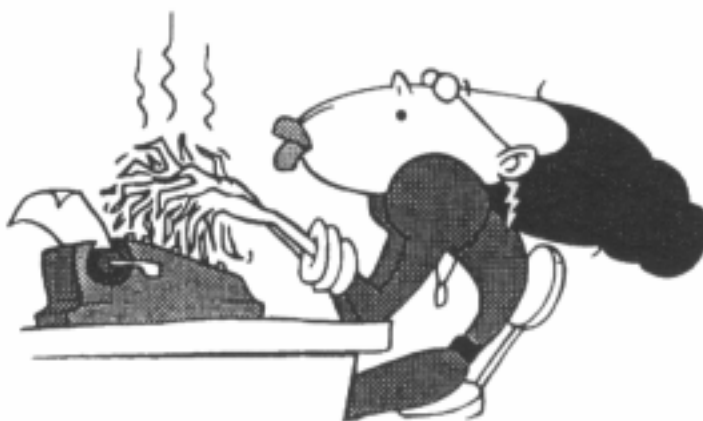


Volunteering for Work Experience

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Contents

Introduction	1
1 What is Volunteer Work?	2
Why Do People Volunteer?	
Volunteer Activity: Real Work	
2 Volunteer Work and Health	4
Feeling Needed	
Expertise	
Control and Self-Discipline	
‘Helper’s High’	
Physical Health	
3 Volunteer Work and Skills	
Development & Maintenance	6
Self-Management Skills	
Work-Content or Specific-Content Skills	
Functional Skills	
Some Skills Transferable from Paid to Volunteer Work	
Some Skills Transferable from Volunteer to Paid Work	
4 Volunteering, Work Experience and Training	9
Volunteer Work and Career Changing	
Volunteer Work and Networking	
5 The Role and Responsibility of Volunteer Centres and Voluntary-Sector Agencies	11
Volunteer Bureaux and Centres	
Agencies Engaging Volunteers	
Conclusion	13
Notes	14

Introduction

WHAT CAN VOLUNTEERING OFFER PEOPLE WHO ARE LOOKING for paid employment? That is the central focus of this monograph, a brief outline of the major elements of the links between volunteering and employment.

In order to answer the question, we must look at the following issues: What is volunteer work? What are the benefits of volunteering? Why should people who are looking for a job consider doing volunteer work? How can volunteer centres and the agencies they serve work with people who volunteer primarily as a way of enhancing their chances of finding employment?

1 What is Volunteer Work?

IN CANADA, A VOLUNTEER IS MOST COMMONLY DEFINED as someone who undertakes community service work of his or her own free will, without receiving a salary or wage in return. Both elements of this definition are important: individual *choice* and the fact that *no salary or wage is paid*.¹

Why Do People Volunteer?

What motivates people to volunteer has been the subject of many articles and books. Each identifies a variety of motives that lead people to volunteer, and emphasizes their importance. *Why* people volunteer is intimately and directly related to the kind of volunteer activity they undertake, its conditions and duration, their commitment to it, and the success or failure of the volunteer placement.

It used to be awkward and, in some cases, unacceptable to talk about the numerous and often complex motives that draw people into volunteer activity. Many people felt — and some still feel — that ‘real’ or ‘pure’ volunteer work is done without any expectation or hope of any return or benefit, and that the only motive behind ‘real’ volunteer work is altruism — ‘the unselfish regard for or devotion to the welfare of others’.

Today, more and more people agree that volunteers act out of many motives, that volunteer activity undertaken for other motives than altruism can be fruitful and meaningful, and that *all* volunteer effort involves some kind of exchange, even that which is based on altruism.

Many Canadians volunteer because they believe it is the right thing to do. Their moral values, religious beliefs, or understanding of the nature of a community motivate them to assist others. The return or benefit they receive is the satisfaction of having fulfilled their moral, religious, civic, or altruistic responsibilities. This is a tangible benefit and should not be ignored or denied. But many Canadians volunteer for other reasons. In fact, most people volunteer for a mixture of reasons, *including* a belief that it is the right thing to do.

People volunteer because they understand that it is important for citizens to participate in the life of their communities, and that this work benefits *all* citizens, not just the ‘poor and unfortunate’. Many volunteer to ‘give something back’, helping others in order to express their gratitude for help given to them or someone they love. Other people volunteer as a way to integrate into a new community or find their way back from tragedy by reaching out to others. Still others volunteer to meet people and build new relationships.

A large and growing group of Canadians is turning to volunteer work for yet another reason: as part of their search for paid employment. Some individuals find their own way to volunteering; some are encouraged by other people, including employment counsellors, outplacement firms, therapists, friends, family members, and volunteers. The rest of this paper will examine what volunteer work has to offer those who are seeking a job, and how volunteer centres and agencies that engage volunteers can respond to this phenomenon.

Volunteer Activity: Real Work

What does volunteering have to do with employment at all? Though few in the voluntary sector would ask

this question, others sometimes do. And what is really being asked is ‘what has volunteering to do with *work*’? That the question is still asked underlines the fact that misunderstandings persist about the real nature, scope, and import of the work of volunteers in Canada.

Anyone who is a volunteer or works with volunteers knows that volunteer activity is real work — volunteers ‘exert their strength and their faculties to accomplish something, to perform something, or to produce something’. We sometimes find it difficult to call this activity ‘work’ because the word *work* has become synonymous with *paid employment*.

In addition, professionals who deal with volunteers are deliberately careful about the use of the word ‘work’ when it is associated with volunteer activity, because volunteerism should never be promoted as a way to supplant or displace paid workers.

However, the negative effect of upholding this principle is the widespread misconception that volunteer work is peripheral, a frill, and of no real consequence to agencies, their clients, or to the community at large. This misunderstanding needs to be corrected.

Volunteers accomplish real work through their efforts. Sometimes the work supports, complements, and extends the work of paid staff, but often it is central to the purposes of the organizations they serve. For example, volunteers in hospitals support the work of the paid staff: doctors, nurses, and technicians. volunteers provide ancillary services and spend the kind of time with individuals that paid staff often cannot. On the other hand, volunteer Big Sisters and Big Brothers and telephone distress line volunteers provide the core services of their organizations, and are supported by paid staff.

Volunteer activity for the most part is, and should be, real work. It should be activity that accomplishes something, performs something, or produces something; it should never be activity done without a purpose, to simply fill time. Volunteer work must be significant to the organization and its clients, and meaningful to the volunteer performing it.² This is as true for people who volunteer as a means of enhancing their search for paid employment as it is for any other volunteer.

2 Volunteer Work and Health

ABOUT 10 YEARS AGO, THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION introduced a new definition of health, which is gradually gaining acceptance in our society. ‘Health’ no longer refers only to physical well-being and freedom from illness or disease. The new understanding of health is that it encompasses physical, social, emotional, mental, psychological, and spiritual well-being. The promotion of a holistic healthy lifestyle is widespread and growing, and includes encouraging people to stop doing things which harm health as well as promoting activities and lifestyle choices that improve health in all its aspects.

Volunteering is one of these health-promoting activities, and its value to people who are looking for employment is significant.

The link between volunteering and health is real and tangible. Volunteers and those who work with them have always known this. The link has now been established in scientific research. It has been and is being documented and explored in studies. It is demonstrated daily in the life and work of volunteers.

“Volunteering can generate a heightened sense of self-esteem, self-worth and confidence, reduce heart rate and blood pressure, increase endorphin production, resulting in greater feelings of well-being and calm, boost immune system and nervous system functioning, reduce life’s stresses, and overcome social isolation.”³

Looking for a job today can be a brutal experience. Individuals face a struggle that can crush self-esteem and erode self-confidence. Young people, regardless of their academic qualifications, often face a long drawn out search for a job that will allow them to use and develop their newly acquired skills and knowledge. People who have lost a job and are searching for new employment face that same market with an additional burden: many have been very badly hurt and shaken by losing a job in the first place. One of the most significant rewards that volunteering has to offer people — those seeking employment among them — is its health-enhancing properties, in particular the opportunity to build or rebuild confidence and self-esteem, to help restore perspective and change attitudes, and to reduce isolation by enlarging the volunteer’s circle of acquaintances, contacts, and friends.

Feeling Needed

People who are unemployed often feel that they are not needed, that their skills are not wanted, that their contribution is irrelevant. Volunteer work — whether visiting a person who is shut in, running a special event, or writing copy for an agency newsletter — can change that. It can help establish or restore an individual’s belief that he or she has something to offer, and that what they offer makes a difference — to other people, to organizations, and to themselves.

Expertise

Calling on an individual’s expertise, be it newly developed in school or seasoned by years of experience, can be a great boost to self-confidence and self-esteem. Putting their skills, knowledge, talents, and experience to work for your organization offers people an opportunity to exercise those skills, to feel that they are valuable and valued, and to test those skills in new ways. As a result, confidence in their own skills

and expertise can grow. This confidence can enhance their job search in obvious ways; it may also enable and encourage them to explore other career paths.

Control and Self-Discipline

One of the most difficult — indeed frightening — aspects of unemployment, especially long-term unemployment, can be the sense of a loss of control over one's own life, and over the future. Many people who are unemployed feel that they have few real choices, and little or no control. In addition, they are often left without the routines and discipline imposed by regular employment, routines and discipline that generally help people accomplish their goals. The absence of these can be frightening and debilitating.

Volunteer work can help in several ways. Generally, people can determine what they want to do, how often, where, and under what circumstances. Having these choices offers them a measure of control and choice. Being responsible for a job, with goals, objectives, and deadlines can help them re-establish routines and self-discipline in their lives.

Volunteers often take on freestanding projects for agencies, seeing them through from planning through execution to evaluation. These opportunities can provide individuals with a significant sense of power and control: "There is work to be done, which I can do. I can make choices about whether or not to do it, and how to do it". This sense that one *has* choices and some measure of control over planning, strategy, and outcomes can enormously enhance an individual's self-esteem and sense of accomplishment.

'Helper's High'

Volunteers constantly say that 'they get more than they give through their volunteer work'. Often, they talk about coming away from the experience feeling great — physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially recharged. This "helper's high"⁴, as it has been called, can be equally strong for those who come to volunteer work as part of their effort to find paid employment. The most important common characteristics of the work that produces this 'high' are that the work is freely chosen and not done as a result of coercion or pressure, and that it involves working with other people, rather than in isolation.

Physical Health

Opportunities to improve physical health through volunteering should be mentioned as well. Many volunteer placements include or focus on physical activity, for example, coaching baseball, taking kids swimming, running, walking, biking, or wheelchairs in fundraising events. These volunteer activities can enhance health in all the ways described above, and can help improve volunteer's physical fitness besides. The mind-body connection is well established: being physically fit helps people feel better about themselves. Likewise, those who feel good about themselves are more likely to be physically active.

The helper's high can affect physical as well as emotional health. "When the experiences of over 1,700 women who were involved regularly in helping others were analyzed at the Institute for the Advancement of Health in New York City, they revealed relief of actual physical ailments in the wake of the helping. Disorders such as headaches, loss of voice, pain due to lupus and multiple sclerosis, and depression improved."⁵

In short, volunteering provides opportunities for people to exercise body, brain and heart, and to significantly improve their health in all its facets.

3 Volunteer Work and Skills Development & Maintenance

IN *THE THREE BOXES OF LIFE AND HOW TO GET OUT OF THEM: An Introduction to Life/Work Planning*, Richard Bolles places skills into three categories: self-management skills, work-content skills, and functional or transferable, skills. Volunteering can help people gain, maintain, and enhance skills in each of these areas.

Self-Management Skills

Self-management skills are those which relate to the way we get along with others, deal with authority, govern our own behaviour, and accomplish things. Examples of self-management skills are resourcefulness, ingenuity, initiative, perseverance, loyalty, and dependability.

Clearly volunteer work can provide individuals with opportunities to test and develop these skills, since the work they are involved in often demands a search for ingenious ways to solve problems, and the taking of initiative when opportunities present themselves. Volunteers are integral members of the staff of organizations and are depended on to complete the tasks assigned to them.

Work-Content or Specific-Content Skills

Work-content or specific-content skills are those which we use to “master a *particular* vocabulary, or procedure, or subject-matter.”⁶ Examples of work-content skills are knowing a particular language, being able to build or repair a computer, or knowing the rules of baseball.

Many volunteers become involved in agencies whose work is unlike anything they are familiar with. In order to carry out their work, volunteers often must learn skills specific to their agency’s work. A volunteer baseball coach must learn the rules of baseball; a volunteer on a distress line must learn the techniques and skills that will allow him or her to listen effectively and help someone in crisis. Volunteers in information centres must become familiar with the database systems that they will be accessing to provide information to the public. These skills are very specific to the job that is being done by the volunteer.

Functional Skills

Functional skills are those we use to work with “...the basic tangibles of the everyday world, namely: data (or information), people and things.”⁷ Functional skills describe how people act upon, or work with, information, people, and things, irrespective of the setting in which we are working, and include skills such as supervision, negotiation, analysis, computation, consultation, mentoring, precision working, operating, handling, and exchanging information.⁸ For example, an individual may be a skilled supervisor. That skill, supervision, can be used in any number of settings. Likewise, analytical skills can be brought to bear on a wide variety of data in many settings.

Some Skills Transferable From Paid to Volunteer Work

Breaking down people’s skills into categories like these and separating them from their association with a particular job allows individuals to look at the basic skills, which may be transferred from one job context

to another, and from one field of work to another. This kind of analysis can identify what volunteer opportunities someone might be good at and which activities would engage and develop particular skills or skill sets, and can also help people identify different potential fields of employment.

Voluntary sector organizations seek volunteers to expand their capacity as they strive to become more and more efficient and effective, to respond to growing demands, and to anticipate and plan for the future. Volunteers with specialized skills can complement this work while practising, developing, and maintaining their skills as they provide the organization's services to its clients.

While we who work in the voluntary sector may take this fact for granted, many people are surprised by the range of volunteer jobs available, and by the types and levels of skill needed to accomplish those jobs. Indeed, the skills important in paid employment are often the same kind as are valued and sought for in volunteers. A few examples will illustrate the point.

Marketing

Voluntary sector agencies are concerned with enhancing and improving the marketing of their programs and services to their clients, government, and the public at large. People with newly acquired or seasoned skills in marketing can help agencies review their history, identify goals, audit their resources, and develop and help carry out a marketing plan.

Computerization/Electronic Exchange of Information

Most voluntary-sector agencies are either computerized or heading towards it, and are faced with a bewildering, often overwhelming array of choices and decisions.

People with expertise in the field of computers can help agencies decide what equipment and software they really need for present needs, where their organization is headed over the next five years, and what the most cost-effective decisions on acquisitions and training are likely to be over that time. In addition, volunteers with those skills can help set up the systems and train staff.

Administration/Management/Evaluation

A stereotype of the voluntary sector portrays non-profits and charities as entirely different from private sector companies. In fact, most agencies employ trained managers and are run in a business-like fashion according to accepted accounting principles. Nevertheless, many agencies could benefit from the expertise and knowledge of people trained in management, administration, and evaluation.

Library Organization/Research

Information is a critical component of the work of any organization. Access to meaningful, comprehensive and easily understood information can greatly improve an agency's ability to provide service. Trained librarians and researchers can assist agencies in developing appropriate databases of information that can support, enhance, and even shape the way the agency does business.

These four are rather obvious examples of the way volunteers can develop their skills while providing service to agencies and their clients. Other possibilities are not as obvious, but can be identified with a little effort.

An example: The purchasing manager of a manufacturing company is laid off. Few voluntary sector agencies need purchasing managers as such. However, his or her skills could be used by an organization to help rationalize and consolidate its purchasing practices for equipment and supplies. This volunteer could help a number of agencies develop a group purchasing mechanism, thereby improving efficiency and reducing costs. Or, he or she could help agencies that operate businesses to improve their purchasing decisions and inventory control. A completely different way to engage this person's skills would be to have the volunteer work with individual agency clients in preparing personal or family budgets.

By identifying the various skills that the prospective volunteer possesses, he or she and the volunteer centre and the agencies involved can develop new and different ways to use those skills in volunteer work. The range of possible employment fields, and therefore of opportunities for the volunteer to explore, expands as well.

Some Skills Transferable from Volunteer to Paid Work

An American research project conducted in 1985 investigated job skill development in volunteer work through surveys and interviews with close to 1000 individuals. Respondents identified the following list of skills which they had developed or enhanced through their volunteer work:⁹

- Arts and Crafts Skills
- Child Care Skills
- Clerical/Secretarial Skills
- Education Skills
- Financial Skills
- Health Care skills
- Household Skills
- Managerial Skills
- Mechanical Skills
- Public Policy Skills
- Public Relations Skills
- Research Skills
- Technical/Professional Skills

The 1987 National Survey on Voluntary Activity in Canada echoed these results, clearly identifying that “...learning new skills was an important feature of volunteer work for 3.4 million volunteers, or 70% of volunteers. These skills included technical and office skills, management and organizational skills, communications, interpersonal skills, fundraising, and increased knowledge of certain subjects and issues. Many of the volunteers (353,000) could transfer the skills learned in their volunteer work directly to their paid jobs. As well, 44% of volunteers said it was important to them that volunteer work offered them an opportunity for improving their job possibilities.”¹⁰

4 Volunteering, Work Experience and Training

PEOPLE LOOKING FOR PAID WORK, ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE, are often frustrated in their search because employers are looking for people with experience. Of course, in order to gain experience, they must find work.

Volunteer activity listed on a résumé was once regarded only as an indication of good citizenship, not as a record of work experience, reflecting the stereotype that volunteer work was peripheral, a frill, non-essential. As volunteer work changes, involving people in more varied and complex activities, that view is changing as well. Both the public and the private sectors now recognize that volunteer work should be factored into the evaluation of a job candidate's skills, training, and experience.

More and more often, employment application forms ask explicitly about volunteer experience. Many of them list it directly alongside paid work experience. Indeed, volunteer work on someone's résumé can often be a determining factor in college and university applications as well as in job competitions, especially if the qualifications of candidates are otherwise very similar.

Work experience in a volunteer placement can be every bit as rigorous and demanding as in the private sector. Volunteer work can provide real job experience, good, solid training, and opportunities for workers to innovate and experiment in ways that often aren't allowable in the regular job market. The transferable skills that individuals bring to their volunteer work can often be applied to a different work-context in the voluntary sector, in such a way that the agency, its clients, and the volunteer can all benefit. But this doesn't happen just by chance.

In order for volunteer work to provide meaningful work experience and training, placements must have the following characteristics:

- Volunteer placements must be well thought out and well designed;
- Volunteer job descriptions must be clear: the respective expectations, rights and responsibilities of volunteer and agency must be clear and agreed upon;
- Volunteers must be properly interviewed and matched with a placement, and they must be given an orientation on the organization;
- Volunteers must be given the training needed to accomplish the job they are doing, and should receive appropriate supervision and support from a trained volunteer manager, including regular feedback and evaluation;
- Where possible, volunteers should be offered opportunities to expand or modify their volunteer roles to develop new skills and expand their horizons.

Investing in training for volunteers is a sign that an agency truly values the contribution its volunteers are making. By offering training, or making it available to volunteers, agencies help ensure that their work is

done well. It is also a way for agencies to recognize and thank volunteers for their efforts, and assist individuals in attaining their career goals.

Volunteer Work and Career Changing

As the world changes, so too do the skills, trades, and professions that employers are seeking. Consequently, many people who have lost a job and are looking for work face an added difficulty as they contemplate entirely different career and work options. This is also true of many people who are still employed, but want to change their line of work, as well as of those who are re-entering the job market after a period of absence. Volunteer work provides opportunities for all three groups.

Volunteering has always given people a chance to do something entirely different from what they do at the 'office' all day (or all night). Accountants by day are volunteer drivers on the weekend; truck drivers teach swimming; law clerks design newsletters; factory workers are board members. What has changed is the number of people who are not just looking for something different to do with their leisure time, but for something different to do with their lives, during their remaining years of paid employment.

Volunteer work provides an opportunity for people to test their interests, to experiment, to discover whether or not they are really suited for or called to a particular field of work before they commit years of study and significant expenditures to making that kind of change. A bookkeeper can volunteer on a distress line to see if he or she has the aptitude and attitudes necessary to become a counsellor or social worker. A nurse can volunteer at a daycare centre to test his or her interest in early childhood education, and so on.

Volunteering also has much to offer those who take early retirement, whether chosen or imposed. Some may not need the salary or wages of paid employment, but would still like to keep working for a time. These individuals can provide vast expertise and skill to voluntary sector agencies through their own efforts, and may be available to act as mentors for others in the organization.

Volunteer Work and Networking

While no one who volunteers can be *guaranteed* a paid job as a direct result of their volunteer work, it is nevertheless a fact that many people *do* find paid employment because of the connections they have made in the course of their volunteer work. If it is true that 80% of the jobs available are never advertised, then networking assumes great significance in a job search.

People unfamiliar with the voluntary sector may not realize the large web of connections that tie agencies to one another, to government, to the private sector, and to the public at large. Volunteers often have the opportunity to meet people from many walks of life and various sectors of the community in the course of their volunteer assignments, at organization meetings, or at special events. This contact offers them opportunities to establish relationships with people they might not otherwise have met, thus expanding their network of contacts, and the range of paid job opportunities they come to learn about. Their volunteer work itself is often the basis on which someone from the agency or organization might recommend them for a paid job.

5 The Role and Responsibility of Volunteer Centres and Voluntary-Sector Agencies

INCREASINGLY COMPLEX DEMANDS COUPLED WITH INADEQUATE resources — the voluntary sector labours under this strain now as perhaps never before. The need for ever more participation in communities and community agencies is tremendous.

In consequence, the growing number of people looking for volunteer work as a way to enhance their chances of finding paid employment can be seen as a gold mine: with relative suddenness, the sector is receiving unprecedented offers of assistance from people with outstanding skills and talents. Voluntary-sector agencies must work carefully with these individuals, recognizing the particular character of volunteer work done primarily for this purpose, and the special needs of those who do it.

Volunteer Bureaux and Centres

Local volunteer bureaux and centres serve two client groups: agencies seeking volunteers, and individuals seeking volunteer opportunities. The role of volunteer centres with respect to this group of potential volunteers is twofold. They recruit and refer volunteers to organizations that will benefit from their assistance, skills, and experience. At the same time, volunteer centres must respect the motivation of these volunteers, and refer them to placements that will help them achieve their own goals. In addition, centres will have an opportunity to encourage them to continue volunteering even after they find paid employment.

The volunteer centre's role should be to:

- Help the volunteer identify opportunities that match his or her skills, interests and available time, and respect the motivation that has brought him or her to volunteering;
- Refer the volunteer to an appropriate, well managed, well organized volunteer program. The program should have clearly defined volunteer jobs, and offer an opportunity for work in an area identified by and agreed to by the volunteer;
- Seek to ensure that the volunteers referred to agencies meet the needs and requirements of those agencies;
- Work with agencies to develop, design, or redesign volunteer placements *where and when possible* so that they can be filled by members of this new group of volunteers.

Agencies Engaging Volunteers

Agencies that engage volunteers have a complex role to play. The first priority of the agency must be to meet the needs of its clients. Its volunteer program, policies, and placements should be designed to meet that goal. It is within this framework that individual volunteers are engaged to support and extend its work.

What this means in practical terms is that agencies have to be particularly careful in ensuring that they are engaging volunteers to meet the clients' needs first, and not placing the needs of the client second to the needs of the volunteer.

It can be very tempting to see the range of skills and expertise which volunteers bring to the sector, and to

create volunteer opportunities to engage them. There are often creative ways to shape and redesign volunteer jobs to take advantage of the particular circumstances and skills of a volunteer. It is, however, ultimately detrimental to all concerned to create a volunteer job around the skills of a volunteer if that job does not meet the needs of clients or fulfil the goals of the agency.

In addition, volunteer centres and agencies must recognize that for these volunteers the search for paid employment must come first. Therefore, the best volunteer placements for them will generally be flexible, relatively short-term, and focused on specific goals or tasks.

These placements should offer the volunteer the kind of experience, training, feedback and practice he or she is looking for. At the same time, the placements must be designed so that the work of the agency is not jeopardized if the volunteer is called away to interviews, or finds a paid job. Agencies must also understand, and be prepared to work with, people who may be feeling very fragile because of their unemployed status and difficult job search.

Conclusion

PEOPLE WHO COME FORWARD TO VOLUNTEER PRIMARILY TO ENHANCE their efforts to find paid employment can provide enormous help to the voluntary sector, to their communities, and to themselves. They bring an array of skills, talents, and experience, and can benefit from volunteering even as they are helping others. Volunteer centres and the agencies that engage volunteers must recognize and respect the particular advantages and limitations of their situation, and be prepared to work with these volunteers to create placements that benefit all concerned.

Notes

1. WHILE IT IS NOT THE SUBJECT OF THIS MONOGRAPH, any discussion of the relationship of volunteering and employment raises the question of *workfare*, currently a subject of much heated debate in Canada. One of the difficulties of the debate is that the meaning of the word itself is in dispute. Some say workfare is this; others say it is something different.

Workfare generally refers to a system whereby people would receive social assistance benefits only if they participated in some kind of work. Variations on this theme include systems which would provide an incentive in the form of a bonus or 'top-up' to social assistance payments for those who participate in work activities.

In reports about workfare or proposals that sound like workfare, the statement "people will be made to volunteer doing community service work" is often made. Workfare, in whatever form, directly interacts with the voluntary sector and our definition of volunteering in two ways. First, the kind of work identified as appropriate and available to workfare 'participants' is usually called 'community service' work, which until now has been by and large the domain of the voluntary sector. Consequently, workfare programs would, by definition, have to involve voluntary sector organizations and staff.

This work would be unpaid in the sense that no salary would be issued from the organization for this work; however, people's benefits (= their income) would be tied to it. Is such work then really 'unpaid' work?

The second issue is that of choice. If a volunteer is someone who *freely chooses* to participate in community service activities, then workfare 'participants', by definition, will have no such choice. Can they therefore be considered as volunteers?

Motivation is central to volunteer efforts; this is undisputed. The question that immediately arises therefore is: what will the effects of compulsion be on the nature, duration, and success of such community service efforts? Will these experiences lead people to make a choice to become volunteers?

2. Complicating the assignment of 'real' (*ie*, commercial) value to volunteer work is the unfortunate habit we have of talking about volunteers as the opposite of professionals, *by definition*. Although generally this contrast refers to differences in particular expertise and training, using the two words as opposites tends to perpetuate the stereotype that volunteers are, *by definition*, 'amateurs', well-meaning perhaps, but less competent, less credible, and less responsible than 'professionals' who are paid. In addition, more and more volunteers *are*, in fact, professionals, who offer their professional services free of charge to community organizations. A more useful, less charged, generic set of terms is 'volunteer' and 'paid staff'.
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