and well-established sport organizations and events can easily reach hundreds and even thousands. For example, approximately 60,000 volunteers worked at the Athens Olympic Games in 2004 (Kennett, 2005) and 1,700,000 people volunteered at the Beijing Olympic Games and hosting communities in 2008 (Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games, 2008). Volunteer labor has been a critical labor source in youth sport organizations. A Report of the Department of Health and Human Service and Department of Education (2000) indicated that approximately 2.5 million volunteers work annually as coaches of youth sport programs in the US. In the case of the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO, 2004), nearly 250,000 individuals participated in volunteer activities to run the youth soccer programs of the organization.

Although varying in service frequency and duration, the levels of skill and knowledge, and volunteer motivation, these sport volunteers provide indispensable services in various positions and levels of responsibility. However, according to the Corporation for National and Community Service (Grimm, Dietz and Foster-Bey, 2006), the rate of adults volunteering for sport and cultural organizations in the U.S. significantly dropped from 1989 to 2005. This calls managers’ special attention to developing strategies to recruit, manage, and retain quality volunteers. Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye, and Darcy (2006) suggested that sound human resources practices (i.e. planning, recruitment, screening, orientation, training and support, performance management, and recognition) should be applied to manage volunteers in sports. In this chapter, based on previous research and human resources practices used, volunteer management practices are reviewed in four different sport settings: non-profit sport organizations, youth sport settings, mega sporting events, and local community events.
Volunteer management in non-profit sport organizations

Recruitment and selection

For non-profit sport organizations, recruiting volunteers is a constant challenge since volunteers receive non-monetary benefits but are preferred to volunteer for a long term. Although finding the right person with the right skills for a job is important for effective volunteer recruitment, finding the perfect candidate who is highly qualified and experienced may not always be the case in non-profit organizations. Thus, managers can rank potential candidates based on how well the candidates meet the minimum or required qualifications and then select the best person for the job.

The first stage of the volunteer recruitment process should involve determining what benefits current volunteers perceive from their contributions, then identifying a target market of potential volunteers who desire those benefits the organization provides (Mitchell and Taylor, 1997). That is, it is important to recognize and understand why individuals choose to volunteer with their chosen non-profit sport organization. Moreover, Munro (2001) noted that in order to maintain a viable volunteer base, one of the most important issues facing non-profit-sector programs and services is to know what specifically motivates individuals to participate. Hoy and Miskel (1982: 137) stated that volunteer motivation involves “the complex forces, drives, needs, tension states, or other mechanisms that start and maintain voluntary activity toward the achievement of personal goals.” Caldwell and Andereck (1994) adopted the conceptual approach developed by Knoke and Prensky (1984) and categorized motivations of volunteers in recreational-related volunteer associations into three categories of incentives: purposive, solidary, and material incentives.

- Purposive incentives: doing something useful and contributing to society.
- Solidary incentives: dealing with social interactions and networking opportunities.
- Material incentives: tangible benefits provided by the host organization utilizing the volunteers.

Of these three categories, purposive incentives were identified as the strongest volunteer motivation, whereas material incentives were often the least important (Caldwell and Andereck, 1994).

Furthermore, organizations can focus on improving volunteer recruitment efforts by employing the following approaches (Kolnick and Mulder, 2007).

- Conveying a clear message that highlights local service involvement;
- Demonstrating proficient leadership;
- Providing one-hour information sessions for prospective volunteers;
- Targeting corporations, college/high school students, and sport teams;
- Identifying a champion to serve as a spokesperson;
- Accentuating flexibility and friendship in volunteering;
- Underlining the benefits of volunteering.

With regard to the recruitment advertising, utilizing internet job boards has become important today. Sixty percent of respondents indicated that they used the internet to search for information about volunteer activities (Kolnick and Mulder, 2007). In-house recruitment can also be effective. Current volunteers within an organization can be a great source of volunteer recruitment and recommend strong candidates. Given that current volunteers are already...
committed to the organization, its goals, and its processes, they may have a good grasp of who will cope with the organization (Chelladurai, 2006) and, particularly, who can carry out a job that comes with non-monetary rewards effectively.

**Training**

Cuskelly et al. (2006) found that sports clubs using training and support practices extensively were less likely to have problems related to volunteer retention. These days, non-profit sport organizations provide an orientation for new volunteers, as an initial program of training, which can help the volunteers understand the organization’s mission, main goals, policies, and procedures. The goals in the orientation are to provide a favorable impression of the organization for the volunteers, to help them get used to the demands of their job, and to create a good atmosphere to enhance their acceptance in the agency (Rossman and Schlatter, 2003). Rossman and Schlatter (2003) proposed three types of information that organizations should provide during the orientation:

- Outlining the nature of the organization and the volunteers’ role to help the organization accomplish its goals. (Who are they working for? What is this organization trying to accomplish, e.g. organizational mission?)
- Explaining about the nature of a typical workday and then making them anticipate what they need to do in a typical workday. (What is a typical order of events in a workday? What kinds of tasks will they do in a typical day?)
- Covering the work rules, policies, procedures, and special skills that are needed. (Provide the volunteers an opportunity to know some details of agency operation.)

Training plays an essential role in enhancing the fit between the individual and the organization (Chelladurai, 2006). Different from most paid positions, many volunteer roles will be performed by individuals who do not have prerequisite skills or knowledge for the job, so specific on-the-job training for volunteers may need to be offered to provide the information and skills necessary to effectively accomplish the volunteer role (Taylor, Doherty, and McGraw, 2008).

The training period can range from a few hours of training to a couple of weeks of training depending on the difficulty and requirements of the position and the experience of the volunteer. Holding daytime volunteer training sessions during the working week may be an unwise strategy (Kolnick and Mulder, 2007). However, one-hour information sessions at an organization during the lunch hour could be an efficient means of enticing potential volunteers to participate in a full training session (Kolnick and Mulder, 2007). During the training sessions, volunteers should learn their role in the non-profit sport organization. Volunteers in basic and reutilized positions can be given only fundamental information about the organization and job, while those in highly responsible or complex positions might be required to take extensive ongoing training about organizational policies and procedures.

**Retention**

Volunteer retention is a significant organizational outcome (Cuskelly et al., 2006) and is often considered to be as challenging as volunteer recruitment in the first place. By reducing volunteer turnover and absenteeism while increasing the effectiveness and satisfaction of volunteers, at the same time organizations can save the time and money associated with
recruiting and training new volunteers (Clary, 2004). Frequently, withdrawal behaviors, such as absenteeism and turnover intention, can be influenced by organizational commitment (Freund, 2005; Worrall, Cooper and Campbell-Jamison, 2000). In human resource management studies, it has been suggested that employees with high levels of commitment improve work performance and a wide range of other positive organizational outcomes such as reduced absenteeism and turnover (Cuskelley and Boag, 2001; Griffeth, Horn, and Gaertner, 2000; Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001; Riketta, 2002). Volunteers who are more committed to a sporting organization may be less likely to leave than volunteers who are less organizationally committed (Cuskelley and Boag, 2001). That is, organizational commitment seems to discriminate more between those who stay and those who leave in comparison with other components such as job satisfaction (Griffeth et al., 2000).

Social exchange theory is one of the most influential conceptual paradigms for understanding workplace behavior (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005); specifically, most commitment literature has been grounded in social exchange theory (Bishop, Scott, Goldsby and Cropanzano, 2005). The social exchange theory proposed by Thibaut and Kelley (1959) considers that voluntary relationships depend on the rewards and costs that satisfy the values of outcomes in different situations for an individual. Social exchange relationships evolve over time into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments (Bishop et al., 2005). However, the individuals need to find out who is supporting them (e.g. organizational support vs. team support) and distinguishing their commitment to a social entity from the social entity’s support for them (Bishop et al., 2005). This is because when an individual or entity makes a contribution, the obligations of the individual or entity develop into an expectation of a return at a future time.

To increase volunteers’ organizational commitment, there are many factors that non-profit sport organizations and managers need to consider in return for volunteers’ contribution to the organization. Organizations can induce a feeling of obligation by treating volunteers satisfactorily. When an individual has made a decision to volunteer, volunteerism generally takes place in an organizational context (Penner, 2002). This means organizational variables seem to be the determinant of an individual’s volunteering behavior (Penner, 2002). One element of organizational variables is an individual member’s perceptions of an organization and feelings about the way he or she is treated by the organization (Penner, 2002). Although volunteers pursue their own goals and values in contributing their time and effort to non-profit organizations, the length of volunteer involvement may be accounted for by the organizations’ treatment of the volunteers. Volunteers’ satisfaction is usually made up by their motivation and by the emotional support provided by the organization (Jiménez and Fuertes, 2005).

Organizations should pay attention to meeting the motivational needs of their volunteers. According to the social exchange theory, people inquire about the degree that they are being rewarded for their efforts, and if an imbalance of reciprocity is conceived, an individual moves toward a better equilibrium (Zafirovski, 2003). Volunteers exchange their time and labor for some sort of psychological gain (Green and Chalip, 1998). That is, individuals who believe that their needs and goals were fulfilled through volunteering are more likely to engage in the service than those with no such belief (Clary, 2004). For example, volunteers may stay with the organization because they believe their personal needs, such as doing something worthwhile, having social interactions, and developing their personal career, are satisfied by their volunteering experience in the organization.

Non-profit sport organizations need to focus on leader–member relations to enhance volunteers’ organizational commitment as well. Given that leaders are volunteers, they may
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be motivated by a truthful interest in members and a desire to assist in their advance. In a sport setting, the roles that people play or their standardized patterns of behavior as part of a given functional relationship are inherent (Case, 1998). Thus, an active role from both leaders and members is a part of required behavior within a non-profit sport organization, and both parties must share a commitment to the mission and goals of the organization in providing sport and recreational services. High-quality relationships between leaders and members indicate that leaders exchange advice, social support, feedback, decision-making latitude, and opportunities for interesting and high-visibility assignments with members (Sparrowe and Liden, 2005). From the members’ viewpoint, members provide high levels of contribution in return, such as commitment to the leader and cooperation in group tasks (Sparrowe and Liden, 2005).

In addition, organizations should consider ways to evaluate and publicly praise volunteer performance (Preston, 2006). Presenting a volunteer appreciation luncheon where organizations can provide certificates of service and speeches highlighting individuals’ contributions, or nominating special volunteers for community service awards, can be a good way to make volunteers feel appreciated and recognized (Preston, 2006). Increasing responsibility that includes longevity and positive contributions to the organization can accelerate the committed volunteers’ motivation as well (Preston, 2006). If organizations possess a large volunteer staff, providing opportunities for volunteers whose performance was highly evaluated to move up the hierarchy into management roles might make the volunteers feel valued (Preston, 2006). Therefore, performance appraisal can be an effective tool to reward the contributions of volunteers and encourage the volunteers’ participation and involvement, which has a positive impact on volunteer retention in non-profit sport organizations.

Volunteer management in youth sport settings

Recruitment and selection

Recruiting and selecting qualified volunteers is also important in youth sport settings like non-profit youth sport organizations. However, somewhat different approaches and practices should be considered based on the context of youth sport settings. Participation in organized youth sport has always been a popular activity of American youth (Coakley, 2007; Hedstrom and Gould, 2004; Seefeldt and Ewing, 1997). In the United States, more than 60 million young people participate in organized youth sport (Coakley, 2007; National Council of Youth Sport, 2008; Pennington, 2003). These organized youth sport activities are run by adult volunteers who play various roles such as coaches, officials, and administrators of youth sport. Although varying in service frequency and duration, volunteers provide youth sport organizations with needed services in various positions and levels of responsibility (AYSO, 2004). Scholars agree that effective involvement of these adults is a crucial factor in providing high-quality sport experiences of children (Hedstrom and Gould, 2004; Seefeldt and Ewing, 1997; Wiersma and Sherman, 2005).

As youth sport participation increases (NCYS, 2008; Seefeldt and Ewing, 1997), the demand for sport volunteers also increases. Thus, most youth sport organizations face challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteers. Similarly they rely on the support of volunteers who are parents of youth sport participants (Doherty, 2005). Some youth sport organizations even require a parent of each youth sport participant to volunteer for a league (personal conversation with Patti Atchison, the manager of Gainesville Soccer Association). In the late 1970s, volunteer coaches in youth sport were more likely to be male, married, and to
have started coaching with the participation of their children (Gould and Martens, 1979). Today, the characteristics of volunteer coaches are not much different. Messner and Bozada-Deas (2009) found in their investigation on coaching staffs of 1,490 youth soccer teams and 538 youth baseball/softball teams in a regional area from 1999 to 2007 that about 90 percent of head coaches were male volunteers while female volunteers often worked as team managers, and often were called team parents or “team moms” (Coakley, 2007; Messner and Bozada-Deas, 2009).

Although parents of youth sport participants serve as volunteers, youth sport organizations have often experienced a lack of personnel to work for the organizations. Thus, researchers have been interested in understanding the motivation of youth sport volunteers (Eley and Kirk, 2002; Kim, Zhang, and Connaughton, 2010a, 2010b) because volunteer motivation involves the reasons, purposes, plans, and goals which lead individuals to get involved and stay in volunteer positions (e.g. Clary et al., 1998; Cuskelly, Hoye, and Auld, 2006; Kim and Chelladurai, 2008; MacLean and Hamm, 2007). Kim et al. (2010a) explored the motivation of youth sport volunteers using the Modified Volunteer Function Inventory for Sport (MVFIS), which was modified from the Volunteer Function Inventory (VFI, Clary et al., 1998). The VFI and MVFIS applied a functional approach to volunteers’ motives and indicated that involvement in volunteer work is a function of the joint effects of individuals’ motives for volunteering and the opportunities provided in the volunteer work environment to meet their needs. They identified six broad functions served by volunteering: values, understanding, social, career, protective, and enhancement (Clary et al., 1998).

- **Values**: the opportunities that volunteerism presents to express one’s values related to altruistic and humanitarian concerns for others;
- **Understanding**: the opportunities for new learning experiences, and to exercise one’s knowledge, skills, and abilities;
- **Social**: a functional motivation to be with one’s friends or to engage in an activity viewed favorably by important others;
- **Career**: a function that may be obtained from participation in volunteer work;
- **Protective**: traditional concerns that may serve to reduce guilt over being more fortunate than others and addressing one’s own personal problems;
- **Enhancement**: a function of volunteering that involves the ego’s growth and development.

Allison, Okun, and Dutridge (2002) stated that volunteers generally consider the values, understanding, and enhancement functions as more important motives than career, social, and protective functions. However, motivation functions usually vary among individuals with different backgrounds; one volunteer can possess multiple motivations (Clary and Snyder, 1999) and the order of importance among the motivation dimensions may differ among organizations, settings, and volunteer groups (Allison et al., 2002). In the case of youth sport leagues where most volunteers were parents of participants, the values and understanding functions of volunteer motivation were the highest and second-highest ranked motivation of volunteers and the career and protective functions were the lowest and second-lowest ranked functions (Kim et al., 2010a). However, among teenager volunteers in youth sport organizations, understanding, career, and values were ranked as the highest volunteer functions (Eley and Kirk, 2002).
Training

The contribution of volunteers in youth sport leagues, mainly volunteer coaches, is significant; however, their knowledge and skills in youth sport have been continuously questioned. Although most volunteers get involved in sports and tasks (e.g. coaching, refereeing, or administrating) which they feel comfortable to perform or are, at least, interested in, many of them do not have adequate knowledge and skills regarding communication, first aid, risk management, and other coaching and administration practices (Missing, 1995). The poor coaching of volunteers often leads to serious physical or mental injuries to youth participants, sometimes brings lawsuits, and causes financial damage to youth sport organizations or leagues (e.g. Ashcroft, 1997; Byrne v Boys Baseball League, 1989; Hills v Bridgeview Little League Association, 2000).

Farmer and Fedor (1999) noted that adequate organizational control, performance standards, appraisals, and support/training would diminish various issues including low quality or high variability of volunteers’ performances/coaching. Thus, many youth sport organizations and leagues require their volunteers to participate in volunteer training as well as the initial orientations. While a few large youth sport organizations create and provide their own training programs to volunteer coaches, (e.g. AYSO’s volunteer training program, Safe Haven), many youth sport leagues rely on training programs created and distributed by umbrella organizations like the National Alliance for Youth Sport (NAYS), National Youth Sport Coaches Association (NYSCA) and the American Sport Education Program (ASEP), which include coaching essentials, safety basics, practice, game-day tips, and sport specific skills (ASEP, 2009; NAYS, 2011). For instance, NYSCA has trained more than 2.5 million volunteer coaches through 3,000 community-based agencies and organizations since 1981 (NAYS, 2011). These volunteer training programs include series of courses on various topics to provide quality sport programs to youth sport participants and protect both participants and volunteers (AYSO, 2004; NAYS, 2011). Also, federal and state laws (e.g. the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997) reinforce the importance of adequate volunteer training or risk management programs.

However, the training requirement of most youth sport leagues is to take an initial one-day (or a few hours) training course, probably more appropriately called orientation (NAYS, 2011). Volunteer coaches in various youth sport leagues reported that their previous volunteer training experiences did not positively influence their self-efficacy on volunteer responsibility (Kim, 2009). Moreover, although volunteers prefer hands-on training, these initial volunteer training courses are more likely to be in-class or online courses (Kim and Chelladurai, 2008). Thus, sport leagues should be more interested in providing adequate training for youth sport volunteers to provide better sport experiences for youth participants and protect both youth participants and adult volunteers.

Retention

Retaining a skilled and experienced coach is far more beneficial than searching for and replacing one (Turner and Chelladurai, 2005). It is the same for volunteer coaches in youth sport settings. However, most volunteers are parents of youth sport participants and the majority of those volunteers leave the organization or league when their children stop playing. Thus, retaining volunteer coaches is extremely difficult although retention of them is a critical issue for youth sport organizations and leagues.

Kim, Chelladurai, and Trail (2007) found in their study on youth sport volunteers that when a volunteer’s skills and knowledge fit well with the volunteer’s responsibilities (person–task fit)
and a volunteer’s value matched the organization’s mission (person–organization fit), the volunteer was empowered and eventually intended to continue volunteering. That is, youth sport organizations and leagues should carefully recruit volunteers and place them based on the fit between the volunteers’ interests, values, knowledge, and abilities and their volunteer roles.

Also, Kim et al. (2007) found that managerial treatments positively influenced the level of empowerment which led to a high level of intention to remain as volunteers. The managerial treatments Kim et al. (2007) studied included proper supervision and rewards (e.g. recognition and appreciation). That is, to retain quality volunteers in youth sport, volunteer managers should be interested in volunteers and volunteer duties and performances and show appreciation of volunteer services. Probably, providing appreciation and recognition gifts (e.g. thanks card and plaque) and promoting high-performing and experienced volunteers to highly responsible positions might be effective to retain quality volunteers in youth sport.

Volunteer management in mega events

Recruitment and selection

Episodic volunteers also bring the power that keeps mega/international sporting events running. Without doubt, volunteers have been the crucial labor source for mega sporting events requiring several thousand individuals in a relatively short time (a few days to a couple of weeks). Such organizations as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) consider volunteer involvement as a key element for its summer and winter Olympic Games (IOC, 2000). Thus, volunteer recruitment and the selection of massive numbers of volunteers for mega sporting events have been a big challenge for event managers.

No different from other sport settings, mega/international sporting event organizations and their volunteer managers have paid attention to the motivations of volunteers when recruiting. However, the motivations of episodic volunteers at mega international sporting events could be qualitatively different from those of continuous volunteers who provide services for regularly scheduled programs for two reasons: (a) the short duration of commitment for episodic volunteering, and (b) the high status and prestige associated with special events. This view is supported by a study by Saleh and Wood (1998) on volunteer motivations in multicultural festival events. Their findings indicated that, although some conventional motivations were significant to the volunteers, other special event-related motivations, such as a pride in one’s culture and a desire to maintain links with one’s ethno-cultural group, were also important. Moreover, Manzenreiter and Horne (2005: 30) stated that “major international sporting events have an extraordinary capacity to generate emotionally powerful and shared experiences.” As international events such as the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup, reveal both the mass appeal of sport and the symbolic power embodied in the sport competitions (Manzenreiter and Horne, 2005), individuals and nations attach bigger meanings to these events. Consequently, volunteers at mega international sporting events might have more specific and unique motives because of the nature of these international events.

Given that most mega/international sporting events rely heavily on volunteers, event organizations or volunteer managers need to focus on meeting the volunteers’ motivational needs. Williams, Dossa, and Tompkins (1995) found in their study on the motivation of volunteers in a mega ski event that supporting the community and the national team were considered most important by volunteers; whereas free tickets and souvenirs were considered least motivating. Later, by modifying Knoke and Prensky’s (1984) three-factor concept, Farrell, Johnston, and Twynam (1998) developed the Special Event Volunteer Motivation
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Scale (SEVMS) with four dimensions to study volunteer motivations for working at an elite women’s curling competition event: purposive (i.e. contribution to society or doing something useful), solidary (i.e. social interactions and networking), external traditions (i.e. family tradition and external influence), and commitments (i.e. the need of personal skills and external expectations for volunteering). In that study, the researchers found that purposive and solidary incentives were primary motives when compared to external traditions and commitments.

More recently, Bang and colleagues (Bang and Chelladurai, 2009; Bang, Alexandris, and Ross, 2010) developed the Volunteer Motivations Scale for International Sporting Events (VMS-ISE) in the contexts of the 2002 FIFA World Cup, 2002 Asian Games, and 2004 Athens Olympic Games, which includes seven factors: expression of values, patriotism, interpersonal contacts, personal growth, career orientation, extrinsic rewards, and love of sport.

- Expression of values: concern for others, the success of the event, and society;
- Patriotism: pride in and love of the country, and allegiance to the country;
- Interpersonal contacts: meeting and interacting with people and forming friendships;
- Personal growth: gaining new perspectives, as well as feeling important and needed;
- Career orientation: career development such as gaining experience and career contacts;
- Extrinsic rewards: getting tangible rewards such as free uniforms, food, and admission;
- Love of sport: loving sport and any event related to sport.

Among volunteers in the FIFA World Cup and Asian Games, the expression of values and interpersonal contacts factors were the highest and second-highest ranked whereas the extrinsic rewards and career orientation factors were the lowest and second-lowest ranked (Bang and Chelladurai, 2009). On the other hand, among volunteers in the Athens Olympic Games, expression of values and patriotism were found to be the highest and the second-highest ranked factors (Bang, Alexandris and Ross, 2010). However, similar to the previous study at the FIFA World Cup and Asian Games, extrinsic rewards and career orientation factors were the lowest and second-lowest ranked factors. These different motives imply that when event organizations or managers seek volunteers for their events, they should identify the various volunteer motives in order to develop strategies to satisfy volunteers’ needs and expectations (Farrell et al., 1998).

Therefore, volunteer managers may need to adapt volunteer recruitment strategies by developing recruitment messages and/or approaches that can play on each of the motivations of volunteering. Although it depends on the nature of the mega/international sporting event, sources of volunteers for consideration can vary such as sponsors; universities, schools, and colleges; service, social, and sport clubs; special interest groups; previous volunteers; religious groups; and professional organizations and unions (Salem, Jones and Morgan, 2003). Once news of the event is out, individuals may volunteer immediately if it is a mega/international event in which one of the most important motivations would be “being there” (Catherwood and Van Kirk, 1992). Thus, effective marketing strategies for a mega/international sporting event would also help run a recruitment campaign to attract individuals to volunteering.

Unlike other events or organizations, another big challenge for mega sporting events is to screen and select adequate volunteers. Often, not only local residents but also volunteer applicants from other regions or countries want to volunteer. In the case of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, 1.126 million domestic and foreign individuals applied and only 100,000 were selected as volunteers at the Beijing Olympics and Paralympics (Xinhua News Agency, 2008). In fact, it is very common for most mega sporting events to have more volunteer
applicants than the positions available because it is such a unique opportunity. Thus, mega event managers often spend several months or years recruiting and screening volunteers based on knowledge, skills, and experiences. Specifically, the 2010 South Africa FIFA World Cup recruited volunteers in two groups: specialist volunteers with expert knowledge and skills (e.g. language, information technology, and media skills) and general volunteers performing customer service duties, and selected volunteers in a three-stage process including application-based initial screening, security screening based on each volunteer position requirement, and face to face interviews (FIFA, 2007).

More generally, with regard to the staffing process in the context of events, Getz (2005: 222) proposed a three-stage process:

- Identify all tasks associated with event creation, delivery and shutdown (e.g. game management, administration, access control, accreditation, language services, marketing, medical and health, transportation, telecommunication, IT, media, accommodation, and logistics);
- Determine the number of people that are needed to accomplish a range of tasks regarding conducting the event (e.g. do all the tasks have to be done in order, by the same work group, or all at once by a larger group? What level of supervision will be required? What tasks can be outsourced and what must be done by the event team? Will more staff than normal be required to perform tasks such as security, as a result of some specific circumstance such as a visit by a celebrity to the event?);
- List the numbers of volunteers and supervisors and the skills/experiences/qualifications needed to create the “ideal” workforce for the event.

Moreover, providing a clear and complete description of the duties and responsibilities for each volunteer position is important. All the position descriptions need to be developed before any recruitment activities take place. The position descriptions must include the purpose and responsibilities of the position, job qualifications, a designated supervisor and worksite, a timeframe for all activities of the job, and a description of job benefits.

Training

Due to the complexity of organizing and managing various events and functions, the responsibilities of volunteers in mega events are functionally specialized (IOC, 2000). Thus, training volunteers can be a big challenge. A large number of volunteers from different backgrounds are involved in mega/international sporting events for a variety of job positions. Sometimes, the core management team starts work months or even years prior to the event, so many different types of training may be necessary (Van der Wagen, 2006). Often, event organizing committees develop a volunteer training manual (such as the Manual for Beijing Olympic Volunteers) based on experience from previous events and specific situations of the host country or city. Then, volunteer leaders of the event, who are often selected earlier and go through additional training, deliver or support training for general volunteers of the event based on the volunteer training manual (Beijing Olympic Games Volunteer Work Coordination Group, 2006).

For mega/international event managers, it is very important to educate volunteers about the spirit and mission of the mega/international event as well as the specialized functions and organization standards and rules (IOC, 2000). Thus, mega/international event managers provide orientation and training sessions to instruct volunteers about the event and its mission.
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For example, the volunteer training programs for the FIFA World Cup also include fundamental and core knowledge about the event along with protocol/rules, venue-specific training, customer service, etc. (FIFA, 2007).

From the perspective of volunteers, training is one of two key components of volunteer experiences along with volunteer task execution (Costa, Chalip and Green, 2006), and quality of volunteer training plays a critical part in the evaluation of volunteer experience (Green and Chalip, 2004). Thus, to increase the effectiveness of volunteer training and volunteer satisfaction, it can be useful to measure volunteers’ motivations when event managers and/or volunteer managers assign and schedule the volunteers. Consideration should be given by event managers and/or volunteer managers in planning volunteer training and orientation to:

(a) what information is needed about each volunteer; and
(b) how to utilize the information in deciding where to assign a volunteer.

If the orientation and/or training are well planned, volunteers should certainly be able to understand what their role, duties, and schedules are. Given that orientation and training not only directly influence a volunteer’s satisfaction but also impact the overall success of the event (Stevens, Connolly, Adams and Bradish, 2008), carefully planned orientation and training should be provided to the volunteers.

Retention

Compared to paid employees, event volunteers mostly have a shorter commitment to their job; the commitment may not even be noticed if they leave before their allocated time has finished, especially in a large-scale event (Van der Wagen, 2006). Therefore, ongoing communication at all stages, from recruitment to the end of an event, is fundamentally essential in order to increase the retention of volunteers (Byrne, Houen and Seaberg, 2002). Costa et al. (2006) noted that satisfaction plays a significant role in employees’ retention in general, so identifying the antecedents that influence volunteers’ satisfaction would be worthwhile. According to Costa et al. (2006), the sense of community and commitment both affect job satisfaction. Volunteers who have opportunities to share opinions and experiences during training sessions tend to build their sense of community at the event and the sense of community positively influences the volunteers’ commitment to the event, which leads to increased satisfaction with the job (Costa et al., 2006). In addition to satisfaction, Van der Wagen (2006: 237) emphasized that an event’s organizational culture has an impact on volunteer retention and proposed the elements of the event organizational culture as follows.

- Feedback: encouragement and a sense of direction;
- Cohesion: everyone wants to feel part of a team that has a positive dynamic, as dysfunctional teams fall apart very rapidly. Shared goals leads to developing a sense of cohesion;
- Resources: lack of resources to do the job proficiently or properly would discourage volunteers, while being well equipped helps productivity;
- Support: being neglected by team members or supervisors makes volunteers feel unhappy, especially those left isolated at distant spots with a lack of relief or encouragement;
- Fairness: like permanent employees, volunteers would be uncomfortable with inequitable treatments;
• Improvement: in the ongoing event operational environment, suggestions for improvements should be taken seriously and acted upon;
• Information provision: to provide high-quality services, volunteers should be in the information loop, which contributes to a sense of collaborative teamwork as well.

Therefore, volunteers’ propensity to continue volunteer activities at a mega/international sporting event comes from the opportunity of being part of the subculture, which is represented experientially in the sense of community gained through their volunteering role, rather than the job itself (Costa et al., 2006). This sense of commitment the volunteers have built then contributes to increasing volunteer retention.

While individual volunteers are satisfied with their volunteer experiences and cherish their memories at mega/international events, retention efforts by mega/international events have been very rare (Kim, Lee, Chon and Chae, 2008). The mega/international sporting event organizers and managers may provide appreciation gifts and awards and throw volunteer social parties; however, their efforts are very limited because the mega/intentional sporting event is not routinely hosted. However, recently, researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers have realized the significance of the mega/international sporting event volunteers and put efforts into retention. Host countries and cities now try to utilize these experienced volunteers in their other mega/international events. Further, the United Nations (UN) helped volunteer training for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and supported retention of these volunteers because the UN believed the volunteerism of the Beijing Olympic Games could be a great opportunity to promote volunteerism in China (United Nations, 2007). In general, the effort to retain mega/international event volunteers for other events or areas has been increased.

Volunteer management in community sporting events

Recruitment and selection

Similar to mega/international sporting events, episodic volunteers are the main source of service delivery in community sporting events. Volunteer labor may be more beneficial in small, regional, and participant sport events which do not receive the sponsorship money and benefits of popular mega-events. Although some local sporting events get sponsorship money, much of it is used for other administrative expenses or contributed to charity; thus, volunteers’ free labor is an indispensable factor in the running of community sporting events (Coyne and Coyne, 2001). However, for community sporting events which are not well known to the public, recruiting enough volunteers and filling essential volunteer positions is not simple. Thus, managers of community sporting events must work even harder to recruit volunteers than those in other sport settings.

As discussed in the previous sections, researchers and practitioners have tried to recruit more volunteers through understanding demographic characteristics and the motivation of volunteers. Kim et al. (2010b) found in their study on local Special Olympic event volunteers that the average mean age of volunteers was 39.17 years old and the majority of them were highly educated and had full-time jobs. These volunteers indicated the values and understanding functions of MVFIS as the highest and second-highest motivation while the career and protective functions were the lowest and second-lowest motivations.

Strigas and Jackson (2003) found from volunteers in a local marathon event that the predominant group was volunteers who were Caucasian, mid-aged (35–50 years old), and full-time-employed. In the study, Strigas and Jackson explored five motivation factors of
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these volunteers: (a) purposive (i.e. humanitarian, beneficial to the community/event), (b) leisure, (c) external influences (i.e. family tradition or for significant others), (d) material (i.e. utilitarian and career-related incentives), and (e) egoistic (i.e. social or networking) and indicated that egoistic motivations were the most important reason for volunteer decision. Similarly, Hardin, Koo, King, and Zdroik (2007) surveyed volunteers at a golf tournament and identified four motivational factors: (a) self-interest, which is similar to Strigas and Jackson’ egoistic, (b) external influences, (c) purposive, and (d) escapism, identical to the leisure factor of Strigas and Jackson.

Although motivation and demographic characteristics might be major antecedents of volunteer involvement, the individual’s role identity is another factor influencing an individual’s intention to engage in volunteering. Kim and Trail (2007) found among college students regarding their intention to volunteer in different local events that university students with high levels of university athletic team identity and sport identity indicated a higher level of intention to volunteer for university sporting events. That is, fans of a specific team or sport are more likely to volunteer for an event relevant to that specific team and sport. Specifically, in the context of the sport of golf, Coyne and Coyne (2001) found that “love of golf” was a very critical motivation of volunteers. Actually, many golf and tennis events attract volunteers with free tickets to events (Kim, Won, and Harrolle, 2009). Thus, contacting university or local sport clubs or sport fans would be helpful to effectively recruit volunteers.

Training

Sporting event volunteers often start their volunteer experiences at the training session and meet other volunteers and supervisors; then, by doing so, volunteers can develop the sense of community which enhances training effectiveness, fosters continuous learning environment, and eventually improves volunteer systems (Costa et al., 2006). Also, the impact of volunteer training goes beyond the individual level to enhance community partnerships and social cohesion and foster local sports clubs by increasing the interests of local residents (Sport and Recreation Victoria, 2008). However, volunteer training for local sporting events has not been the main area of event managers’ interest because of the situations of community sporting events. Except for a few well-known events, community sporting events which are held over a few days need several hundred to a thousand individuals but do not have enough money to pay these individuals. Accordingly, just filling the volunteer positions is a big challenge. Thus, in this situation, it is hard to focus on quality training for volunteers. In most cases, volunteer training in community sporting events is replaced with a day’s or even an hour’s orientation program. A few big-name professional sporting events (e.g. Professional Golf Association or International Tennis Federation events) require their volunteers to participate in a volunteer training session prior to working for the events. However, some events just provide a brief introduction before placing volunteers in their positions on the event day. Although it is practically hard, community event managers should care more about volunteer training and provide training including introduction of the event and its mission, sport and event-related rules and protocol, customer services, and risk management. By doing so, they will help to provide better service for event participants and spectators and protect volunteers and participants from any possible physical injuries and lawsuits.

Retention

Due to the difficulty of recruiting volunteers in community sporting events, it is extremely beneficial to retain existing volunteers and let them come back to subsequent events. Also,
returned volunteers need less training and help new volunteers learn about the system and event; thus, successful retention of experienced volunteers minimizes the problems of volunteer training in community sporting events. Indeed, some individuals volunteer for the same event for several years, which is not common in most community sporting events, despite the benefits of experienced volunteers. Thus, researchers and practitioners have suggested various practices to retain volunteers.

Kim, Trail, Lim, and Kim (2009) found that volunteers in a local Special Olympics event felt empowered and intended to return for the next event because they felt that their values and ability matched well with the event mission and volunteer requirement (good fit) and their volunteer experiences were similar to their expectation (fulfilled psychological contract). That is, recruiting volunteers fitting well with the event and the volunteer position may be a good way to retain volunteers. However, for many community sporting events it is not realistic to rigorously screen volunteer applicants for good task and organization fit. Instead of screening and hiring well-matched volunteers, if the event managers provide accurate information about the event and volunteer responsibilities during recruiting and orientation or initial training, volunteers can create realistic expectations toward the organization and the required duties, and thus construct realistic psychological contracts. Accordingly, it is more likely that the psychological contract will be fulfilled and the volunteers will be empowered and willing to return for the next event.

Further, Andrew et al. (2009) found that when volunteers perceived adequate organizational supports (i.e. personal care for and interest in volunteers and their performance) by the event organizer, volunteers were likely to be satisfied and return for the next event. Thus, it is an effective means to retain volunteers if event managers are interested in the needs of volunteers and appreciate volunteer services. Specifically, expressing appreciation and rewarding good performance are a key but relatively simple practice as a volunteer retention effort. Giving out free gifts, sending a post-event thank you postcard, and recognizing volunteers’ names in local newspapers or pamphlets are some effective examples (Forsyth 1999; Martinez and McMullin, 2004). Also, Kim et al. (2009) found that free gifts (e.g. free game entrance tickets, food, volunteer uniforms, chances to play sport, chances to meet athletes, discount coupon for sponsored products, and social events) could be a significant factor for college students to return as volunteers. Therefore, community event managers who experience difficulty in filling their volunteer positions should put more effort into these effective retention practices.

Summary

Figure 12.1 shows the significant elements of the three stages of recruitment/selection, training, and retention in the management of volunteers in sport. These elements were discussed in the context of four different sport settings (non-profit sport organizations, youth sport, mega/international sporting events, and community sporting events). Although volunteer management practices are somewhat different due to unique characteristics of each sport setting, all sport organizations and leagues and their volunteer managers should keep in mind the following important things in volunteer management:

- Managers should not forget that volunteers are a crucial labor source of volunteer service delivery (Green and Chalip, 1998).
- Managers should understand motivations of potential volunteer groups.
- Managers should match the knowledge and skills of volunteers and their job requirements, if possible.
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Although the labor of volunteers is free, managing volunteers should be professionally done because the client’s evaluation of the service and image of the organization or event are caused by the service given by volunteers (Kim and Trail, 2007). Thus, managers should provide proper orientation and training including sport-specific, organization/event-specific, and task-specific knowledge and skills, risk management, and customer service information.

- Managers should express personal interest in volunteers and their performance and create a good volunteer environment.
- Managers should show appreciation for volunteer services through various practices such as thank-you cards, plaques, free gifts, and volunteer social parties.
- Managers should try to satisfy volunteers’ motivational needs.
- Managers should evaluate the performance of volunteers and try to retain quality volunteers.

References

Kim and Bang


Byrne v Boys Baseball League (1989) NJ 236.


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