

**I Work for Nothing – Should I Feel Good or
What?
The Impact of Training to Address the
Frustrations of the Volunteer Worker**

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at the University of Leicester

by

Richard Dale Sheptak Jr MSc (Leicester)
Centre for Labour Market Studies
University of Leicester

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Richard D Sheptak Jr
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Abstract

Status, well-being, and belonging can be key features influencing the morale and performance of paid workers. Is this less so for the unpaid volunteer worker?

This ethnographic study explored the impact that job training had on unpaid volunteer workers in a sports environment. It sought a phenomenological understanding of how unpaid workers made meaning of their training and work experience.

The research was conducted over 9 months at a large multi-sport complex in the Midwest USA. Data was collected using field observation, in-depth and informal interviews, and document review. Data was analysed using an inductive approach employing constant comparison to identify and categorize recurring concepts and themes.

Findings and conclusions informed the development of a new, two-level typology of frustration for volunteer worker - ‘Social Frustration’ and ‘Task Frustration’. These findings have important implications for unpaid volunteer workers’ level of satisfaction and for organisations seeking to recruit, motivate, and retain volunteer workers. Data from the study also revealed that access to current and pertinent job related *information* was of greater importance to volunteers than formal systems of training when dealing with frustration. Volunteers in this study gave their time freely with expectation that their time will be used effectively and did not believe that formalized training programs were necessary, but recognized the importance of being informed. It is possible that organizations will need to rethink systems of training to engender feelings of self worth, accomplishment and belonging, and assist in improving performance and overcoming the frustrations of close identification with task completion and social relevance. Both volunteer and organisation can benefit.

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To my daughters, Olivia and Bronwyn. You can have your dad back now! Thanks to my mum and dad for their unending support throughout my life.

To my wife, Lea, thanks for the endless hours of conversation, brainstorming, and proofreading. You have been my pillar of strength through this process. Most of all thanks for your patience when this research was all I spoke and thought about.

Statement of Original Authorship

In accordance with the University of Leicester Regulations for Research Students I hereby certify that I am responsible for the work submitted in this thesis and that the original work is my own. Neither this thesis nor the original work contained therein has been submitted to this or any other institution for a higher degree.


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Chapter 1

Introduction

Background to Research

Volunteerism is a critical part of the labour pool in the sports industry. Almost all sport organisations benefit from services offered by volunteer workers and have, in fact, grown to depend on volunteerism as a critical form of labour (Auld, Cuskelly, & Harrington 2009); Costa, Chalip, Green, & Simes (2006); Cuskelly, Hoye and Auld (2006); Han (2004); Kim (2004); Pi (2001)). In a study on volunteer learning and satisfaction, Kemp (2002: 109) refers to the volunteer sector as the “hidden workforce”. Whereas, the term “hidden workforce” can be interpreted to illustrate the ‘behind the scenes’ and selfless nature of the sport volunteers work, it also has interesting application to the status of sports volunteerism in research. While paid work has been, and continues to be, subject to extensive research, the volunteer workforce has not received adequate attention commensurate with the contributions that it makes to the sports industry and society as a whole. In the context of recent sporting mega-events the hidden workforce that Kemp (2002) studied at the 2000 Sydney Olympics have been renamed the “games makers” at the 2012 London Olympics. Volunteers are the people who give their time, energy, and passion to make sporting events run, make spectators’ experiences memorable, and give the participants the opportunity to shine.

The past twenty years have seen unprecedented growth in the sports industry. For example, recent figures published in a 2011 study entitled “Changing the Game” by PriceWaterhouseCoopers reveals that global revenue in professional sport is

estimated to continue its growth from \$107.6 billion (annually) in 2006 to \$145.3 billion in 2015 (PWC, 2011). In the United States alone, Covell, Walker, Siciliano, and Hess (2007) estimate that that total annual expenditures on sport consumption (professional, amateur, recreational, fitness, leisure) exceeds \$150 billion which ranks sport as the 11th largest industry in the United States. Industry growth and expansion has resulted in a greater demand for the services of volunteer workers. A result of the growing demand for volunteer services within the sports industry in the United States has been increased competition in the recruitment and retention of volunteers. Further, as the volunteer worker becomes an increasingly valuable asset it makes sense that sports organisations become aware of the human resource management (HRM) factors that impact the recruitment and retention of volunteer workers. Additionally, Williams, Dossa, and Thompkins (1995) state that organisations have financial incentives to use well trained volunteers in place of paid employees, and managers benefit from the availability of a larger labour pool.

As with paid workers, the development of well trained and motivated volunteers can also add a greater degree of organisational flexibility with regard to volunteer relations, labour costs, risk, and uncertainty (Rosenberg & Lapidus, 1999). Operational flexibility, attained through the strategic training, placement, and management of volunteer workers, can help ensure that a sports organisation can maximise efficiency and effectiveness. Within the context of paid work, Atkinson (1984, 1987) developed the flexible firm model which posits that employees can be separated into three categories: core, peripheral, and distance. Core workers are those who take on the functions or tasks most important to the organisation

and are rewarded a high degree of security based on their skill level. Peripheral workers, on the other hand, enjoy a lower level of job security and are used as work demands permit. Peripheral workers could be part-time, seasonal, or temporary workers. Distance workers, according to Atkinson (1987), bring a specialised skill set that is needed only when the occasion arises. The distance worker could be a contract employee, a consultant, or an outsourced job function (i.e HVAC maintenance).

Within the context of sports volunteers, Lockestone and Smith (2009: 111) state, “At present the opportunity exists to understand and evaluate the roles, functions, and structure of volunteering in terms of recognized forms of flexibility: namely functional, temporal and numerical.” Lockestone and Smith (2009:111) define functional flexibility as the volunteer workers’ and organisations’ utilization of different skill sets at various times, at various levels, and in various functions. Numerical flexibility addresses the numerical size and readiness of the volunteer workforce in response to projected productivity or service needs, and temporal flexibility addresses the timing and quantity of labour resources.

Although, as Lockestone and Smith (2009) point out, little research has been done in regard to the application of flexibility theory to volunteerism, parallels can be drawn. Core workers from Atkinson’s (1984) flexible firm model can be linked to functional flexibility, peripheral workers can be linked to numerical flexibility, and distance workers (Atkinson, 1987) can be linked to temporal flexibility. Further, in order to maintain a flexible model of volunteer engagement, sport organisations need to maintain a diverse volunteer workforce in terms of the

amount of time they give and regularity of their volunteer engagements. Core volunteers make a long term or permanent commitment to work and give their time at an organisation (i.e. volunteers who work a set weekly or monthly schedule), peripheral volunteers, also called episodic volunteers (Lockstone and Smith 2009), refers to volunteers who give their time as a one-off engagement or as their personal lives allow (i.e. volunteer for specific annual or one-off events), and distance volunteers may give their time for specific events or roles (i.e. running a time board at a track meet). Stebbins (2004) approach to volunteering as serious leisure, casual leisure, or project-based leisure also has application to the discussion on the employment of volunteering as a form of flexible labour and will be addressed further in Chapter 2.

According to the Independent Sector's annual research report released in June 2010, the United States saw the largest annual increase in volunteer activity since 2003 (a 2.6% increase from 61.8 million volunteers in 2008 to 63.4 million volunteers in 2009) (Independent Sector, 2010: 3). Comparatively, in research conducted by Cuskelly, Hoye and Auld (2006) findings did not show a reversal of the recent trends towards declining volunteer participation on an international level. For the year 2009 the Independent Sector reported that 63.4 million Americans volunteered for a total of 8.1 billion hours (Independent Sector, 2010). The Corporation for National and Community Service estimates the monetary value of voluntary activity in 2009 to be \$169 billion. Further, the average person volunteers for 127.7 hours per year. In total it would take 3.9 million full-time employees to cover the work hours completed by volunteers (Independent Sector, 2010: 1-3).

In a review of research, Cuskelly *et al* (2006) found that other countries do not share similar patterns of volunteer activity. For example Canada has experienced a 13% decrease in voluntary activity since 2000, while the UK has experienced a 3% decrease. Conversely, Australia, like the United States, has experienced a moderate 3% increase in voluntary activity. Much of the data used in Cuskelly *et al's* (2006) research was extrapolated from studies conducted by government agencies, which the authors themselves note can be problematic due to the varying definitions of volunteerism. It is also difficult to grasp the total impact of volunteerism given the differing levels of formal versus informal activities which may take place within a diverse collection of organisational settings, and therefore affect the accuracy of reporting (Cuskelly *et al*, 2006; Stebbins, 2004).

However, researchers agree that volunteers are an invaluable resource in the sports industry regardless of the size, scope, or level of the event or the organisation involved (Kim 2004). Indeed Green and Chalip (1998:14) state that “volunteers are a core component of sport service delivery.” Chelladurai (2006) contends that the importance of volunteerism has increased on an economic and non-economic level. Economically, Chelladurai calculated that sports volunteers’ contribution exceeded \$50 billion. The non-economic impact of volunteers is tied to their ability to give objective feedback to the organisation because they are not bound by any financial incentives.

Impressive as the economic and participation numbers are, the important focus in volunteer research should be on the quality of service and work provided. Kim (2004: 1) states that volunteers do not always have the skills, experience, or

training necessary to provide required services. Additionally, where extensive research (Bang & Chelladurai, 2003; Bang & Ross, 2004; Caldwell & Andereck, 1994; Chun, 2003; Costa *et al*, 2006; Cuskelly, 1995; Cuskelly & Boag, 2001; Han, 2007; Kim 2004) has been done regarding the motives for sports volunteer engagement and satisfaction, very little research has been conducted regarding the training of sports volunteers, and even less research has focused on the relationship between volunteer training and satisfaction in a sport environment. Further, researchers and practitioners alike have approached the management of volunteer workers using traditional HRM practices. However, sports researchers (Auld, Cuskelly & Harrington, 2009; Costa, Chalip, Green, & Simes, 2006; Han, 2004; Kemp, 2001; Pi, 2001) argue the inherent difference in volunteer motivation necessitates a different approach. For example, volunteers are rarely recruited based on their skills and abilities, and work is usually carried out with minimal supervision. Volunteers in sport are motivated to engage in volunteer activity based on what the organisation's mission is, ties they have to the organisation, or what the organisation has to offer them and the community (Farrell *et al*, 1997; Bang & Ross, 2004). Therefore appropriate systems of training and management should be developed to maximize volunteer motivation, effectiveness, and satisfaction.

Justification for Research

Very little research has focused on the importance of volunteer training in a sports environment, and that which has been very limited in scope. For example, Green and Chalip (1998) posit that most concepts and measurements employed in sports volunteer research have been derived from research that took place in a

non-sporting environment and fail to recognize the uniqueness of the sports environment. Additionally, studies (Bang & Chelladurai, 2003; Costa *et al*, 2006; Elstad, 1997; Farrell *et al*, 1998) on sports volunteers have taken place primarily at mega-events (Olympics, FIFA World Cup), one-off events that last a pre-determined number of days, or at sports festivals. At best these events call on the services of volunteers on an annual basis; some can even be described as one-time events for the location in question. Little attention has been given to sports volunteers who give their time at sports organisations, clubs, or facilities on a permanent basis. That is to say, their commitment to the organisation is long term. Additionally, research on sports volunteers has historically focused on motivation, satisfaction, and retention with little focus being placed on the relationship that the training process has on any of these factors (Chelladurai, 2006; Han, 2007).

Although, as Han (2007: 5) points out, recruitment and training of volunteers can be expensive for organisations, the end results can be impactful in terms of organisational effectiveness and efficiency. A volunteer workforce that is in flux, is poorly trained, unmotivated, and has high turnover will affect the service that the organisation delivers. Therefore it is crucial for sports volunteer organisations to understand the events that occur between the volunteer engaging and deciding to stay or leave. Further, organisations need to understand the impact that they have on controlling the decision-moulding events through proper systems of identification, training, and feedback. By exploring the lived experiences of long-term volunteers at a single sports organisation, this research will help bring

understanding to the role that training plays on volunteer satisfaction (and their decision to continue the volunteer engagement).

The Focus of the Research

The purpose of this study is to explore the extent to which training affects the job satisfaction of volunteer workers in sports organisations. Within this context the primary aims of the study are to (1) explore and understand volunteer workers' individual difference factors (motivation, experience, education) as they pertain to the training process, and (2) to gain some insights into the effectiveness of training in affecting volunteer satisfaction. Additionally, the guiding research questions were:

1. To what extent do volunteers see themselves as an integral part of an organisation based on the impact of training programmes (resulting in higher levels of volunteer worker commitment)? In other words, does training matter?
2. What insights can be gained to develop effective training models for volunteer workers in sports organisations?
3. How can the role and effectiveness of the volunteer worker (and the relationship with training) be better understood from the perspective of the volunteer workers themselves?
4. How can the role and effectiveness of the volunteer worker (and the relationship with training) be better understood from the perspective of the training provider or organisation.

Contribution of Research

This thesis makes a number of methodological, theoretical, and practical contributions.

Within the field of sports volunteer research there has been little attention paid to the relationship between training and satisfaction. The few studies that exist (Costa *et al*, 2006; Elstad, 1996; Kemp, 2002) were conducted at high profile mega-events that took place one time in a given cycle (i.e. Olympics take place once every 4 years) and employed quantitative analysis techniques to test predetermined hypotheses. These studies fail to consider the impact of training programmes on ‘permanent’ volunteers, those who volunteer at the same organisation on an ongoing basis and who have to be prepared for a number of different assignments, events, and customer type. This study employs an ethnographic approach utilizing qualitative data collection and analysis techniques to focus on and explore understandings and meanings that are constructed by volunteers within their work setting.

This is important because little research exists that has focused on volunteer training and satisfaction from the volunteer’s perspective. Only through understanding how volunteers construct meaning within the context of their work environment can a true link be formed between motivation and expectations, training, and satisfaction. Volunteer meanings and understandings were elicited through observation, unstructured interviews and semi structured interviews.

The study is based on a small sample of volunteers who conduct their volunteer work at a single organisation (The Sports Academy (TSA)). This enabled me to *tell the story* of a group of people within a shared context and capture their perspectives and emotions as they lived their volunteer experience. These perspectives allowed the development of rich descriptions of organisational and personal context, personal emotions, and organisational processes.

Overall, this research contributes to discussions on training and development for volunteers in a work setting. In particular the research improves understanding of volunteer frustration and the role of training in affecting work satisfaction. Being an exploratory study the research aims to create a framework for future research in volunteer training.

Structure and Chapter Outline

This section will outline the contents of the remaining chapters. A review of literature is presented in Chapter 2. This chapter presents and critiques pertinent research as it relates to volunteers' training and the potential impact it has on the overall satisfaction with the volunteer experience and ultimately the ability of the organisation to retain its volunteer workforce. Motivation, satisfaction, and training theories are discussed. Chapter 3 describes the methodological approach employed for this study. It also offers justification for qualitative techniques used in data collection and analysis. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 tell the story of the volunteers at TSA. These chapters present the findings and provide rich thick description and analysis. Chapter 4 discusses the volunteers' need to feel like they are part of the organisation and their need to be involved on a number of levels from decision

making, to participation, to systems of feedback. Chapter 5 discusses training and orientation and explores volunteers' experiences and opinions on what type of training is relevant to them. Chapter 6 introduces the concept of frustration to the discussion on training and satisfaction. The chapter is broken into two sections, task frustration and social frustration, based on a typology of volunteer that emerged from the data. Chapter 7 identifies the significant themes and discusses the findings in the previous three chapters. The chapter further describes the effect of volunteer difference factors, work environment factors, and defines the typology that emerged from the data. The chapter concludes by examining the relationship between training, frustration, and satisfaction, discusses limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2

What's Being Said About Volunteers? – A Review of Literature

Introduction

The role of volunteer service is indispensable in society as a whole. Within the context of sport and recreation volunteerism can be described as crucial to the overall success of organisations and events alike (Han, 2007). It is critical that sport organisations understand the importance of recruiting, training, and retaining a volunteer workforce that can perform an ever growing range of functions and tasks essential to the sustainability of the organisation and the achievement of strategic goals.

This chapter presents and critiques pertinent research as it relates to volunteers' motivation, training, and the potential impact it has on the overall satisfaction with the volunteer experience and ultimately the ability of the organisation to retain its volunteer workforce. Further, this chapter builds a foundation for understanding the areas of knowledge that are critical to navigating the research findings presented in later chapters. The literature review explores theory from general to specific in order to show how broadly utilized theory (i.e. Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964); Equity Theory (Adams, 1963); Needs Theory (Maslow, 1959)) has been applied and adapted to the volunteer setting. The chapter is divided into four (4) sections. The first section will review current debates and definitions of volunteerism and the impact of volunteerism on organisations and economies as a whole. Secondly, motivation will be examined on three (3) levels: (a) general motivation theories; (b) volunteer motivation; and (c) volunteer motivation in a

sport setting. The third section will examine the theories and research on employee satisfaction, volunteer satisfaction, and their inter-relatedness. Finally the fourth section will study the impact that training has on workers, particularly those in a volunteer setting.

Volunteerism in the Workplace

Volunteerism Defined

While there exists wide consensus in literature regarding the importance of volunteer workers in the delivery of both sport and non-profit services (Chelladurai, 2006; Green and Chalip, 1998, Ilsley, 1990), less clarity exists with regard to a clear and universally applicable definition of volunteerism. Although at surface level the definition of volunteerism appears to have a common meaning, many researchers (i.e. Cnaan, Handy & Wadsworth, 1996; Cuskelly *et al*, 2006; Girdron, 1983; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2009) posit a wide range of diverse interpretations with regard to the actual application of such definitions. The following sections will further explore how issues of motivation, satisfaction, and reward impact the application and understanding of volunteer definitions in terms of research.

Ilsley (1990) defines volunteerism as commitment to a cause or to other people in the deliberate spirit of service in response to perceived social needs. These actions often occur within a formal organisational environment and are carried out in return for intrinsic rewards. Further, Ilsley (1990) suggests that volunteerism stems from emotional commitment, as opposed to rational choice, with no remuneration, and refers to people engaging in activity with no coercion. Morris

(1969: 23) defined volunteers as “people who undertake unpaid work for the community as a whole or for individual members of it.” Henderson (1984: 55) simply suggests that a “volunteer is someone who freely chooses to give his/her time and effort for no monetary gain.” Within the context of sport, Vos, Breesch, and Schaerder (2012: 847) posit that volunteers are a “significant economic force” who do not receive any form of monetary pay for the work they perform, although they may receive limited reimbursement for expenses.

Generally speaking, a volunteer is someone who freely chooses to act in fulfilment of a need, with a recognition toward social responsibility, without concern for monetary gain (Ellis & Noyes, 1990). Cnaan *et al* (1996: 380) argued that it is critical to “delineate boundaries of the term volunteer,” rather than allowing it to remain a generalization for any type of non-paid labour. In doing so Cnaan *et al* (1996) identified four defining dimensions of volunteerism: 1) free choice; 2) remuneration; 3) structure; and 4) the beneficiaries. Within Cnaan *et al*'s definition each dimension is based on a continuum ranging from *pure* to *broadly based* volunteers. For example, the continuum for free choice ranges from absolute free will to volunteer to relatively un-coerced to volunteers who were obligated to do so. The remuneration continuum is based on a scale that ranges from no expectation of monetary reward at all to expectations of reimbursement of expenses to expectations of stipends for time given. The structure dimension addresses the level of formality in the volunteer experience. The scale for intended beneficiaries ranged from helping others who were strangers to helping friends and relatives to volunteering to benefit oneself (Cnaan *et al*, 1996). Cuskelly *et al* (2006) suggested that Cnaan *et al*'s definition tends to

narrowly define the pure volunteer (un-coerced, no remuneration, volunteer within a formal organisation, with no connection to anyone benefitting from the volunteer activity). However, others such as Handy *et al* (2000) support the idea that the closer the volunteer activity is to Cnaan *et al*'s "pure" end of the continuum the more likely people are to perceive the activity as volunteering.

Building on Cnaan *et al*'s (1996) four dimensions of volunteerism, Stebbins (2004: 5) states that, "Volunteering is un-coerced help offered either formally or informally with no, or at most, token pay done for the benefit of both people and the volunteer." Stebbins' definition makes pathways into some of the ambiguity caused by what Cuskelly *et al* (2006) call Cnaan *et al*'s (1996) narrowly defined "pure" volunteer by expanding the working definition to include a wider range of volunteer motivations and commitment levels. Indeed, Stebbins (2004: 5) explains the need to expand the aforementioned definition:

"Concerning the free choice dimension, we prefer the language (lack of) 'coercion', since that of 'free choice' is hedged about with numerous problems. The logical difficulties include obligation in definitions of volunteering, treated earlier, militate against including this condition in our definition. As for remuneration, volunteers retain their voluntary spirit providing that they avoid becoming dependant on any money received from their volunteering. Structurally, volunteers may serve formally in collaboration with legally chartered organisations or informally in situations involving small numbers of relatives, friends, neighbours and the like that have no such legal basis. Finally, it follows that from what we said previously about altruism and self interest in volunteering that both the volunteers and those they help find benefit in such activity"

In doing so, Stebbins (2004) provides a broader definition of volunteerism, which is applicable to a wider segment of those who are considered to be a functional part of the volunteer sector.

Defining volunteerism has not been the domain of academics and researchers alone. Government policy makers and sports governing bodies have also attempted to outline what does and does not constitute volunteering. In the United States, the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 clearly states that that a volunteer is someone who performs services for a non-profit organisation or government entity and receives either no compensation, or does not receive anything of value in lieu of compensation (in excess of \$500 per year). Volunteering Australia (2005 cited in Cuskelly *et al*, 2006: 15) defines formal volunteering as “an activity which takes place through not for profit organisations or projects and is undertaken: to be of benefit to the community and the volunteer; of the volunteers free will and without coercion; for no financial payment; and in a designated volunteer position only.” In Ireland, the Department of Social, Community, and Social Affairs (2000 cited in Donoghue 2001:3) defines volunteerism as “the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society, local communities, to individuals outside the immediate family, the environment or other causes. Voluntary activities are undertaken of a person’s own free will and without payment (except for reimbursement of out of pocket expenses).”

Within the context of this thesis, volunteerism, and how it is defined will not be narrow in scope. Using broader definitions proposed by Cuskelly *et al* (1996) and Stebbins (2004) allows for the inclusion of a wider range of people when researching volunteerism. Given the wide range of motivating factors and commitment levels of volunteers, limiting oneself to the idea of a pure volunteer (Ilsley, 1990; Cnaan *et al*, 1996) in the sports industry would leave a shallow pool of candidates to work with, which in turn would impact the ability of researchers

to understand the functional nature of the volunteers. Indeed, Stebbins (2004:5) offers a definition that has a wider functional appeal and application in the sports volunteer sector.

Volunteer Characteristics

Defining volunteerism is further complicated by the wide range of activities that volunteers engage in, the motivational factors, and the personal characteristics of the volunteer. Often volunteers utilize their leisure time in pursuit of the altruistic endeavour to which they have committed themselves (Pi, 2001; Stebbins, 2002). Within a sports context, Pound (1999) states that good volunteers must have an active interest in the organisation, be future oriented, and usually have a background in the sport that the voluntary organisation sponsors. Volunteers also represent different socio-demographic segments of society ranging across age, gender, economic status, political ideology, geographic constraints, and ethnic background (King & Gillespie, 1985; Smith & Lockstone, 2009).

Volunteering as Leisure

Volunteerism is often part of the leisure component of a person's life which fulfils the individual desire to make a contribution or give back to society (Pi, 2001). Henderson (1984) was one of the earliest contributors to research on the leisure component of volunteerism. Henderson drew a parallel between volunteering and leisure by investigating whether each activity possessed similar components. Henderson's (1984) findings suggested that there are indeed commonalities between volunteering and leisure motivations, citing that both activities were engaged in freely to be "involved in the social community" and to "be with

friends”. Henderson (1984) further classified motivations to volunteer as a leisure activity into intrinsic and extrinsic categories. Intrinsic motives were self-fulfilment and self-actualization while helping the community and getting the job done were extrinsic motivators.

Henderson (1981, 1984) noted that volunteering is often treated, in research, within the same parameters as paid work, focusing on the extrinsic motivations. This focus on extrinsic motivators opposes the view that leisure is fuelled by intrinsic motivations where participants engage in an activity for the sheer joy or satisfaction of it. Henderson’s (1981, 1984) studies yielded empirical evidence that the volunteers (in her studies) considered their volunteer work to be leisure. This relationship between volunteering and leisure has been supported in literature (Chambre, 1987; Graham, 2001; Henderson, 1981; Stebbins, 2004) and is worthy of consideration when examining the broader picture of volunteer motivations and characteristics.

Stebbins (2004) separates volunteerism into three main forms of leisure: serious, casual, and project based. Volunteering as serious leisure is defined as a methodical and deliberate pursuit of a voluntary activity which gives the participant an adequate challenge in which they can acquire, develop, and express special skills, knowledge and experience (Stebbins 2004). Volunteering as serious leisure is also referred to as career volunteering, examples of which could be working with people with disabilities, serving on the board of a non-profit organisation, working with children in literacy and reading programmes, or coaching youth sports.

Within the context of serious leisure Stebbins presents six (6) qualities in volunteers which distinguish them from casual and project-based leisure volunteers. The six qualities are: 1) the occasional need to persevere, 2) the opportunity to follow the volunteer endeavour through the different stages of achievement and involvement, 3) the ability to put forth significant effort based on the knowledge, skills and abilities brought forth by the participants, 4) the ability to experience tangible benefits and outcomes such as self-actualization, self expression, enhancement of self image, and a sense of belonging, 5) the unique ethos that is shown throughout the volunteer experience, and 6) the strong identity that the volunteer attaches to their chosen pursuit (Stebbins, 2004: 5-7).

In contrast, volunteering as casual leisure does not require the acquisition or attainment of any special skills or knowledge (Stebbins, 2004). Casual volunteer activities are usually short term and require lower levels of commitment, including activities such as taking tickets at a community sports event, serving at a soup kitchen, or emptying garbage cans at community events. Stebbins (2004) describes project-based leisure volunteering as a short term, yet reasonably complicated, one off or occasional activity. Project-based leisure volunteering, like serious leisure, will require skill, knowledge and careful planning. However, it does not turn into a long term ongoing commitment. Examples of project-based volunteering would be preparation for a one time civic event, a sports tournament, a political rally, or an anniversary celebration (Stebbins, 2004).

Understanding volunteering as a leisure choice impacts this research and has practical implications for organisations in terms of the recruitment and retention

of volunteer workers. As Warner, Newland, and Green (2011: 392) state, “The shift towards understanding volunteering as a leisure choice has led researchers to try and understand volunteers as consumers rather than unpaid workers.”

Specialist Versus Non-Specialist.

In a study of volunteer training at an annual Indy Car Festival in Queensland, Australia, Costa, Chalip, Green, and Simes (2006) defined two different types of volunteer, specialist and non-specialist. Specialists were defined as volunteers who could fill technical roles or bring specific skill sets to event or organisation. Costa *et al* (2006) reported that the volunteers within the specialist group tended to be repeat volunteers and had high levels of retention (similar to Stebbins (2004) serious leisure). The non-specialist volunteers filled the non-technical roles such as information distribution, ushering, and ticket taking (similar to Stebbins (2004) casual leisure). The researchers found that non-specialist volunteers tended to volunteer only one time, and therefore had potentially negative impacts on the ability of the organisation to run its event. Volunteer organisations depend on planning and consistency to be successful and are impacted by the need to retrain and re-staff on a regular basis. When this occurs the organisation loses, what Lockstone and Smith (2009: 110-111) refer to as, its operational flexibility.

Motivation Theory

Motivation refers “to the complex forces, drives, needs, tension states, or other mechanisms that start and maintain voluntary activity toward achievement of a personal goal” (Hoy & Miskel, 1991: 137). Pinder (1998: 11) defined work motivation as “a set of energetic forces that originates both within as well as

beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behaviour, and to determine its form, direction, intensity and durations.” Motivation has long been an area of interest to researchers in the fields of organisational behaviour and organisational science (Herzberg, 1968; Kalleberg, 1977; Locke, 1976; Locke, 1991). Individual organisations and society as a whole benefit from the results yielded by a motivated workforce. Of the many theories developed to explain motivation, no one theory stands alone. Indeed, a number of theories continue to add to the discourse on workplace motivation and lay the theoretical foundation upon which current research and practical application is built. Some of the best known and widely accepted theories of motivation which this thesis will briefly explore are: Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs, exchange theory (Blau 1964), Herzberg's (1968) motivation-hygiene theory, Alderfer's (1972) ERG theory, equity theory (Adams 1965), and expectancy theory (Vroom 1964). Exploration of these general and widely accepted theories of motivation adds to a more complete understanding of volunteer motivation theories by uncovering the theoretical foundation upon which the latter theories were developed.

General Theories of Motivation

One of the most accepted theories of motivation is Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs (outlined in Fig 2.1), which states that people are motivated to meet present needs, and once that need is satisfied they can move on to a higher level need and attempt to satisfy it. According to Maslow's research needs are physiological and psychological requirements that must be satisfied in order to ensure well-being. A person's unmet need creates an internal tension that must be fixed. Therefore, according to need theory, the tension created by unsatisfied needs motivates an

individual to take action. Maslow states that once the need is met, the tension will subside, and the individual will no longer be motivated to act and moves on to the fulfilment of other needs.



Figure 2.1 – Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs¹

Although Maslow’s theory was not developed to explain people’s motivation in the workplace, it is still widely accepted and used in the development of workplace motivation theory. For example Porter, Lawler, and Hackman (1975) adapted Maslow’s ideas into a managerial hierarchy by dropping the physiological needs since it was their belief that few managers were motivated by hunger and thirst (Williams 2009). Bennett (2011: np) is critical of Maslow’s theory in that it does not take into account acts of “selflessness, bravery, charity, and heroism”. Further, Bennett (2011: np) states that “Maslow’s ideas belong to a time and

¹ Taken from “Hydrponics and Housing for the 21st Century” by Robert G. Salsbury (1996) retrieved on October 5, 2010 from <http://sculptors.com/~salsbury/Articles/house.paper.html>

place. Maslow was American, and he first suggested the hierarchy in the 1940s. It's highly specific to America's individualist culture where middle-class people worry about their personal needs rather than any collective needs".

Needs then, according to Maslow, are the physical and psychological requirements that must be met to ensure well-being. Attainment of the need is what drives us or motivates us to act. Another needs based theory is Alderfer's (1972) Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG) theory. Differing from Maslow, Alderfer posits that needs fulfilment can be attained in different order by different people. ERG theory also collapses Maslow's hierarchy of needs into three levels. First is existence, which includes both psychological and safety needs. Second, relationship draws from Maslow's need for belonging and social recognition or esteem needs. The final need in Alderfer's ERG theory, growth, is tied to Maslow's self-actualization or self esteem. Maslow states that people are motivated by their lowest level of unsatisfied need and gradually work their way up the hierarchy. Alderfer offers a contrasting view stating that people can be motivated by more than one need at a time and that individuals are as likely to move down the hierarchy of needs as they are to move up. Particularly when higher needs seem unattainable (Williams, 2009).

Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (1968) applied needs specifically to the workplace by addressing the human development factors that affect an individual's degree of motivation towards work that has to be accomplished. Motivation-hygiene theory states that only higher-order needs, which were called motivators (i.e. recognition, achievement, responsibility, the work itself, and advancement), affect satisfaction while lower-order needs which were called,

hygienes (i.e. salary, supervision – technical, supervision – relationship, and working conditions) affect dissatisfaction. According to Chelladurai (2006: 110), “the most important findings of Herzberg’s work were that motivators were related to the work itself, while hygiene factors all were related to the context in which work was carried out.” Therefore, motivation-hygiene theory postulates that there is a positive relationship between the fulfilment of a person’s higher needs and the satisfaction that they will derive from the work accomplished. Gidron (1983, as cited in Han, 2007) used Herzberg’s theories to study and measure job satisfaction among volunteers. Gidron’s findings show that the work itself, achievement, convenience and absence of job stress are related to volunteer satisfaction. Herzberg’s motivation-hygiene theory is equally pertinent in discussions regarding both motivation and job satisfaction, which is covered later in the chapter

Further theoretical stances on motivation take into account the influence of external factors. Although an individual is motivated to act, the persistence of that motivation may be hindered by situations of inequality within Herzberg’s classification of motivators and hygienes. In equity theory (Adams, 1963) behaviour is motivated by the individual’s perception that they are being treated fairly. Therefore the size or nature of the extrinsic reward is not as important as the perception that the reward, compensation or pay, is equitable in comparison to other referents. The basic components of equity theory are inputs, outcomes and referents (Williams, 2009). According to equity theory process, employees compare outcomes (the reward they receive) with their inputs (the work or contribution that they have made to the organisation). This comparison is called

the outcome/input (O/I) ratio. Next the individual employee takes their O/I ratio and compares it with that of another employee (referent). This process is outlined in figure 2.2 below.

OUTCOMES self	OUTCOMES referent
INPUTS self	INPUTS referent

Figure 2.2 Adams's Equity Theory Outcome/Input Ratio (Williams, 2009:540)

When the employee perceives that there is a difference between their O/I ratio and that of the referent, they may conclude that they are being treated unfairly and experience a decrease in motivation. According to equity theory, this inequity can take two forms – under rewarded and over rewarded. Employees who feel under-rewarded tend to experience anger and frustration, whereas those who are over-rewarded experience guilt. Perceived inequity leads employees to restore equity which can lead to lower outputs, increased outcomes, change attitude or change the reference person (Celladurai, 2009; Williams 2009).

Expectancy theory (Vroom 1964) holds that people make conscious choices about their motivation. According to Vroom motivation is explained as a process of making choices based on the extent to which people believe that their efforts will lead to performance and that the achieved performance will result in desired rewards. Expectancy theory has three (3) components: valence, expectancy and instrumentality. Valence is the desirability of a particular outcome or reward. Expectancy theory recognizes that the same reward or outcome may not hold the same level of desirability for all people. Therefore the level of valence will affect

the level of motivation in an individual. Expectancy is the relationship between effort and performance. When expectancy is high employees believe that hard work and effort will lead to good performance. In contrast, when expectancy is weak, employees believe that no matter how hard they work they will not attain good performance. Instrumentality is the link between good performance and reward. When instrumentality is high employees believe that good performance will result in rewards and positive outcomes and are therefore motivated as such.

Expectancy Theory holds that all three components, valence, expectancy and instrumentality, must be high in order for employees to be highly motivated. Therefore expectancy theory can be represented as:

$$\text{Motivation} = \text{valence} \times \text{expectancy} \times \text{instrumentality}$$

Fig. 2.3 Vroom's Expectancy Theory (Williams, 2009:546)

If any of the components of expectancy theory declines then the overall motivation of the individual employee will decline.

Locke's (1976, 1991) study of motivational theories advocated that the differences between motivational theories can be best brought together when it is recognized that different theories are applicable to different stages of the motivational sequence. Locke's hierarchical sequence is broken into the following seven (7) categories: 1) needs; 2) values & motives; 3) goals and intentions; 4) self-efficacy; 5) performance; 6) rewards; and 7) satisfaction. Locke believed that people's values will motivate and influence their actions (Locke, 1991). Locke's

ideas regarding value driven motivation will be discussed in greater detail in the satisfaction section of this chapter.

Volunteer Motivation

Studying motivational theories builds a foundation upon which volunteer motivation can be better understood and is therefore of importance to this research. Volunteers are driven to action by many factors. Ilsley (1989) believed that the actual organisation itself was an important element to the volunteer motivation process and believed that strong commitment to an organisation was central to a volunteer's mission. As outlined in the previous section, theorists such as Maslow and Alderfer claim that the drive to satisfy individual needs will motivate behaviour. Others such as Herzberg, Vroom and Adams based motivation on job satisfaction.

According to Montgomery (2004:25), "The study of motivation involves individuals, organisational settings, and the interaction that occurs between these variables." Ilsley (1989) noted altruism, the idea of doing something for others, is a major motivational factor in volunteering. He also recognizes that reward is often sought by volunteers and has its place in the discussion of volunteer motives. However, for Ilsley the volunteer does not see reward in terms of financial incentives but rather an internal satisfaction that goes beyond financial gains. Ilsley (1990) listed eight (8) elements of volunteering: altruism, commitment, free-will, learning, absence of financial remuneration, organisation, psychological benefits and sacrifice.

Adding to Ilsley's purely altruistic approach, Martin (1994) recognized that volunteers are also motivated by self need. Martin (1994) believed that egoism and altruism are two major factors that are raised in research on volunteer motivation. Egoism focuses on fulfilment of personal needs as the primary motivating factor, and altruism focuses on helping others. Another popular approach applied to volunteer motivation includes three components: altruistic motives, egoistic motives and social motives (AES Motives) (Snyder and Cantor, 1998). Altruistic motives include the individual's selfless desire to help improve others' welfare. Smith, (1981: 23) defined altruism as:

“An aspect of human motivation that is present to the degree that the individual derives intrinsic or psychological rewards for attempting to optimize the intrinsic satisfaction of one or more other persons without conscious expectation of participating in an exchange relationship whereby those others would be obligated to make similar or related satisfaction optimization efforts in return”

For example, volunteers work with the elderly, taking meals to their homes, cleaning, taking them out; volunteers work in child literacy classes, tutoring children in different skills; volunteers go to the source of natural disasters such as New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina or Haiti after the earthquake to help ease the pain and suffering and rebuild a sustainable life for others.

Egoistic motives focus on the individual's self-driven needs and rewards that could improve their own status. Gaining career-related experience and gaining greater social acceptance are common egoistic motivations (Rumsey, 1996). For example, volunteers serve as coaches or managers in youth sports so that their children can experience the benefits of participation; volunteers serve on boards of organisations to improve their status; volunteers engage in volunteer activities in

organisations to help improve their chances of securing permanent employment, or learning the skills to help them do so (Zakour 1994).

Social motive refers to the building of relationships with others (Smith 1981) or paying back or offsetting a debt to society (Winniford *et al.* 1997). For example, an individual volunteering in an organisation that had served them in some way gives their time as a sense of duty or reciprocation; volunteers participate in services with the idea that they will meet new people and build social relationships. According to Fitch (1987) social obligation is usually the least cited reason for volunteer activity with egoistic motives being the most frequently cited.

Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen (1991) conducted a thorough examination of literature pertaining to the assessment of people's motivation to volunteer (MTV). The study, which sampled 258 volunteers and 104 non-volunteers in human services, was undertaken to test the common assumption that the motivation to volunteer was a two or three-dimensional phenomenon. From literature, an inventory of 28 motivational items was developed with each item being supported by five references as evidence of past use. The most highly rated motive was "opportunity to do something worthwhile" (altruistic needs), followed by "volunteering make me feel better about myself" (egoistic needs). Motives which ranked the lowest on the scale were social needs and career developments (self-egoistic or material needs). Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen (1991: 281) summarize that, "The motives for volunteering are not distinct but overlapping. If our theory that MTV is unidimensional is correct, then volunteers are both altruistic and

egoistic. That is, volunteers do not distinguish between types of motives, rather they act on both.”

Clary *et al* (1998) explained volunteer motivation by adopting an approach based on psychological functionalism, stating that people are motivated to engage in volunteer activity to satisfy both social and psychological goals. Even though individuals may be involved in the same volunteer activity, their goal motivation may be quite different. Clary *et al* (1998) identified six (6) categories or functions called the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) that can be served by volunteering. The functions are 1) values, 2) understanding, 3) social, 4) career, 5) protective, and 6) enhancement. Values-based motivators, which are altruistic in nature, are engaged in to satisfy values that are important to the individual volunteering. Understanding-based motivators are reflected by the need to learn new skills or broaden the volunteer’s worldview. The establishment of interpersonal relationships underlies the social motivation. Career motivation helps the volunteer gain experience and develop career skills. Protective motivation aims to protect against feelings of loneliness or guilt by reducing anxieties. Lastly, the enhancement motive focuses on the ego by developing self-esteem and psychological awareness. Clary *et al* (1998) tested the reliability and validity of the VFI in six (6) separate studies using exploratory and confirmatory factors and found that the VFI is indeed a valid and reliable instrument to measure volunteer motivation. Figure 2.4 shows the relationship between AES motives and VFI.

Caldwell and Andreck (1994) explored three (3) categories of motivation for volunteering: purposive, solidary, and material. Purposive benefits are incentives relating to global or community concerns and a need to make a contribution based on these concerns. Networking and social interactions are the underlying benefits of the solidary category. The material category encompasses monetary rewards, memorabilia, and other extrinsic rewards. Caldwell and Andreck's (1994) research, which was conducted at the North Carolina Zoological Society, found that respondents rated purposive incentives as their top motivator for engaging in volunteer activity. In particular, volunteers cited their contribution to society as the main reason for their volunteer activity, followed closely by the relationships that they had developed through their volunteer work. Material incentives, such as free admission and free memorabilia, ranked third. Caldwell and Andreck's research findings would seem to support the notion that altruism is indeed an important motivating factor that should not be ignored by organisations in the recruitment and retention of volunteer workers.

AES MOTIVES	VFI
Altruistic	Values
Social Obligation	Social
Egoistic	Understanding Career Protective Enhancement

Fig 2.4 AES versus VFI (Kim 2004: 39)

Volunteers then can be said to act based on motivation factors that meet their personal psychological needs. Needs that can range from pure altruism and the

desire to give back to an organisation or society to pure egoism and the need to gain status or experience. However, according to Cnaan and Glodberg-Glen (1991) volunteers' motives cannot be categorised as either purely altruistic or purely egoistic; in fact, they posit that volunteers act on both altruistic and egoistic motives. For volunteer organisations, understanding the breadth and scope of volunteer motives, especially with regard to task assignment, is essential to the management, training and retention of a volunteer workforce. Within the context of this thesis the volunteer motivation theory outlined in this section builds the framework for the discussion on sports volunteers and the motivation factors that drive them.

Volunteer Motivation in Sport

Although the importance of volunteers' contributions to organisations have been outlined by researchers (Farrell *et al*, 1998; Bang & Chelladurai, 2003; Bang and Ross, 2004; Cuskelly and Boag, 2001; Cuskelly, McIntyre and Boag, 2006; Sharififar *et al*, 2011; Warner, Newland, & Green, 2011) there still exists a relative dearth of research focusing on volunteer motivations in sport specific environments. In this section several studies related to volunteer motivations in sport settings will be examined.

Farrell, Johnston and Twynam (1998) examined the traits of satisfaction and motivation for volunteers at the 1996 Scott Tournament of Hearts, an elite women's curling championship. Farrell *et al* employed a 28 item scale based on the Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen's (1991) MTV scale. Nine new items were used to

assess satisfaction and motivation at a sporting special event. The result was the development of the Special Event Volunteer Motivation Scale (SEVMS).

In the study, which consisted of a sample of 300 volunteers, the researchers examined volunteer satisfaction with the experience, satisfaction with the organisation of the tournament, and satisfaction with the facilities. The 28 items were ranked from most to least important on a 5 part Likert scale. The researchers grouped the responses into four categories: purposive, solidary, external traditions and commitments. The purposive and solidary categories mirrored those of Caldwell and Andereck (1996). The external traditions category included friends and family involvement either as volunteers or participants, opportunity to meet players, and the continuation of a tradition. The commitment category was comprised of statements such as “my skills were needed”, “I am expected to volunteer”, and “being a volunteer at an event like this is prestigious” (Farrell *et al*: 294).

The results showed that the greatest motivator was “to make the event a success”; while the lowest ranking reason was “I could obtain an educational experience”. Results showed that 80% of volunteers were satisfied with their experience. These findings are somewhat varied from the original findings of Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen (1991), where the highest ranked motivation for volunteering was based on doing something good for others. Farrell *et al* (1998:295) state that, “this suggests that motivation for special event volunteers is different from that for other volunteers.” They further state that this is a key concern for management in

fulfilment of volunteer motivations which extend beyond accepted norms and include overall perceived satisfaction attained through positive experience.

Farrell *et al*'s (1998) model has had popular application over the past decade (Cuskelly *et al*, 2006). Extending the research on volunteer motivation, Bang and Chelladurai (2003) found six motivational factors, labelled the Volunteer Motivation Scale for International Sporting Events (VMS-ISE) that were prevalent during the 2002 FIFA World Cup. The findings resulting from a factor analysis uncovered these six components of sport volunteers' motivation: 1) expression of values (concern for others and society), 2) patriotism (allegiance and love of country), 3) interpersonal contacts (meeting and networking with people), 4) gaining new perspective (growth), 5) career orientation (career contacts, knowledge and skills), and 6) extrinsic rewards (free memorabilia etc.). Bang and Chelladurai's (2003) research showed the emergence of patriotism as a prevalent motivational factor within a large scale international sporting event and further suggest that motivational patterns pertaining to sport volunteers may not be the same as those applied to volunteers in other contexts.

Working on a regional level, Bang and Ross (2004) used a modified version of Bang and Chelladurai's (2003) VMS-ISE to gather data from 254 volunteers at the 2004 Twin-Cities Marathon. The results yielded seven factors that affect volunteer motivation. The factors are: 1) expression of values, 2) community involvement, 3) interpersonal contacts, 4) career orientation, 5) personal growth, 6) extrinsic rewards, and 7) love of sport.

The study asked for 30 volunteer motivation items, twenty-six of which were based on Bang and Chelladurai's (2003) study. The four additional items were related to the volunteers' mere love of sport and the patriotism factor was related to community involvement to reflect the local or regional nature of the sporting event being studied. The last point is paramount to future study of volunteering at sporting events which are local in scope and lead the researchers to suggest that a feeling of local or regional pride could be used in the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Bang and Ross (2004: 70) also make a significant contribution with the introduction of the "love of sport" factor, which was found to be strongly motivational among volunteers. The researchers state that, "because of the special nature of sporting events, the reasons for volunteering converged on the sport itself rather than the simple reason of helping others". As with Farrell *et al's* (2004) study, the volunteers in Bang and Ross's (2004) study experienced higher levels of satisfaction when they felt they had helped make the event a success, leading to the conclusion that volunteers' motivation will increase as they feel that they are an integral part of the organisation/event.

Other studies such as Pi (2001) and Chun (2003) add to the understanding of volunteer motivations in sports settings and further develop the international context. Pi (2001) examined the factors influencing volunteerism at sporting events in Taiwan. The study sampled 500 student volunteers using a modified model of Farrell *et al's* (1998) SEVMS. Results showed personal issues as a motivation factor in volunteerism. Other motivations included personal growth,

experience and future benefits derived from the volunteer activity. Based on research results Pi recommended that the recruitment of volunteers should be done with consideration given to the following areas: 1) increase efficiency by organizing volunteers to make use of their background and professional goals, 2) give volunteers a sense of service to community, 3) give volunteers the opportunity for personal growth and skill developments, and 4) ensure documentation is available and that training is certified so volunteers can use the experience to obtain future employment (Pi, 2001: 81).

Chun's (2003) research, like Bang and Chelladurai (2003), was conducted at the 2002 FIFA World Cup. The purpose of Chun's study was to improve management and organisational understanding of volunteer motives and satisfaction in order to increase volunteer retention. Chun used a modified version of Farrell *et al*'s (1998) SEVMS, consisting of four motivation factors: 1) altruism, 2) patriotism, 3) egoism, and 4) solidarity. Chun's results from the sample of 1100 volunteers proposed that all four factors impacted volunteer motivation and satisfaction.

In a study of Iranian sport volunteers, Sharififar, Jamalian, Nikbakhsh, and Ramezani's (2011) findings support the positive relationship between motivational factors (such as career, material, protective, and purposive) and commitment levels. Further, Sharififar *et al* (2011) found that volunteers who experience excitement, are allowed to be creative, and feel greater levels of self worth will have higher levels of performance and satisfaction.

Research (Bang & Chelladurai, 2003; Bang & Ross, 2004; Chun, 2003; Farrell *et al*, 1998; and Pi, 2001, Sharififar *et al*, 2011; Wicker & Hallmann, 2013) shows that there is something inherently different about the sports volunteer. Although previous research on volunteer motivation is not rendered moot in its application to the sport volunteer, the development of new motivation factors such as patriotism (Bang & Chelladurai, 2003), love of sport and community involvement and pride (Bang & Ross, 2004), and personal issues (Chun, 2003) mark a progression beyond traditional research on volunteer motivation and illustrate the need for expanded research on sports specific volunteers. Within the scope of this research, the expanded understanding of motivation factors presented in this section, especially those presented by Bang and Ross (2004), informed the framework upon which this research was developed. In particular, application of the community involvement and love of sport motivation factors offers research participants the ability to move beyond the basic “I just wanted to give back” motive. For example, a volunteer may want to “just give back” to the sport that helped shape them as an adolescent and give them confidence. Additionally, sports organisations need to consider volunteer motivation factors during the recruitment process because as Clary *et al* (1998) found, volunteers who receive reward in-line with their primary motives are more likely to be satisfied and continue to volunteer (Papadakis *et al*, 2004; Pi, 2001).

Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction Theories in Paid Work

Researchers have made numerous attempts to define job satisfaction. In doing so many theories have been adapted from the basic theories of motivation covered

earlier (see Adams Equity Theory, (1963); Vroom's Expectancy Theory, (1964); Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, (1959)). Job satisfaction is often defined as an affective condition, which results from the individual's perception that the experience has met one's needs and expectations (Dawis & Lofguist 1984, Iaffalodono and Muchinsky, 1985). Gruneberg (1976) described job satisfaction as an emotional attachment to a job, which is similar to Locke's (1976) observations that job satisfaction stems from a psychological state gained during the job experience. Balzer *et al* (1997) agree that job satisfaction is an emotional reaction, but argue that the state of satisfaction is based on previous experiences, expectations, and viable alternatives. Essentially, according to most accepted research, job satisfaction is driven by someone's affective state or attitude toward the work they do based on their own perceptions about the job they do. Further, Ivancevich and Matteson (1997) state that job satisfaction is also affected by environmental factors such as management styles, organisational climate (internal and external), co-worker relations, benefits, and financial compensation. The following section will explore job satisfaction theory as it pertains to paid employees

Lawler's (1973) facet model of job satisfaction suggested that satisfaction is a function of individual comparisons between what an individual believes they should receive from a job compared to what they actually receive. This comparison can become complex when differing levels of skill, knowledge and experience combined with task difficulty and responsibility levels are added to the process. Further, drawing from Adams' (1963) equity theory, individuals will also talk to other employees or referents to compare what they receive (outputs) in

comparison to what they bring to the job (inputs) and draw conclusions on what they themselves should be receiving. According to Lawler, in order to be satisfied an employee needs to perceive that the outcomes or rewards of the job were consistent with the amount of effort and expertise that they brought to the job. Additionally the employees also compare personal performance and rewards with that of others. If the comparison is perceived as equitable, then they will be satisfied. If the comparison is perceived to be inequitable, that is, if the reward of their peers is perceived to be greater than theirs, dissatisfaction will result.

Locke's (1976) value-based theory of satisfaction takes a different approach arguing that individuals place more or less value on different components of their job outcomes (Chelladurai, 2006). According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction is influenced by the degree to which the functions and rewards of a job are matched to what the individual values. Based on this concept of value, Locke distinguishes values from needs by defining value as "that which one acts to gain and/or keep" (Locke 1976 cited in Tietjen & Myers, 1998: 228). According to Locke, values, unlike needs, are acquired, unique to the individual, subjective, and ultimately determine choice and reaction. Values also share commonality with goals in that they contribute to answering the question, "what do I value?" and "how much do I value it?"

Further, job satisfaction for an individual is attained by following a path in pursuit of one's values (Tietjen and Meyers 1998). Key factors in Locke's theory are those of the agent and event. An event is what causes individuals to feel satisfaction (Locke 1976). Events can be the actual task or activity itself, the

amount of work, success or failure, levels of responsibility, recognition, physical conditions and atmosphere. Agents are the components that cause an event to happen, such as one's own attitude, a supervisor, a co-worker, a subordinate, the organisation itself, and customers. Teitjen and Meyers (1998: 230) state that "Locke's clarification of that which motivates and the means through which someone is motivated in the agent/event theory, draws a more practical application to the way factors at work contribute to the experience of the worker as understood through satisfaction/dissatisfaction." Job satisfaction, then, is the perceived difference between internal values and actual performance. The smaller the gap between intended and actual performance, a greater sense of achievement of one's values will exist, resulting in higher job satisfaction.

Locke's notion of value of needs is supported by Kalleberg's (1977) study of work values and job rewards. In this study Kalleberg empirically examines the relationship between job satisfaction, work values, and job rewards. The study was based on six dimensions of work: intrinsic, convenience, financial, relations with co-workers, career opportunities, and resource adequacy. Kalleberg (1977: 141-142) found that work values have "independent and significant effects on job satisfaction." Kalleberg postulated that three distinct social factors affect people's work values: 1) socialization and life experience; 2) non-work social roles; and 3) work experiences. For example, an individual with a large number of dependents is more likely to value the financial aspect of work over someone who does not have any dependants.

Volunteer Satisfaction

Until recently, much of the discussion surrounding volunteer satisfaction was included in the same category as paid workers' satisfaction or was minimalised because researchers thought that volunteers wanted nothing in return for their time. Indeed, Chelladurai (2006: 270) states that, "the study of satisfaction in volunteer work has been sparse and sporadic because until recently, researchers believed that volunteer work was based solely on altruism, implying that volunteers had no expectation of any kind of return." As we have seen during the discussion of volunteer motivation, altruism is only one consideration in most volunteers' motivation. Therefore, if the exchange is not purely altruistic the motivating factors such as community involvement (Bang and Ross, 2004), patriotism (Bang and Chelladurai, 2003), interpersonal contacts, personal growth, and expression of values (Bang and Chelladurai, 2003; Bang and Ross, 2004; Clary *et al*, 1998; Farrell *et al*, 1998) will demand a level of satisfaction either during or upon completion of the volunteer service.

Volunteerism first and foremost values work which, according to Gidron (1981: 21) "involves a situation where there is a job to be done, the job can utilize one's skills and creativity, one's efforts can bear fruit in the form of results or achievements, and one can be recognized for it." For Gidron (1983), volunteer work was similar to paid work in some regards, (i.e. satisfaction with the organisation or supervisors), but very different in other regards (i.e. one cannot measure satisfaction with pay and benefits when one is studying a volunteer).

Gidron (1983) identified 12 different factors that could drive satisfaction amongst volunteers. First, the work itself refers to a challenging and interesting work environment. Second is task achievement – what kind of progress is made towards accomplishing a particular goal? Third is task convenience – how convenient is the volunteer’s activity in terms of location and available work hours? The fourth element is stress factors – this refers to the volunteer’s ability to do the job (do they have the knowledge, skills and ability to do the job and is it well explained?). The fifth factor is family – does the volunteer have family involvement and encouragement from the family in the volunteer activity? Sixth is supervisor (instrumental) – does supervision provide clear and concise direction and give volunteers opportunities to learn new things? Seventh is professionals – are volunteers appreciated and helped by the professional (paid) staff? Eighth is social acceptance – is volunteer work valued by people inside and outside of the organisation? Ninth is client – do the recipients of the volunteer work appreciate it? Tenth is recognition – are there sufficient forms of recognition for the volunteer work? i.e.: thank you letters, publication of names. Eleventh is supervisor (expressive) – do supervisors offer encouragement and appreciation? The twelfth factor is other volunteers – is there a sense of teamwork and camaraderie among the volunteers? (Gidron, 1983: 20-35). Chelladurai (2006: 271) draws a parallel between the facets of satisfaction in volunteer workers and those of paid workers. He states that work itself, task achievement, task convenience, stress factors, client and other supervisory facets will be equally important to both paid and volunteer workers. The remaining four facets are unique to volunteers.

Silverberg, Marshall, and Ellis (2001), based on research that showed American public parks and recreation agencies were heavily dependent on volunteers, set out to test the reliability and validity of inferences that can be made about volunteers' job satisfaction using scores from a modified employee satisfaction scale. The scale items in the study included six dimensions: nature of work, contingent rewards, supervision, operating procedures, co-workers and communication. The study took place in the City of Phoenix Department of Parks and Recreation (n=583). To measure satisfaction the researchers developed a modified 36-item job satisfaction scale based on Spector's (1997) employee job satisfaction scale (Silverberg *et al*, 2001). Silverberg *et al*'s research contributes a greater understanding of factors that drive volunteer satisfaction, and although this research is conducted within the context of parks and recreation volunteers, many of their findings can be applied universally. For example, they found that certain dimensions such as communication, nature of work, supervision and contingent rewards were more reliable than the others (co-workers and operating procedures). When findings were compared to the findings of other studies on job satisfaction, such as Herzberg *et al* (1959); Smith *et al* (1969); Locke (1976); and Spector (1997), Silverberg *et al* (2001: 87) posited that "Ultimately, volunteer job satisfaction may prove to be much more complex than the absence of pay and promotion dimensions from the construct of paid employee job satisfaction."

Volunteer Satisfaction in Sport

Research on volunteer satisfaction within the context of sports has received very little attention until recently. Green and Chalip (2004) contend that this has occurred due to the common misconception that human resource models

developed within the context of paid work will translate equally well to a volunteer environment. Although Green and Chalip (2004) recognize that there is value to these studies, they lack an understanding that volunteerism in sport is a leisure choice and not a work choice. Therefore the needs and values that prompt satisfaction from volunteering may not be fully represented by measurement items related to paid work (Stebbins, 2002; Green and Chalip, 2004).

Cuskelly, McIntyre, and Boag (1998) conducted a longitudinal study of volunteer administrators ($n = 328$) from 52 community-based sport organisations. Organisational commitment was measured in relation to several variables including personal characteristics, behavioural commitment, volunteering benefits, organisational size and budget, and committee functioning. An adapted version of Mowday, Steers, and Porter's (1979) OCQ was utilized to measure commitment factors. Further, the researchers measured the perceived benefits of volunteering by employing the Recreational Experience Preference (REP). The REP consists of four dimensions including altruism, learning, recognition and relaxation. Among the more notable findings was the lack of impact that time of service had on volunteer commitment and satisfaction. Among the perceived volunteer benefits, the most highly rated factor was altruism. Further, the study found that volunteers who valued altruism had higher levels of organisational commitment. Although the more self-interest driven benefits of volunteerism such as learning and relaxation were positively related to organisation commitment, they did not emerge as strong predictors. Interestingly the study found that a number of individuals felt "obligated" to volunteer either because the

organisation did not have enough help or because they felt that they had to “repay” on what the sport had given them.

Similarly, Green and Chalip (2004) studied the paths to volunteer commitment at the 2000 Summer Olympic Games held in Sydney Australia. The research sample consisted of 1,702 volunteers from seventeen different work sites. The research consisted of surveys and post-event focus groups. Green and Chalip (2004: 50) contend that, “if we want to understand event volunteers’ satisfaction and commitment, then we need to know what the sources of their satisfaction and commitment are.” Commitment was measured using four items from Mowday, Steers and Porter’s (1979) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire. Volunteer responses were measured using a six-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” The four items selected in this study were:

1. I am willing to put a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help the Sydney games be successful.
2. Deciding to work for the Sydney Olympic Games was a big mistake on my part.
3. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working at the Sydney Olympic Games.
4. I really care about the fate of the Sydney Olympic Games. (Green and Chalip 2004: 55)

Next, the respondents were asked to rate the likelihood that their volunteer experience at the Sydney Olympic Games would provide them with the benefits listed on a 24-item questionnaire that represented 6 common benefits that the researchers had identified in literature. Benefit items included in this questionnaire included prestige (of working at a high-profile event), learning, helping, excitement and social benefits.

A second post-Olympic Games survey included the OCQ (Mowday *et al*, 1979) and a 'reward expected' benefits scale to measure benefits obtained. However, the second survey included focus groups with selected volunteers to assess volunteer satisfaction with their overall experience. From these groups eight key aspects of volunteer satisfaction were identified: training, job assignment, rewards earned, distribution of rewards, recognition, support, equality, and the relationship between paid staff and volunteers (Green and Chalip 2004:57).

The research found that volunteer's commitment and satisfaction changes as they experience the event itself and that commitment and satisfaction are, in Green and Chalip's (2004:63) words, "intrinsic to the event itself." Green and Chalip's (2004) research shows that a volunteer's satisfaction with their experience drives eventual commitment and that satisfaction is driven by benefits that are obtained by participating in the voluntary experience. The significance of Green and Chalip's(2004) research is two-fold; first the link between satisfaction and commitment is identified. Second, the research explores the drivers that impact volunteer satisfaction with those drivers being sense of community, excitement obtained, learning obtained, and helping obtained.

Park and Kim (2013) propose that commitment is not solely inherent to an event itself or an organisation. Rather, they view commitment as a developing process based on a progressive, five-part hierarchy consisting of primitive commitment, continuance commitment, external commitment, normative commitment, and affective commitment. Park and Kim (2013:104) state, "The transition in sport

volunteers' organisational commitment may not occur simply with the passage of time, but rather result from processes that lead them from one stage to the next."

Bang and Ross's (2004) study on volunteer motivation also yields insights into volunteer satisfaction. Through regression analysis the researchers found that motivational factors best explain levels of satisfaction. Bang and Ross' research identified three motivating factors: expression of values, career orientation and love of sport. Drawing from self-regulation theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981), which states that satisfying individual needs promotes increased motivation, the researchers concluded that volunteer satisfaction could be within the control of the management practices within the volunteer organisation. Bang and Ross state that volunteer managers need to understand what motivates people to volunteer in a sports organisation and how they can help volunteers achieve satisfaction by identifying different motivational factors. Additionally, organisations that successfully identify volunteers' motivating factors can assign appropriate tasks to specific volunteers, thereby enhancing the volunteers' experience, increasing the level of satisfaction and guaranteeing the retention of volunteer services.

Building on previous findings, Bang, Ross, and Reio (2013:97) state that, "volunteer organisational commitment can be considered as one's attitude toward an organisation related to the willingness to dedicate significant time and effort to the organisation without monetary compensation." Further, Bang *et al* (2013) found that as the values of the volunteer align closer to the values of the organisation, the strength of the volunteers' commitment will grow stronger. These findings indicate that volunteers who are motivated by their values will be

more satisfied with their experience and consequently more committed to the sports organisation (Bang & Ross, 2013:106). Bang *et al*'s alignment of volunteer and organisational values makes paths into understanding volunteer satisfaction and commitment on both the individual and organisational level.

Recently, Wicker and Hallmann (2013) have posited that volunteer research has been overly focused on either the individual (volunteer) perspective or the institutional perspective and propose that both perspectives need to be explored. Additionally, Engelberg, Zakus, Skinner, and Campbell (2012) believe that volunteer satisfaction and commitment can best be understood by examining the volunteer experience on three levels: 1) the volunteers' relationship with the organisation; 2) the volunteers' relationship with work team; and 3) the volunteers' individual role.

However, some studies such as Auld and Cuskelly (2001), Auld, Cuskelly, and Harrington (2009); Cuskelly *et al* (2004), Cuskelly, Hoye, and Auld (2006); and Pi (2001) have argued that a number of factors that influence volunteers' satisfaction is outside of the direct control of the volunteer organisation and put forth that managers in a volunteer setting need to focus on areas where they can have an impact. Cuskelly, Hoye, and Auld (2006: 92) posit that managers can influence volunteer satisfaction through effective systems of communication and recognition that will aid in alleviating any undue stress on the volunteer and showing appreciation for the work that they have performed. According to Auld *et al* (2009), the organisation itself and the work that needs to be performed can influence satisfaction. The structure or culture of the organisation cannot be

changed to meet the motivations or likes of volunteers, just as the nature of the work performed cannot be tailored to meet individual needs. Examples within this context would be high stress, fast moving environments at one end of the spectrum to slow and menial tasks at the other. Auld *et al* (2009) argue that although these components cannot be controlled by management directly, it can be controlled to an extent by having a rigorous selection system. Pi (2001) found that if the volunteer is matched closely with their motivation and skill set in mind the level of satisfaction will be higher.

Elstad (1996) studied volunteer satisfaction at the 1996 Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer, Norway. Elstad's work is rare in its examination of the relationship between learning and satisfaction in a volunteer setting. Elstad's research sample consisted of 50 female volunteers ranging in age from 18 – 22 years old who were assigned to three main job functions: accreditation, arrival/departure security, and service in the media and competitors' villages. Each respondent completed a questionnaire consisting of one open-ended question and a series of closed-ended questions. The questions asked the volunteers to evaluate what they did and did not like about the volunteer experience. Elstad (1996:77) explains that, "this strategy has been used by other researchers when they want to study job satisfaction in new work environments and have very limited knowledge about the determinants of job satisfaction." Elstad found that volunteer satisfaction was directly linked to opportunities to expand personal networks, to be a part of the event itself, and to feel a sense of job accomplishment. Only 8% of respondents wished they had not volunteered. Elstad claims partial consistency with research on job satisfaction in paid work environments, where the content of the job, pay,

benefits, and supervisory relations as satisfaction factors are comparable with the satisfaction factors in the study (job characteristics, poor management/organisation, cooperation, and welfare issues).

The importance that social factors play on the volunteer experience must be considered in the discussion on satisfaction and commitment, especially when considering long-term or permanent volunteers. Within this context Peachy, Cohen, Borland, and Lyras (2001) explored the benefits that volunteers experience and the impact that that experience has on social capital with long-term volunteers at Street Soccer USA. Peachy *et al's* (2011: 27) research found that volunteers were impacted in four key areas: 1) enhanced awareness and understanding; 2) building community and relationships; 3) enhanced passion and motivation to work in the field; and 4) development of self-satisfaction through a feel good mentality.

Further, Peachy *et al* found that as volunteer awareness and understanding grew, the ability to experience a sense of community within the volunteer experience increased. This sense of community gave volunteers a feeling of social belonging, which increased the volunteers desire to continue volunteer work. Wicker and Hallmann's (2013:118) findings support Peachey *et al* (2011) stating that social relationships built through volunteering are regarded as a resource and should be reinforced and renewed whenever possible. Further Wicker and Hallmann found that volunteers with a high level of social capital tended to see themselves (not the organisation) as the beneficiary of their volunteer activity.

This importance of social capital and a strong sense of community is further supported by Schlesinger, Egli, and Nagel (2013) who analysed the determinants impacting sport club volunteers' decision to continue or terminate long-term commitment. Research found that satisfied volunteers tended to volunteer for longer terms, especially when there were high levels of collective solidarity. Findings also revealed collective solidarity to be a stronger influence on the decision to continue volunteer engagement, even when the volunteer experience was less than satisfying. Accordingly, Schlesinger *et al* (2013:47) state, "The results underline the increasing importance of aspects such as reciprocity or solidarity and emotional attachment when explaining individual social actions such as continuing or termination volunteering."

Findings from Peachy *et al* (2011), Wicker and Hallmann (2013), and Schlesinger *et al* (2013) suggest that collective solidarity, or the sense of belonging, self worth, and attachment, is essential for long term commitment and is an important construct within the context of this research.

Auld, Cuskelly and Harrington (2009) support the idea that diminished volunteer satisfaction may hinder the overall success of the organisation. They cite meeting volunteer expectations and maintaining high levels of satisfaction as the most significant challenges for managers in voluntary sport organisations and events. Volunteer satisfaction ultimately affects the ability of the organisation to retain a trained and competent workforce which can help the organisation meet long term strategic goals. The relationship between motivation, satisfaction, and retention of

volunteer services is an area of investigation that Hoye and Cuskelly (2009) and Kim, Chelladurai, & Trail (2007) have asserted needs far greater attention.

Research shows that volunteer satisfaction is a complex construct (Cuskelly *et al*, 2006) that is influenced by volunteer motivation factors, ability to perform and desirability of assigned task, and the influence of volunteer management practices (Chelladurai, 1999; Cuskelly *et al*, 2006; Johnston *et al*, 2000). Within the context of this research, volunteers can be described as long-term, permanent, or “serial” volunteers. It is imperative for management to understand the relationships between motivation, task assignment, management practices and satisfaction. From a management perspective Cuskelly *et al* (2006: 92) state, “From a traditional HRM or programme management perspective it is important to be able to differentiate the components of volunteer satisfaction that are controlled by an organisation.” In this vein, management practices cannot be changed to meet the desired style of each and every volunteer. Organisational protocol and structures cannot always be flexible especially with regards to established industry standards, branding, and safety. However, the relationship between motivation and task assignment normally falls within a controllable domain. Further, systems of volunteer training aligned with motivation factors and task assignment can have a profound impact on volunteer satisfaction. For example, a volunteer whose motivation to volunteer is based on an expression of values (Bang & Chelladurai, 2003; Bang and Ross, 2004), or desire to give back (Pi, 2001) and has a high level of education and professional experience will require, and arguably be open to, a different level of training than a young college student who is looking to gain experience and establish professional contacts

(Bang & Chelladurai, 2003; Bang and Ross, 2004; Chun 2003). Training programmes then, can have a positive or negative impact on volunteer satisfaction depending on the motivation and needs of the specific volunteers. Training programmes should be aligned with a system of recruitment and documentation (Pi, 2001) that allows the organisation to place and prepare volunteers in the most effective and efficient training possible. The following section will review the limited research that exists regarding volunteer training and the impact that training can have on volunteer satisfaction.

Training Theory and Practice

The following section will briefly examine approaches to training and development as they pertain to volunteer settings. Although training design and delivery is not the focus in this study it is still prudent to outline general concepts and theoretical approaches to that influence volunteer's perception of what training is and how it affects them. Culp (1995) suggests that when training and development programmes meet the needs of volunteers, there is a positive effect on retention. Culp (1995) further explains that in order to meet the needs of volunteers, training programmes must be seen as useful, applicable, desired, and hands on. Before assessing the impact or importance of training within an organisation setting, it is important to understand how people learn.

Training in the Workplace

Most training theory has been developed within the context of paid work and refers to a planned effort by an organisation to increase job performance (Noe, 2009). Training, according to Cull & Hardy (1974) is also a continuous process,

which, when well planned, will contribute to the overall growth of the employee while increasing productivity and effectiveness. Annual industry reports published by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD, 2009) support the notion that formal and effective training programmes are critical to an organisation's success. The report shows that 80% of organisations polled provided formal training programmes to their employees at an annual cost in excess of \$125 billion. Employees themselves spent 30-40 hours per year participating in training programmes. Training programmes that were most commonly offered included new employee orientation, sexual harassment, leadership, new technology and performance management (ASTD, 2009). However, Noe (2009) contends that due to shifts in global work environments training and development now takes on a greater role in the preparation of employees to compete in the global market. Training programmes such as cultural diversity, foreign languages and high performance work systems are now common themes in an organisation's training curriculum.

Kim (2004: 3) acknowledges the importance of training and development with organisations but argues that "In the context of volunteering, the need for effective training programmes is even greater because (a) skills and abilities are not the basis for recruitment of volunteers; (b) several volunteers share or rotate a task; (c) such work is carried out with much less supervision." Kim's (2004) assertion draws attention to the importance of the role that volunteer training plays in ensuring that volunteers have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform tasks and aid the organisation in the accomplishment of organisational goals.

Training in Volunteer Organisations

Taylor, *et al* (2008:110) found that, “organisations that have well managed training and development programmes can more easily retain employees and volunteers, ensure that their human resources have the capability to deliver on the organisation’s strategy, and provide future leaders for the organisation.” Taylor *et al* (2008) further support the notion that training programmes can positively impact an organisation’s overall performance (including market share, employee satisfaction, and better product quality).

Working within the context of a volunteer sport organisation, Taylor *et al* (2008:111) developed six strategic motives to engage in training and development:

- 1) Increased job satisfaction and morale among volunteers and employees
- 2) Reduced turnover of employee and volunteers
- 3) Increased employee and volunteer motivation
- 4) Improved efficiencies in process and procedures
- 5) Enhanced capacity to adopt new technologies and methods
- 6) Risk management in terms of better knowledge of compliance standards

Essentially, effective training programmes are paramount to the long-term sustainability of volunteer sport organisations. Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye & Darcy (2006) studied the effect of human resource management practices on volunteer retention within community-based sports organisations and found a positive correlation between training and volunteers’ decisions to continue volunteering with the organisation. Training and development, when used properly, bridges the gap between the strategic objectives and the actual capabilities of the

organisation's workforce. Simply stated, training and development is used to ensure that the organisation's objectives are met (Taylor *et al*, 2008).

Breaking from the traditional workplace HRD approach to formal learning, Griffiths and Armour (2012:169) found the need to "reconceptualise volunteer learning in ways that differ from formal models borrowed from business and education." Griffiths and Armour found that with the volunteers in their study learning opportunities existed in informal processes and were valued because they offered easy access, offered relevant sources of knowledge, were communal, and were timely.

In research conducted to help Volunteering Southern Australia, Deslandes and Rogers (2008:365) propose a training framework that segments volunteer training into three levels: entry level, developmental level, and master level. At the entry level volunteers complete a series of three hour workshops that cover necessary "basic" information that are delivered to meet the requirements of the both the organisation and volunteer. At the developmental level volunteers can further their training and achieve volunteer vocational certification on a level that meets national standards. At the master level education focuses on volunteer management using current research and best practices. To address different motivation factors or willingness to be trained Deslandes and Rogers (2008) stress that training can be optional or compulsory depending on the organisation, but should be standardized.

Although Deslandes and Rogers (2008:367) claim that “this approach offers clear linkages and pathways for volunteers and organisations and it is anticipated that this will build a culture of continuous self improvement”, consideration for the volunteer’s motivation and willingness to be trained must be considered on a deeper level. For example, Kim (2004: 148-152) found that volunteer’s willingness to be trained was affected by the volunteer’s goals, expectations, commitment, and motivation. Kim found that volunteers with a high level of commitment to the organisation, or have motivation to volunteer centred on career development, have the highest level of willingness to engage in training activities. Kim suggests that it is important for organisations to put systems in place to address and measure the volunteers’ goals, expectations, commitment, and motivation. Without such systems Kim claims that even the best training programmes can fail.

Wilson (2000: 107) states that “volunteer training is the foundation for a strong and dedicated volunteer programme.” In her observations and research of hospice workers Wilson also found that training volunteers could be broken into three levels: knowledge, attitude and team rapport. However, Wilson differs from Deslandes and Rogers (2008) in that the three levels of training that she proposes take place within the same training session. Within the context of knowledge, Wilson recognizes the diversity of motivation, background, and education and posits that training should be based in fact and applicable to the volunteer’s work environment. She recommends that the volunteer organisation recognizes the unique ways in which adults learn when designing knowledge delivery. Lastly, Wilson (2000: 108) recommends a three-part process to delivering knowledge to

volunteers “Information: key points and concepts; illustration: stories and anecdotes; and demonstration; putting the concepts into action.”

Regarding attitude, Wilson (2000) sees the training process as an opportunity to assess volunteer attitudes and identify positive and negative characteristics and provide intervention. Although Wilson’s definition of attitude is specific to hospice care workers, the general framework is applicable to the sports environment, especially in regard to acceptance of others and flexibility.

Lastly Wilson addressed team rapport and bonding. In this area her research addresses the team identification that takes place during the volunteer training experience. This idea is supported in sports volunteer research by Costa *et al* (2006) who found that in volunteer training, especially orientation, volunteers decided whether or not they fit in with the team which in turn greatly impacts whether or not the volunteer returns for work assignments.

Conclusion

Volunteerism, it can be argued, is a dynamic and evolving construct in both research and practical application. Although definitions of volunteerism vary based on motivation, satisfaction, and commitment factors, there is little doubt as to the impact that volunteers make in society today. As such, this review of literature sought to examine theoretical linkages between volunteer motivation, satisfaction, and training theory. As such, the chapter was divided into four main sections examining volunteer definitions, motivation, satisfaction, and training.

The first section explored the current debates on volunteerism. It offered a critique of definitions presented in current research and evaluated the economic value of volunteer services. Although volunteers are shown to make significant economic and social contributions, there still exists a comparative dearth of research on volunteer recruitment, training and management. Further, volunteers are often subject to the application of organisational theories that apply to paid workers and do not recognise the key factors that differentiate them from paid workers. There also exists a disparity regarding definitions of who or what constitutes a true volunteer. These definitions seem to be evolving from the pure altruistic motivation that is traditionally assumed to a more dynamic, robust and flexible definition which allows for the inclusion of egoistic and social motives. This paradigm shift in defining volunteerism allows for volunteer managers to understand the motivating factors that drive each volunteer worker to engage in volunteer activity which in turn impacts the satisfaction and retention of individual volunteers.

The second section examined motivation on three levels: (a) general theories of motivation were presented to build a foundation upon which to examine volunteer motivation, (b) motivation research regarding non-sports volunteering, and (c) volunteer motives in sports. Volunteer motivation ties directly to the previous discussion on volunteer definitions as the debate between altruistic and egoistic motives were a major theme throughout research. General theories of motivation such as needs theory, expectancy theory, and equity theory provide the framework upon which volunteer motivation theory is built. Research on volunteer motivation, especially that of Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen (1991) reveals that the

altruistic/egoistic is not an either or debate, arguing that volunteers do not differentiate between the two motives and, in fact, act on both.

Research on the motivations of sports volunteers, although focused on large mega and regional one-time events, introduce new motives to the motivation debate. People volunteering for a mega event out of a sense of national or regional pride because they want to make the event a success (patriotism), or because they want to give back to, or stay involved with the sport they love. Research also finds that the event itself can be a motivator for volunteer engagement due to a sense of status that is derived from involvement. Lastly, research (Chun, 2003; Cuskelly *et al*, 2006; Pi, 2001) shows that the organisation itself must be cognizant of and recognize the importance of volunteer motivation factors when recruiting and placing volunteers. In doing so, organisations can increase efficiency by making use of volunteer strengths and motives and give volunteers a sense of belonging in the organisation (Pi, 2001).

In the third section theories of job satisfaction were analysed as they pertain to both the paid work environment and the volunteer setting. Different approaches such as facets, needs, and values were discussed. Literature seems to show that there are many areas of commonality between paid workers and volunteers when measuring job satisfaction. Differences between paid worker satisfaction and volunteer satisfaction can be found in the nature of the volunteer experience itself and researchers agree that considerations must be made in order to account for the intrinsic motivations that drive volunteers to service. In other words, volunteering is an activity in which someone gives their personal time, driven to action by a

motive that if left unfulfilled will cause dissatisfaction and possible termination of the volunteer relationship. Gidron (1983: 32) captures this idea stating,

“In order to be satisfied, a volunteer needs, above all, a task in which self expression is possible – a task which is seen as a challenge, a task where achievements can be seen....the volunteer should not have to waste time getting to work, looking for tools, or arguing with officials about what to do and how to do it.”

The final section takes a broad look at training and development in the volunteer sector. Although there is a dearth of information regarding the training and development of volunteers, most studies shared a common theme, that training and development has a profound impact on an organisation's ability to retain volunteer services and therefore meet organisational objectives. The importance of orientation is a key theme in volunteer training research. Researchers argue (Costa *et al*, 2006; Wilson 2000) that orientation is the time when many volunteers decide if they are staying or leaving and that organisations should use this opportunity to build a sense of team or community amongst the volunteers. Further, volunteer organisations should be cognizant of volunteer motivations and the unique way in which adults learn when designing systems of training delivery.

The next chapter maps out and discusses the methodological approaches employed during this research and describes the theoretical and philosophical stances that guided the research.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

Given the lack of empirical research on training sports volunteers, the methodological approach for examination of the research questions was essentially exploratory. Ethnographic research methods, including participant observation, informal interviews, semi-structured interviews, and document review, were employed to gain an understanding of how volunteers construct reality within the context of their volunteer experience. Specifically, my aim was to gain an authentic understanding of the volunteer community and illustrate how they perceived the relationship between themselves and the organisation. In particular, I sought to gain an understanding of the volunteer culture, attempt to understand the volunteers' perceptions and understanding of the training provided by the organisation, and relate it to the frustrations that they experienced during engagements.

Ethnographic methods were employed because they met my own naturalistic-constructivist beliefs (Cresswell, 2003; Bryman 2004), that knowledge is constructed in an authentic environment in which the researcher, as Bryman (2004: 541) explains, "seeks to minimize the intrusion of artificial methods of data collection." Further, ethnographic methods allowed me to focus on the emic perspective and take a holistic view of the dynamic interdependencies of the entire volunteer community (Gratton & Jones, 2010; Fetterman, 2010).

Ethnography allows the researcher to explore, untangle and understand the multiple realities that are constructed from multiple perceptions and interpretations created by individuals within a social context (Davis, 2008; Fetterman, 2010). Focusing on a single volunteer community allowed me to examine volunteer training, performance, and frustration within a particular context and achieve a thick descriptive story that Merriam and Simpson (2000:109) stated should “illuminate the reader’s understanding” and “aid the discovery of new meaning.” Tom *et al* (1994: 15) state,

“Fundamentally, and simplistically, ethnography is a commitment to a way of understanding and explaining the shared meaning of a group of people. This means that ethnographers spend extended amounts of time with the people they study, trying to learn as much as possible about their everyday lives in order to learn about and be able to tell other people about the shared meanings and ways of getting on with daily life that work for this group.”

As a participant observer I lived the volunteer experience; I shared the frustrations, the success and failures, and was able to get close to members of the volunteer community and participate in discussions about experiences and feelings. Merriam and Simpson (2000: 109) define an ethnographic case study as, “a socio-cultural analysis of a single social unit or phenomenon.” Given that research for this study was conducted at a single site and explored the constructed meanings and interpretations of individuals in one community within an organisation, it would be prudent to consider this research as an ethnographic case study (Merriam and Simpson, 2000). Further, Merriam (1988 in Allenbrack, 2009: 47) posits that case study research generates knowledge that is more contextual, concrete, open to interpretation, and consists of four properties, all of which were present in this study. Allenbrack (2009: 49) describes Merriam’s (1988) case study properties as:

1. Particularistic – The study deals with particular groups of people, problems or institutions.
2. Descriptive – The study has thick or rich description.
3. Heuristic – The findings illuminate the reader's understanding by facilitating discovery of new meaning, extending the readers experience, or confirming what is known.
4. Inductive – The findings generate new theory, concepts, and understanding.

This chapter will define the theoretical position of the research design and explain the procedures employed in site selection, participant identification, data collection practices, data analysis techniques, and explain positioning with regards to ethical practices. The research methodology consisted of participant observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews and informal interviews. Informal interviews were conversations that took place during volunteer engagement. From the onset of the research the volunteer community was aware of my presence and what my purpose was. Often, they would approach me with comments or observations and were open to letting me partake in side-bar conversations. Further, I was allowed to attend volunteer group meetings and was included on the distribution list for the meeting minutes. The volunteer meetings were especially enlightening for me as an outside researcher. At these meetings the volunteer community themselves, with guidance from a few paid managers, organised and planned for upcoming events, discussed issues, and attempted to solve problems that had been encountered at previous events. The final component of the research design was document review. I was given access to

training materials, both drafts and published, organisational marketing materials and archived meeting minutes that pertained to the volunteer community.

At the request of the organisation, the names of the individuals, the organisation, and the geographic location of the organisation were changed in the final write up of research findings. The Sports Academy (TSA) is a general name created to protect the identity of the organisation, and each of the research participants were given an alias. Further, in order to protect the identity of the organisation, the name of the town, county, and state in which the organisation exists will not be used. All other information regarding the economic status and demographic make-up of the region is accurate. The research process also employed the use of an organisational gatekeeper (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999b). From an organisational standpoint, the role of the gatekeeper was to protect and inform the organisation and the research participants during the research process. For the researcher, the gatekeeper helps to remove roadblocks, gain access to areas, and helps ensure that research was conducted within the boundaries set by the organisation (Fetterman, 2010; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999).

Setting the Scene - Selecting Research Site and Volunteers

The Sports Academy (TSA), located in a Midwestern state of the United States was chosen as a case study. The main reasons that TSA was selected as the research site were its extensive portfolio of year round events, the permanent nature of volunteers (i.e., they do not volunteer once and leave), and the newness of the volunteer programmes and the organisation itself. Field work was conducted over a nine month period between February and December 2011.

During this time frame I was on campus (at TSA) all but 17 days. I followed news and events by reading the local newspaper and tried to gauge local sentiments towards the organisation. The Sports Academy is a not-for-profit sports facility and academy that sits on 150 acres of land in a rural county.

The Organisation was formed in 2008 with the mission to provide sports development and events for all ages and all levels. TSA was also an interesting site because it is located in a highly depressed rural area which has high unemployment rates - 14.6% compared to a state-wide rate of 7.8% and national rate of 8.5% (U.S. Census, 2011). The foreclosure rate on homes is also higher than the national average, and the education system in the county is below state and national standards. For the past twenty years the number of companies leaving the county, taking with them employment opportunities, has far exceeded the number of new companies, and the county as a whole has been unable to attract new business to the area. This poor economic climate makes TSA a very important part of the county's economic development plan. Local residents see TSA as a way to boost employment opportunities, not just within the organisation itself, but also within the greater community through a multiplier effect (Fried, 2010). TSA hosts events that will attract large crowds who will stay in hotels, eat at restaurants, and patronize local shops.

The volunteer community at TSA consists of approximately 175 people who have diverse backgrounds and motivations. Volunteers ranged in age from 15 to 80 years old and come from varied socio-economic backgrounds. From a gender perspective, 47% of the volunteers are women and 53% men. Racially, 95% of

the volunteers are Caucasian, 3% are Hispanic, and 2% African American. Most of the volunteers (approximately 70%) reside within 20 miles of the TSA facility, 25% reside within 35 miles of the facility, and 5% reside 50 miles or more from TSA.

Volunteers' motivation factors were also varied. Some volunteers gave their time because they simply loved sport, others just wanted to be involved, others felt that TSA was going to help the community and wanted to help it be successful, and others were looking for extrinsic rewards. Another group of volunteers saw TSA as an opportunity to further their own development and careers.

Living the Experience - Sample Selection and Data Collection

"I once heard a distinguished anthropologist say something that I have shamelessly plagiarized ever since. 'There are,' he declared, 'only two basic methods of social research. One is called "asking questions" and the other is called "hanging out".' (Dingwall, 1997: 52-3 in Gratton & Jones, 2010: 193)

Primary data were collected through participant observation, informal impromptu interviews, and semi-structured in-depth interviews. Data were collected from numerous sources including volunteers, paid staff, and patrons, to increase the reliability and validity. Data from observations was recorded in a research journal throughout the fieldwork stages of the research. It is important to point out that the research journal became more than just a record of my observations and perceptions. From day one in the field, my journal morphed into an eclectic collection of quotes and conversations that told the story of how volunteers actually felt during their work engagement (analysis of the research journal is

covered later in this chapter). It represented the emotional, real-time responses of people under pressure and ‘in the trenches’ as it were. This is worth mentioning because my initial plan was to digitally record informal conversations, but volunteers were reluctant to speak in the presence of the recorder. Further, the voice recorder changed the authenticity of the moment and created a manufactured environment.

Throughout the fieldwork phase of my research I never hid my purpose for being there. I purposely engaged in conversation with volunteers, paid staff, patrons, and other stakeholders to explain the purpose of my research. It was my belief that if people in the overall TSA community understood why I was there they would be more willing to engage in informal conversations which would give me a better understanding of the dynamics that existed in the organisational culture. This relationship building was a crucial step in the research process because I had spent a substantial amount of time at the organisation as a paid consultant, and initially some of the paid staff distrusted my motives, which in effect influenced the volunteers. For the first few weeks of fieldwork there was a belief that I was still a ‘hired gun’ who was still conducting a review of the organisation’s effectiveness and would eventually affect people’s jobs. Had this barrier not been removed, the task of collecting data would have been hindered or shaped by individuals who were too cautious to open up. Successful relationship building required immersion into the culture (Gratton & Jones, 2010) of the volunteer community at TSA. In his study of community events, Ziakas (2007: 102) states,

“Throughout my fieldwork I sought immersion in others’ world and local culture in order to grasp what they experience as important and meaningful. With immersion the researcher sees from the inside how

people lead their lives, how they carry out their daily activities, what they find meaningful and how they do so.”

Throughout my fieldwork this quote, which was recorded on the first page of my research journal, stayed with me and shaped my approach to gathering data. To gain an authentic understanding of the volunteer culture at TSA I had to set aside my own bias, listen, and participate in a different way of life as part of the volunteer culture. In doing so I positioned myself as a researcher, an outsider who wanted to learn and tell the story of this particular volunteer community (Fetterman, 2010; Gratton & Jones, 2010).

Unstructured or impromptu interviews ($n=88$) were conducted throughout the nine months of field work to tap into the mindset and culture of the volunteer community. At opportune times volunteers, paid staff, event participants, event patrons/spectators, and event organizers were approached with questions. These interviews happened in real time as situations occurred and differed in composition and length. In general, these interviews helped me as a researcher to learn the culture from the inside and outside. I interviewed volunteers ($n=38$) to gain an understanding of the volunteers themselves and how they felt about the organisation. Similarly, paid staff members ($n=11$) helped to give me an inside perspective into the volunteer community, especially with regards to the value that paid staff placed on volunteers. Event participants ($n=17$) and event patrons/spectators ($n=23$) helped to give me an outsider's perspective on the quality of service and help provided by volunteers. Lastly, event organizers also gave an outside view on the performance of the volunteers and were able to add

comparisons to the performance and preparation of volunteers at other sports facilities throughout the United States.

The semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted using a purposive sample of volunteers ($n=20$) and full time paid staff members ($n=4$). The volunteers were selected from the general volunteer community with input from the organisational gatekeeper, and the paid staff members were selected due to the role they played as liaisons between the organisation and volunteers. The volunteer sample was selected as a representative cross-section of the volunteer community as a whole. The interview participants consisted of eleven males and nine females. Six participants were between the ages of 19-24, four were between the ages of 25-35, two between the ages of 36-49, and eight participants were over the age of 50. The volunteer sample also represented a wide range of motivational factors (See appendix A for a complete breakdown of volunteer demographics and motivation factors). Two scripts were created to serve as a guide for the semi structured interviews. The first script, for volunteers, consisted of 22 open ended questions (Appendix B), and the second script, for management, consisted of 13 open ended questions (Appendix C).

Interviews lasted approximately one hour (sometimes longer when the interviewee wished to talk more) and consisted of probing questions that asked the interviewee to really consider the experience that they encountered while volunteering at TSA. Each interviewee was asked to review and sign a consent form (Appendix D), which gave them the option to opt-out of being recorded, outlined the confidentiality guidelines, and their right to withdraw from the study at any point.

With the interviewee's consent, interviews were recorded on a digital audio recorder and transferred to a computer for transcription (all interviews are password protected). After transcription, interviewees were asked to review their interview transcripts to ensure the accuracy of information in order to keep my translation true to their intended purpose. During this process I also stressed to the interviewees that they still had the right to withdraw or omit any of the information that they had given during the information process. From the interviewee pool only seven approached me with edits and omissions. Many of the edits were clarifications of meaning and gave me the opportunity ask further questions and enhance the richness of the data. All interviews were conducted on-site at TSA at the convenience of the interviewee. Interviewees also chose the setting. Some wanted to sit in an office or conference room, others wanted to walk and talk, and others wanted to sit in the café and interview over a coffee. Since I sought an authentic understanding of the volunteer community, I felt that putting the interviewee in an environment of their choosing would yield the greatest amount of comfort and therefore impact the effectiveness of the interview.

Secondary data were collected from meeting minutes, marketing materials, newspaper articles, organisational documents, press releases, and event programmes. These secondary data sources were used for information purposes only and were not coded and included in the final analysis of this research. Rather, this information served to educate and inform me, as an outsider, as to the current status and proposed changes to organisational aids and processes, organisational direction and self-image, and local and regional news coverage and

outside opinions of TSA. Reviewed documents included: (1) one strategic planning document; (2) a paid employee training manual; (3) a draft copy of a volunteer training manual; (4) a volunteer handbook; (5) a volunteer quick reference sheet; (6) minutes from 7 volunteer meetings; (7) 10 different pieces of marketing materials; (8) 9 newspaper articles; and (9) a copy of the organisation's standard operating procedures. Additionally the organisation's website was used to gain updated information on a regular basis.

Constructing the Story - Data Analysis

In ethnographic research, data analysis needs to begin well before the data collection is complete (Creswell, 2003; Fetterman, 2010; LeCompte & Schensual, 1999). Gratton & Jones (2010: 202) state,

“Data analysis in reality is a continual process and takes place during, rather than at the end of, the ethnography. Interpretation emerges from the data, and then further data can be collected to support or refute the interpretations.”

Guided by the idea that ethnographic data analysis is a continual process, I conscientiously began data analysis after only a few weeks of observation. As I wrote in my research journals, I began to look for emerging categories and themes and began to categorize them in NVivo 7.0. All data, observation notes, research journal notes, interview transcripts were entered into NVivo for storage and sorting purposes only. NVivo's analysis capabilities were not used during this research since, due to personal preference, I wanted to experience, as a researcher, the manual task of coding and sorting data.

Qualitative content analysis (Bryman, 2004; Fetterman, 2010) was employed to identify key terms, phrases, and ideas in the primary and secondary data. According to Fetterman (2010: 104), “The assumption underlying content analysis is that the frequency (or lack thereof) of a term or topic reflects its relative importance to the group or culture.” Frequency of terms (or topic), then guide the researcher as to what is important or significant. In addition to frequency, LeCompte (2000) identifies omission and declaration as criteria to determine if data is of significance to the study. Omission deals with themes or topics that the researcher expected to show up in the data and did not, and declaration deals with items that the participants say is significant. The process of coding themes and categories was conducted on three levels, utilizing open coding, focused coding, and constant comparison.

Open coding (Bryman, 2004; Emerson *et al*, 1995) was used to identify the key emerging themes ideas and issues. During the process of open coding data is broken down, compared to other data, and categorized by theme (Bryman, 2004). Emerson *et al* (1995: 152) cautions that,

“In open coding the ethnographer should not used pre-established categories to read field notes; rather he should read with an eye towards identifying events described in the notes that themselves could become the basis of categorization.”

With this advice in mind I approached the initial coding with a blank slate and attempted to let the data speak for itself. The research journal and field notes were coded first and then compared to interview transcripts to assess if my perceptions during observation were similar to those of the volunteer community. This was a useful process in addressing my own subjectivity as a researcher and helped me to

remove my own bias and let the research participants tell the story. Five thematic categories emerged from the open coding process. Those categories were: 1) motivation; 2) frustration; 3) training; 4) expectations; and 5) social issues. These categories created the model for the analysis that followed.

Following the identification of the five inductive thematic categories, a system of focused coding (Emerson *et al*, 1995) was employed in which data was analysed line-by-line and placed within the one (or more) of the five thematic categories. During focused coding the researcher engages in a system of constant comparison between incidents, topics, and themes and attempts to indentify “contrasting cases or variations” (Emerson *et al*, 1995: 161) in the data. I therefore analysed the data five times, each time focusing on one particular category. During this focused analysis of data subcategories emerged according to frequency, omission and declaration (Emerson *et al*, 1995; Fetterman, 2010; LeCompte, 2000). The subthemes are outlined in table 3.1.

Thematic Categories	Motivation ²	Frustration	Preparedness	Expectations	Social Issues
Sub Themes	M1 Expression of Values	F1 Feeling Stupid	P1 Orientation	E1 Recognition / rewards	S1 Lack of Communication
	M2 Community Involvement	F2 Lack of Information	P2 Informational (event Specific)	E2 First to have Information	S2 Understaffed
	M3 Interpersonal Contacts	F3 Authority	P3 Role Training	E3 Community Benefit	S3 Freedom to Make Decisions
	M4 Career Orientation	F4 Accountability	P4 Teambuilding	E4 Use of Facilities	S4 Follow-up from Management
	M5 Extrinsic Rewards	F5 Freedom to Complete Task	P5 Mentoring	E5 Meeting New People	S5 Ability to give input
	M6 Personal Growth	F6 Task Matches Motivation	P6 On-The-Job Training	E6 To Learn	S6 Fitting in With Others
	M7 Love of Sport	F7 Lack of Written Instructions		E7 Help Others	S7 Appreciation
	M8 Altruism	F8 Understanding Reason for Task		E8 Be Able to Complete Task	S8 Accomplishment
	M9 Obligation			E9 Feeling of Belonging	

Table 3.1 Basic Coding Structure

² The subthemes in motivation category matched the volunteer motivation typology created by Bang and Ross (2004) so the categories are closely related to that of Bang and Ross (2004).

Looking Inward – Assessing Subjectivity and Reflexivity.

Silk (2006: 81) states that “it is important that the ethnographer provides a clear account of the process and thus lays the process open to the reader.” This process includes addressing one’s own bias and subjectivity, addressing reliability and validity, assessing reflexivity, and laying out what worked and what went wrong.

I entered this research with a number of pre-conceived opinions about what defined true volunteerism and about the organisation and community in which the research was to be conducted. Although research (Bang and Chelladurai, 2003; Bang and Ross, 2004; Clary *et al*, 1998; Cnaan & Goldberg Glen, 1991; Farrell *et al*, 1998; Pi, 2001) has shown varied motivations to volunteer, I was still of the opinion that volunteers were motivated solely by selfless intent, that volunteer motivation was truly altruistic. This position was informed by personal experience and personal motivation to volunteer and by the fact that my experiences had always occurred at single sport specific events that only lasted one to four days. Based on the above I considered volunteers to be individuals who showed up to work, completed the work, and then went home. The ‘heavy lifting’ or decision making was the responsibility of the paid staff. I had always derived my personal satisfaction by being present at a sports event, helping others, and giving back to something that had profoundly shaped the person that I was today.

Having worked at TSA in a consultative role for almost a year prior to engaging in the research project it was natural that I had formed relationships and opinions with and about the organisation. As a lifelong sports participant, fan, and coach I

was excited about the development of a world class organisation and sports facility within driving distance of my home and work. This excitement created an initial bias that favoured actions that the organisation took. Essentially, I was emotionally engaged in the success of the organisation.

As a consultant, I was hired to help shape the organisation's structure from a user's perspective. My job was to assist with the facility layout and design, introduce other sports organisations to TSA, and help structure and attract leagues and events to the facility. During this time I worked with upper management on strategic initiatives and had little interaction with the day to day operations that would impact my research. Prior to the fieldwork stage of this research I had no input or contact with the volunteer programme at TSA (other than cordial greetings and pleasantries). Although I had no input or contact I was keenly aware of the volunteer programme's existence and was cognizant of the important role that the volunteer community was going to have to play in the success of TSA as an organisation.

Due to prior experience with TSA I entered the fieldwork phase of this research with mixed feelings regarding the human resources side of TSA. As previously stated, I was emotionally tied to the success of the organisation because it was good for the area, it was good for sports, it was good for young athletes, and frankly I got an ego boost from being involved. However, I felt that internally the organisation had failed to take care of the people who were working there. Employees were working long hours for which they were not compensated, the new organisation's strategies changed and caused stress, and staffing levels were

inadequate. I saw people burning out quickly, and an organisation ignoring it. There was an organisational attitude that people should feel lucky to be associated with such a world class sports organisation that in the future would become an official training site for the United States Olympic Committee. This approach had sold me on being involved, and it worked on others too. When I was present on the TSA campus I was enamoured with the place, but when I stepped away and went back to my job the faulty environment became apparent. It is frustrating as a consultant to see mistakes being made and being unable to impact change or decisions within the organisation. I was not hired to consult on human resource issues and as such was not invited to give an opinion on them.

Even though I had spent almost a year working within the organisation, I was still considered an outsider amongst the people who ran the day to day operations. My work took place at the higher levels of the organisation, and I was still unknown to many of the people in the organisation who would impact my research.

In order to address my own subjectivity I collaborated with three key informants (one paid staff and two volunteers) to discuss my observations and perceptions. Even towards the end of my research these conversations were productive in helping me understand issues or correct my misinterpretations. After nine months I still had an outsider's perspective when it came to jargon and technical phrases that led me to misinterpret situations. In addition to ensuring that information was accurate and representative, this process further developed buy-in from members of the volunteer community as they felt they had a say in the final production of the study.

As field work began, I secured the commitment of a professional, but detached, researcher to act as my baseline throughout my research. At her suggestion, I wrote a list of preconceived notions that I had about volunteers, the organisation at which the research would take place, and about what I thought I would find. Every month I presented my findings in a process that Silk (2006:81) calls “peer debriefing’. During the peer debriefings I was held accountable to my bias and forced to clarify my perceptions and interpretations. Lincoln & Guba (1985: 308, in Silk 2006:82) say that “this process involves exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytical session and for exploring aspects of inquiry that might otherwise remain implicit within the inquirer’s mind.” Further, following the transcription of interviews, all transcripts were returned to the interviewee for review and clarification. As stated previously, seven of the interviewees took the opportunity to clarify what they had said. This process was not a simple edit or change, but more of a gateway to open further discussion on the topic. It is important to acknowledge that processes were put in place to ensure that my biases as a researcher were kept in check, and the voices of the participants were heard. However, I would be remiss not to acknowledge that it is my own experiences and, in fact, my voice that will impact the final telling this story.

The limitations of the study are covered in chapter 7, but it is worth briefly mentioning some of them within the context of subjectivity and reflexivity. Beyond my personal position as a researcher, the study was impacted by choice of location and nature of the organisation. Both of these factors brought a unique perspective that may not be replicated at other organisations. Further, the choice

of qualitative research techniques, which were designed to gain a deep understanding of a particular phenomenon are often hard to generalize (Fetterman 2010).

Self Reflexivity

Self-reflexivity is an important component of ethnographic research and refers to the researcher's role and experience in the field (Creswell, 2003). In seeking to be reflexive and be aware of my own subjectivity I was guided by Silk (2006: 82) who states, "At the very least , the ethnographer needs to be fair, balanced and conscientious in taking into account multiple perspectives, interests and realities that will exist in any social setting." Charlotte Davis (2008: 4) describes reflexivity as,

"Reflexivity, broadly defined, means a turning back on oneself, a process of self reference. In the context of social research, reflexivity at its most immediately obvious level refers to the ways in which the products of research are affected by the personnel and process of doing research."
Davis (2008: 4)

Davis posits that the researcher has a responsibility to be transparent and investigate how their personal experiences and the process of research may have influenced particular findings or conclusions. My professional background as a consultant, athletics coach, and instructor of sports studies drove my interest in the research topic. Throughout my career I have had the opportunity to work closely with volunteers at dozens of sporting events throughout the United States. I have also been what I describe as a 'serial' volunteer within the context of sports. These experiences and the knowledge gained through them were ever present throughout the research. I had also worked as a consultant at the site for 12 months prior to the research engagement. In this vein Jackson (2004) believes

that the researcher's experience is a resource, not a hindrance, that adds to the richness of the research findings. She states,

“That the subjectivity of the researcher is the primary tool and resource for discovery or for making sense in any form of research. Thus they don't try to eliminate subjectivity, but employ it fully and make transparent how this is done.” Jackson (2004: 12).

Although the aforementioned processes were put in place to minimize bias and the influence of preconceived ideas, I believe that my past experience and professional knowledge gave me credibility with both the organisation and the volunteers during the process of collecting data. Volunteers were more willing to speak with someone who understood what they were doing and had walked in their shoes before. The organisation, on the other hand, was more willing to support my research since they knew my background and expertise in running sport organisations. Regardless of this acceptance, I was always an outsider who was treated as a guest who required a gatekeeper to successfully navigate the politics of the organisation. Reflecting on my past experiences also aided me while analyzing data.

Just Doing It Right - Ethical Considerations

Data for this research came primarily from volunteers and paid staff members at TSA. These were real people, with real lives, serving real roles within a real organisation and therefore required ethical planning and consideration (Gunzok, 1999; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Ethical consideration is not a onetime consideration. In other words, ethical protocol is not developed during the proposal stages of research and then put away never to be looked at again. Within the context of my research, I found that ethical considerations were evolving.

Diener and Crandall (1978) cited in Bryman (2004: 509) break ethical principles into four succinct categories which were considered during the creation of the research instrument. They are: 1) harm to participants; 2) lack of informed consent; 3) invasion of privacy; and 4) deception. As I write the final drafts of this thesis I am also guided by Mason's (2006: 201) self-reflexive questions about honouring ethics and commitments. Those questions are:

1. Have I honoured my commitments about confidentiality and privacy?
2. Have I acted in the spirit of the informed consent which I received?
3. Have I fulfilled my responsibility to produce good research?
4. Have I used my research, and my explanations, effectively and morally?
5. Have I generalized appropriately?

Having identified that there was no apparent physical danger in entering the research environment, my ethical preparation was centred on the research participants themselves. Two weeks prior to the beginning of field work a letter (Appendix E) was distributed to the volunteer community and paid staff explaining the reason for my presence and the purpose of my research. Members of the organisation were given the opportunity to voice any problems that they had with the research or with my presence. There was no deception or pretending to be something or someone that I was not; I did not sneak into events and covertly observe volunteers at work. In fact I was often greeted by volunteers saying "look it's the doctor wannabe!" All of the volunteers who took part in the interview process did so of their own free will and signed informed consent letters (Appendix D). The organisation-wide letter served as informed consent for the observation phases of research. For the protection of the interview participants

and myself, all interviews were conducted in public facilities at the participants' convenience.

Initially, I gave interview participants a choice with regards to anonymity and everyone declined. However LeCompte and Schensul, 1999a:191),

“Caution researchers to use these strategies (pseudonyms and altering biographical data) even when, as may be the case, participants would like to have their true identity revealed, because it is never possible to assess adequately in advance which data, might become harmful to an informant.”

Given that the definition of harm to participants is broad and can include loss of self esteem, loss of standing, harassment, or physical harm (Bryman, 2004; Davis, 2008; Fetterman, 2010) it was decided, in collaboration with the gatekeeper and upper management, that pseudonyms would be used for all research participants and for the organisation itself. Biographical information was not changed for interview participants, but all geographic and demographic information was changed to protect the organisation (TSA).

All ethnographers are faced with the challenge of breaking down power relationships between the researcher and the research participants (Goodley, 2012). The issue of power relations was considered during the preparatory stages since I had worked as a consultant at the organisations. Even though the consulting work that I had done was unrelated to the research on volunteers, I decided to terminate my professional relationship with the organisation in an attempt to set aside any fears that I was in a position of power or had decision-making abilities that could affect the organisation as whole or the volunteers in

particular. The issue was addressed in the initial letter sent to the organisation and reinforced at volunteer meetings.

During the final stages of research, and throughout the analysis and writing processes, I have striven to answer Masons' (2004) questions outlined earlier in the chapter. Now in the closing stages of writing up the research I can attest that I have honoured my commitments on confidentiality and was guided by the spirit of the informed consent. I never forgot that the volunteer community at TSA consented for me to tell their story, and I honoured the commitment to do so. Further, checkpoints were employed to ensure that research data was used as effectively and morally as possible and that generalizations were as appropriate as possible. Again it was their story being told, and I was the one to tell it. Lastly, the hardest of Mason's (2004) questions; have I fulfilled my responsibility to produce good quality research? The answer to that question is truly in the hands of the reader.

Conclusion

In this chapter I introduced the research and traditions that influenced and drove my research, and it was stated that research would be influenced by naturalistic and constructivist paradigms. An ethnographic research strategy was outlined utilizing observation, informal interviews, formal semi-structure interviews, and document review. The justification for selection of the research site and interview participants was outlined. Data analysis techniques were considered with a focus on ensuring reliability and validity in the employment of ethnographic methods. Lastly, the ethical considerations that impacted the research were discussed on

two levels: 1) During the planning and execution of research, and 2) reflecting back on the finished product and asking the question, did I tell the story accurately? This chapter told the story of the research, informed on choices, discussed strengths, uncovered weaknesses, and examined potential bias and my subjectivity as a researcher.

Chapter 4

Involve Us and We Will Learn

Introduction

Chapter one of this thesis outlined the research aims as an exploration into the effects that training has on volunteer satisfaction within a sports organisation. Within this context the research aims to gain insight as to the effectiveness of training programmes on individual volunteers' feeling of belongingness to the organisation. The literature review concluded that definitions of volunteerism, theories of motivation, and theories of satisfaction are dynamic and evolving constructs within the realm of sports volunteerism. As such, it is important for organisations to have systems of recruitment, management and training to address and meet the motivational needs of the volunteer workforce. Research for this thesis was conducted at The Sports Academy (TSA), a multi-sport athletic facility located in a rural county in the Midwestern United States.

The following chapters will discuss the key findings that emerged from the research. Key findings included motivation to volunteer and difference factors that were impacted by age and professional experience, frustration and the idea that the acquisition of appropriate information within the volunteer setting is more important than systems of formal training. Within this context chapter 4 will discuss the volunteers' sense of involvement in and belonging to the organisation and introduce the need for volunteers' need for information. Chapter 5 will tie the volunteers' need to acquire information to different levels of the training process (orientation, skills training, and ongoing or refresher training). Chapter 6 introduces the concept of the *frustration* that occurs when the process of training

(or information delivery) fails to deliver the information that allows the volunteer to do a good job and feel satisfied with the contribution that they made. Chapter 7 introduces a new typology of volunteer frustration, discusses the concept of information versus training, and proposes that training and learning may need to be reconceptualised (Griffeths and Armour, 2012) within the sport volunteer setting.

The volunteer population of The Sports Academy (TSA) is a diverse one in terms of age, education level, occupation and motivation. Volunteer ages ranged from 18 years old to 80 years old. Some of the volunteers held advanced degrees from university, others only held a high school diploma, while others had not completed high school at all. Most of the volunteers over the age of 30 lived within a 20 mile radius of the facility and expressed their personal belief that this sports facility would help the local economy. Those under 30 tended to come from greater distances and were enrolled in either graduate or undergraduate work at local colleges and universities. Volunteers represented a wide variety of vocations including teachers, nurses, physical therapists, emergency service workers, private business owners, bankers, and college students. A number of the volunteers were unemployed and saw the facility as a way to gain experience, training, and future employment. The twenty volunteers who were interviewed represent a carefully selected cross-section of the general volunteer population.

Motivation factors were varied amongst those interviewed. Using the seven motivation factors (Expression of Values, Community Involvement, Interpersonal Contacts, Career Orientation, Personal Growth, Extrinsic Rewards, and Love of

Sport) developed by Bang and Ross (2004) at the 2004 Twin Cities Marathon, volunteers were asked to pick the factor(s) that best described their motivation to volunteer at The Sports Academy (TSA). Many volunteers found it hard to associate themselves with only one of the factors and discussed how any number of them tied together in moving them towards their volunteer relationship with TSA.

All but one of Bang and Ross's (2004) factors were cited by volunteers. Only the extrinsic rewards factor was not cited as a motivation factor due to the fact that most of the volunteers at TSA truly believe they are volunteering to help the greater good, or do not see their motivation as being reward based. Three volunteers cited a personal obligation as the reason for volunteering. One was returning a personal favour to the owner, another was showing gratitude to the facility for hosting an event honouring a fallen soldier from the local community, and the third was related to a paid employee. Table 4.1 outlines information on each of the volunteers and paid staff members who were interviewed. Two volunteers cited expression of values as a motivating factor in volunteering. These volunteers expressed a deep belief in what the organisation was doing and identified their own beliefs with this mission. Eight volunteers were motivated by community involvement. Community involvement stemmed from the volunteers' belief that, although TSA is a private venture, the organisation's success was going to aid the local economy and overall desirability of the area. Although there were exceptions, most of the volunteers citing community involvement were at the older end of the age range. Gaining interpersonal contacts was a motivating factor for six volunteers. Interpersonal contacts tended to mean social contacts within

the context of this volunteer group. A number of volunteers cited the social aspect and making friends as a key motivator. Again the ages of people in this category were for the most part older. Seven volunteers cited career orientation as their motivating factor. Generally, these volunteers tended to be younger in age, students and at the beginning of their professional careers. These volunteers saw the opportunity to give time and work at TSA as a resume builder and learning experience. Some even saw TSA as their future employer. Personal growth was associated with career orientation by the volunteers. The four volunteers who cited personal growth all cited career orientation and saw little difference between the two. Three people volunteered because of their love of sport or love of a particular sport. These volunteers felt that they had gained valuable life lessons, confidence, and rewards from sport and wanted to give back and help others gain the same experience. These volunteers were lower middle aged to older and past the point of competitive participation in their respective sports.

Volunteers also had a varied range of previous volunteer experiences, which had an impact on some of their personal views about the volunteer experience at TSA. Although diverse in many ways, the volunteer community at TSA all shared a common desire to see the new organisation succeed. Whether motivated by self or community, there was an overwhelming sense of pride related to involvement, and a feeling of ownership in TSA. Most volunteers felt that they had something at stake with the success or failure of the organisation and wanted to be involved as much as time would allow.

‘Involvement in the organisation’ was one of the most prominent themes that emerged from the data. At surface level the idea of being ‘involved’ in an organisation as a volunteer appears to be a simple process – you sign-up to volunteer, get an assignment, do it, and are then involved in the organisation. However, within the context of this research the definition of “involved” proved to be broader and more complex. In no way did volunteers express a desire to be involved beyond the scope of their volunteer activities and be included in organisational decision making, strategy, or day to day operational discussions. However, some in the volunteer community expected a high level of involvement and autonomy in the operation of the volunteer organisation itself.

Although the phrase “involvement in the organisation” was used frequently by volunteers, the phrase seemed to lack universal meaning. In fact the meaning behind the use of the phrase “involvement in the organisation” was influenced by factors such as motivation, age, role, experience, and length of volunteer service. Along these lines the idea of involvement could be broken into the overlapping or interconnected categories of (1) information, (2) use of facilities, and (3) systems for feedback.

The Need for Information

For volunteers, information, and access to that information, was essential. In fact, information was a term often used in conjunction with, and sometimes instead of, training processes. Jamison (2003: 127) describes a system of ‘refresher training’ for volunteers in which they “are periodically reminded of the agencies’ missions and their roles in those mission while updating them on updated policies and

procedures.” This idea of refresher training fits with what many volunteers believe that the training process should be, purely informational, and that the more forums (newsletters, webpage, meetings) that exist for them to get information the better they will be able to execute their roles. The word “information” is used so often that the organisation’s management team dangles it in front of volunteers like a carrot. For example one executive stated, “Like I said, a lot of the volunteers really like to know what’s going on and that they are privy to inside information.” TSA is a very exciting and crucial component to the economic development of the general geographic area, and access to the latest breaking information seems to give volunteers a sense of belonging. Whereas upper management feels that the volunteer community has been given sufficient information to complete the tasks, the volunteers discussed how they felt like they were being left ‘out in the cold’ and how unsatisfied they were when they did not know everything that was going on.

Table 4.1: Interview Participant Information

Alias Name	Age	Gender	Professional Background	Volunteer Background	Motivation
Ricky	21	M	College Student	Youth Sports, Community Orgs	Career Orientation / Personal Growth
Diana	22	F	College Student	Sports Organisations	Career Orientation
Andy	20	M	College Student	Community Based, Sports, Health	Career Orientation / Growth / Contacts
Tim	19	M	College Student	First time Volunteer	Interpersonal Contacts / Career Orientation
Justin	22	M	Graduate Student	Numerous Sports Orgs, High School Events	Career Orientation
Megan	28	F	Physical Therapist	Church, Community, Hospital	Obligation/ Community Involvement
Joe	25	M	Information Technology	First Time Volunteer	Community Involvement
Ellen	35	F	Athletic Coaching	Numerous Sports Orgs, High School Coaching, Youth Sports	Love of Sport / Career Orientation
Stuart	57	M	Police Captain	Local Community, Youth Sports	Community Involvement / Obligation
Devon	55	F	Office Manager	Youth Sports, Recreational Sports, Local Community	Community Involvement
Lenny	50	M	Self Employed – Produce Distributor	Youth Sports, Local Community	Community Involvement / Interpersonal Contacts
Cathy	65	F	Retired Psychiatric Nurse	Local Community, Church, Schools, Youth Sports	Expression of Values / Love of Sport
Eileen	80	F	Retired Hospital Worker	Local Community, Church, Schools	Obligation
Mark	70	M	Self-Employed – Construction	Charity Events, Community, Local Hospital	Community Involvement
Abby	55	F	Retired Teacher	Local Community, Church, Schools, Charity Events	Community Involvement / Interpersonal Contacts
Julia	60	F	Retired Teacher	Foreign Exchange Students, Local Community, Church, Schools	Community Involvement / Interpersonal Contacts
Gary	40	M	Restaurant Manager	First Time Volunteer	Interpersonal Contacts
Nate	35	M	Unemployed Military Veteran	Church	Career Orientation/ Personal Growth
Dave	20	M	Unemployed	First Time Volunteer	Career Orientation/ Personal Growth
Brent	38	M	Teacher / Coach	Youth Sport, Church, Community	Love Of Sport / Expression of Values
Paid Staff / Management					
Alias Name	Age	Gender	Professional Background	Volunteer Management Experience	
Mike	26	M	Operations Manager	None	
Val	52	F	Volunteer Coordinator	Charity Events	
Grace	50	F	Administrative Coordinator	Local School Functions	
Sarah	45	F	Hospitality Director	Charity Events, Local School Functions	

Dave, an unemployed volunteer looking to gain experience states,

“We have to know what’s going on. It just makes sense. People ask us ‘cause we are the face of the organisation. It sucks...no it’s embarrassing when you can’t answer questions when you are working. I have left a few times feeling like a dumb ass....not cool at all!”

Dave speaks of frustration he feels when he cannot give general information, the answers to questions that patrons ask on a regular basis. Things such as, what is being built next? Which big event is coming to the facility? Who’s paying for the facility? Or, what big sports stars will be visiting? The frustration he describes (feeling like a dumb ass) leaves him feeling unfulfilled by his volunteer engagement and questioning whether he should come back or not. This feeling is echoed by a number of volunteers who want to be able to execute their tasks to maximum effect.

The flow of and access to information about the organisation and events tied very closely to the concept of volunteer involvement. Volunteers discussed information flow through a number of channels such as newsletters, web pages, ‘cheat sheets’, quick briefings prior to events, and continual on-the-job training. The level of importance and the type of information also differed according to volunteer motivational factors and demographics. For example, younger volunteers who were giving their time to gain work experience and make personal/career contacts sought out any information that would further their knowledge and advance their career goals. When the motivational factor of this segment was ignored, they felt frustration and low levels of satisfaction with their volunteer experience. Tim, a college student stated,

“I was looking for experience, contacts and stuff like that. I wanted to meet people that I can look to for a job after I graduate. Not getting it here at all...I was hoping for more from this volunteer experience. This facility is amazing and I want to do more than walk around turning lights off....can do that anywhere you know”

For Tim and other younger, career-minded volunteers the opportunity to learn is of the utmost importance. Their definition of involvement centred on the acquisition of knowledge, both organisational and individual, that would help them grow. They found no reward in merely being involved with the facility or associated with the name and were unwilling to take on tasks that do not help them. Megan, another younger volunteer who is not career-motivated, describes her frustration at being assigned to an event and role with little communication or explanation of the role.

“So I came to the airplane expo, and there was no one here, so I was bored and did not understand why I had to be here and I left early thinking that I had wasted my time. I think anyone who comes wants to feel as though they had made a contribution, so understanding the importance of the role and the reason for it are important.”

Although Tim and Megan do not share the same career-oriented motivation they both share displeasure with being unprepared, lacking understanding of their role, and feeling as though they wasted their time. Younger volunteers, who may lack the experience or confidence, want information to be task-related and add to their own professional development. It is only with this task-related information that they feel comfortable in their assigned role and satisfied that they have learned something that will help them in their professional development.

Conversely the older demographic, most of whom live in the immediate area, who are motivated to volunteer due to a sense of community pride and the ability to help

community development viewed information as having the ‘inside scoop’. What is the ‘inside scoop’, and why does it matter to this segment of the volunteer workforce at TSA? TSA is built (and expanding) in a small Midwestern town, which is located in a county that currently has 14.9% unemployment, which is almost 7% higher than the national and state average (U.S. Census, 2011). Business development is minimal, and the school districts are underperforming. Essentially the future looks bleak for the area, and the development of TSA is one of the few positive business ventures that have come to the area in recent years. So, what is the ‘inside scoop’? Volunteers at TSA have access to information before the general public, and this access gives them desirable social currency. One volunteer commented at a meeting,

“We feel good because we have the inside track, and the organisation wants us to because we then go out to the community and talk about it.”

Others have echoed this sentiment during informal conversations stating,

“Like I said a lot of the volunteers really like to know what’s going on and that they are privy to inside information.”

And,

“Yeah, volunteers love information. This place is the talk of the town, and volunteers like to be the people with the new information. So share it with them when you can.”

Collectively, these statements paint a picture of a volunteer community striving to engage in and become an important part of the organisation as a whole. Being able to enter a coffee shop and have the answers to people’s questions is a reward that many of the volunteers crave, and they want more information than the organisation is willing to give. When information is withheld, whatever the reason, volunteers often accuse the

organisation of being secretive and claim that the lack of information hinders them from doing the best possible job. Many claim that they, as volunteers, are the face of the organisation because they work in customer service and hospitality services and need the most up to date information to answer the questions posed to them by patrons.

Recently, TSA was getting ready to announce a partnership with one of America's most famous and beloved track and field stars. Weeks prior to the official announcement the information was leaked to the press and patrons were asking questions about it on a regular basis. Unable to answer the questions and feeling as though the organisation had left them out, the volunteers voiced frustration with their lack of involvement in the flow of information. Bill, a fifty-something local volunteer stated,

“It's communication isn't it....we need the answers and look stupid when we cannot answer questions. It's a matter of being open and giving us the information and preparing us for the questions that we will be asked.”

Bill illustrates the frustration that the volunteers feel when they feel left out and unable to answer questions. Bill, like other volunteers, wants to and expects to be on the leading edge of information regarding what is going on at TSA. This feeling was shared by many of the volunteers who are committed to community development and are excited by their involvement with a facility and organisation that can bring national recognition to an area that has been struggling economically since the 1970's.

Volunteers who are sport specific or specialised volunteers, who could not be characterized by age, had practical needs for information. The main focus of this group of volunteers

was having information that allowed them to get their job done and done to the highest level possible.

Regardless of motivational factors or demographics, volunteers put a high level of importance on receiving information from the organisation. Some volunteers regard the organisation's willingness to share information as a direct measure of the value that the organisation puts in the volunteer workers. Regardless of volunteer motivation (sense of community, career orientation, love of sport, etc) volunteers believe that individually they are as crucial to the success of the organisation as paid employees are. In fact, they see little difference between themselves and paid employees. Abby, a retired teacher states,

“If paid employees can know things why can't we? We are here making sure that this place operates smoothly. We get the same questions that they do...so we need to same information.”

Abby sees herself as an integral part of the organisation and has trouble understanding why information is not shared unilaterally. Many of the volunteers shared this opinion and had trouble separating themselves from the paid staff and felt that they have a right to similar information. This is an important consideration for the organisation as it will impact the overall satisfaction and retention of volunteers. Further, volunteers felt that when they were lacking information, their ability to service patrons and complete their tasks to a satisfactory level was low. This concern is raised again in other themes and is especially prevalent within the causes of volunteer frustration. It is here that the concept of 'information' ties directly to the training process in that most volunteer jobs at TSA are service oriented and deal with patron questions and inquiries. Volunteers feel that in order

to complete the task of answering questions they need to be equipped with the appropriate information.

Use of Facilities

Another form of involvement that volunteers identified was “learning by doing.” Essentially volunteers feel that if the organisation gave them access to different aspects of the facility that they in turn could speak to patrons (and the community in general) from experience. A common sentiment was articulated by Devon, a local volunteer, in the following manner:

“You know, there is a real fine line because you are doing this because you want to. My husband and I both volunteer here and really do not want anything, but on the other hand being able to use this beautiful facility and equipment would be great. I believe that as you use the facility, you learn more about it and that enabled you to truly become an ambassador for the facility because you have that personal experience.”

In the Devon’s mind, this access would include free admission to all events, use of the training facilities, and use of the aquatics centre thus allowing the volunteers to fully immerse themselves in the organisation. Whereas Devon and other volunteers may truly believe that they can educate themselves by using the facility, interviews with managers at TSA revealed that this type of involvement poses a problem on two separate levels. First is the problem of rewards. Do volunteers really want to use this experience to learn? Or is it being used as a form of payment or reward for volunteer services? Volunteers feel that this is not a reward, just good business sense and adds to the volunteers’ sense that the organisation values their contributions. Further illustrating the divide between management and volunteers on this issue, one volunteer said in passing,

“It is not that we all want something like access to the facility, but I think that it would be a nice gesture and it would be advantageous to the organisation.”

The second consideration is the control that the organisation will have over the learning experience and the information that the volunteer is being exposed to. An additional concern for the organisation would be the volunteers’ ability to separate themselves from their volunteer role when they are exercising their ability to use the facility. Management has concerns that every time a volunteer walks in the door they will put on their volunteer hat and try to represent the organisation even in situations that do not warrant it.

Volunteers continually alluded to the fact that full and part time paid staff are given access to the facility and its many amenities, therefore they felt they should have it too. Again, as with information sharing, the gap in perception of status between the organisation and volunteers has the potential to impact satisfaction and retention. Stuart, a volunteer who runs the parking operations shed a different light on the notion of facility use. He stated,

“Even if it is just trying the new things so that you can pass the information along. Kind of ‘learning by doing.’ Instead of being given free access the organisation could give temporary memberships to volunteers. This way if you really want to learn how things work....this is good enough, and it is a learning experience, not some kind of finagled reward system.”

Stuart outlines a solution to the reward problem by stating that volunteers should get temporary memberships to experience and learn the facility. He takes the reward notion away by implying that the learning can be done in a short period of time and if learning is the motive then temporary use will be good enough.

There was disparity between the younger and older volunteers on this subject. The older community-based volunteers generally supported the idea that access to the facilities would enhance their ability to do a good job and allow them to leave work satisfied with their level of contribution. The younger, more career driven volunteers did not show interest in using the facility. One such volunteer, Justin, said,

“The main purpose for me volunteering was simply to see what it was like to be involved with a sports project starting from the ground up. It’s an experience that most people don’t get to see, and I thought that anything that I could pick up from being a volunteer at the facility for that experience would be beneficial for my career aspirations. I want to learn! None of the other stuff matters.”

Justin speaks of the uniqueness of this volunteer opportunity for him and other young volunteers and puts minimal focus on any perks. Like Justin, other younger volunteers seem to be more interested in the learning experience and less interested in the peripheral benefits associated with the organisation. On the other hand, the older volunteers who reside in the local community have a greater interest in the organisation and specifically the facility. The issue of facility then, appears to be tied to motivation, expectations, and perceptions of roles within the organisation. Volunteers who are motivationally tied to the community and have the expectation that TSA will help the local economy, tend to associate their role within the organisation with that of the paid employees. They feel that they can better serve the organisation if they intricately understand the facilities from a patron’s standpoint. Further, paid employees have use of the facilities, so why shouldn’t they? These are important considerations for management when developing a recruitment and retention plan for TSA.

Systems for Feedback

Volunteers saw feedback as an important way for the organisation to involve them. Feedback was viewed as a two-way system within the organisation letting the volunteers know how they are performing and giving the volunteers a forum to let the organisation know what is and is not working and an avenue to give suggestions on how to improve things.

Mike, the Operations Manager at TSA, describes what he calls “the involvement system” that was set up to ensure a feeling of mutual ownership in the volunteer programme.

“First, we decided to call the volunteers ambassadors to give a real sense of the importance that they had to TSA. In the beginning we had monthly meeting to schedule talk about what has to be done, make improvements to the programme, and generally get issues on the table. We have an ambassador president who is a volunteer to head up the meetings. It seems to go well. The meetings don’t happen as much now because we are busier than in the beginning. But...the ambassadors still feel like they have a say.”

Mike describes the sense of ownership that the organisation has built into the volunteer programme. From the official name of the volunteer programme (TSA Ambassadors) to the appointment of a volunteer president, the organisation has recognized the expectation that volunteers have regarding involvement in the organisation. Sarah, the Hospitality Manager, illustrates further how management believes that the current avenues for volunteer involvement and information sharing work well.

“Well we have monthly meetings, so for the most part I would say about 50% of the volunteers attend those monthly meetings so we can kind of talk about past event and discuss what worked and did not work. This past season we were fortunate enough to have some larger national attention-type events and they were very happy to be a part of that. Last week we had the Michael Johnson event, and they felt like they had the inside track and they were involved with something really big. They feel good because they have the inside track, and we want them

too because they then go out to the community and talk about it. Also, it is not necessarily a track fan that gets excited about meeting Michael Johnson, it's everyone getting caught up in the hoopla and the excitement of the event and we really want them to get excited and to feel like they are a part of it. I think that they are definitely satisfied, and I feel that if they did have any questions or concerns of being pushed beyond their expectations that they'd have no problem telling us that and we build and make adjustments based on that feedback."

According to Sarah, TSA has created a separate volunteer organisation within the overall organisation that allows volunteers the opportunity to give feedback and receive information. Mike and Sarah describe a system of involvement and information sharing that is contingent on the volunteer giving more time to attend meetings and discuss the programme. Lenny, the President of the Ambassadors, agrees that this is a good idea and a lot of people like to attend the meetings, more for the social value than anything else. However, he is adamant when he says that there is limited information shared and no decision making authority at all. He states that

"The information that they give us is limited. Sometimes it is like marketing or a weekly TV show. They give enough to keep people on the hook and get folks excited. Autonomy? Nah! We don't have any. In the end all of the suggestions go to management and they decide what we need. It's not often they grant our wishes, especially when it comes to spending money."

Even as the president of the ambassador group Lenny feels that the organisation is not as forthcoming as they could be. His assertion that the group lacks autonomy or decision making ability strengthens his argument that group meetings exist as a social event and nothing more. Mark likes the volunteer meetings and feels that they create a cohesive team environment.

"We get together and talk about what was good and what was bad. We make suggestions. I think they listen to us, but I have not seen any changes yet. Oh except one. Many of us were not comfortable acting in a security-type capacity.

We let them know and now we don't have to do it. They hired security. But I like the opportunity to get together and talk about the place even if we are getting nothing done. But then again, I have the time to do it."

Mark feels that the feedback that the volunteers give is listened to by the organisation and cites one change made as a result of meetings. Meetings are attended almost exclusively by the older volunteers who live in the local community. Lenny worries that the meetings are quickly becoming marketing or propaganda sessions where the organisation aims to create buy-in and increase motivation.

Younger volunteers very rarely attend due to busy school schedules, lack of interest, and distance from the facility. In fact, many of the younger volunteers actually had a very negative view of the volunteer meetings. Ricky, a college student says,

"The meetings are pretty social...I don't really learn anything so I don't go."

Andy, another college student, supports this idea, stating,

"Those meetings are a waste of my time. I went once. It was like a party or something and the people talked about how great this place is for an hour. I don't go."

Ricky's and Andy's negative views of the meetings talk to the separation between older (local and experienced) volunteers and the younger (college aged) volunteers when it comes to the social aspect of volunteering at TSA. Younger volunteers want to get in and out, learn, and potentially further their careers. Older volunteers, on the other hand, see great value in spending time at TSA and forging social relationships with others. It is, however, evident (through attendance at meetings and a review of meeting minutes) that

the organisation uses the monthly meeting to thank the volunteers and give ‘kudos’ to those who did something exceptional. It is at these meetings that volunteers receive most of the information about what is happening at the organisation, what special events are coming, and will be required of them as volunteers. Management at TSA used the monthly meeting to talk to the volunteers and solicit their input on the orientation and training process. In a process that could best be described as ‘group brainstorming’ management representatives would throw ideas for training on the table and gauge the reaction of the volunteers. Volunteers would generally agree with ideas because “anything is better than nothing”

Other systems of feedback that were discussed by volunteers centred on performance feedback (how am I doing?) from the organisation to the volunteer and operational feedback from the volunteer to the organisation. Feedback is covered in greater detail in chapter 6, but is worth mentioning here as it ties to the idea of organisational involvement. Younger volunteers were more apt to only want feedback on how they were doing largely because when questioned most of them did not feel that they had the experience or know how to give feedback on how to make things better. Andy stated that he was there to learn and wanted feedback on how he was doing.

“It was not there (feedback)...I almost felt, because I asked questions to make sure that I am doing things right, I felt like I was bugging them and it was extremely frustrating.”

Tim, another college student, had a similar experience.

“I left after my volunteering was finished and I had no clue if I was good or not. They were very good at saying thank you, but man....I know I f’d some stuff up

and they never told me what to do different. I was just never given that job again. It bothered me...I mean...say something and help me out.”

Justin, a graduate student, felt that he was prepared for some of the tasks, but still wanted more feedback than he got.

“I was here because my degree programme dictated that I do some volunteer work at a sports facility, and I think that my education had prepared me for the tasks. But I wanted to know how I was doing. I just assumed everything was good and kept doing what I was doing.”

These accounts illustrate the need that younger volunteers had for feedback on their performance. They speak of the frustration they experienced when feedback was not given and how their overall volunteer experience was affected. The younger volunteers at TSA entered their volunteer experience with an expectation of learning and gaining valuable work experience. For them, performance feedback was part of that process and one that was lacking at TSA.

Older volunteers tended to want minimal of feedback. They felt that the organisation owed it to them to help them do a better job and represent the community and the organisation in such a way that will help ensure success. For the older demographic, most of whom live locally, the success of TSA is essential to the economic revitalization of the town and county. Although they are volunteers, they treat their roles as ‘real’ jobs and believe that they have a vested interest in the organisation’s success. For this group of volunteers feedback was less about learning and more about doing things right.

On the other hand, as retired and current professionals (business managers, military personnel, teachers, etc.) these volunteers also feel that they have some knowledge to share

with the organisation and each other and are often frustrated when they feel that the organisation does not listen to them. Stuart, a police officer with training in traffic management, offered numerous suggestions to help with the parking and traffic flow at big events.

“You know I love this place and my experience here has been great, but I think some of the folks in management need to listen to and tap into some of the expertise that some of us have. We have nurses, teachers, business people and so on. I’ve been a cop for 25 years, and I know how to handle traffic. I tried to help, but they didn’t want to listen. It’s happened to others too.”

Stuart’s frustration occurs when the expertise that he brings to the organisation is ignored. He feels that TSA has a special group of volunteers because of the community tie that they have to the organisation. This is a group who is willing to lend their expertise to ensure success, and Stuart feels that the organisation needs to listen. Ellen, a former professional athlete and professional coach has experienced similar situations.

“They just don’t listen to those who have the experience, and there are a lot of young people without experience who think they know better than everyone. Ok.....Basically, there are some people who are involved in administration who would like to be in charge of everything without having the experience. The volunteers know that this is not going to happen. Volunteers talk and have expressed displeasure with this behaviour and feel that instead of telling what to do all the time, why don’t you come on down and experience what it is that we do? Why don’t you show that you are interested in this? This is where my frustration lies. Unless this person wants to really be part of the volunteers and the programme, and not just a mouth piece, he needs to get involved. I run into this person several times and have the same experience over and over. As volunteers he tells us to do things, and I have heard from others how he runs things and it contradicts what the mission of TSA is and how things are run. So rather than going through the chain of command, this person comes right down and tells you what to do. I had a situation last week and he told me that he would go to someone else and skip the professional way to do it. So there is a bee in his bonnet. So as far as communication goes he needs to stop stepping on volunteers’ toes. And if you want to keep volunteers around you need to talk to them and identify why they are here, embrace it and work with it.”

Ellen explains the frustration that volunteers have when paid staff ignores their experience and professional background. She describes an occurrence with one individual who is directing her to do things that are not only counter intuitive to her, but contrary to the mission of the organisation. Lastly she introduces the idea that the organisation and the paid staff in particular need to understand the experience, skills and knowledge that volunteers are bringing with them.

Where younger volunteers craved performance feedback, older volunteers wanted to participate in operational feedback by using their personal and professional experience to make the organisation better. Ellen's and Stuart's situations illustrate the frustration that volunteers feel when they perceive that the organisation is devaluing the skill, knowledge and abilities that they bring to the table. Volunteers who feel devalued in their volunteer work tend to separate themselves from the volunteer experience and leave a knowledge gap within the organisation.

Conclusion

For volunteers at TSA 'involvement in the organisation' could be separated into three overlapping or interconnected categories: (1) information, (2) use of facilities, and (3) systems for feedback. It is important to note that all three categories of volunteer involvement add to the acquisition of the knowledge and information that volunteers feel is essential to their roles at TSA. Further, expectations and meaning regarding these categories varied according to motivation factors and age. Younger volunteers who were motivated by learning and career opportunity/advancement desired involvement that would

add to their experience and improve their career development. Older volunteers who tended to have a greater stake in the local community required a level of involvement that matched the experience and passion that they brought to the organisation. Many wanted information to bolster their self-image or power in the community (having the “inside scoop”), but many felt that information, whether skill based or purely policy or event-based, was the key to them, as volunteers, being able to deliver an acceptable level of service to the patrons of TSA. Others felt frustration when the organisation did not use their expertise to help guide decision making processes. Essentially, local (generally older) volunteers derived a sense of pride from their association with the organisation and expected reciprocation through information, access, and respect.

Additionally, the volunteer programme at TSA differs from many of those subject to sports volunteer research (i.e. Bang and Ross, 2004; Chun 2003; Costa *et al*, 2006; Elstad, 1996; Farrell *et al*, 1998) in that volunteers at TSA do not give their time for a one time high profile event. They show up week after week, working at numerous functions, some high profile, some not, and ensure that events go off without a hitch. In fact, the volunteers are the backbone of the staffing model at TSA. Overall, management at TSA struggles with the concept of ‘involvement in the organisation’ due to the diverse experiences levels, motivation factors, and levels of commitment that volunteers bring with them. Volunteers at TSA did not speak in terms of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, rather they spoke of frustration, especially when the organisation withheld or failed to disseminate information and involve the volunteer community. This multi-faceted concept of ‘involvement’ and

‘frustration’ at TSA will be a recurring theme that will be explored further in the forthcoming chapters.

CHAPTER 5

Starting off on the Right Foot: Training Issues: From Orientation through Job Preparation and Beyond

Introduction

Within the context of training and how it affects volunteer satisfaction, volunteers at TSA identify ‘involvement in the organisation’ as a key theme that impacted levels of volunteer frustration. They separated this theme into three overlapping or interconnected categories: (1) information, (2) use of facilities, and (3) systems for feedback. Chapter 4 identified the difference factors in these categories, based on motivation factors and age, which impact the organisation’s ability to deliver training in a set format. This chapter builds on this discussion by addressing training and orientation, and exploring volunteer experiences and opinions on what type and how much training is relevant to them. Training was broken into a three-tiered process consisting of orientation, skills specific training, and ongoing (re)training and sharing of new information. As with the concept of *volunteer involvement* covered in chapter 4, *information* and the ability to access it was the key theme that resonated through discussions on volunteer training. Volunteers were less interested in method of delivery than they were in the fact that the information was made available in a timely manner, with a high level of clarity that would allow them to do perform their tasks. The findings in this chapter may also challenge the traditional application of workplace methods of training delivery and suggest that training for permanent or long term sport volunteers be reconceptualised (in line with Griffeths and Armour, 2012) to include less formal methods based on continuous interaction between the volunteer, the volunteer community, and the organisation.

Costa *et al* (2006) posit that the volunteer experience is comprised of two major components: (1) training and (2) the job experience (or task execution). Therefore volunteers evaluate their experience based on these two components (training and the job experience). Further, Costa *et al* suggest that since training and the execution of the job experience occur at different points in the volunteer experience they can be treated as separate. However, the limited research conducted on sports volunteer motivation, training, and satisfaction (Costa *et al*, 2006; Elstad, 1996; Kemp, 2002) are conducted at events (or mega-events) which take place over short periods of time and do not take into account the ongoing needs of ‘permanent’ volunteers. This research shall define ‘permanent volunteers’ as those who volunteer at the same organisation on an ongoing basis and who have to be prepared for a number of different assignments, events, and customer type. For these volunteers it should be noted that training is an ongoing process, and the delivery of training, whatever the method, needs to be clear, concise, and conscientious of the volunteers’ personal time.

In her study of hospice volunteers’ training Wilson (2000), found that volunteer training is the foundation for a strong and dedicated volunteer programme and must be based in knowledge of the organisation, attitudes towards the service provided, and team rapport and relationships with other volunteers (and paid staff). Although the notions of delivering knowledge and assessing attitudes had differing meanings amongst the volunteers and the management, there was agreement that in order to be successful the training programme would have to meet the needs of a diverse volunteer population. Volunteers come from differing educational backgrounds, career paths, socio-economic situations, and life stages

(see table 4.1). Interestingly, volunteers saw training as a system of obtaining and sharing and important for three different reasons. First, they acknowledged the need to be competent in the job functions that they would perform (a topic that will be covered in Chapter 6). Secondly, they saw training as a gateway to the social benefits of volunteering (covered in more depth in Chapter 6). Lastly, volunteers discussed the fact that orientation, as part of the training process, was the first official encounter that they as volunteers had with the organisation and was important in creating first impressions and shaping attitudes (as found in Costa *et al*, 2006). For volunteers this initial impression lays the foundation upon which a solid relationship between volunteer and organisation can be built. This last point is of paramount importance within the retention of volunteer workers given that they (the volunteers) are giving their time freely. In fact, many (Costa *et al*, 2006; Graham, 2004; Stebbins, 2002 & 2004) would argue that the volunteer experience is a leisure experience, which unlike work settings, is chosen to obtain enjoyment or pleasure. An organisation, such as The Sports Academy (TSA), that depends on ‘permanent’ volunteers for the daily operation of its programmes must be cognizant that an overbearing and non-enjoyable training experience could lead the volunteer to sever their relationship.

Volunteer Views of Training and Orientation

Knowledge acquisition was an ever-present theme with volunteers. Even in its fourth season of operation, TSA is still learning, as an organisation, how to run different types of events and effectively use their volunteer pool to create the efficiency, effectiveness, and the public persona that an organisation of this magnitude is expected to present. One of the

difficult tasks for management at TSA is evaluating and successfully navigating the vast number of opinions as to what the appropriate knowledge actually is. A task made even more difficult by the large number of different motivating factors that drive people to volunteer at TSA. It is important to note that when this research was conducted, the orientation and training programme at TSA could best be described as piece-meal, with little formal structure to the programme outside of the initial orientation.

In speaking with the volunteers, the definition of appropriate knowledge ranged from basic information about the organisation and the story behind it, to job-specific training, and on to information about the operational status of the organisation. Definitions varied based on motivations, educational background, career, and life stage. A contingent of younger volunteers who are currently enrolled in a local college went as far as to discuss the organisation's role in giving the knowledge and skills that would allow them to secure employment in the field of sport management (at TSA or elsewhere) after graduation. For this group, personal development - the knowledge, experience, and acquisition of new skills are of the utmost importance. Wang (2004: 421) and Sharifafar *et al* (2011) agree that this type of volunteer values not only the chance to gain new knowledge and experience but also the opportunity to challenge themselves and test their existing skills.

Other volunteers who were at different stages in their careers and levels of education did not share the same enthusiasm for training and knowledge acquisition. Some volunteers who gave their time to better the community, or to get out and be social (leisure experience), expressed a desire to have the information to do the job required and nothing

more. Many felt that within the tasks that they were assigned, their life and career experience gave them the tools and knowledge needed. For these volunteers especially, the delivery of pertinent information was important.

Opinions also differed greatly amongst the volunteers regarding the method of training that should be used to deliver the required knowledge. At one extreme, some volunteers such as Mark wanted,

“To be shown what I need to do and let me get on with it. If I have questions then I’ll ask. I really have no desire to sit in a classroom for any length of time.”

As a 70 year old business owner, Mark feels that he has the skills needed to perform the tasks that will be assigned to him. His expectations are that he will be given the information that he needs and the freedom to execute his role. This approach was shared by many of the volunteers who either brought a lot of work experience with them, or volunteered in jobs that could be considered non-specialised. Other volunteers such as Justin, a college student, stated,

“I want as much training as I can get. I am giving my time for nothing, so what does TSA have to lose by sitting me in training for a few weeks? I’d like to get as much as I can out of this experience before I leave.”

As a college student with limited work experience Justin volunteers at TSA to learn, network, and hopefully gain employment. His expectations are that the organisation will provide him with the knowledge and skills to be successful. He also sees training as a win-win situation due to the fact that he is there on his own time in a volunteer capacity. This view is shared by Ellen, a professional coach who usually works in highly specialised tasks and feels that these specialised tasks require extensive training. Ellen states,

“Some of the technical and board work that we have to do is very complicated, and if you are going to volunteer to do this type of work, you are going to have to be willing to put some time into training. You cannot mess this up on the day of an event.”

Ellen describes the difference between specialised and non-specialised jobs. Volunteers expecting to engage in specialised roles should expect to participate in training programmes to ensure that they have the technical knowhow to perform tasks.

The idea of training then, was categorized into three major areas; orientation, task-specific training, and ongoing training. Orientation deals with the knowledge of the organisation that a volunteer will need to be successful. This knowledge is generally delivered in most organisations during an orientation programme with the goal of acclimating the volunteers to the organisational culture and educating them on the mission, vision, and values. Task-specific training is the preparation that each individual will need to carry out the tasks assigned to them. Ongoing training includes organisational updates, event specific information, and the sharing of new information as it becomes available. Within each of these categories volunteers discussed knowledge, method, and target audience.

A final nuance that surfaced in discussions regarding training was the common substitution of “training” with the words “information” and “communication”. Many volunteers felt that what TSA failed to do was share information in a timely and appropriate manner and suggested that this idea of open communication and information sharing would make any formal training programme unnecessary.

Orientation

Orientation can lay the foundation for a successful relationship between volunteer and organisation. If mismanaged the orientation process can leave the volunteer asking themselves if they want to return (Costa *et al*, 2006). Andy, a college aged volunteer, describes the differences that he sees between this volunteer engagement and other experiences that he has had.

“Well other organisations that I volunteered with have all had a formal set up in terms of orientation and paperwork. You are told what your role is and training is involved throughout the whole process. If they (TSA) set it up like an actual volunteer programme it would be different. It’s a crazy beginning as it stands now.”

Andy describes the lack of continuity and organisation in the current orientation programme at TSA and gives a sense that other organisations not only do it better, but care more. According to Costa *et al* (2006) since orientation is at the beginning of the volunteer experience it will have an impact on the overall experience itself. Essentially, volunteers may decide to terminate their commitment if they do not enjoy and feel prepared by the orientation process. Julia states,

“My first day on the job was nerve racking because you are held at that point accountable and people start asking you questions...you know what? I wasn’t ready for it.”

Julia’s sentiments reflect the popular feeling that from the beginning of their volunteer experience many of the volunteers feel as though they were not prepared by the organisation and just thrown into the mix without the right information. Many of the volunteers have helped the organisation to put together a volunteer orientation programme, but still assert that it is not enough. Although management recognizes that there is a gap in

the training process very little has been done to rectify it. Sarah, the hospitality manager and head of the volunteer programme explains,

“Because right off the bat we only cared about having a warm body in the facility due to the fact that we were not sure of what the needs were. Now we have taken the core group (of volunteers) on tours, we have monthly meetings and discuss different things, and try to keep them informed. Going forward we hope to have a more formal training programme with a manual and instruction.”

Sarah’s initial statement is important because she describes an organisation that brought volunteers on board without really knowing what they, the organisation, actually needed. There was also no consideration for what the volunteer needed or for what their expectations might be. Sarah’s comments also outline management’s recognition that the programme has, and has had, inadequacies and attribute the lack of organisation to the newness of the organisation and the dynamic environment in which they are conducting business. Grace, who started as a volunteer and is now the manager of administrative services, is able to look at the training issue from both sides of table. She shares her vision of what the orientation programme should consist of.

“I see it (training and orientation) as moving around. I see it as giving them (volunteer) the answers to the things that people are curious about. If they want to take it further and learn more about TSA, that’s fine, but they are training to give the important information. Getting to know the facilities better, teaching them the mission, teaching them what we want from them, and having them understand the roles that they will be taking on and making sure that we match them up with a job that matches their interests and motivations. So if a Cindy is a swimmer and wants to volunteer in that area, we make sure that she is not stuck at track and field and that she knows everything that she needs to for the swimming events.”

What Grace describes here is the organisation’s ability to match volunteers with the right task according to their motivation and/or interest, providing the appropriate training for that volunteer (based on experience), and putting them to work in an environment which

they will enjoy. Essentially, the organisation will attempt to recognize the expectations that volunteers have when they come to TSA and try to give them the experience that they desire and therefore ensure satisfaction.

To Grace's point, volunteers assert that many of the key issues that cause frustration could be eliminated in the orientation process. Gary is one of the most vocal of the volunteers when it comes to training.

“We are the face of the organisation. We are the first people that the patrons see. We wear the red shirts with the logo on it. Ergo, we are the people who are approached with questions. We need the answers, and we need to know the facility and be able to help people. That should happen from day one. As representatives of the organisation we should never be put on the job without the right training. Orientation is step one.”

He goes on to speak about the volunteers who never came back after they were thrown into the mix without proper preparation.

“Yeah people have left, not many, but some. And do people feel frustrated when we can't answer basic questions? Hell yes we do! We feel stupid and pissed off about it.”

The frustration that volunteers feel when they cannot perform tasks to the level of proficiency that they (the volunteers) expect is addressed in Gary's statement. According to Gary, volunteers want to do a good job and represent the organisation well. When they cannot achieve a level of proficiency they experience frustration especially when they feel embarrassed. Volunteers want to feel that they understand the facility and can serve the patrons well. Volunteers need to feel like they are making a difference and doing a good job, and most importantly, they want to be informed. Gary's statement about “feeling stupid” addresses an underlying feeling that not enough information is shared in a timely

manner. This speaks to the importance that volunteers feel the organisation puts on the services they render. By asserting that volunteers are the “face of the organisation” and “the first people the patrons see” Gary illustrates that volunteers are on the front lines of customer service and need to be the first people that information is disseminated to. Dave took Gary’s sentiments a step further when he asserted,

“We as volunteers are here on our time, and we don’t have to do this. Even though I am gaining experience, and that’s a bonus for someone my age, I really don’t have to stay. I can walk at any time, and so can anyone. As this place gets busier the preparation is going to have to be better.”

Whereas Gary outlined the importance of volunteers getting prepared with information in a timely manner, Dave essentially states that if the preparation does not get better people will leave. The implied power struggle contained in the statement “I can walk at any time, and so can anyone” shows the fragile relationship that can exist between the volunteers and the organisation. Further, this sentiment of not being prepared and looking/feeling stupid in front of patrons was a prevalent theme throughout the organisation.

Abby, one of the original volunteers at TSA, says that there is general consensus (amongst volunteers) about what is needed to prepare volunteers in the orientation programme.

“I mean who would know better than the volunteers about what is needed? So I think some kind of orientation that gives an overall view of what is happening here. Tours...so you know where everything is and some basic information about the facility so that you can answer questions. That’s all you need. I bet that most of the questions that people ask are the same ones over and over again. There are probably 50 questions that people out there ask over and over again, and if the volunteers had a list of those questions and an answer it would be a good tool from the onset. Not that you will be able to memorize everything, but if you read it over and over again some things might stick. Understanding the mission is very important in this environment.”

Similar to Gary's and Dave's previous statements, Abby's views hint at a power struggle between the volunteers and the organisation. Essentially, Abby sees the volunteers themselves as the place for the organisation to find out what is and is not needed in the volunteer programme. The organisation, on the other hand, wants to tell the volunteers what they need to know. This power-relations issue creates a dichotomy, especially for older, educated or experienced volunteers who feel they have the knowledge to evoke change, but are not in a position to do so.

Many volunteers felt that they did not have a total grasp of the organisation and that the mission and vision had not really been shared. Ricky stated,

“It's not very clear what they are trying to do. If you look at the mission statement, it is all over the place and heading in like a hundred different directions. Plus they keep changing the name of the place you know...”

Ricky experiences frustration because he cannot talk to the direction that the organisation is heading in. TSA is a new venture and is drawing attention and creating excitement throughout the region. Patrons ask many questions regarding the future, and Ricky does not feel as though he can answer those questions. Megan adds insight to the frustration of not knowing what you are doing during your first days as a volunteer,

“I almost did not come back. The first couple of events I had no Idea what I was doing. Initial in-depth training was needed because I was so lost and couldn't answer questions. I was not up to speed enough at the time, and now I think there is a process by which volunteers are brought up to speed on the mission, or what's coming next and so on.”

Megan's frustration with the lack of information and preparation was such that she almost left. She shares a common experience for new volunteers who are put to work without the

correct training or information. Volunteers have the expectation that they will be able to execute tasks and service patrons and feel good about what they are doing. When they find themselves unable to answer questions, their expectations have not been met. Abby echoes these thoughts and adds that volunteers feel a sense of low self worth when they cannot answer questions about the organisation that they have volunteered their time to represent.

“I remember my first time volunteering here, and I felt really uneasy because people asked me so many questions that I did not have the answers for so I felt like an idiot. So I think it is wonderful to have some kind of a training programme for your volunteers to at least give them basic information to make sure that they know where everything is so that when people ask they can tell them and have the ability to answer general questions.”

Abby ties the importance of training to meeting volunteer expectations and avoiding potentially embarrassing situations. Volunteers feel that the preparation that they have received to this point was sub standard. Given that volunteers and management alike feel that the volunteers are the ‘face’ of the organisation it would not be unrealistic for the volunteers to expect that they would be given the appropriate knowledge and tools to perform that function. So, what makes volunteers stay at an organisation that experiences power struggles between staff and volunteers and does not provide adequate preparation and training?

Many volunteers discuss their loyalty to the organisation and what they believe it will do for the economic condition of the local community. They caution, however, that as the organisation and facilities grow, the pool of volunteers will need to expand and they will need to recruit from outside of the immediate community. According to Lenny,

“Once we start pulling more and more people from outside of the community, things are going to have to be more real. By that I mean organised. I think this

group of volunteers is different. Not many people would put up with the shit that we put up with. So they have to be ready.”

Lenny’s assertion is that the local nature of the volunteer pool has allowed TSA to move slowly in the implementation of orientation and training programmes. He says that as more and more people from outside of the local community join the volunteer programme things will need to be more structured and organised. To this point, Lenny’s implication is that people have dealt with the frustration and disorganisation because they see the long-term economic benefits to the local area. Most volunteers recognize that the organisation is working towards a formalized orientation programme, but are unified in their opinion that it should have been there from the start.

Some even take the orientation programme a step further and propose that new volunteers need to be assigned a mentor to shadow during their first few volunteer engagements.

Abby says,

“After orientation I think that they need to work with someone when they first start. Like a mentor or a volunteer buddy. I got to work side by side with an actual employee when I first started so I had the advantage of learning that way.”

Ricky also suggested a similar scenario,

“I think one of the things that they could have done during the first few weeks was a shadow-type situation by following someone around who was doing the types of jobs that I would be doing. I can see what’s going on, and when they feel that I am prepared and have a grasp of things, then let me loose. I think too many times people are dropped in untrained and untaught...so for the first few weeks training is not a waste of money, because I am not getting paid.”

Both Ricky and Abby speak to a previous point that volunteers are the best ones to prepare volunteers for the tasks that lay ahead. What Ricky and Abby are asserting is that part of

responsibility for the training and orientation process should sit with the volunteers themselves and that the organisation should recognize the expertise that resides within the volunteer group itself. One last concern that was voiced by some of the older volunteers was the amount of time that a training/orientation programme should take. Mike, the operations director, laid out what he thought was needed in a comprehensive training programme.

“I like the approach of formalizing it to the point where you cannot be a volunteer at this facility/organisation until you have completed the training. I think it adds to the validity and prestige of the position as well as prestige. I also think that it adds to the credibility and entices people to want to be involved with something that is real and organised. People tend to realize that a good structured programme with good training is worth being a part of. You have to remember that these people are the face of the organisation and have to be good. So scheduled trainings for new volunteers on a rotating basis throughout the year (monthly, quarterly, etc.) with time spent learning the culture and operations and then breaking into smaller groups where they learn the final nuances of the area that they will be volunteering in (hospitality, parking, etc). Although lengthy, this format will minimize people’s time in training by having they focus on the area that they are specializing in. And finally we build a system of reinforcement such as FAQ sheets, newsletters and emails. There will also be events that we need to conduct a whole new training programme for specifically, but that will all come together in tiers and phases. How big it gets will determine the frequency and time.”

Mike proposes a very structured orientation and training process in which people learn the specific knowledge and skills that will apply to the tasks that they signed up for. Other managers disagreed with this process and had concern over taking too much time from people. Some volunteers confirmed this concern asserting that they did not want to spend large amounts of time in a classroom. Sarah, the hospitality operations director observed that,

“The organisation has to be careful with how much we ask of our volunteers. I think that a long drawn out orientation programme would turn a lot of people off. Most of the volunteer jobs are easy enough and we have to get them up to speed in a quick and efficient manner.”

Sarah is conscious of the fact that people are giving their time and wants to make the training process as timely and succinct as possible. From the volunteer viewpoint, Stuart stated,

“I don’t have time to sit through training. I’m game for anything else, but I can’t sit in a classroom for hours...I sit in meetings all day as it is. It’s that simple really.”

As with many of the older volunteers at TSA Stuart brings a lifetime of professional experience with him. He expects to give his time helping the organisation and not sitting in a training class. Stuart’s aversion to sitting in a classroom has more to do with the expectation that his time will be used appropriately, but also hints that Stuart himself has the power to decide if he sits in a classroom or not. Eileen put the volunteer roles and training in perspective telling of her experience volunteering elsewhere.

“I volunteer at the local hospital, and they have a long and detailed training programme. But they have to because of what they do and the roles that you fill there. We are not saving lives here (at TSA). We are saying hello and answering questions. So long, drawn out training would be a turn off for me.”

Eileen speaks of how the perceived importance of the tasks performed by the volunteers combined with what motivates the volunteer has an effect on the volunteer’s willingness to attend training. Generally speaking, volunteers agree that an orientation process needs to be in place, but conflict on the delivery mechanism and time for the programme. Younger volunteers who are driven by personal development have a greater desire for formal training whereas older more experienced volunteers are more likely to want a quick and to the point programme that delivers the appropriate knowledge and information.

Specific Skills Training

Since most of the tasks performed by volunteers at TSA can be classified as non-specialised (taking tickets, greeting patrons at the door, and fulfilling usher type responsibilities) there was little discussion with regards to specialised role training (See Table 5.1 for a detailed breakdown of volunteer roles). Indeed, most of the volunteers who fulfil the specialised or skilled volunteer positions either come to the facility with the event, and are therefore not part of the volunteer community at TSA, or come to the organisation with past experience and training in hand. There was one volunteer role that was an exception to this rule. This role was that of the Facility Manager, a role that seems to be reserved for the college-age volunteers or volunteers looking to gain experience in the sport management field.

Specialised Roles	Non-Specialised Roles (listed from most common to least common jobs)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parking Contollers – Control and manage the flow of traffic in and out of the facility. 2. Event Specific Specialist – Generally brought in from the outside for specific events. Are usually affiliated with the intricacies of the sporting event. Roles can include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Referees/Officials b. Timers c. Scoreboard Techs d. Technical Crew e. Camera Operation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greeters – Welcome Patrons at door and answer questions 2. Ticket Sales – Sell tickets for entrance to event. 3. Ticket Takers/Ushers – Check tickets for entrance to specific areas. Show people to seats. 4. Runners – deliver important paperwork to various parts of the event 5. Janitorial – Empty garbage cans and keep facility clean. 6. Information Desk – Help patrons with event information and local/community information 7. Security – Patrol restricted areas and check credentials for entrance 8. Team/Athlete Liaison – Check teams in and act as liaison for any athlete problems

Table 5.1 Volunteer Roles at The Sports Academy

Only four of the volunteers interviewed served in the facility manager capacity. Although the sampling is small, their insights will serve as valuable information for a growing

organisation that can expect to experience an increase in the number of specialised or skilled volunteers in the future.

In fact, Mike, the operations manager, already expects that number to increase. He says,

“I think there will be a divide. The roles that we have had so far, the greeters and the ticket takers, are in the roles that they (current volunteers) want to be in. They want to be the smiling face as people walk in. The specialised groups are going to grow greatly. The question is who do you want to be in those groups? I think the answer is the kids who are juniors and seniors in college who want to work in the sports industry and need to get the real life exposure, experience and networking. For those individuals learning the industry and those specialised roles and skills are the key to future success. Obviously we will have to give them detailed training. We have not gotten too deep into that yet, with regards to the specialised skills, but it will definitely include a lot of input from the programme (department) directors.”

Mike outlines the process of role specialization that the organisation expects to happen and the training structure that will need to be employed. This speaks greatly to the changes that will have to occur in the training process at TSA. Mike also acknowledges the current frustration with people in the facility manager roles.

“It is very hard for them and they have a lot of responsibilities and they are put in positions where they have to make organisational level decisions. I have lost quite a few over time because we have not had any training in place to make them successful.”

Mike speaks of losing a number of volunteer Facility Managers over time because the organisation was unable to prepare them and give them the tools to be successful. To this point, the facility manager role was the most specialised of all the volunteer roles at TSA, where volunteers were put in positions to make organisational level decision with regard to operations and safety. Volunteers in this role question whether the organisation has really thought this through, or are they only using volunteers to avoid paying employees? As the

organisation grows, the roles that volunteers play will change from predominantly non-specialised roles to include specialised (more specific and skilled) tasks. To date, the inability to prepare the few people who perform specialised roles has resulted in substantial turnover. The more specialised the task or role, the greater potential there is for frustration to mount, especially when there is no training programme in place, and current volunteer Facility Managers have experienced this frustration first hand.

Volunteer Facility Managers share the same responsibilities as their full-time, paid counterparts. At times they are left to run entire buildings with events in progress. They are responsible for emergency situations, customer problems, heating, cooling, lighting, clean-up, and shutting the facility down. Given the scope of the responsibilities, Andy describes how his shift would begin every night.

“From the first day on the job I was just given a t-shirt and told if anyone gives you money just put it here and mark it down and make sure that no one is running around. I was told the exact same thing at the beginning of every shift, and if they needed me to run a clock for an event then that is what I did. There were no standard operating procedures; I was on my own.”

Andy’s frustration with lack of structure and training was a common theme among the Facility Managers. Being left in charge of a facility with little direction or training left Andy feeling isolated. After recalling an experience relating to a traumatic injury to a patron, a situation that he was not prepared for, Andy speaks about specific training for people in his role.

“It all goes back to training. If you are going to be put in a situation, even on the field, and I know a lot of coaches are mandated to have a CPR and first aid training, but if I was being called the “site manager” while I was on duty then I think that we all should be adequately prepared and trained in first aid and CPR without question, and secondly there needs to be protocol that has to be followed.”

Essentially, Andy feels that the organisation should look at a role, assess the potential situations that will present themselves, and prepare the volunteer (through training) to deal with it. Ricky supports this assessment saying,

“Yeah, I was appalled and still am that people that have worked and volunteered there have not had to take that kind of training, especially in the roles that I was in. I thought that for sure that it was going to be the situation that you had to have it. Even if you’re not going to have to use it...just have it for liability issues. Being able to take care of a situation if the need arises.”

Ricky believes that this training is necessary and has refused to take on certain responsibilities that he feels he is not qualified for. He believes that volunteers should never be put in a situation until the organisation has invested the time to train them. Tim offered some further insight, saying,

“We were not prepared for this job and were essentially treated like full time employees with little consideration for our personal schedules. What made it worse was the continued feeling of dread that you had for the first couple of weeks until you got comfortable with everything. You have to understand that the real problem is not that they (the academy) don’t care, it’s that they are so understaffed that we become the best alternative. It got better as time went on.”

Although Tim feels that things got better as time went on because he got used to the role, the ‘dread’ he felt in the initial couple of weeks has the potential affect volunteer motivation or even cause attrition. Interestingly, Tim does not separate the organisation’s responsibility for hiring enough full time employees from their ability to ‘care’ enough to train volunteers. Justin supports the contention that things got better over time because the volunteers became more comfortable in their role.

“It was frustrating, and I felt very overwhelmed at times. I was not prepared to be thrown in the mix, but I knew that was going to be the case. In the long run I don’t think anyone is prepared to be frustrated, but it happens when you are running around like a chicken with their head cut off all the time. Time on the job served as training though, and it gets better.”

Although frustrated at first, Justin found that time on the job served as his training. Like Tim, Justin was able overcome the frustrating times until he became comfortable with the role that he was in. All four volunteers quoted above describe the lonely feeling of being left in a role that they were not prepared for. Some even described it as a sense of dread. How does the feeling of dread and being overwhelmed due to lack of training affect the volunteers' ability to do their tasks and their desire to remain in the job? What effect does it have on the patrons of the organisation? In some cases lack of training leads to frustration which in turn, leads to a decrease in motivation. Three of the volunteers felt that things got better with time, learned things on-the-job and became competent enough to get by. Although three of the four Facility Managers interviewed were able to overcome their 'dread' and frustration, seven others ended their relationship with TSA within a week of engaging the organisation. Regarding the importance of training Ricky says,

"I kind of was not really satisfied at first, because when you are trained to do something you feel more of a purpose, you know what's expected. You know the different things that need to be done. When you are not trained and you're just thrown into something, you just feel like whatever happens. You don't have the sense of responsibility and purpose. So I feel that a training process would have made the whole situation better."

Volunteers want to understand their role in the organisation. Ricky describes the sense of purpose that volunteers get when they feel prepared. With their expectation (of being prepared) met, they are ready to take on the role and feel competent and in control. When the expectation of being prepared is not met, volunteers feel that they have no control and withdraw the volunteer relationship.

Of the four volunteers that had assumed the specialised roles, all but one left the organisation before the interview/research process was completed. During follow up phone calls and emails all three responded that ‘it just was not worth the aggravation anymore.’ Of the four, only Ricky stayed with the organisation past the initial three month commitment. Andy walked out in the middle of a shift due to other factors, Tim left because he could not take the pressure anymore and Justin saw his commitment out and left.

Retraining and Sharing New Information

Ongoing training, refresher training, and the general sharing of information constituted a single entity amongst volunteers at TSA. Many volunteers spoke of a training manual that they would add to as time went on. The manual would consist of memos, new procedures, and updated information. Others suggested a volunteer section on the organisation’s webpage that would feature updates with information and relevant training material. The most common suggestion from older volunteers is encapsulated in the following statement, “Why can’t they just take five minutes before an event or before a shift and tell us what’s new and what we are expected to do?”

The consistent theme that runs through all three suggestions is the communication of information. Within the volunteer community at TSA the communication of information is used interchangeably (or mistakenly some might say) with the word training. As previously stated, most of the volunteer jobs at TSA can be described as non-specialised and centre on customer service type functions. The biggest complaint that volunteers have

with regards to not having information is ‘feeling stupid’ or ‘looking like an idiot’. Therefore the expediency and accuracy of information is of utmost importance to the volunteers.

“All we need is a do’s and don’ts if you will, and of course information. This place is the talk of the town, and volunteers like to be the people with new information.”

This comment made by Stuart illustrates the level of importance that some volunteers put on information, with little or no real consideration for the actual training process. For Stuart, and many of the older, more experienced volunteers at TSA, all he needs is current information which he can then process and apply to the various situations using the professional experience that he has gained over the years. In fact, Stuart’s assessment reflects the general feeling among the older more experienced volunteers (that training should consist of information and TSA’s way of doing things). Eileen says,

“I don’t think that there is a disregard for the training process. It’s just that a lot of us are or have been professionals and business managers in our everyday life. We don’t need to be trained on how to handle people...we do that every day. We just need the information and told what the organisation does and doesn’t want us to do.”

Lenny says,

“We all bring something to the table, but we do need to train people on the TSA way.”

Cathy agrees that formalized training may be overkill, and that the disbursement of information is the most pressing need.

“I don’t know about training. These volunteers are professionals for the most part. I am talking about little things, like let them know your name and give them information about TSA. Find out if it is their first time at TSA and give them the information that they need and familiarize them with things like the volunteers (all wearing red TSA shirts) are here to help you so don’t be afraid to approach any of

the red shirts for help. That is all kind of routine, so I don't know that a big official training is needed. Maybe a little customer service and professionalism will be needed for new people as the numbers grow."

Stuart, Eileen, Lenny and Cathy iterate the beliefs of older volunteers that, in contrast to the younger college age volunteers, they have no expectation of the organisation when it comes to formal training. All they need to be successful is the current information. In fact, they have expectations that the organisation will respect and utilize the expertise that they bring. They believe that the lifelong and professional experience that they bring to the organisation is sufficient, but concede that training may be needed as the volunteer community expands beyond its current realm. For these volunteers success lies in the sharing of information on both a formal and informal level.

Volunteers tied the sharing of information as an ongoing training process to the relationship between volunteers and paid staff. One volunteer who was not part of the interview pool stated, "We need more direction than training, and I guess they, (the paid staff) need to be more open to answering questions and helping people learn." Devon discussed this topic further when she said,

"They (paid staff) need to be more aware of us as volunteers. They often think that we don't need all the information, and *we (volunteers)* end up looking like idiots."

Devon addresses the perceived gap in communication between the paid staff and volunteers stating that paid staff needs to be more aware of volunteer needs. However, there is such a thirst for information in the volunteer ranks that the lines between what is appropriate to share and what is not have become blurred. From an operational stand point Devon wants her information so that she can perform her job to a satisfactory level and

leave feeling good about what she achieved. For other volunteers information about TSA is social currency in the community (the more you have, the richer you are), and they want information for the sake of information. Megan believes that the continual communication between the paid staff and volunteers is crucial.

“They know what’s happening. They should be our link to the organisation, and we work beside them every time that we come. So communication and the implementation of an informal training programme where someone is presenting the information that they want the volunteer community to know.”

Megan describes a team effort where appropriate information is shared in a timely manner through a synergistic working relationship between volunteers and paid staff. If this synergy does not exist, a communication gap forms between the paid staff and the volunteer community, and the dissemination of information will be slowed. As Megan points out, open communication is key to the success of the organisation, but who determines what information is needed? The volunteers or the organisation? Other volunteers spoke of a system of training and information sharing that could best be described as on-the job-training or possibly an elementary form of experiential learning. Julia says,

“I am more of an on-the-job training type of person. I think that you can tell people things, but they will not always remember it when they need it if it is not used right away. I sometimes have trouble pulling stuff up that I don’t use on a regular basis. So I want to learn things as I need them.”

Devon takes the idea of learning by doing a step further and suggests that volunteers should learn by experiencing the facility from the patron’s point of view.

“I believe that as you use the facility, you learn more about it, and that enables you to truly become an ambassador for the facility because you have that personal experience. So it is not that we all want something, but I think that it would be a nice gesture and it would be advantageous to the organisation.”

She goes on to say,

“I’m just saying that it does bug some people because we want to experience the user’s point of view. That’s why I am saying just a voucher for one or two time usage. Then, if I like it I can buy a membership. So it is just trying the new things so that you can pass the information along. Kind of learning by doing.”

These ideas hold a lot of weight with the volunteers, but management has struggled to assess if this is a real training experience or are the volunteers trying to get use of the facility as a reward for their volunteer services. A further question arises when one considers the nature of the jobs that the volunteers perform and the correlation to experiencing the patron’s point of view. From managements’ point of view there is very little cross over between the two. This issue will be discussed further in the section on rewards for volunteer work.

Conclusion

Essentially, volunteers at TSA use the terms training and information synonymously. Given that most volunteer jobs at TSA are service oriented and require a high level of interaction with patrons, volunteers do not believe that the organisation has to prepare them with the skills to perform tasks, but does have an obligation to provide them with the pertinent information. Therefore, volunteers want information that is current and delivered in an appropriate manner within a timeframe that will help them perform their tasks to high standards. They do not want to be left ‘feeling stupid’ because the organisation was unable or unwilling to inform them of changes in events or policy. There were exceptions with the volunteers who performed the more specialised roles such as facility manager. These volunteers felt that the organisation should provide them with first aid or CPR training, a

process that would require certification through an outside entity. However, even within the more specialised roles, most of the knowledge that volunteers sought was informational. They wanted to be informed on policy changes, event changes, and most importantly wanted the information to communicate with and solve problems for patrons.

Volunteers' tendency to blend the meaning of training and information is an important one within the context of this research because frustration and satisfaction can be tied to the organisation's ability or willingness to share or provide the information that volunteers desire. Additionally, the fact is that volunteers see room for improvement in the process by which they get the information to complete their assigned duties. Further, views on how and what training should be delivered varied according to age, experience, and motivation. Older volunteers who brought with them more experience did not want to spend time in training sessions since they felt that they had the expertise to complete those tasks that were assigned to them. They wanted current information that would help them help the organisation by servicing patrons at a high level. Similarly, volunteers who volunteered for love of sport did not want to spend time in a training classroom. Again, they felt like they had the experience needed to complete the tasks that they came to do and did not want their time wasted. Younger, less experienced, volunteers who tended to be motivated by career advancement or development and meeting professional contacts wanted more training than the organisation could provide.

Although management at TSA has expressed a desire to (and is in the process to) create formal training programs, it is advisable for them to step back and assess the blended

meaning that volunteers within this community assign to training and information. In an environment where training is used to mean acquisition of information, the creation and mandate for formal systems of training may serve to de-motivate a volunteer community that is not willing to give its time to be trained when all they want is information. This may force management to reconsider what they believe to be training and move towards an interactive community-based system of information sharing.

Volunteers felt that a structured orientation programme was important, but lacked any continuity at this time. In line with research (Costa *et al*, 2006; Wilson, 2000), orientation was discussed as a good time to prepare volunteers by introducing them to the organisations culture, structure, mission, and procedures. It was also identified as a good time to for the organisation to familiarise itself with volunteer motivation and discuss task assignments. Interestingly, volunteers felt that they should have input into the content of the orientation programme in the role of subject matter experts. Volunteers feel that the implementation of a comprehensive orientation programme will help alleviate the frustrations that volunteers are feeling as they take on their initial assignments at TSA.

Task specific training was found to be non-existent at TSA and was found to cause high levels of frustration among volunteers who took on specialised roles. Although this number was small at the time this research was conducted, future implications could be important as the organisation grows. Ongoing training or retraining was viewed within this volunteer community as a system of communication, a tab on a webpage, a classroom activity, or an on-the-job experience. The message that volunteers send is clear. By

whatever means necessary, they want the information and ability to do their job and represent the organisation well. For the volunteers it is the absence of information, not the method of delivery, that causes job frustration, especially when the situation could have been avoided. The next chapter will further the discussion on volunteer training and satisfaction by introducing the concept of frustration and how volunteers view differing levels and types of frustration whilst fulfilling their volunteer commitment.

Chapter 6

The Frustration Factor

Introduction

The definition of what training is, how it should be delivered, and to whom it should be delivered, was influenced by motivation factors, age, and professional experience. Further disparity in definition exists due to the use of the word training as a synonym for information or communication thereof. Data presented in Chapter 5 found that most volunteer expectations with regard to training revolved around the communication of information that would help the volunteers do a better job and feel involved in and appreciated by the organization. It is clear within this volunteer community that the desire was not for more or improved systems of formal training, but for better systems by which to communicate and disseminate information from the organization to and among the volunteer community.

Although the volunteer community (at TSA) as a whole support the notion of a strong volunteer programme, disparity exists when it comes to task specific and ongoing training. Older more experienced volunteers do not want training and articulated that they would be unhappy if their time was wasted. Younger, less experienced volunteers, on the other hand, feel that they need it and should be provided with it. Finding the appropriate systems of information sharing, then, can either alleviate or cause frustration based on the volunteer's individual motivation and experience factors.

At TSA the volunteer community speaks of frustration on two levels – task frustration and social frustration. Accordingly, this chapter is divided into two sections covering both levels of frustration. Accordingly, this chapter is divided into two sections covering both levels of frustration. Of the two, task frustration is the easier to define as it refers to the physical and emotional ability to engage in and complete a task and is affected by communication of information, organizational support, and interest in the task. Social frustration, on the other hand refers to the volunteer's feeling of social relevance in their volunteer work and can be affected by feelings of belonging, accomplishment, recognition, and fit. Further, this chapter will explore how the lack of (what is perceived to be) training and systems of information sharing have on the ability of the volunteer to perform their tasks and fit into the organisation as a whole and the volunteer community in particular.

Throughout the observation and interview stages of this research, volunteers rarely spoke of being satisfied or dissatisfied with their volunteer experience. In fact, in interviews when the words (satisfied or dissatisfied) were framed within the context of a question the volunteers often found other ways to phrase their answers. However, the most common theme was the feeling of frustration amongst volunteers when they could not perform their tasks adequately. When asked to explain what was meant by the term frustration, volunteer definitions met the standard dictionary definition of “preventing from attaining a goal or fulfilling a desire” (Websters II, 1996). Volunteers attributed this feeling of frustration to the newness of the organisation and the lack of standardized processes and training available to volunteers. Regardless of this fact, volunteers were cognizant that

they give their time freely and expected the organisation to prepare them to be successful.

Along these lines, Gary, a 40 year old volunteer said,

“It is very frustrating to feel like you have your hands tied with regard to completing a task that you have volunteered for. You know, this is not like my paid job, where I have to put up with it. I can walk at anytime.”

Gary’s words illustrate a sentiment that ran deeply in the volunteer community at The Sports Academy (TSA) and portrays the nature of the potentially fragile relationship that can exist between the organisation and the volunteer. Gary speaks of clarity of communication and empowerment and expects the ability to complete the task or give the service that he was assigned to do. Volunteers spoke with regularity about the frustration that they feel when they do not have the ability to perform their assigned task to a satisfactory level and help the organisation. Although TSA enjoys a very high level of volunteer commitment, due in part to the economic impact that it will have on the local community, many volunteers, such as Gary, clearly understand that they are in no way tied to their volunteer assignment, especially when they are not happy. As Gary outlines in the above quote, he does not volunteer to be in stressful and frustrating situations and is free to walk at anytime he wants to.

Frustration can be directly linked to a volunteer’s motivation for volunteering, their expectations, and the experience that they bring with them. If a volunteer is denied the opportunity to attain their goals or satisfy their motivations, then frustration will impact the overall volunteer experience. As outlined in chapter 4, if a volunteer does not feel that they are being used to their fullest potential, meaning that their past experiences and

expertise are ignored and assigned to menial tasks, then frustration will impact the overall volunteer experience.

For many volunteers, TSA is a different type of experience due to the new and evolving nature of the organisation. This is summed up best by Lenny, the president of the volunteer organizing committee, when he compares this volunteer experience to others that he has had over the years.

“Volunteers are a lot more likely to walk if they are not happier than a paid employee, and you want that because you don’t want unhappy volunteers hanging around. I have been involved in other volunteer things like little league baseball, but this is a little different in that we have no power. I wrote the bylaws for our volunteer committee, and one of the bylaws states that the Operations Manager has to approve any expenditure. It is not like little league where you have full control, or vote on everything, so there is a little political factions developing. Here TSA tells us what we are going to do and then we do it.”

Lenny outlines the importance of volunteer happiness and believes that those who are not happy should leave because the organisation does not need them. Larry also discusses the sense of autonomy that is missing in this volunteer group and the fact that the organisation maintains full decision making authority over every decision that affects the volunteers. As covered in chapter 4, volunteers at TSA have a strong sense of ownership in the programme that they give their time to and want to have an input to the decision making process. At TSA this sense of ownership versus organisation has resulted in a low level ‘power relations’ struggle that leaves many of volunteers feeling frustrated and believing that the organisation does not value their input.

Task Frustration

Task frustration is centred in the volunteer job itself and occurs when the volunteer cannot physically or emotionally perform an assigned task due to organisational roadblocks, lack of knowledge, or lack of motivation. It is the responsibility of the organisation to ensure that the volunteers are armed with the tools and knowledge to be successful by adding value to the organisation and fulfilling the motivational needs that drive the volunteer to engage with the organisation. This section will be divided into three sections addressing frustration due to (1) lack of training and communication, (2) lack of organisational support, and (3) lack of interest in task.

Lack of Preparation and Communication

The majority of volunteer jobs at TSA are centred on hospitality and customer service. However, during non-event hours volunteers are often utilized as facility managers and custodians. In most of these roles volunteers act as the face of the organisation, interacting with patrons, answering questions, giving directions, and offering general assistance. In these types of roles volunteers often feel frustration when they cannot assist patrons to the level that they feel they are expected to. Devon, a long time volunteers states,

“The organisation has to understand that we do not want to look like the idiot and that we want to help and do a good job. They need to give us the information and trust us to do a good job. I don’t think that that exists yet. In this instance I was really angry that night. We need to know everything that is going on all over the facility so that we can truly help everyone.”

Devon shares the frustration that she and other volunteers experience when they are not prepared for the task and are unable to deliver the type of service that she and others expect. Further, Devon posits a lack of trust as the reason for the lack of preparation that

has been provided. This sentiment regarding preparation was supported by others such as Abby who shared her thoughts,

“I think a large part of volunteering is when you come...I remember my first time volunteering here and I felt really uneasy because people asked me so many questions that I did not have the answers for, so I felt like an idiot. So I think it is wonderful to have some kind of a training programme for your volunteers to at least give them basic information, to make sure that they know where everything is, so that when people ask they can tell them and have the ability to answer general questions like ‘how big is this track?’ and as a volunteer I just felt kind of ignorant if I could not answer the questions.”

In line with Cathy’s and Abby’s thoughts, volunteers often feel that the sources of task frustration can easily be avoided through clarity in communication and the free flow of information. Cathy, a volunteer who loves sport and just wants to be around it, was speaking after dealing with a situation that left her feeling under-informed responded by saying that,

“A system of communication, even a one line memo explaining the policy change, would have kept things consistent. We, as volunteers, like to get things done right. Again it was no one’s fault, but a system of communication would have worked. I mean this facility is huge, the crowds are huge, and keeping everyone on the same page is hard, especially as the facility grows and grows.”

Cathy’s experience, although centred on a lack of communication, also speaks to the issue of preparation. Volunteers want to be ready to perform the task that is assigned for them. For Cathy, success in this area is not limited to the physical ability to complete a task, but also includes changes in information, policy and procedures that impact the execution of the task itself.

Other volunteers, especially the younger college students who volunteer to gain experience and help further their career, spoke of training and preparation, or the lack thereof, as the

key to their frustration when trying to complete tasks. Unlike the older volunteers who bring with them a large amount of real-world work experience, the younger volunteers have little to no experiential resources from which to pull. These younger volunteers simply do not have the ability to “wing it” as the older volunteers do. In fact, Lenny, a 50 year old self-employed volunteer, describes this ability to wing it as one of the most enjoyable and satisfying parts of his experience.

“What I really like about the whole thing is that you wing it! TSA is not telling you how to do everything and looking over your shoulder, so that’s nice and you know that you are representing the organisation so you make decisions based on what you think is best for it. And heck, you can’t get fired.”

Lenny expects the organisation to leave him alone and respect the experience that he brings to the organisation and would potentially experience frustration if his freedom to complete a task was infringed upon. However, Lenny does recognize that he needs enough information to “wing it”, “Well yeah...I talk about winging it....but if I don’t have the basics it is kind of hard.”

On the other hand Carl, a 19 year old college student (who was not part of the formal interview process), shares the opposite sentiment, when he says that,

“I wanted a volunteer experience that would give me real work experience. I saw this as my road to a job...one in which I would be treated as a professional and given guidance. I didn’t want to walk around and accomplish nothing.”

Carl, as a young student, comes to the organisation with little to offer other than enthusiasm and is looking to gain experience and expects the organisation to prepare him for the tasks that he takes on. He further illustrates the point that younger volunteers

struggle with their assignments when he sarcastically added “Well I felt that I was prepared to do nothing except hang out.”

Ricky, another college age volunteer, describes the frustration of just being thrown into jobs and expected to perform well.

“The part I disliked when I first started was that I was literally just thrown into stuff. The first night I was there, I was there watching over the place, running the leagues and that...umm...was in my opinion asking a little too much of me you know they would ask me to do projects and things and pretty much not give me any type of guidelines or directions....I did not know what they were looking for. They were not really clear on things and I was pretty frustrated in the first couple of months just because I was not given any type of direction or what they were looking for. Oh, and I really don’t think that they knew why I was here.”

Like Carl, Ricky speaks to the need for task preparation, the need for the organisation to recognize levels of experience, and understand the motivations behind volunteer’s participation. Lacking understanding of any of these factors increases the likelihood of frustration.

These contrasting viewpoints between the older and younger volunteers highlight the need for the organisation to understand that all volunteers are in fact not equal, and need to be treated according to the experience and skill set that they bring to the organisation. Ignoring the level of experience and the mis-assignment of tasks leads to volunteer frustration, which eventually leads to retention issues. As with paid employees every time a volunteer walks out the door they take with them knowledge and skills that will then need to be replaced. Diana, a college student, describes the level of preparation that she experienced and the resulting feelings,

“It was the responsibilities of a full-time employee. Going in there I was not prepared, there was no training and it was like ‘this is what’s going to happen and if anything goes wrong just give me a call.’ There was no real training process. It was really scary at times. Some nights I wanted to sneak out and go home.”

Diana describes feelings of abandonment by the organisation and uncertainty about her ability to do the job that she has volunteered to do. She further implies that better preparation would have helped alleviate the stress lack of preparation put her under.

Lack of Organisational Support

Adding to the idea of preparation, lack of organisational support was added to the frustration levels when volunteers could not perform the required tasks. For volunteers at TSA, lack of organisation support is measured by the authority, ability, and support that volunteers have when completing tasks. Tim, a 19 year old college student, gave an eye opening account of an event when he, as a volunteer, was left alone in charge of one of the buildings on the TSA campus.

“Yeah, one time this kid was running behind seats in the track building and they have these huge metal beams (and we walk around every 15 minutes or so, but we have to watch the front door also to make sure no suspicious characters come in) and I told him to stop running multiple times, I even told the parents who still let them run around down there, and I just got to the front and I heard the loudest hardest thump that you had ever heard on metal in your entire life. So I rush to the back, and the kid is just knocked out cold. He was playing hide and go seek with two girls and was running full speed with his head turned and ran dead into the pole. And we did not have anything. I had to call the other building and wait for the security guard to get ice for this kid (we didn’t even have ice), and there was no protocol on how to handle a situation like this other than call 911, which the dad was fighting heavily. I called the supervisor and was told that the 911 call was up to the parents, and I thought that was wrong there has to be certain protocol. I mean the kids eyes were rolling into the back of his head, and he was clearly concussed, was having a hard time breathing, said he was nauseous (and I knew that from just being involved with sports). There was nothing....nothing that had me prepared for this and to put it on the parent, even if they sign a waiver, and there is not protocol and I was not trained, then they are liable.”

This event described by Tim illustrates not only the feeling of helplessness that a volunteer can feel when they are not prepared for a task, but also the level of frustration that is felt when the lines of authority are not defined, and the proper equipment is not available to complete a task. Joe, another of the younger college students who volunteers added his thoughts with regard to the event described above.

“It was amazing to me that the basic training that I had learned about in school was not available. I knew we needed it, but they (the organisation) didn’t get it at all....I mean what about liability? What about customer service? We were put in a bad situation by the managers when they assumed that we could do things.”

It can be assumed that there will be a difference in the response and level of frustration felt by volunteers according to their past experiences. For example some of the older volunteers who are retired nurses or serving police officers would presumably have the skill set to deal with the situation outlined by Tim due to the fact that they will have experienced similar events in the past. It can also be assumed that due to these past experiences their levels of frustration would differ also. Therefore in the absence of formal training programmes volunteers need to be assigned to tasks that fit their background and expertise. Volunteers recognize that some people are being asked to do things beyond their capabilities. Stuart, a 50 year old police officer, sums this idea up, stating,

“I think things like asking people to do more than they signed on for hurts the satisfaction level of the volunteers and hurts the image of the organisation.”

Lack of organisation support can also lead to a feeling of disorientation when it comes to fulfilling tasks and understanding what the purpose of those tasks are. Ricky, a 21 year old college student who has a diverse level of experience volunteering in sports organisations, states that frustration set in because,

“They were not really clear about things, and I was pretty frustrated in the first couple of months because I was not given any type of direction with regard to my authority and what decisions I could and could not make. I found myself second-guessing all the time.”

Ricky goes on to say,

“Because I wore the shirt they expected that I was an employee, and I was not, and did not know how to answer the questions. Some of the stuff I had no clue about. I did not have any type of contact with, and because I was there I was being verbally abused and yelled at. I didn’t know if I should call 911, so the types of situations that happened, with injuries and kids got hurt or were bleeding, I knew not to move them or touch them because I wasn’t qualified and did not have the proper equipment. So I guess the types of situations that occur that you are not trained to deal with cause a lot of frustration. And a lot of times the organisation just expected you to know.”

Ricky outlines that for volunteers (especially younger volunteers) the lack of preparation combined with not understanding or being comfortable with their level of authority led many to ask themselves whether the experience was worth it, and if they would be better going somewhere else. Unlike most of the older volunteers, the younger group had no tie to the community, and in some cases drove over an hour to volunteer. The purpose of their volunteer experience was to build their resume, meet new people, and learn the business. Experiences that many of them did not feel they were getting, which led to frustration. For the younger volunteers lack of preparation and training was the prevalent factor in the frustration that came from lack of ability and authority to complete the task.

On the other hand older workers did not feel the need to be trained and actually expressed a desire to avoid any formal training beyond what was absolutely necessary. Access to information, respect for experience, and authority was more important to the older, more experienced volunteers who felt that they brought enough experience from their work lives

to deal with almost any situation that would confront them at TSA. Cathy, a retired psychiatric nurse, states, “We don’t really need training. These people are all experienced professionals who bring a lot to the table.” These older volunteers wanted information in order to answer patrons’ questions. Devon, an experienced office manager, states,

“I did do a lot of volunteering as a greeter, and in the beginning and for a while, we did not know enough about what was happening or what was going on and now with the formalization of this ambassador group, we have been able to learn a lot. So in terms of getting volunteers prepared in the future there will need to be a very basic training or a handbook that covers the basic information (history, size, future plans, etc.) Essentially a resource that will allow the volunteers to effectively do their jobs and represent the organisation well.”

This quote outlines the sentiment shared by others that when key information is not made accessible, the ability of the volunteers to do their job is compromised and that this type of hindrance will in turn leave the volunteers looking (and feeling) inept. This feeling of being inept was an important issue to the volunteers because they felt that since they were professionals in their careers, they should be treated as professionals in their volunteer work to reflect their desire to deliver a professional level of service to the patrons. This idea is outlined by Abby, who says,

“I think it (the flow of information) is important because you do not want to feel like you are ignorant of the organisation that you are supposed to be representing. I would hate to be asked 2 or 3 questions none of which I could answer. The customer would be like...”did you walk in off the street or something”...It makes me uncomfortable when I can’t answer questions. It is not like I am going to remember the exact square footage of each building, but being able to speak intelligently about it is a start.”

and Mark, who states,

“But we need to have some kind of training manual or some kind of informational newsletter for volunteers and I know that we have an hour training now with a tour just to help people get prepared to answer questions, because that is a key part of

the volunteers role, and there has been a lot of frustration surrounding the inability to answer question for volunteers.”

Both Abby and Mark discuss the need for the information that volunteers at TSA crave for personal reasons and need to successfully fulfil their customer service roles. As professionals in their daily lives the older volunteers are determined to represent themselves and the organisation well. When the appropriate information is not shared on a timely basis, volunteers question the trust that the organisation has in them and in turn question their trust in the organisation. Whereas younger volunteers require training on a basic level, older volunteers, as outlined by Abby and Mark, require the information to share with patrons on a timely basis and in a succinct manner.

Volunteers Not Interested in the Task

Volunteers also took issue with, and felt frustrated, when the assigned task was not something that they wanted to do. The frustration in this case was not necessarily caused by an inability to meet goals or lack of training, but rather motivation factors and the sheer nature of the task. An example of this type of frustration is volunteers having to deal with patrons in potentially unpleasant or confrontational situations. During events there are certain places that patrons and participants are not allowed to congregate. Volunteers are asked to police these areas and respond to situations as they arose. In essence, volunteers were asked to do the job of a steward with regard to controlling the crowds. Volunteers, both young and old, were uncomfortable with this role and avoided any confrontation whenever possible. Though volunteers purposely avoided these jobs and failed to execute their roles when put in them, they were still left feeling as if the organisation had put them

in a situation where they could not be successful. When discussing this topic with volunteers, Eileen asked,

“What do I do when they say ‘no’, will not move, or get mouthy with me? Do I physically move them? I don’t think so. So I have no power or authority to do this kind of task.”

This sentiment was shared by Brent, who added,

“I’ll do those things, but I don’t like it. It’s not what I’m here for. I deal with people issues all day, every day at work, and when I volunteer I don’t expect to feel like I’m working. I am not here to argue with people”

One of the younger volunteers, Justin, also commented,

“I just don’t like confrontation. They should have trained security guards doing that job. I want to come here, learn, meet people, and accomplish things, not get into arguments with people.”

These volunteers express the common sentiment amongst volunteers at TSA when it comes to performing undesired tasks. They further illustrate the importance of the organisation recognizing the type of tasks that volunteers are willing to do. Stuart, who is a police captain, agrees with the volunteer’s sentiments even though, due to his professional training, confrontational situations do not bother him. He states that it is important for the organisation to,

“Learn what motivates each volunteer and make sure that they are assigned to tasks that match their motivation. No use sticking someone on parking detail who hates mornings and wants to interact and talk to people. In the same light, it is absolutely absurd to ask people who are not trained to deal with crowd control issues.”

Stuart speaks of matching volunteer motivation to the tasks that are assigned. In addition, recognition of the experience levels that volunteers bring to the organisation will aid in placing volunteers in the appropriate positions. Experience matters in a volunteer

environment. Many of the volunteers at TSA shape their expectations based on their experience. In general, the female volunteers liked the customer interaction roles, and males enjoyed the more solitary roles with less customer interaction. Stuart states,

“There is no damn way I would stand at the doors of one of these building and smile and saying welcome to (TSA) can I help you with something. Stick me in the parking lot directing traffic, and I’m happy.”

Nate echoes Stuarts dislike of the ‘greeter’ position at TSA.

“Well I guess some folks like that...and the position is needed, but really I couldn’t do it. I like parking detail. Outside shooting the shit with the guys and being in a position of control.”

Male volunteers also liked roles that included heavy involvement in the sporting events themselves. Positions such as field marshal, score/time expediter, and event coordinator made the male volunteers feel as though they were a key part of the event. Joe, a 25 year old IT professional stated,

“I have been around sports my whole life, I played in college...there is no way I’m standing by the door, taking tickets, or standing outside parking cars. I come to be part of the events. I’m a sports guy.”

Conversely, Julia states,

“They wanted me to help with the long jump and measure stuff and rake pits. I had no idea what they were talking about and definitely had no idea how to do it, I said no. I was happy greeting people and performing the customer service roles.”

Although the male volunteers were not open to performing the customer service roles the female volunteers as a whole were more open than Julia or their male counterparts in getting involved in a wider range of activities.

Social Frustration

In addition to the task frustration that volunteers felt when they could not perform their job functions adequately, there was also a level of frustration that involved the social aspects of volunteering at an organisation. Due to the emotional nature and the role of personal perception, social frustration is in many ways more complex than task frustration. Social frustration is the sense of social relevance that the volunteer experiences during and after the volunteer experience. This feeling of social relevance can occur on a number of levels and include experiences such as a feeling of belongingness and importance, accomplishment and recognition, clarity of communication, and feeling good about what you're doing. When volunteers feel that the organisation or the other volunteers do not value their contribution, they begin to question their personal worth (in this volunteer situation) and whether this is a good use of their time. Gary, a 40 year old volunteer states,

“It's not as if this is a job or anything. I am here because I want to be here! If I feel that they are undervaluing my time or contribution, then ‘see ya!’ I'm gone. This is supposed to fun. If I wanted to get frustrated, I'd go to work (laughs).”

Gary's statement illustrates an important factor in volunteer retention. That factor is that volunteers have no reason to return to a volunteer environment in which they do not experience respect and appreciation.

This section will be broken into four (4) sub-sections addressing social frustration due to a (1) Feeling of Belonging to the Organisation and Accomplishment, (2) Lack Clarity of Communication from the Organisation, (3) Feeling of connection to other volunteers, and (4) Lack of recognition within the organisation and feeling good about oneself.

Feeling of Belonging to the Organisation and Accomplishment

One area of concern that volunteers addressed was the organisation undervaluing them on an individual level. Older volunteers, in particular, felt frustration when the organisation ignored their expertise and experience and put them in jobs that were psychologically and emotionally unfulfilling. Lenny, who is president of the volunteer committee and a small business owner, states,

“I have been involved in other volunteer things like little league baseball, but this is a little different in that we have no power. As I said...I wrote the bylaws for our volunteer committee and one of the bylaws states that Steve (an executive) has to approve any expenditure. Like my previous example of little league where we had full control or vote on everything. The Sports Academy tells us what we are going to do and then we do it (sighs). It’s annoying because they ignore the fact that a lot of us on the committee are quite capable of running a budget.”

Stuart, a 57 year old police captain, echoes Lenny’s frustration in situations where his expertise could really help the organisation, but is ignored. As a police officer Stuart is trained in traffic management and tried to advise management on to best way to manage the flow of traffic at major events, especially when all three buildings are operational.

“One frustration is that I asked for a sign that said ‘drop off’ because we are trying to send them down the second lane so that they do not have to walk through moving cars. If we could get a sign there, instead of me telling them, then they would learn, and down at the other end of the parking lot would say ‘exit’ and ‘park’ because we want them to go all the way around. Well we never got the signs.”

Lenny and Stuart both describe the frustration that volunteers feel when their expertise and professional opinion is ignored by the organisation. Lenny a successful business man feels that he has the business acumen to make good budgetary decisions, but is not allowed too. Stuart offers his professional expertise to the organisation, is ignored, and gets frustrated because of it. Both volunteers also struggle with the power structure at TSA. In their

professional lives both men enjoy the ability to use their knowledge and skills and are respected for them. In essence, their experience gives them power within their work organisations. As volunteers at TSA they expect the same level of respect, and hence power, and experience frustration when it is not given.

Early on, in the formative months of TSA, other volunteers experienced such a high level of trust and value that the organisation essentially left them alone to run programmes with little or no management interference. Abby, a volunteer who started and manages the senior citizens walking programme, was given so much autonomy that she felt as if the programme did not matter to the organisation. As the programme grew and started to turn a profit she felt management start to impinge on the autonomy that she once had. She states

“Well this was in the very early stages, and they were very cooperative and let me do almost anything that I wanted to. It was almost as if the programme did not matter. But it’s not that big a deal. We have 10 volunteers, I write a schedule for them and fill in for people who can’t make it. I go out and buy the stickers for the lanyards. Originally I collected the money from the walkers and got it ready for deposit. But we have made so much money that they took away that component now and it’s done in the front office. I think we matter now (laughs).”

Abby describes how originally she felt that her programme did not matter to the organisation, but as time went on and the organisation became more formalized and took control she experienced a sense of accomplishment. Abby’s experience (feeling accomplishment as she lost control) is an interesting one in contrast to the experiences of Stuart and Lenny who want more control over what they do. Essentially, Abby has experienced success and feels as though she has served the organisation well, whereas

Stuart and Lenny have not been allowed to use their experience to impact decisions at TSA and feel undervalued.

Frustration was experienced by younger volunteers also with regards to the recognition of expertise. The problem with most of the younger volunteers is that they do not bring a high level of expertise to the organisation and were put in positions that they could not handle. Ricky, a college student trying to gain some experience through volunteering, summed up the feeling of the younger volunteers who shared his motivation to gain contacts, learn the industry and hopefully find a job, saying,

“They (the other young volunteers) are frustrated too! And I didn’t talk bad about it or anything like that and I did not share my experiences, but when they came in they were like “what’s going on here...this is a joke why don’t they train us? I have no idea what to do.” So they had the same experience, they wanted to be trained and shown how to do things right.”

Ricky explains how the younger volunteers see the value that the organisation puts in them in relation to the amount of preparation or training that they are given. This experience was shared by another college student, Andy, who experienced an undervaluing of time and priorities. He stated,

“Do they value what you bring to the table? Not really because I did have an issue where I had a test and had to study the night before and I was almost let go after not being able to show up to work one time and I was just like...really, ‘I am volunteering’ and they are telling me ‘that I have a lot of problems and you are going to start having issues’ and I am like ‘school comes first, I’m volunteering out here’ and like there is no need for them to do that. As quick as they were to chastise me for this it told me that there was minimal value placed on the volunteer’s time and priorities because they feel that they can just grab whoever they want at any time.”

Gratitude and value of personal time is at the centre of Andy's experience. As a volunteer Andy expects that the organisation will have respect for his personal commitments, especially his school work. For Andy, his experience leaves an impression that TSA feels that they have the right to demand whatever they want from volunteers and have no sense that the volunteer is a valuable member of the organisation.

On a similar level, volunteers experienced frustration when they felt like they were being taken for granted by the organisation. Dave, an unemployed 20 year old who volunteers at The Sports Academy in hopes of landing a full time job experienced this attitude from the beginning of his volunteer experience.

“I love it here, you have to understand that. But I had motivation to stay. The way they (management) talked to me and the assignments they gave me were like that of a full time employee. For the first few months that was fine and I didn't mind it because you had to get your foot in the door, but after a while you felt like you were being take advantage of because people are looking to volunteer and I was doing things that a normal worker would do.”

Dave describes a situation where the organisation used his desire to procure full time employment to get as much work out of him as they could. In the beginning, when he still had a high level of energy and belief that a job would be offered, Dave talks about how he did anything that was asked, even jobs that should be done by full time employees. As time went on and he grew weary, his level of motivation dropped, he felt as though he was being taken advantage of, and felt frustrated about the value that the organisation had put on him as an individual. Dave left the organisation after five months of volunteering and no job offer.

Ricky shares ideas from his experience on how the organisation should give volunteers a sense of belonging,

“Things like that people take you for granted and if you don’t feel like you are appreciated when you are volunteering then why go back? If someone is giving time and energy why not make that person feel welcomed? Even some kind of incentive, not an incentive system, but something in place that lets people know that you are doing a good job and you are appreciated and your efforts are contributing to the achievement of the goal....none of this was happening.”

Volunteers also expressed frustration every time that they felt as though their time was not being used in a profitable way. During the initial observation phase of this research, I witnessed volunteers leave their posts and go home because they did not understand the purpose of their assignment. One individual (whose name I was unable to obtain) was assigned to stand by a door and make sure that no one tried to go through it. That was all the explanation he had received. After three hours of standing there with no human interaction, and no one trying to go through the door, the volunteer wrote ‘do not enter’ on a piece of paper, taped it to the door and went home. As he left he told other volunteers that this was a waste of his time and he had more productive things to do. The volunteer never returned for subsequent volunteer engagements. Megan, a volunteer who lives in the local community has experienced similar ‘boring’ or unfulfilling assignments.

“I have shown up to little events and never understood why I was there. No one bothered to explain my role...the customers didn’t need me and the staff members had everything under control. I was left to wonder if they didn’t value the time I was giving and I was not happy at times...explanations would have helped.”

Megan outlines the frustration that volunteers feel when they perceive that their time is taken for granted and the role that they are assigned to is not explained. Because volunteer activity is something that people enter into on their own time they want to know that they

are doing something of value. As Megan states, “I left early thinking I had wasted my time.” Volunteers expect the organisation to value the time they give and use them appropriately.

It is important for the organisation to assess and understand the importance of the role volunteers play in the operational structure. At TSA volunteers expressed the need to be used in capacities that meet the expertise and experience that they bring with them. Further, they want their expertise to be ‘tapped’ by the organisation to help improve processes and programmes. The organisation must also recognize when a volunteer does not have the skills or experience to complete tasks and match these individuals with assignments that meet their skill level and motivation. By doing so the organisation can help to alleviate any frustration and let the volunteer leave with a sense of accomplishment. Whilst giving to the organisation volunteers also want management to be cognizant of their time. Volunteers do not want to leave at the end of a volunteer engagement feeling as though they have wasted time or have been used below their capacity. These issues, if left unchecked, lead to higher levels of frustration that eventually have an impact on volunteer retention.

Clarity of Communication from the Organisation

Volunteers at The Sports Academy value a high level of clear and current communication. Within the local community, obtaining information about The Sports Academy has become a premium measure with regards to social standing. People want to know what is going on and when things are going to happen. The Academy has been very diligent about

making sure that the volunteers have the information before anyone else. For volunteers who live in the surrounding community, access to this information is of the utmost importance. On a number of occasions during this research volunteers expressed frustration over not being kept informed on the big events and announcements. One such time involved The Sports Academy partnering with a number of Olympic gold medallists to provide various sports services at the academy. This information was withheld more for the dramatic effect of the big press conference than anything else. Volunteers knew something was coming, but could not get any particulars. The frustration was short term and was used by the organisation in a ‘dangling carrot in front of a horse’ type manner to keep volunteers engaged.

Additionally, volunteers experienced high levels of frustration with the organisation’s ability to communicate schedules, tasks, and give feedback. Megan relates how poor communication was when she first started volunteering,

“When I first started I think that they just needed bodies that would help. And we were told a little bit, but the organisation was not sure what we needed to know. So this is an evolving organisation, and the volunteer programme seems to be evolving with it. It has progressed since last fall (even during track season). There is more attention to who is the contact person (paid staff). That is the person who is the point person. So big events are less frustrating when it comes to getting the information you need.”

Nate, an unemployed military veteran, feels that the organisation has still not improved its communication to the levels Megan describes. He states,

“Communication on role and responsibilities is still not good enough. At the big press conference last week people were wondering or uncertain about what they should be doing. There was a lack of understanding around expectations, especially at such a major event.”

Megan describes the progress that she has seen in her time volunteering at TSA and is cognizant of the fact that things have improved. However, Nate's assessment is that as a volunteer, one who is giving their time for nothing, he still expects a better level of communication. In speaking with numerous volunteers during events the consensus was that both Megan and Nate are correct. Communication has improved but still is not good enough. As a volunteer it is normal to expect that the organisation have the capacity to communicate schedules and roles in a clear and concise manner. When the organisation fails to communicate effectively, volunteers become frustrated with the lack of organisational clarity.

Devon, a volunteer with a lot of experience in sporting events, relates how the lack of communication and disregard for the volunteers 'need to know' can affect the actual job performance.

“There was a mess up with communications that happens too often. I was working the front desk for the PSU v. OSU volleyball game, and we were told as volunteers that we did not need to know anything about what was going on anywhere else in the facility. Well there was a mix up in scheduling for another event, and all the lost patrons were coming to us for information or directions and we had no information to give them. The organisation has to understand that we do not want to look like the idiot and that we want to help and do a good job. They need to give us the information and trust us to do a good job. I don't think that that exists yet. In this instance I was really angry that night. We need to know everything that is going on all over the facility so that we can truly help everyone.”

Devon's experience speaks to social frustration on a number of levels. Within this context, she illustrates the lack of understanding that the organisation shows when it comes to the importance of information sharing with volunteers. However, Devon also talks to the organisation's value in the volunteer and their importance to the organisation and the

capacity for the volunteer to feel good about what they are doing. Volunteers have the expectation that they will be given the tools, the trust, and autonomy to do a good job.

Cathy, a retired nurse, echoes Devon's experience,

"I have one experience which was really the fault of no one. The situation was at a huge track and field event, and there was a change from day 1 to day 2 as to what we were charging for programmes, were we going to charge for a heat sheet or not? The first day we charge a dollar and then they decided on day 2 that they would not charge and just gave it to the patron (which I was glad to hear, because that is what is supposed to happen). I don't think that it was communicated well and since we were all working different shifts it was passed by word of mouth so I don't think that everyone had the same information due to different locations. Some people were charging and some were not. There was also confusion over military personnel, active vs. retired vs. non retired Vets. Do they get charged admission to the building? That was always up in the air from event to event. So maybe things like that could be cleared up once and for all because everyone seems to have a different opinion, especially with regard to status. So little details like that become important when you are taking people's money, and you want to make sure that everyone is on the same page and there is consistency. You want to feel good about what you are doing and leave at the end of your shift knowing that you did the right thing."

Although Cathy does not want to point the finger at anyone in particular, she is clearly identifying a flaw in the communication system at TSA. In the same vein as Devon, Cathy sees that the organisation is potentially undervaluing the volunteer by not ensuring that the correct information is in place. In both examples, Devon's and Cathy's, the volunteer is left without the information to perform the job adequately and is left questioning the organisation's value in their volunteer roles when it comes to sharing pertinent information.

Most of the volunteers who were interviewed spoke of organisational communication as it related to their ability to do their job well and leave feeling as though they, as individual

volunteers, had served the organisation and its mission well. Abby illustrates the importance of this, stating,

“I think it is important because you do not want to feel like you are ignorant of the organisation that you are supposed to be representing. I would hate to be asked 2 or 3 questions none of which I could answer. The customer would be like...’did you walk in off the street or something’...It makes me uncomfortable when I can’t answer questions. It is not like I am going to remember the exact square footage of each building, but being able to speak intelligently about it is a start.”

Abby’s statement raises the question at this point as to whether the volunteers are talking about communication, or whether they are talking about a system of communication within the context of training. This is especially important since the focus is on communication that will help them complete their volunteer tasks.

As with paid employees, two-way communication on performance is important to volunteers. Performance feedback was especially important to the younger or career-oriented volunteers who displayed a need for guidance. From an organisational standpoint, TSA provides a forum for two-way conversations in a monthly volunteer meeting. Sarah, the hospitality manager, describes the meeting structure,

“Well we have monthly meetings, so for the most part I would say about 50% of the volunteers attend those monthly meetings so we can kind of talk about past event and discuss what worked and did not work. This past season we were fortunate enough to have some larger national attention type events, and they were very happy to be a part of that.”

From management’s point of view, Sarah describes an open forum where volunteers share ideas with paid staff and gain access to information regarding the facility and organisation itself. As an observer, I saw the interaction between paid staff and volunteers, the sharing of ideas, and the teambuilding that occurred. However, there was little done with regards

to giving volunteers feedback on performance and many volunteers such as Brent, a school teacher, question the motivation for these meetings. He states,

“Yeah we have meetings and it is nice that we get to voice our concerns, but do they actually do anything with what we told them? We don’t really know. I also know that a lot of the younger folks who volunteer would like more guidance and these meeting do not provide for that.”

Although, the younger, career-oriented volunteers all spoke about the need for more performance feedback from the organisation they were not forthcoming with examples. During the interview process it seemed that they were leery of naming names and citing specific examples. Justin shared that “I almost felt, because I ask questions to make sure that I am doing things right, I felt like I was bugging them and it was extremely frustrating.” Diana feels that her experience would have been enhanced if she had “received different insight from different people and more firsthand information.” As young volunteers Justin and Diana expected continual feedback from paid staff members on their performance and associated lack of feedback with lack of value to the organisation and a problem with the overall ability of paid staff and management to effectively communicate with volunteers. Further, Justin’s frustration is amplified when he seeks feedback and is made to feel as though he is a burden. The younger demographic was not alone in their opinions about feedback. Ellen, a 35 year old professional coach commented, during an event, about management’s inability to effectively communicate performance feedback stating,

“Volunteers talk and have expressed displeasure with some managers’ behaviour and feel that instead of telling us what to do all the time, why don’t you come on down and experience what it is that we do? Why don’t you show that you are interested in this? This is where my frustration lies. Unless these people want to really be part of the volunteers and the programme, and not just a mouthpiece, they need to get involved.”

Ellen describes the perceived gap between volunteers and paid staff. She asserts that paid staff members like to give a lot of direction but have little understanding of the jobs that volunteers do. For Ellen, these actions show a lack of interest in the volunteer programme and illustrate the value that is placed on the volunteers by paid staff. Further, Ellen describes a problem with communication, especially the ability to give effective feedback. She questions the ability of paid staff to give effective feedback when the paid staff does not have a clear understanding of what the volunteers do.

As with the paid staff within an organisation, the volunteer staff is there to help affect organisational efficiency and effectiveness. Whereas, volunteer staff may not require the same level of performance feedback as paid staff, it is still important to volunteer retention efforts. As shown in figure 6.1 volunteers at TSA demonstrated a desire for feedback on two levels - feedback from the volunteer to the organisation and feedback from the organisation to the volunteer. First, the older and more experienced volunteers wanted to know that the organisation is taking their feedback seriously, but were less concerned about receiving feedback from the organisation (illustrated in fig. 6.1 by the thicker line from the volunteer to the organisation). Second, younger, career-oriented, volunteers wanted feedback on their performance from the organisation (illustrated in fig. 6.1 by the thicker line from the organisation volunteer) to help them learn and improve. Younger volunteers also sought performance feedback from the older more experienced volunteers. Across the demographic scale all volunteers expected to be told if the job they were doing met organisational standards or not.

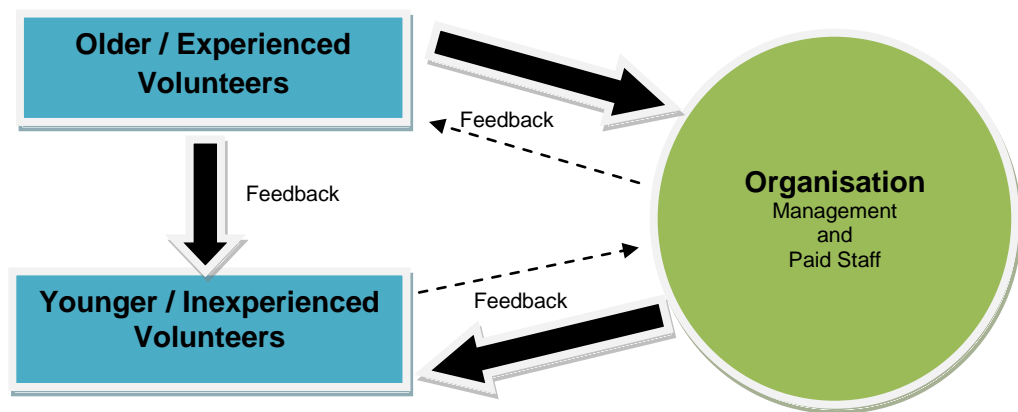


Figure 6.1 Streams of Communication & Feedback

Connecting with other Volunteers

For some volunteers at The Sports Academy volunteering was purely a social or leisure experience. For older retired volunteers, the volunteer activity gave them the chance to get out, be involved, and meet new people. In a side conversation with Eileen and Lenny we discussed the importance of the social community that has grown out of the volunteer programme at TSA. Lenny says,

“This has to be a social club. A lot of the older volunteers come here to get out of the house and be involved with something. I know that I consider a number of the people here to be good friends now, and that is important. It makes you look forward to coming in.”

Eileen adds,

“Yes Lenny is right. I mean we have picnics in the summer, dinners in the winter all hosted here. A lot of us get together on our own too.”

Stuart talks about the social interactions of the parking volunteers, who often endure freezing and wet conditions for hours at a time.

“We love to sit and have coffee and a donut together after our shift. We sit and chat for a while before we go home. It is good bonding.”

Both Lenny and Stuart stress importance of social interaction while Eileen describes how the organisation fosters the social aspect of the volunteer community at TSA. Other volunteers talked about how they have met people from other towns and forged relationships that they would never have had without the volunteer experience at TSA. The organisation is very cognizant of this social aspect and does a good job of creating opportunities at picnics, banquets and public events to increase the social aspect of volunteering for the organisation. Although not exclusive, a frustration level within this social context exists between the younger and the older volunteers. Older volunteers such as Cathy enjoy the ability to meet new people.

“It’s great to meet new people and not just volunteers. At the NAIA track event I met people from Idaho, Vancouver, Washington, and lots of other places. I’d never met people from so many places. Who would have thought that in the middle of winter people would come to our little corner of the world?”

Julia states,

“This is pretty tight-knit group. We all get along and respect each other. Some of us actually have formed friendships and see each other away from The Sports Academy. It’s funny though, the young kids who volunteer, the college kids, they come and work and leave. I guess they are not interested in the social aspect.”

Older volunteers enjoy the social aspect of volunteering. From observation alone, at picnics and banquets, it is apparent that the social events are attended by the majority of older volunteers and sparsely attended by younger volunteers. Motivated by learning, networking, and experience the younger volunteers are not interested in the picnics and banquets. Justin, a graduate student, illustrates this when he explains,

“I’m not here to make friends, I am always pleasant, but I graduate with my MBA soon, and I want to find a job. Unless an event helps me serve that purpose I am not interested.”

Justin speaks to his motivation for volunteering. He feels that he giving his time for free, and he wants to gain experience and connections. He is not interested in attending events that do not help him attain his goals. In this capacity there is a level of tension between the older and younger volunteers. For many of the older volunteers, TSA represents an opportunity to better the economic state of the area that they live in, and they are committed to its long term success. As previously stated, the older volunteers also see advantages in and enjoy the social aspects of volunteering at TSA. They have trouble understanding the younger, college-age volunteers. Mike, the academy's operations director feels that this is a natural phenomenon.

“We experience a higher level of turnover in our younger volunteers. They come get the experience they need, make the contacts they need and move on. I think some of the long-term volunteers see this as a lack of loyalty, but it is the nature of the beast.”

Although, the organisation understands that there is going to be a different level of commitment with the younger, college-age volunteers due to the fact that they are only looking to gain experience and may not live in the area year round, other volunteer see it a different way. Lenny puts it down to age,

“That’s the younger generation for you...no commitment. Sometimes they bail in the middle of a season.”

Lenny’s thoughts are shared by many in the volunteer community. He sees the turnover and lack of social involvement as a lack of commitment. Essentially he feels that everyone should have the same level of commitment or not volunteer. Mike adds to his earlier statement by saying,

“We as an organisation need a high number of volunteers, some skilled and some not skilled. We know what we are getting with a lot of college-age volunteers, and

we have to plan around it. I think our issue as management is to get the solid core of (making quotations with his fingers) ‘older’ volunteers to understand and not have an issue with it.”

Regardless of Mike’s assertion that older volunteers need to understand and not have an issue with the commitment levels of some younger volunteers, the organisation still has an issue to address. The perception is real, and there is a divide that causes tension within the older volunteers. As Mike himself states, the older volunteers are the core volunteers and essential to the long term success of the organisation.

Recognition and Feeling Good Within the Organisational Culture.

Volunteers felt as though they deserved recognition for the contribution that they made to the overall success of the organisation. Within the context of social frustration, this recognition was purely intrinsic in nature, a pat on the back for a job well done and the feeling that the organisation appreciated the effort that had been put forth. Most of the volunteers interviewed were very quick to point out that the organisation generally does a very good job in this category, but were also frustrated when it did not happen. Volunteers had problems and experienced frustration in this area when paid staff took credit for the work that the volunteers had done and felt that proper recognition should be given where it was due.

Diana relays a story regarding her first volunteer experience at The Sports Academy. She had volunteered to write an essay and enter it into a competition on behalf of the organisation. The essay got national exposure and rewards.

“I mean, with the outlook of what happened with the essay being nominated for national recognition showed that my hard work actually paid off, but I feel that there could have been more done with their side of things since it was going to get them a lot of publicity and a lot of advertising and recognition. It made me feel under-appreciated. They feel like you are doing things for them, and they don’t owe you much. I think in my situation, where my volunteer work got them national recognition, they should have probably given a little bit more attention and recognition to this. But they took the credit for it and they took it as if they had written it and this is what they won when they actually did nothing to help out. It took a lot to have me do anything for them again, and when I did it was half-hearted.”

Diana expresses the frustration she felt when she was not given credit and the impact that it had on her desire to do anything else for the organisation in the future. She feels especially slighted because the organisation was not forthcoming with help and gained national recognition for her efforts. Andy had a similar experience when he introduced a couple of paid staff to people at a professional franchise in order to form a partnership on certain programmes.

“The cool thing that I did was at the time I worked with the Cavs (Professional NBA Franchise), so I got them involved with the Cavs organisation, and I was supposed to help with the development of actually initiating a Cavs camp coming in, which they actually have now, but they asked me to do a lot of things and I came to find out that all the work that I was putting in was not being taken into account at all. The organisation was doing everything on their own and not using any of my ideas. In the end all they did was use me as resource or contact to get what they wanted. I mean...to me I wanted to be able to learn and ask questions and help develop the whole process so that I would understand how to do the whole process and there was none of that. This is when I stopped volunteering.”

Like Diana, Andy felt as though the organisation had used him for business contacts and then discounted his contributions and blocked his ability to learn from the business process. For Andy, who had a number of negative experiences, this encounter was the one that led him to leave the organisation. Both Diana and Andy are examples of volunteers

feeling used by the organisation. Andy left the organisation immediately when he felt as though the organisation was using him, and Diana left about 2 months later.

Other volunteers spoke of minor occurrences where they felt their efforts had been claimed by paid staff, but many just put that down to office politics and a young management staff who felt the need to further themselves. However, volunteers did share that every time credit was taken away from them, they would be less likely to put the effort forward again.

Nate said,

“Why would I continue to bust my ass, so that one of these guys can look like a hero?”

Ellen added,

“It’s a disincentive, and you just kind of say to hell with it. It’s a great place to be around so you keep coming, you just don’t put forth the effort.”

Mark, a 70 year old business owner says,

“It is sad when people give their time for free and don’t get credit for what they have done. It is something that has to change. Luckily the people who volunteer really want this place to succeed and look beyond the little things....but they don’t stay little things for long!”

The impact on the organisation within this context is of great concern. Essentially, the message being conveyed by select volunteers is that they will stay committed to their volunteer activity, but will put less effort into what they are doing or will not engage in anything other than their assigned roles. It is important, in the long-term, for the organisation to assess the impact that the decision to put forth less effort will have on the effectiveness of the operations and events that it hosts. At this time, as previously stated,

the organisation is heavily dependent on volunteer contributions and cannot afford a rift between volunteers and the work that they do with paid staff.

A more common issue within the realm of social frustration was gratitude. This feeling of gratitude comes when someone in the organisation recognizes that a job has been completed and completed well. There are many similarities here to the section on feedback, but the context is much simpler. Brent says,

“All we ever want is a pat on the back, a well done, or a simple thanks. No one is looking for a parade or anything.”

Simple acknowledgement and appreciation of a job well done is all Brent thinks most volunteers want. Lack of appreciation has a resounding effect on the volunteer community at TSA. In fact, during observations and participant observations it was clear that the volunteers migrated towards the paid staff who were in the habit of saying “thank you”. “Those people are easier to work for,” says Tim. “It’s always nice to hear ‘nice job’ or ‘thanks’. It makes you want to work for that person. The other people can be jerks.”

When asked about the organisation showing gratitude for her work Diana said,

“I do not think that they did a good job of making me feel that I had done something good for them and that I had helped them in anyway.”

Ricky supports this statement when discussing volunteers who had left saying,

“They were treated like employees instead of volunteers, were not thanked for their time and efforts, and felt as though they were taken for granted.”

Additionally, within the context of gratitude, volunteers did not like to have their time wasted (as stated previously) or be talked to in a manner that discounted the time that they had given to the organisation. Andy describes this as a

“Short handedness that I was shown by management.”

Devon states,

“Ideas are shot down by management before we can even explain the rationale.”

Joe laughs as he recounts an episode when a paid staff member started to yell at him because of a problem with the computer timing system.

“I was like...dude...really...you are going to yell at me and I am here on my time as a volunteer. Maybe I’ll just go home and you can fix it. He calmed down in a hurry.”

Volunteers at TSA want to be valued by the organisation by having their contributions recognized for what they are worth. Joe illustrates that when this recognition is not given he has the option to leave and put the onus of his contribution on the paid staff members who he feels are devaluing his time and contribution. Others such as Dave and Diana speak of gratitude and the simplicity of saying ‘thanks’ or ‘well done’. Others such as Devon want to be heard and recognized for what they bring to the organisation. Many volunteers stated that gratitude and recognition is free, and all they expect from management and paid staff is appreciation. When they feel used or taken for granted they either withhold effort or terminate their relationship with the organisation.

Conclusion

Although The Sports Academy has been open for over four years, the staff and management is still getting used to and learning how to manage volunteer workers. Volunteer workers enter the volunteer environment with different motivations and expectations. Some volunteers bring with them high levels of professional and volunteer experience, whilst others bring little or no experience. At TSA, the notion of frustration sits within two major contexts; task frustration and social frustration.

Volunteers experienced and spoke of task frustration on numerous levels. They spoke of the lack of preparation and sharing of information hindering their ability to perform tasks, having the appropriate authority to complete tasks, the autonomy and power to complete tasks, and being given tasks that met their motivation and experience. Volunteers at TSA wanted to experience success in their assignments and felt varying levels of frustration when they felt that things within the organisations' control impacted their ability to perform. Types of task frustration also differed according to demographic factors such as age and gender. For example, preparation had a different meaning for younger volunteers who felt that preparation was a complete training process (although informational) that would give them the skills and knowledge to successfully complete tasks and operate within the organisation. On the other hand, older volunteers brought a lot of professional experience to the organisation and expected to be given only the necessary information in a timely and succinct manner. Part of the disparity in definition between the inexperienced (younger) and experienced (older) volunteer can be attributed to the educational paradigm in which the younger volunteers are used to learning (within the context of the college

system). Further, older volunteers expected their experience to be taken into account when being assigned to tasks and to be given the freedom and power to see assignments through.

Social frustration refers to the emotional state that a volunteer experiences both during and after the volunteer experience. Volunteers at TSA spoke to the idea of social frustration on a number of levels including feeling of belonging to and appreciation from the organisation, recognition, and feeling good about what you are doing. Although some social frustration factors can be linked with task frustrations, there was less disparity in opinion between younger and older volunteers as to what the organisation should do. Volunteers wanted and expected to be treated as an important part of the organisation by paid staff and other volunteers alike, and want to feel that the contribution that they were making makes a difference. When these needs cannot be affirmed, social frustration occurs and volunteers begin to question why they are giving their time. Volunteers experience social frustration when their expectations are not met and they do not have a clear understanding of why. It is crucial for the success of TSA, and any voluntary sport organisation for that matter, to understand the motivations and expectations of their volunteer community and have in place clear channels of communication when these expectations are not met.

Continuing the discussion on frustration, the next chapter will identify key themes found in the research and discuss the findings presented in the previous chapters (volunteer difference factors, organisational factors). Based on research findings, a typology of volunteer frustration will be presented with ties to training and satisfaction.

Chapter 7

Bringing it Together

Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

This study aimed to explore and understand the volunteer workers' individual difference factors as they pertain to the training process, and to gain some insights into the effectiveness of training in affecting volunteer satisfaction. Throughout the course of the study and analysis key topics emerged that set members of the volunteer community apart. An eclectic collection of approximately 175 people, the volunteer community at The Sports Academy (TSA) brought their past experiences (or lack thereof), their personal work ethic, motivations, and opinions to each and every engagement.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the key themes that emerged from the research. In particular, the chapter will explore volunteer frustration and its relationship to training. Volunteers at TSA clearly assert that systems of formal training were less important to them than clear, concise, and timely systems of communicating pertinent information. Access to information was a recurring theme amongst volunteers TSA and is an important factor in most of the key findings presented in this research. Key findings included the impact of age and professional experience levels on task preparation, volunteer frustration, and differing definitions of what constitutes training. The last finding is of great interest since it potentially changes the concept of training within this particular volunteer setting. The research also yielded insight into the impact that paid-staff/volunteer and volunteer/volunteer relations had on levels of frustration. Further, based on findings, a two

level typography of volunteer frustration was developed with each level consisting of five factors (See table 7.1). The Chapter will be organised in four main sections discussing the volunteers' relationship with the organisation, the key findings, presentation and explanation of the task/social frustration typology, and finally the relationship between the frustration factors and training. The chapter closes by addressing limitations, ideas for future research, and concluding remarks.

Task Frustration	Social Frustration
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparation for Task 2. Freedom and to Complete Task 3. Authority to Complete Task 4. Task Does Not Match Motivation 5. Task Does Not Match Experience Level 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feeling of Belonging to the Organisation (team value) 2. Clarity in Communication 3. Feeling of Accomplishment 4. Recognition 5. Feeling Good about experience (personal value)

Table 7.1 Typology of Volunteer Frustration

The Organisation – Paid Staff and Volunteers.

With only 30 full time employees the organisation is severely understaffed to operate and run the type of events that are attracted to the facility. The paid staff, for the most part, is young and lacking in experience. Upper management aside, the average staff member is only 4 years out of college with minimal work experience. Due to the low staffing levels, staff members work long hours (averaging over 60 hours per week) and are often on the TSA campus seven days a week.

The volunteer community at The Sports Academy (TSA) can be categorized as permanent volunteers who have a long term commitment to an organisation. The permanent nature of some of the volunteers' commitment even warrants a set weekly schedule. For their time,

TSA offers volunteers no remuneration or extrinsic rewards. There are no free memberships, waiving of fees for family members, or promises of employment. The only thing of monetary value that volunteers receive is clothing bearing the TSA logo, but these are necessary for working at events and cannot be classified as a reward.

Many of the volunteers at TSA view their volunteering as a leisure activity (in line with Henderson 1981, 1984; Stebbins 2004; Pi, 2001) that allows them to enjoy the events, meet other volunteers, and meet participants and spectators from all over the world. Within this leisure paradigm the volunteers at TSA meet Stebbins (2004) definition of serious leisure as they are able to express themselves, acquire new knowledge or skills, and gain new experiences (Stebbins 2004: 6-7). Volunteering for many at TSA is more than just helping out. The volunteer community can be described as a semi-autonomous social group who have their own identity, 'The TSA Ambassadors', who, theoretically, have the ability to collectively meet with management to collaborate on making the volunteer experience better. The volunteer community also organizes events or 'celebrations', as they call them, to gather socially. These 'celebrations take the form of picnics, dinners, or sporting field days.

Volunteers tend to take on the basic functions at TSA such as customer service, hospitality, parking, ticket sales, and set-up and clean-up. Contrary to the research (i.e. Costa *et al*, 2006), the volunteers at TSA tend to take on the non-specialist roles and leave the specialised work to the paid employees.

A Strange Relationship - Volunteers and Paid Staff

Research findings yielded a connection between volunteer frustration and the relationship between paid staff members and volunteers. This connection bears a great deal of importance for the organisation given the interdependence that each group has on the other. The low staffing levels at TSA have led to overdependence on volunteer workers, not only for events, but for day to day operations as well. This overdependence has led to a tenuous relationship between the paid staff and the volunteer community due to the fact that each group lacks understanding of what the other does. Issues of value and trust are central to the tension that exists between the two groups.

The TSA campus currently consists of 4 buildings, two stadiums, playing fields, and a lake. Events or programmes can be taking place simultaneously at any or all of the venues and require the presence of a TSA representative. The work environment is fast and busy, which means that there is not a lot of time to stop, gather thoughts, and spend time on the little things that build relationships. Most volunteers struggle with this aspect of the volunteer experience. Staff members are often terse with volunteers and only give the directions and information that they think is necessary, with little or no consideration for the volunteer's expectations. Additionally, a lot of paid staff members don't see the value that the volunteers bring to the organisation and don't understand the importance of maintaining and retaining a highly motivated and informed volunteer community. Much of this misunderstanding can be tied to the non-specialised roles that volunteers take on. Comments from various paid staff members illustrate the disconnect between paid staff and volunteers.

“I don’t see why we need to take care of them so much...The jobs they do are simple”

“Anyone can walk in and do the stuff they do”

“They always want our time and I don’t have it....I mean how hard is it to stand by a door and say hello?”

“Volunteers cause more work for me.....they always have questions.”

The above comments illustrate the burden that many paid staff members feel when they have to spend time with volunteers to share information or bring them up to speed with what is going on. They also give insight into the value that some paid staff members put in the tasks that volunteers complete.

Another disconnect exists when volunteers ask for their past experiences to be considered and placed in tasks that they will find challenging. Again there is a question of value since many paid staff members believe that volunteers should do what they are asked. Bryan, one paid staff members stated,

“They’re volunteers and are supposed to be here to help us. We decide what tasks need to be done and they should do them. We are the ones that are here all the time, we understand how to run an event....they just need to do what they are asked and if they don’t like it then don’t volunteer.”

Bryan believes that volunteers are there to do exactly what they are told by the ‘expert’ staff member with no consideration for the experience or expectations of the volunteer. There is also a belief amongst paid staff members that volunteers are easy to attract and retain and therefore easily replaceable.

Although there is a lack of value placed by paid staff members on volunteers, they acknowledge that the organisation could not function without their contributions. Even though they do not understand the value and have no appreciation for the management of the volunteer community, they do acknowledge the importance of it. This dichotomy between value and importance is the heart of the relationship issue between paid staff and volunteers. Although the importance is recognized, the paid staff put little value in the jobs that volunteers take on. As volunteers point out, there is little recognition for the importance of the experience that the volunteers create for the participants and patrons alike. The organisation faces the challenge of educating paid staff members on the importance of recruitment and retention of good volunteers. As Pi (2001) points out, successful volunteer organisations use volunteers to increase efficiency by making use of their professional backgrounds. In return, organisations give volunteers a sense of service and the opportunity develop new skills and experience personal or professional growth. Bang and Ross (2004) also believe that paid staff members within an organisation need to understand what motivates people to volunteer for their organisation and assign appropriate tasks in order to enhance satisfaction.

On the other hand, the dynamics of the volunteer-paid staff relationship are centred on trust and the ability to do a good job. Whereas, volunteers feel that they are valued by upper management and the organisation as a whole, they are very tuned in to the lack of value that many of the paid staff members put in them. Volunteers also understand the importance that their roles play in the overall success of the organisation. The fact that volunteers strive to do a good job is supported in studies (i.e. Auld *et al* (2009); Bang &

Ross, 2004; Cuskelly *et al* (1998); Green & Chalip (2004)). In order to be successful volunteers expect that paid staff members will share information with them on a timely basis. Older, more experienced volunteers also recognize that the staff members at TSA are young and generally lack experience, and are willing to lend their professional knowledge and expertise to help solve problems. The volunteer - paid staff relationship is strained when expertise is ignored.

Younger volunteers, who lack experience, have the opposite issue in that they do not receive the feedback or instructions that they need to complete tasks. It is important to note that stories spread through the volunteer community quickly. When one volunteer experiences a negative encounter the rest of the community knows about it. Further, this relationship issue is often discussed at monthly meetings. Lenny, the president of the volunteer committee, captures volunteer sentiment on this topic saying, “We are here for free, giving our time and all we ask for is to be given the information and tools to do a good job.”

Volunteer vs. Volunteer – Differences in the Volunteer Community

Examining the relationship between volunteers and paid staff members is critical because many of the problems that lead to volunteer frustration stem from a lack of understanding between paid staff and volunteers. These issues are lack of information sharing, mutual value, and recognition of experience, knowledge and skills. The gap in understanding between paid staff and volunteers is further compounded by the difference in volunteers themselves. Using the sample of volunteers ($n=20$) who participated in the interview

process as an example (see Appendix A), volunteers at TSA bring with them varying degrees of experience, education, and skills. These motivation factors, experience, education, and skill levels changed volunteer perceptions and expectations of what kind of preparation (training) was needed, what tasks volunteers should do, and how the organisation should treat volunteers.

The greatest demographic gap that influenced perceptions and expectations was age. Volunteers who were over 35 years old (older volunteers) had a different outlook from those below 35 years old (younger volunteers). The older volunteers tended to have high levels of professional experience, were motivated by helping the organisation or community, and had expectations that the organisation would use them in roles that fit their expertise. Younger volunteers, on the other hand, tended to be lacking in professional skills, were motivated by gaining experience and professional contacts, and expected the organisation to provide training and preparation to aid in their personal development.

“Older Volunteers”

Many of the older volunteers had extensive professional business and service backgrounds. Occupations included school teachers, nurses, police officers, business managers, and entrepreneurs, and their motivations to volunteer included community involvement, social/interpersonal contacts, expression of values, and love of sport (Bang and Chelladurai, 2003; Bang and Ross, 2004; Chun, 2003). Older volunteers felt that they were giving their time to help the organisation be successful and in turn help the economic development of the region, and expected their experience to be utilized. In this regard,

older volunteers held the view that extensive training was not necessary for them since they were doing tasks that their professional lives had given them the skills to handle. Many believed that training should be quick and consist of an orientation session and pre-event updates.

This older group of volunteers also used the word “information” as a synonym for “training”. They believed that information was the key to being able to do a good job. Information was viewed on two levels - information to complete tasks effectively and information for social standing. In fact, many stated that if they were forced to sit in a classroom for training sessions that they would be forced to reconsider their decision to volunteer. In this vein, understanding the motivations and expectations of this group of volunteers is of the utmost importance to the organisation when it comes to designing training, information communication systems, and task assignment.

Given the excitement surrounding the development of this multi-sport organisation, and the hopes that the local community has for its impact on economic development, there is an aura of social capital pertaining to information about future plans and events at TSA. Many of the older volunteers, who reside in the local community, place a lot of value on having information before anyone else. They demand current information for the sake of information. Within the local community, information on TSA gives a level of social standing that many of the older volunteers enjoy. People want to know what is going on and what is coming next, and the volunteers like to be the people that have and share that information.

Expectations for older volunteers are shaped by the experience and skills that they bring to the organisation. Whereas older volunteers are open to feedback from the organisation, they are more interested in having their feedback listened to. As a group, they have a wealth of knowledge and believe that the organisation should listen to them and make use of their expertise. They also expect to be placed in tasks that either match their experience or their motivation.

“Younger Volunteers”

Younger volunteers (those under 35) had different motivations and expectations for their volunteer experience. Many of these volunteers lacked extensive professional experience and expected the organisation to provide in-depth preparation for them. Younger volunteers tended to be students or unemployed. For the students and unemployed workers, who constitute the majority of the younger volunteers, the common deficiency was lack of professional experience. Most of these volunteers were motivated to volunteer to further their professional career, gain experience, and meet or network with people who could help them get started in their professional endeavours (Bang and Chelladurai, 2003; Bang and Ross, 2004; Chun, 2003). It was not uncommon amongst this group to expect an opportunity at full time employment as positions came open.

Whereas the older volunteers did not want extensive training, the younger group wanted more than the organisation was willing or able to provide. They expected to be trained in a formal environment and were willing to sit through training sessions to get the knowledge that they craved or felt that they needed to be successful. For the younger volunteers,

information was associated directly with ability to do a job and develop skills that would help them find employment in the future. The need to have the latest information did not hold the same value for them as it did for older volunteers. Value for this group was in the knowledge that they could attain from their experience at TSA. Younger volunteers did not display the same level of commitment to the success of the organisation or the community as the older volunteers did. Length of volunteer service for younger volunteers tended to be shorter (often the equivalent of one school term) and was often terminated when a job was found or goals were not being met.

In comparison to older volunteers whose motivations to volunteer were more altruistic (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991; Ilsey, 1989; Martin, 1994), it can be said that younger volunteers at TSA had motivations and expectations that were egoistic (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991; Martin, 1994) or more self-oriented. They had the goal of gaining knowledge and furthering or starting their career, and volunteering at TSA provided that opportunity. Further, younger volunteers craved feedback from paid staff on their performance. They wanted to know when they were doing well and how they could improve. For these younger volunteers everything was a learning opportunity. They also sought to impress paid staff and other stakeholders in hopes of building their professional network.

“Older” vs. “Younger” – Implications for the Organisation

The differences between the older and younger volunteers had implications for TSA as an organisation and how they managed the volunteer community. With two very distinct

groups separated by age, motivation, and expectations, the organisation is faced with the challenge of having everyone working towards the same goal, yet getting them there through different avenues. At the time of this research TSA as an organisation was not set up to deal with these issues. There was no system in place to track experience and motivation factors. Training was delivered in piece-meal form through various methods and without thought to who the target audience was. The organisation did have a system of feedback, in the monthly volunteer meetings, for volunteers to give their ideas and discuss their role in the organisation, but there was no formal system of giving or receiving feedback on performance. The lack of systems led to all volunteers being treated as one and the same with no regard given to specific motivations or expectations. Areas that were affected by lack of differentiation included methods of training, channels of communication, assignment of tasks, and systems of recognition and feedback.

Volunteer Frustration – A New Typology

The lack of formal systems to recognize the differences in volunteers created what volunteers at TSA referred to as “frustration”, which affected their overall satisfaction with their volunteer experience. Frustration occurs when the volunteer is prevented from attaining their goals or fulfilling their motivations to the level that they expect to. Volunteers expect to be successful and accomplish the goals that they set out to achieve, and when the organisation either cannot remove roadblocks to achieving goals or constructs the roadblocks that prevent goal attainment, then volunteers experience frustration. With the idea of frustration in mind, findings in this research informed the development of a new two-level typology of frustration for volunteer workers – ‘task

frustration’ and *‘social frustration*’. Each consisted of five factors. Task frustration is the ability for the volunteer to physically and emotionally complete the job and is affected by 1) preparation for the task; 2) freedom to complete task; 3) authority to complete task; 4) task does not meet motivation; and 5) task does not meet experience level. Social frustration refers to the volunteer’s feeling of social relevance in their work and is affected by 1) a feeling of belonging to the organisation; 2) clarity in organisational communication; 3) feeling of accomplishment; 4) recognition; and 5) feeling good about what you are doing.

Task Frustration

Task Frustration refers to the ability of the volunteer to physically and emotionally complete the task. Regardless of motivations, volunteers have expectations that their volunteer work will make a difference and that they will experience a level of success in tackling the tasks assigned to them. When any of the five task-related factors (see table 7.1) affect a volunteer’s ability to complete the task, then frustration is experienced. At TSA, volunteers who experienced high levels of task frustration left the organisation.

Preparation for task is the training and information that volunteers require to successfully complete the task that has been assigned to them. When an underprepared or undertrained volunteer cannot complete a task they become frustrated and feel that they are wasting their time. At TSA, younger volunteers experienced frustration from lack of preparation when the organisation did not provide them with the knowledge and skills to be successful. In these situations younger volunteers often felt overwhelmed by the task and resented the

fact that they were not adequately prepared. Older volunteers experienced frustration when they were not given the information to answer questions adequately. For older volunteers preparation was not as much about ability to complete the task, rather it was about knowledge or more precisely, information.

Freedom to complete tasks refers to the autonomy that volunteers have when working in an assigned role. Volunteers shared their desire to be given a task and then left alone to complete it without the hindrance of organisational roadblocks. This frustration factor was especially prevalent with older volunteers who felt that they had the professional experience to work independently and provide service to patrons. Although younger volunteers desired a level of autonomy, they appreciated the ability to check in with paid staff on policy and procedures. On the other hand, older volunteers wanted to be given their task and the pertinent information and allowed to do the job. They “felt stupid” when they could not fulfil the requirements of the task without having to continually call on paid staff members to do so. This frustration was particularly relevant when volunteers could not complete tasks in the presence of patrons due to organisational roadblocks.

Authority to complete task refers to having the power to make decisions. Volunteers wanted clear communication from the organisation on how much authority they had, with regards to decision making, when completing assigned tasks or operating in assigned roles. Older volunteers were comfortable with higher levels of authority while younger volunteers tended to lack the confidence to make these decisions. Volunteers expressed that equally high levels of frustration were experienced when authority was ambiguous or

lacking. Volunteers at TSA had the expectation that they would be able to provide a high level of service and the authority to do so. They experienced frustration when they did not have the authority to complete tasks and deliver the type of service that was expected.

Task does not match motivation refers to the organisation's ability to assign tasks to volunteers that will help fulfil or meet the motivating factors that led them to volunteer (Bang & Ross, 2004; Pi 2001). For example, younger volunteers at TSA generally volunteered to gain experience and meet professional contacts. They wanted to be in positions that would help them grow professionally. Older volunteers were generally motivated to volunteer for community involvement and wanted to be involved in roles that would help TSA and therefore help the community as a whole. Other motivating factors that were present included love of sport, interpersonal contact, and expression of values, and obligation (Bang and Chelladurai, 2003; Bang and Ross, 2004; Chun, 2003). Volunteers motivated by love of sport (Bang and Ross, 2004) wanted to be involved with their sport of choice and were only available to help with events that pertained to that sport and had no interest in helping at other events. Volunteers motivated by interpersonal contacts desired the social setting of volunteering. Most of these individuals were retired and wanted to be in positions that allowed them to interact and meet new people. Expression of values is a belief in the intrinsic values of the organisation. These individuals believe in the opportunity that TSA is giving to young people, para-olympians, and wounded soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and want to be associated with such programmes.

Volunteers at TSA recognized that they could not always be placed in the perfect role at the perfect event. However, when volunteers were continually placed in roles or at events that did not meet their motivations, and when the expectations they had were ignored, they began question their relationship with the organisation.

Task does not match experience level is the need for the organisation to consider what type of role is assigned to volunteers based on the professional experience that they bring to the volunteer engagement. For example, TSA volunteer Stuart, is a police officer and brings experience security and traffic management. Stuart likes to work on security type roles and direct the parking service. He has no interest in customer service type roles. If the organisation chooses to ignore the expertise that an individual brings with them, then they (the volunteer) will experience frustration. The opposite is true of younger volunteers. Often they are placed in roles that are beyond their experience level, and they experience frustration because they cannot complete the assigned task.

Social Frustration

Social frustration refers to the feeling volunteers experience when their social relevance within the organisation does not meet their expectations. Volunteers at TSA expected the organisation to treat them as an integral part of the organisation and include them in the dissemination of information. They expected to be valued and recognized by the organisation for the contributions that they made. Further, volunteers needed to feel a sense of accomplishment themselves and expected to leave feeling good about the organisation and what they had done. Given that volunteers at TSA are long-term, 'serial',

volunteers, the frustration experienced on a social level had an impact on volunteer morale. Although task frustration resulted in volunteer attrition, social frustrations became the talk of the volunteer community, spread to throughout the ranks, and affected other volunteers. This was especially prevalent when a volunteer felt that the organisation has devalued them, taken credit for their work, or had failed to communicate (or mis-communicated) information. Social frustration did not have the same demographic influences as task frustration. Regardless of age, education, experience, or socio-economic standing, all volunteers were affected similarly by social frustration.

Feeling of belonging to the organisation. Volunteers at TSA expected to feel as though they were a valued part of the organisation. They understood that the organisation was extremely understaffed and that events and operations could not continue without the participation of the volunteer community. As such, the volunteers expected to be treated with the respect and professionalism that is expected for paid staff. Volunteers experienced frustration on this level when they felt as though the organisation (via paid staff members) took their service for granted or treated them as though they were expendable.

Clarity of organisational communication. Volunteers at TSA craved information and were frustrated when the organisation withheld it. As volunteers with a long-term commitment who felt as though they were an integral part of the organisation, they expected to be kept up to date with the latest information on special events, new facilities, and general news regarding TSA. On one level, communication of information impacted the volunteers'

ability to do their jobs. On another, communication of information impacts the social standing that volunteers felt it gave them in the local community. Withholding this information, or not communicating it clearly, caused anger in the volunteer community and made them question the value that the organisation put in them.

Feeling of accomplishment. Volunteers wanted to experience accomplishment not only on an individual level, but on an organisational level. For many volunteers this level of frustration was tied directly to their motivations and expectations. Volunteers wanted to leave events feeling as though it had been a success and patrons left feeling that TSA was truly a special organisation. Volunteers wanted to share in the organisation's successes and worked hard to ensure that success was attained. When they felt success was lacking due to circumstances out of their control, frustration set in and affected morale.

Recognition. Volunteers wanted to be recognized for the contribution that they made. Although most did not expect any kind of remuneration for their services, they did expect to be recognized. Simply thanking the volunteer community over the public address system during an event, or having them step on the field for public acknowledgement is all that was required. Volunteers want to know that the organisation values their time and is willing to take the time to acknowledge their contributions.

Feeling good about what you are doing. In addition to being valued by the organisation, volunteers wanted to be valued by each other. On a social level many volunteers wanted to

be part of a team that worked towards a common goal. When teamwork broke down volunteers felt frustration and terminated their relationship with the organisation.

Information vs. Training and the impact on Frustration

The fact that formal systems of training were lacking was not of great concern to the volunteer community at TSA. In fact volunteers did not speak in terms of more or better training, but rather the need for clear and concise channels by which information could be better communicated. Given the non-specialised nature of volunteer tasks at TSA, it is through the communication of pertinent information that the volunteer community expected to be prepared to take on their assigned task. Although, Wilson (2000: 107) states that “volunteer training is the foundation for a strong and dedicated volunteer programme,” findings at TSA point to a potential paradigm shift in volunteer expectations regarding the training process. At TSA access to information is a key reliever of frustration. So much so that the two words (training and information) are used interchangeably.

The purpose of this research was to explore the relationship between training and volunteer satisfaction. Within the parameters of this research volunteers discussed the frustration that they feel when unable to perform tasks or aid patrons on a high level. The inability to perform tasks is usually related to volunteers not being provided with the proper information in a timely manner. In fact, volunteers at TSA did not seek more or better training, rather they spoke about and sought better information that would help them do their job better. Information can be defined as changes in policy or procedure, a clear idea

of the other events that are happening at TSA, and explanation as to the purpose of specific tasks, and the latest ‘newsworthy’ plans for TSA (current and future). Although methods of training and information delivery is beyond the scope of this research it is important to note that older (more experienced) volunteers wanted information delivered in a clear and concise manner with little regard as to the delivery method. Younger (less experienced) volunteers on the other hand wanted a more formal ‘training like’ method of delivery.

The challenge for an organisation such as TSA is to develop training and systems by which to communicate information that can meet the expectations of the diverse group that is the volunteer community. Meeting these expectations is important for any organisation because volunteers shape their opinions on an organization during their initial engagements, especially orientation. Costa *et al* (2006: 167) caution that, “Training is the beginning of the volunteer’s experience. Unlike work settings, this is a leisure experience, freely chosen to obtain enjoyment. If a volunteer does not enjoy the training experience, he or she may choose not to return for the event itself.” Even though Costa *et al*’s (2006) research was conducted at a one-time event, their advice is still of value at an organisation such as TSA where volunteers engage for long periods of time. Unlike paid workers, volunteers do not need to give their time to sit in what some volunteers called ‘tedious’ and ‘boring’ training sessions.

The desire to have more information was present in and can be used to address most, if not all, of the frustration factors and organisations such as TSA need to have systems in place to capture data on volunteers with regards to motivation factors, education levels, and

experience. This data allows the organisation to determine who needs training versus who needs information and at what levels they need it. Further, the organisation needs to recognize the different levels of task and social frustration that volunteers experience, and ultimately, develop training programmes that fit the need of the organisation and meet the expectations of the volunteer community.

For most volunteers at TSA frustration seemed to be tied to expectations that focus on the acquisition of information, the feeling of organisational value, and the feeling of self worth. These three generalized categories fit with Wilson's (2000: 107-109) division of volunteer training into three distinct segments, knowledge, attitudes, and team rapport. Knowledge is the transmission of solid, fact based information so that volunteers share a common understanding (p.107). Attitudes refer to the experience that the volunteer brings to the organisation and the flexibility and patience that they need to be successful (p.108). Team Rapport is the group bonding or teambuilding that builds trust and openness between the volunteers and helps people understand the different strengths that each member brings to the team (p.109).

Development of a comprehensive orientation programme that involves the input and facilitation of volunteers would be an essential first step, given Costa *et al's* (2006) assertion that volunteers can choose to return to the volunteer setting based on the training experience. Orientation is a good time to give the volunteer the organisational information and knowledge that they will need to be successful and to explain the importance of the volunteer role in the organisation. The second step in regards to knowledge is the

development of a system of communication that allows for the continual updating of information (i.e. newsletter, volunteer section on webpage). In the absence of formal training programmes the organisation can utilize the experience of the older volunteers and develop a mentor programme in which younger volunteers can learn from the experiences of the more experienced volunteers. This last programme would also serve to bridge the gap in understanding between the older and younger volunteers.

Clarity of communication will also aid the volunteer flexibility and patience. The sports business environment is fast paced, emotion filled, and ever changing. No two events are ever the same, and the issues presented are always different. For many volunteers at TSA this is their first experience with working in a sports environment. It would be worthwhile for the organisation to introduce volunteers to the complexities of the industry in which they are volunteering. This understanding could lead to greater levels of flexibility and patience (Wilson, 2006) throughout the volunteer community and lessen levels of frustration.

Lastly, teambuilding activities create a bond between volunteers and can help bridge the divide between paid staff and the volunteer community. Investment in teambuilding also shows the value that the organisation puts in the volunteer relationship and provides ongoing opportunities to address the knowledge (information) and attitude component of training.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of this study stems from the unique context of The Sports Academy itself and the geographic area in which it exists. Being a new and growing organisation presented situations and contexts that may not occur at other organisations. Also, the rural setting and economic climate that surrounds the research site influence people's perspectives. It is possible that the findings and conclusions that were informed by this research do not apply in other contexts such as urban or more affluent settings. Therefore, similar studies need to be conducted in other organisational settings to validate results and test applicability of conclusions. The second limitation was in choice of research methods. As discussed in chapter 3, qualitative methods, designed to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon, are difficult to generalize (Fetterman, 2010). The third limitation was my subjectivity as a researcher. I have extensive experience in volunteer communities and brought my own experience and opinions with me. The fourth limitation was time and money that imposed a particular time frame to the study.

Recommendations for future Study

This research presented a unique view into the volunteer world from an emic perspective using ethnographic methods over an extended period of time. This approach allowed the real life story of the volunteer experience to be observed and discussed as it happened within the context of the volunteer work environment. I propose that further research needs to be conducted on two levels. First more research should be conducted with regards to sport volunteer training and its effect on satisfaction. Second, more research should be conducted on sport volunteerism from the emic perspective, thereby gaining an

understanding of what volunteers themselves experience during their volunteer work engagement. In particular greater understanding should be sought regarding age and experience difference and how motivation factors effect willingness to participate in training programmes, and how past experience and motivation affect volunteers perception of what constitutes training. Is training merely the transfer of information? If so, does training within the sport volunteer setting may need to be rethought?

As stated in the research limitations, further research should be conducted in different settings allowing for the cross referencing and validation of findings. The typology that emerged from the data in this study needs to be tested in different contexts and settings in order to gain a true understanding of the frustrations that volunteers experience. Frustrations that impact volunteer effectiveness and overall satisfaction with their experience. Further, within the context of the frustration typology, additional research is needed to draw out and identify sub-categories within the frustration factors introduced in this study.

Concluding Remarks

The original contribution of this research is threefold. First, the employment of ethnographic research methods, which sought to understand the relationship between training and satisfaction in a community of permanent sports volunteers is unique and allowed for thick descriptive accounts of volunteers' lived experiences. Second, the *frustration factor* presented in this research adds to current research on sports volunteer motivation, training, and satisfaction by providing a link in the relationship that each has

with the other, especially when issues of age, motivation factors, and volunteer/paid staff relations are involved. Third, recognition that volunteers see information as a key construct in relieving frustration is a significant step away from the traditional workplace training paradigm that is employed by most voluntary sport organization and may require a reconceptualised method of knowledge/information delivery.

It was evident throughout the research that the organisation did not have the systems in place to deal with the frustrations of volunteers. Similarly there is a dearth of research information to aid and assist organisations in addressing the issues of volunteer frustration and training, which ultimately impact the satisfaction of volunteers.

Looking back at the initial entries in my research journal, I originally set out, as a novice researcher, to save the world, to find all the answers to my research questions, and develop systems that would make organisations and volunteers more effective. Instead, I found ethnographic research to be a journey of discovery, both of self and of others. A major component of that discovery of self was a paradigm shift from one of creating solutions to one of gaining understanding, from a research centred approach to a participant centred approach.

The importance of this research is in the understanding, or lived reality that is uncovered. The research tells the story of one community of volunteers, the frustrations they experience, the changes they propose and the influence that their prior and professional

experiences have on the volunteer engagement. It is an account of their lived experience.
This is their story.

“If you want to build a ship, don't drum to the women and men to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.”
Antoine De Saint-Exupery, *The Wisdom of the Sands*³

³ Quote found on Page 102 in Deep, S. & Sussemen, L., (2000) *Solving 101 of the Toughest Management Challenges*. Cambridge, MA. Perseus Publishing.

Appendix A

Volunteer Characteristics

Throughout the observation/fieldwork phase of the research, a number of people were interviewed on two different levels. The larger group ($N=88$), which consisted of volunteers, full time employees, participants, and spectators, were considered 'unofficial' interviews. Unofficial interviews were non-structured and often impromptu conversations which often only lasted a few minutes. They always happened in the 'heat of battle' during an event when there were other things going on in the surrounding area. Many of the questions arose out of the researcher's curiosity in response to actions that were taking place.

The second group of interviews ($N=24$) were semi-structured 'official' interviews. The participants were selected with the help of the researcher's main contact or gatekeeper at the organisation. These participants consisted of volunteers ($N=20$) and management within the organisation who work with the volunteer community on a daily basis ($N=4$). Interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 1 hour and participants were asked to sign an informed consent form.

The following outlines the main characteristics of the volunteers selected for the official interviews. They were selected because they represent a diverse cross section of the volunteer population at Spire Institute (which will be referred to as *The Sports Academy* from this point forward).

In the chart the first column contains the initials of the research participant. The second column is an assigned alias name that will be used in the written findings.

Initials	Alias Name	Age	Gender	Professional Background	Volunteer Background	Motivation
NC	Ricky	21	M	College Student	Youth Sports, Community Orgs	Career Orientation / Personal Growth
LB	Diana	22	F	College Student	Sports Organisations	Career Orientation
SG	Andy	20	M	College Student	Community Based, Sports, Health	Career Orientation / Growth / Contacts
CL	Tim	19	M	College Student	First time Volunteer	Interpersonal Contacts / Career Orientation
MT	Justin	22	M	Graduate Student	Numerous Sports Orgs, High School Events	Career Orientation
HM	Megan	28	F	Physical Therapist	Church, Community, Hospital	Obligation/ Community Involvement
SB	Joe	25	M	Information Technology	First Time Volunteer	Community Involvement
CS	Ellen	35	F	Athletic Coaching	Numerous Sports Orgs, High School Coaching, Youth Sports	Love of Sport / Career Orientation
BH	Stuart	57	M	Police Captain	Local Community, Youth Sports	Community Involvement / Obligation
KH	Devon	55	F	Office Manager	Youth Sports, Recreational Sports, Local Community	Community Involvement
DM	Lenny	50	M	Self Employed – Produce Distributor	Youth Sports, Local Community	Community Involvement / Interpersonal Contacts
IM	Cathy	65	F	Retired Psychiatric Nurse	Local Community, Church, Schools, Youth Sports	Expression of Values / Love of Sport
MG	Eileen	80	F	Retired Hospital Worker	Local Community, Church, Schools	Obligation

Initials	Alias Name	Age	Gender	Professional Background	Volunteer Background	Motivation
WR	Mark	70	M	Self-Employed - Construction	Charity Events, Community, Local Hospital	Community Involvement
NS	Abby	55	F	Retired Teacher	Local Community, Church, Schools, Charity Events	Community Involvement / Interpersonal Contacts
PJ	Julia	60	F	Retired Teacher	Foreign Exchange Students, Local Community, Church, Schools	Community Involvement / Interpersonal Contacts
BG	Gary	40	M	Restaurant Manager	First Time Volunteer	Interpersonal Contacts
CS	Nate	35	M	Unemployed Military Veteran	Church	Career Orientation/ Personal Growth
PU	Dave	20	M	Unemployed	First Time Volunteer	Career Orientation/ Personal Growth
RS	Brent	38	M	Teacher / Coach	Youth Sport, Church, Community	Love Of Sport / Expression of Values
Management						
Initials	Alias Name	Age	Gender	Professional Background	Volunteer Management Experience	
MT	Mike	26	M	Operations Manager	None	
TC	Val	52	F	Volunteer Coordinator	Charity Events	
TP	Grace	50	F	Administrative Coordinator	Local School Functions	
LB	Sarah	45	F	Hospitality Director	Charity Events, Local School Functions	

APPENDIX B

Volunteer Interview Questions

1. **What are your reasons for volunteering and what you feel that you get from it?**
2. Why do you volunteer at this organisation?
3. What do you like or dislike about your volunteer experience at this organisation?
4. What other types organisations do you volunteer for?
 - a. What kind of organisations? Do you feel the same way about your volunteer experience at other organisations? What are some of the experiences that are the same and different?
5. Describe your volunteering in terms of fulfilling a recreation need vs occupational fulfilment
6. Please describe what motivates you to keep volunteering event after event?
7. **Can you tell me a little about what you do here and about your volunteer experience here?**
8. Can you tell me about what you particularly like (or dislike) about volunteering here
9. What is/are some of the roles that you have performed as a volunteer in this organisation?
 - a. How did you feel about this (these) role(s)?
 - b. How were you prepared for this (these) role(s)?
10. What type of interaction do you have with management and paid employees at this organisation?
11. What level of interaction do you have with patrons of the facility during events?
12. **What kinds of occurrences (interactions, feelings) affect your overall satisfaction as volunteer?**
13. What type of frustration have you experienced during your volunteer experience?
14. What affects your satisfaction with your volunteer experience?
 - a. What could be done to improve your satisfaction(s)
15. What type of situations or roles would you be most likely to avoid in your volunteer work? How would being placed in those situations or roles affect your overall satisfaction?
16. How Satisfied are you your volunteer experience?
17. **In what ways do you feel that you were prepared (or not prepared) to take on your volunteer role in the organisation**
 - a. What types of situations have you run into where you felt unprepared or equipped to perform effectively? How did this make you feel?
18. What could the organisation do to better prepare volunteers?
19. What level of education or training, if any, did you receive prior to or during your volunteering?
20. If a more thorough and intense training programme was to be offered, would you participate in it? Why or why not?
21. What value do you believe the organisation puts in the volunteer workers?
22. What recommendations would you have, for the organisation, to make the overall volunteer experience better or more satisfying?

APPENDIX C

Management/Paid Staff Interview Questions

1. What do you think motivates volunteers to give their time to this organisation?
2. How important are volunteers to the success of this organisation? Will this level of importance increase or decrease in the foreseeable future?
3. What factors exist within the current volunteer programme that creates obstacles for the organisations when running events? What possible solutions has the organisation looked at?)
4. What value does the organisation put in the volunteers' contributions and ideas?
5. How does the organisation measure satisfaction amongst the volunteers?
6. What are your opinions with regard to the volunteers' satisfaction and commitment to the organisation (are they satisfied and committed? Why or why not?)?
7. What is the retention rate of volunteers within the organisation? What do you attribute to this number?
8. How does the organisation measure satisfaction amongst the volunteers?
9. Have you ever had to deal with a volunteer who was put in a situation that they were not prepared for? Please describe the experience and the results?
10. What type of feedback does the organisation receive from volunteers? How is this feedback received? What is done with the feedback?
11. How does the organisation communicate with and prepare volunteers for the roles that they will take on?
12. Describe the recruitment and training process for new volunteers (orientation, specialised role training, ongoing training, etc.).
 - a. What training methods are employed during training (lecture, experiential, OTJ).
 - b. How receptive to this training is the volunteer staff?
13. Overall, do you think the training programmes provided prepare the volunteers to take on the roles that the organisation needs.

APPENDIX D

Date

Name

c/o The Sports Academy
1822 Anywhere St
Somewhere, MW 55555

DATA PROTECTION/INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Dear Name,

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this research on volunteer satisfaction. I greatly appreciate you giving up your time in order to help me. I am undertaking this project as a part of a Doctorate degree which I am studying with the University of Leicester in England. The project I am working on intends to explore the relationship between job training and volunteer satisfaction. You were selected to take part in this research because of your involvement within the volunteer community at The Sports Academy.

You can withdraw from the study at any time if you feel that is necessary. If you are happy to take part in the research, however, I will ask you to sign a consent form giving your agreement. You can still withdraw from the research after signing the form.

The interview will last for approximately one hour. I will ask you a series of questions and will give you the opportunity to ask me any questions you may have. I would like to reassure you that the information which you provide in the course of the interview will be treated in the strictest of confidence. All data collected will be treated in accordance with ethical codes set out in the American Sociological Association and the American Anthropological Association's code of ethics. In addition, your answers will be unattributed to either yourself or to any organisation which you work for or have worked for. The data gathered during the interview will only be used for my Doctorate thesis. Your own data will be completely anonymous and you will not be identifiable.

Once again, thank you very much for your participation. If you have any questions at any stage of the project please do not hesitate to contact me at the email address or number provided below.

Yours sincerely,

Dale Sheptak
(216)339-9577
rds18@le.ac.uk
rdsheptak@hotmail.com

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

TRAINING VOLUNTEER WORKERS: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF TRAINING ON VOLUNTEER WORKER SATISFACTION IN THE SPORT INDUSTRY

I agree to take part in an interview as part of the above named project. The research has been clearly explained to me and I have read and understood the participant informed consent letter. I understand that by signing the consent form I am agreeing to participate in this research and that I can withdraw from the research at any time. I understand that any information I provide during the interview is confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than the research project outlined above. The data will not be shared with any other organisations.

If applicable: I agree that the interview can be audio taped by voice/tape recorder: YES/NO

Name: (please print)

Signature:..... Date:

Appendix E

Adapted copy of letter to work and volunteer community At TSA. All Names and logo's have been removed or changed.

March 1, 2001

Dear TSA Community,

This letter is to inform you of a research project that will be taking place at TSA over the coming months. Dale Sheptak, who some of you may know as a consultant, will be researching our volunteer programme and how they are trained. The title of his research is "Training volunteer workers: an ethnographic study on the role of training on volunteer workers' job satisfaction in the sports industry." The research is part of Dale's doctoral degree which he is completing at the University of Leicester in England.

Over the coming months, Dale will be present at events observing volunteer work and talking to people about their experience. A group of people will be invited to take part in an interview process at a later date. Dale has asked me to stress that people should not feel obligated to speak with him and are under no pressure to take part in any phase of the research.

Lastly, due to the nature of this research project, Dale will no longer be working with "TSA" in a consulting role.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me by phone at 123-456-1212 or by email at mtabc@tsa.org.

Sincerely,

Name
Director of Operations
The Sports Academy

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