
Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management

Le journal canadien de gestion
des bénévoles

2004

Volume 12.4



OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

MESURE DES RÉSULTATS

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ISSN 1192-1676

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EDITORIAL

Well, I never thought that we would see another year of the journal come to an end so quickly.

Outcome Management is a timely and important topic on which to end the year. We have some fascinating articles that will assist you with your own situation or shed light on a topic about which you may know very little.

We start the subject of Outcome Measurement with Romy Litwin's article. In a unionized setting, Romy conducted a survey in order to gain the statistics required to define the value of volunteer work.

The CCHSAA accreditation can be of great benefit to an organization. Toby Yan discusses the process, breaks it down into three basic areas and shows the role the volunteer plays in each one.

Anne Stock-Bateman looks at the Canadian Code of Volunteer Involvement and how it has been adopted by Volunteer Calgary. Marcella Ciampa looks at implementing your own outcome measurement system. This look is based on a book from United Way for which she has provided a book review.

Our Peer Expert, Tracy Mann provides an excellent breakdown of how to put together your own outcome measurement system. It provides tips and tricks to setting up your own system.

We hope you find this journal full of useful tips and practical applications - the editorial committee learned a great deal when putting the edition together for you.

The Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management wish you the best for 2005 and hope that you join us for another exciting year of topics on subjects that matter to you and your volunteer programs. As always, if you would like to suggest upcoming articles or subjects, please contact us!

Lynne Whitehead
Editorial Member

THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERISM TO THE VOLUNTEERS: WHY ASK THE QUESTIONS

by Romy Litwin

As managers of volunteers, we are often called upon to speak about volunteerism. We prepare our mental checklists of anecdotes: youth volunteers who have had inspirational life altering experiences through working with the elderly; volunteers coping with life changes by keeping busy and helping others and isolated volunteers whose service is their main social activity. We bring along extra snippets, just in case the crowd is tough. We pack jokes, quotes and poems into our song and dance. We are well versed at bringing our audiences to both laughter and tears.

When my boss recently asked for a summary of the activities in my department, I was equally armed with statistics. I could recite the number of volunteers per year, per department, per role. I could compare hours served by period and by year. I could analyze trends and predict patterns. However, these numbers limited me as they merely provided an outline. I wanted to add vivid technicolour to my rough sketch of our volunteer activity. After striving to improve the professional image of my department, I did not want to revert to reciting anecdotes. I appreciated that hard data strengthened my arguments, but was convinced that the current data gathering methods did not paint an accurate picture. I found myself challenged to best describe the value of our volunteers.

In accounting terms, value added is "a measure of wealth that an organization creates by 'adding value' to the raw materials, products, and services through the use of labor and capital" (Quarter, Mook & Richmond, 2003). Volunteers frequently tell us that they receive more than they give. Value added accounting principles or social accounting attribute a dollar value both to the actual volunteer service and to the benefits of volunteering. For example, if a volunteer prepares meals in a soup kitchen, it would be reasonable to attribute the same dollar per hour cost that an employee would receive. Thus, we can compute the dollar value of all the volunteers in our institutions. Moreover, a volunteer may acquire computer skills while 'on the job'. After calculating the cost of a college course for that skill, this value could be added to the dollar value thereby arriving at a monetary 'value added' of the volunteers in our institutions.

Once again, I found myself challenged. Because I manage volunteers in a heavily unionized setting where it is a thorny issue to claim cost savings through volunteerism, I decided to ask the volunteers about their volunteer experience. I developed a survey based partly on the Mook et al model and incorporated questions that were specific to our setting, a university affiliated

hospital in a large city. The 29 question survey was pre-tested with a focus group, which represented a broad cross-section of the volunteers. After making some changes to the wording of some questions, two questionnaires were distributed, one to 265 current volunteers and the other to 170 former volunteers who had served within the last calendar year.

The return rates were somewhat predictable. I expected that the affiliation ties to the institution would be stronger for current volunteers than for the recent volunteers and this would lead to higher response rates for the former group. In fact, almost 60% of the current volunteers and only 18% of the former volunteers responded to the survey.

The real surprise, however, was in the demographics of these two groups. The majority of the current volunteers were 65 years or older, female, married, widowed or divorced and retired. Conversely, the majority of the former volunteers were young, female, single and students. This was unexpected and led me to explore age-related trends. I expected to find that young people appreciated the career-related experience that hospital volunteerism provided them. I expected to see patterns in which recruitment strategies worked based on age or gender. I was again surprised by the findings. Both groups of volunteers claimed that a sense of satisfaction was the biggest benefit of volunteering. Neither group identified an effective recruitment strategy. The only clear age-related trend that emerged was that younger people (16-24 years of age) have less available time to volunteer and they volunteer for shorter periods of time. I believe this resulted in the students' receiving less appreciation from staff and patients than did the older volunteers. There was really less time to effectively integrate these volunteers into existing teams.

Never before had the volunteers in our institution been asked targeted questions about their own volunteer experience. Many of the survey respondents had been volunteering for over ten years (18.2%) and had never had the formal opportunity to share their thoughts in a confidential and structured format. Johnstone (1996) asserts that volunteer organizations have to be more inclusive of their volunteers by "recognizing volunteers, not as subordinates, nor as do-gooders, but as active partners ... who share responsibility, share commitment, share risks and share rewards". McCurley and Lynch (1996) argue that "the mission statement (of an organization) should be developed with the involvement of the people who will be attempting to carry it out. This insures they will feel a sense of ownership". I believe that volunteers are important stakeholders who must feel ownership to fully appreciate how any organization attempts to successfully achieve its mission. Since the mission of my institution was developed long ago, the survey became an innovative way of exploring the volunteers' sense of affiliation and helping establish a partnership rather than the existing somewhat lopsided relationship.

The survey was an important outlet for volunteers to share their experiences in a

confidential and non-threatening format. For example: when asked whether they had any unpleasant experiences while volunteering, 10% of respondents described negative interactions with patients, staff and other volunteers as well as minor dissatisfactions with the program itself. I believe that volunteers generally do not complain and accept off-putting experiences as 'part of the job'. Indeed, one volunteer claimed " ... I think everyone has bad experiences every once in a while ... It's just part of life, I guess". This survey provided the volunteers with an important opportunity to complain and allowed me to identify trends and potential problematic areas for volunteers throughout the institution.

As managers, we are acutely aware of the multiple challenges we face when trying to improve our volunteer retention rates. We plan volunteer appreciation parties, send birthday and holiday cards and say thank you each and every day. McKenzie and Moore (1993) argue that "recognition, coaching and assessment are the very heart of effectively working with volunteers". They assert that volunteers thrive in an environment where evaluation and discussion is ongoing. It follows that the happier a volunteer is, the longer that person will continue to volunteer. It is essential for managers to always have an ear to the ground and to know the issues and concerns of the volunteers. In practice, however, we are challenged to find creative ways of continuously dialoguing with our volunteers. I learned - and continue to learn - more from the volunteers who completed this study than I would ever have learned otherwise because they felt safe in sharing with me. I believe that this survey opened doors for communication that were otherwise closed. Surprisingly, the communication was improved even for volunteers who chose not to complete the survey. I hope that this exercise and the resulting exchanges of ideas will result in higher retention rates because the volunteers' sense of being valued and heard was renewed.

A detailed examination of the unpleasant experiences of volunteers highlighted the challenges for new volunteers who try to integrate into existing teams. Of those who had unpleasant incidences, 17.6% involved staff. One volunteer commented, "I noticed that in all the (areas) I work, the personnel is over-worked and that is one of the reasons they are not always smiling". Others wrote of not being thanked or not being invited to meetings and parties. These comments led to the development of a comprehensive set of education sessions for staff who work closely with volunteers, covering the soup-to-nuts of working with volunteers: from volunteer motivation to appropriate volunteer job design. I also now regularly meet with managers throughout the institution and help them to develop appropriate volunteer positions. Involving staff who work directly with the volunteers in the process has helped them better understand volunteer motivation, facilitated planning and improved the volunteer experience and retention rates.

Finally, the biggest innovation and quality improvement resulting from the survey was the creation of a multidimensional program for student volunteers. According to the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP), Canadian youth between the ages of 15 to 24 accounted for 15% of all volunteer hours. Last year, student volunteers accounted for 1/3 of the volunteer body in my institution, and contributed 11% of the hours, 67% of which was dedicated to basic clerical support. Over the past few years, volunteer managers have been faced with significant changes in the demographics of potential volunteers. The Baby Boomers caring for aging relatives and their disinterest in many long-established volunteer areas has created a situation whereby it may no longer be possible to meet many of our volunteer needs through traditional avenues (Volunteer Canada, 2001). The survey results made plain the opportunities for both the institution and the students when their energy and talents are harnessed.

Although the students claim very high levels of satisfaction (86.2% were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience), they do not remain on as volunteers with the organization for long periods of time. The challenge was to design a program that would offer the students a positive volunteer experience to encourage life-long volunteerism, provide enough flexibility to accommodate their demanding schedules and ensure a sense of ownership. To this end, I have implemented a program that is steered by a committee of experienced student volunteers. These future leaders have been given a broad mandate to design a lecture series, support system and social events for the student volunteers. This active participation has encouraged their feelings of ownership over the very mission that they are developing. Their involvement and their energy have already had a positive impact on recruitment and affiliation.

Prior to this project, I found myself straddling a fence between tradition and innovation. When on the tradition side, I was inspiring and understanding, a teller of stories. When on the innovation side, I was able to effectively manage a large department but I felt that the warmth and humanity that drew me to managing volunteers was missing. Completing a major research project was a turning point in improving the professional image of the 80-year-old department. The results led to the development and implementation of several new initiatives that will have important implications for the entire volunteer program. The wealth of information that I acquired has allowed me to more effectively balance on the fence and improve my technical painting skills. I would encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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Romy Litwin is the Director of Volunteer Services at St. Mary's Hospital Center in Montreal. Having completed a Master's Degree in Educational Psychology and Counseling at McGill University, she first applied her expertise in program development and evaluation in educational settings. A passion for volunteerism and community involvement inspired her to shift her career focus to the voluntary sector.

TRANSLATION OF MAIN ARTICLE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

THE VOLUNTEER'S ROLE IN ACCREDITATION - YOUR OPINION COUNTS

by Toby Yan

Accreditation is a process that allows health services organizations to measure, evaluate and improve the quality of care and services they provide to their clients and communities. Volunteers play a key role in the accreditation at many levels and are a vital source of feedback to the organizations they serve.

As the only national body that directly evaluates quality across health care sectors, the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA) sets national standards of excellence and develops accreditation programs for a wide range of organizations across Canada. The current accreditation program is based on a philosophy of quality improvement, which requires organizations to respond to the needs and expectations of their clients and communities.

The accreditation process is comprised of three main building blocks: the self-assessment, the peer review and the survey report. Let us take a look at how volunteers play a part in each of the three stages. One of the organization's first priorities in preparing for accreditation is to assemble teams of individuals to complete the self-assessment for each standards section. These sections are Leadership and Partnerships, Support Services (Environment, Human Resources and Information Management) as well as a service delivery section for each program or service that the organization provides. Each team will be assessing all aspects of its services against the standards and criteria through identifying its strengths and areas for improvement and then coming to

consensus on a rating of performance for each criterion.

CCHSA encourages the participation of volunteers on all of the self-assessment teams. For example, if you are a volunteer at a long term care centre who regularly helps residents at meal times or are part of the lay chaplaincy team, you could be asked to sit on the resident care team for that nursing home. If you are a director or coordinator of volunteers, you would have a place at the Human Resources table, as these standards address a wide array of issues including recruitment, retention and performance of volunteers in the organization. If you represent the organization's consumer advisory council, you may be asked to provide input to the Leadership and Partnerships standards completed by your governing body and senior management team. We also need to recognize that most boards of directors are volunteers themselves!

While attending team meetings is one way of participating on a team, there are other methods to obtain the input of volunteers. Written comments, telephone conversations, focusing on particular standards and participating in specific discussions are ways to keep the volunteers' time commitment manageable and participation most effective.

The second building block of accreditation is the consultative peer review or on-site survey. Senior health professionals working in the field, selected and trained by CCHSA, conduct the survey and are known as surveyors. Although the surveyors receive a small honorarium, they are essentially volunteers who, with their employers' support, agree to share their knowledge and expertise with other organizations. The purpose of the visit is to validate the information submitted in the self-assessment. This validation includes interviews with each of the self-assessment teams, a review of selected documents, a tour of the facility, individual interviews with clients and focus group interviews. Typically, three focus group interviews are held: one with clients, one with staff and one with community partners. Volunteer participation in the staff focus group can be requested. The client and community partners focus groups provide further opportunities for volunteer input. The purpose of the client focus group is to get a broad consumer view of the organization's services and may include representatives from consumer advisory groups. The community partners focus group is asked to comment on the services provided by the organization and its relationship with its partners. As an example, the president of the local chapter of the Schizophrenia Society could be invited to participate in the community partners focus group for a psychiatric hospital in its region.

Given the greater demand for accountability in health care, CCHSA now expects organizations to develop indicators to measure and monitor their performance. This is built into the accreditation program. In assessing organizations, surveyors consider the extent to which organizations are using

indicators, including outcome measures, to guide quality improvement. Volunteer Resources should be included in the quality improvement program and should have defined indicators aligned with corporate goals and strategic plan.

The last building block in the accreditation process is the accreditation survey report. Organizations receive a comprehensive report approximately 45 days following the on-site survey visit. This report provides the organization with a roadmap of the quality improvement activities that should be implemented. In 2002, 226 recommendations were made that related to the following standard: The team monitors and improves the quality of its services to achieve the best possible outcomes. In their next survey, organizations will be assessed on the progress made toward addressing recommendations related to this standard. Therefore, these recommendations will be acting as catalysts for organizations to focus on outcome measurement.

Accreditation yields many benefits for organizations, their clients and their communities. Participation in accreditation can strengthen the links between an organization and its volunteers. According to Carol Anne Clarke, former (retired) Director of Volunteer Services for the Royal Ottawa Hospital (ROH), "accreditation brings the community into the hospital. Volunteers bring a different perspective about care and service to the table than staff and may offer other ways to improve services. Volunteers who participated in the hospital's accreditation in 2002 felt their opinions counted. By involving volunteers in accreditation, the ROH was sending the message that it valued its volunteer community".

Toby Yan is an Accreditation Specialist with the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation in Ottawa.

NEWS BITS

On December 26, 2004 Southeast Asia was devastated by an earthquake measuring 9 on the Richter scale. This earthquake triggered tsunami waves that killed over 166,000 people and displaced millions more. Canadians donated millions of dollars to the relief efforts and every dollar was matched by the federal government. There is a complete list of organizations that received funding on the Canadian International Development Agency website:

<http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca>

THE CANADIAN CODE FOR VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT:

Calgary's Approach to Implementation

by Anne Stock-Bateman

While we all know that volunteers are not 'free', many of us are still beginning to develop an understanding of the elements required to engage volunteers effectively in the work of our organizations.

Of the five key themes identified by Volunteer Canada in 2001, The International Year of Volunteers, one that continues to stand out is the need for improvement of infrastructure of voluntary organizations.

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement has marked a key step in this direction. Many organizations and volunteer centres across the country have taken the Code and made it their own through workshops, key discussions and resource development.

During the past three years, Volunteer Calgary has worked with its member organizations, trainers, communications team and volunteer advisors in integrating and applying the Code. This work has touched virtually every element of Volunteer Calgary, including training programs, the youth engagement program and its member and volunteer services.

Daphne Ffoulkes-Jones, Volunteer Coordinator at Habitat for Humanity and a Volunteer Calgary member, is a keen supporter of the Code, "The Code ensures your volunteer program is part of the larger picture of your organization. It formalizes and gives credibility to volunteerism and volunteer programs. There are built-in accountabilities and standards I need to maintain. And the framework allows our organization to fully realize the significance of volunteers."

Volunteer Calgary has been using the Code to assist local organizations in meeting these challenges. On the flipside, members of the Calgary community continually approach Volunteer Calgary with questions about volunteer involvement, concerns about inaccessibility to opportunities and standards of volunteer programs.

Volunteer Calgary is addressing these concerns in a variety of ways. Through year-long training, Volunteer Calgary member organizations and other local groups can learn the fundamentals of effective volunteer resource management. Our signature program, the Introduction to Volunteer Management (IVM), is a three-day intensive program for managers of volunteer resources. Based on long-standing principles of volunteer management, the

IVM curriculum has changed with current trends in volunteerism. After an intensive revamp following The International Year of Volunteers, the IVM curriculum was enhanced through the full integration of the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement. Learning modules in the course now reference the Code directly and the values, principles and standards of the Code provide key models for all aspects of volunteer resource management.

Volunteer Calgary is leading by example. Volunteer program policies have been updated and modified to comply with the standards outlined in the Code.

An innovative step that Volunteer Calgary has taken is to help local organizations to integrate the Code by introducing a Working Group process. Through a partnership with Enbridge Inc., Volunteer Calgary secured funding for the development of a policy template, a resource tool outlining the policies that must be in place in order for an organization to be fully compliant with the Code standards. Members of Volunteer Calgary attend a three-hour Working Group session at which the fundamentals of policy and procedure development are introduced and the policy template is presented. During the session, participants discuss challenges faced by their organization and policies and procedures are developed to address these challenges. Board members, managers of volunteer resources and executive directors are encouraged to attend the Working Group session. Since the inaugural Working Group session, over 100 organizations have participated in the process.

We are continuing to develop the Working Group process and in the months to come, several ongoing supports will be introduced to participants of the Working Groups, including a new Peer Review Team. Peer reviewers, experienced managers of volunteer resources, will be recruited and trained to provide feedback and support to Working Group participants as they work through the process of policy development and implementation.

A partnership with local government has further enhanced the Working Group process. Calgary Family and Community Support Services provides funding for capacity building in the organizations it supports and a portion of these funds has been allocated to enhancing the Working Group process for these organizations. A survey of all funded organizations was conducted in the summer of 2004. Working Group participants were interviewed to gauge the level of implementation and to gather feedback on the benefits and challenges of adopting the Code.

For Volunteer Calgary, the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement is a flexible tool with many applications, a fundamental framework for current work and future endeavours. Martha Parker, Former Executive Director of Volunteer Calgary, believes strongly that the Code is a key resource for recognizing and positioning volunteer resources in our sector and in our

communities, "The Code is a fundamental tool that can help organizations move to an integrated human resource strategy. Adopting and promoting the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement encourages strategic networking inside the organization and promotes a team approach to volunteer development and best practices."

For Volunteer Calgary, strengthening its members' volunteer resources means looking toward the future. In Parker's words, "The traditional Manager of Volunteers is about today - Volunteer Developers are about today, tomorrow and 10 years from now."

Anne Stock-Bateman is the Manager of Training at Volunteer Calgary, a non-profit volunteer centre that offers support, training and resources to over 400 local member organizations. Anne works as a consultant, trainer and facilitator both within Calgary and in other communities in the province.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Volunteer Value Added Website.

<http://home.oise.utoronto.ca/~volunteer>

Includes tools for calculating an organization's volunteer value added. Also lists workshops on the topic.

The Dollar Value of Volunteer Time by Susan Ellis

<http://www.energizeinc.com/art/afoc2.html>

Also visit the Energizeinc Volunteer Management Library.

Assigning Economic Value to Volunteer Activity: Eight Tools for Efficient Program Management. Canadian Centre for Philanthropy.

www.nonprofitscan.ca/pdf/MAN/Goulbourne-MAN-English-Web.pdf

Includes list of references.

The Volunteer Management Audit: The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement.

www.volunteercanada.ca

Under Programs, National Education Campaign on Screening, I work with Volunteers, Tools and Resources

Valuing the Rural Volunteer Toolkit. The Ontario Rural Council. As of Dec. 1, 2004, the toolkit was unavailable.

<http://www.torc.on.ca/torceng/memact/ValuingRuralVolunteer.htm>

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN OUTCOME MEASUREMENT SYSTEM:

A Practical Step-by-Step Approach

by Marcela Ciampa

As a result of shrinking resources, growing competition for dollars and increased community needs, not-for-profit organizations are asked more and more by funders and donors to demonstrate that their programs are effective and are making a difference in the lives of the people they serve. The outcome-based system provides organizations with a framework to answer the following key question: What is the impact of the program activities on the people we serve?

United Way of America has developed an excellent framework for measuring program outcomes that has been tested and implemented in the U.S.A and Canada. This article outlines six practical steps for the implementation of an outcome measurement system in an organization. This article is based on the information contained in the United Way of America Resource titled Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach and on the lessons learned from the implementation of this framework by United Way / Centraide in Windsor - Essex County.

Step 1: Getting ready to implement an outcome measurement system

The purpose of this step is to plan for the effective implementation of an outcome measurement system.

The following activities should be undertaken:

- ♦ Identify a group of individuals that will guide the implementation of the outcome measurement system and establish a working group.
- ♦ Develop Terms of Reference outlining the key areas of responsibilities.
- ♦ Provide training to the group members on outcome measurement.
- ♦ Identify one program within the organization to start implementation.
- ♦ Develop a work plan identifying key activities and timelines.

Step 2: Identify outcomes for the selected program

The purpose of this step is to define a set of outcomes that track the benefits that participants experience during and after participating in the program. The benefits will answer the question as to the impacts of the program activities on the participant/ client.

The following activities should be undertaken:

- ♦ Identify the inputs required for the program. Inputs are the resources dedicated to or consumed by the program.
- ♦ Identify the program activities. What the program does with its inputs to fulfill its mission.
- ♦ Identify the outputs of the program activities. Outputs are the direct products of a program's activities.
- ♦ Research possible outcomes of programs by reviewing client files, conducting focus groups and interviews with clients, program staff and volunteers. Outcomes are the benefits for participants during and after their involvement with the program. For example new knowledge, increased skills, changed attitudes or values, modified behaviour and improved condition.
- ♦ Write the program outcomes based on the information gathered.
- ♦ Put the inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes into a Program Logic Model. A Logic Model is a description of how a program theoretically works to achieve the benefits for the participants. Please refer to figure 1.
- ♦ Share the outcome logic model with key stakeholders and obtain feedback.
- ♦ Make changes to the logic model if necessary.

<i>Program Logic Model</i>			
<i>Program name: Job Search Assistance</i>			
<i>Inputs</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
<i>Staff Volunteer Facilities</i>	<i>Assess clients' needs</i>	<i>50 clients assessed</i>	<i>Increased knowledge of how to write resume</i>
	<i>Deliver workshops on resume writing and interviewing skills</i>	<i>10 workshops delivered 100 clients attended training</i>	<i>Increased self-esteem and confidence with interviews</i>

Figure 1 - Example of a Program Logic Model

Step 3: Design a system to measure the program outcomes

The purpose of this step is to develop a system to measure the outcomes identified in Step 2. Through this step the organization identifies the data needed and how the data will be collected.

The following activities should be undertaken:

- ♦ For each of the outcomes specify one or more indicators. Indicators are the specific items of information that track a program's success. They describe

observable, measurable characteristics or changes that represent achievement of an outcome.

- ♦ Identify the data sources for each indicator.
- ♦ Identify the method that is going to be used to collect the data.
- ♦ Put the outcomes, indicators, data sources and data collection methods in a chart titled Outcome Measurement Framework. Please refer to figure 2.
- ♦ Share the outcome measurement framework with key stakeholders and obtain feedback.
- ♦ Make changes, if necessary.
- ♦ Design data collection methods.

Outcome Measurement Framework Program name: Job Search Assistance			
Outcomes	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
Increased knowledge of how to write a resume □	Number and percentage of program participants who can identify the key components of a resume	Participants	Quiz
Increased self-esteem and confidence with interviews	Number and percentage of participants who identify increased self-esteem and confidence with interviews.	Participants □	Survey at the end of training.

Figure 2 - Outcome Measurement Framework

- ♦ Pre-test data collection instruments and procedures.
- ♦ Make changes to the instruments and procedures, if necessary.

Step 4: Pilot-test the outcome logic model and outcome measurement framework

The purpose of this step is to identify any issues that may have been overlooked in Steps 1 to 3. This step is critical in the identification of errors that may have an impact on the data to be gathered and analyzed.

The following activities should be undertaken:

- ♦ Determine size of pilot-test.
- ♦ Develop a critical path for the pilot-test.
- ♦ Orient and train the data collectors on the instruments created and data collection methods.
- ♦ Track and collect data necessary to measure each outcome.
- ♦ Analyze data and the outcome measurement system.
- ♦ Make changes to the logic model and outcome measurement framework, if necessary.

Step 5: Data analysis and reporting

The purpose of this step is to analyze the data gathered for a program cycle in order to answer the question: What impact does the program have on its participants?

The following activities should be undertaken:

- ♦ Gather data.
- ♦ Make necessary tabulations.
- ♦ Analyze the data.
- ♦ Provide explanatory information related to the findings.
- ♦ Write a report to show the impact of the program on its participants.

Step 6: Use the findings from the outcome measurement system to improve and promote the program

The organization needs to develop a clear policy and procedure outlining the internal and external uses of outcome findings and the procedures for incorporating the findings into program planning.

The following are some of the suggested uses of outcome findings:

Internal uses

- ♦ Provide direction for staff.
- ♦ Identify training needs.
- ♦ Identify program improvement needs and strategies.
- ♦ Support annual and long range planning.
- ♦ Guide budgets and justify resource allocations.

External uses-

- ♦ Recruit talented staff and volunteers.
- ♦ Promote the program to potential participants and referral sources.
- ♦ Identify partners.
- ♦ Enhance public image.
- ♦ Retain and increase funding.

As indicated, the six steps outlined in this article will assist program managers and executive directors in the effective implementation of an outcome measurement system. This will provide the necessary information to answer the following questions: What is the impact of the program on the participants? Are the programs making a difference in the lives of the participants? Is the organization making a difference in our community?

Works Consulted

United Way of America, *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*. Virginia: United Way of America, 1996.

United Way of America, *Focusing on Program Outcomes: A Guide for United Ways*. Virginia: United Way of America, 1996.

Marcela Ciampa is the Manager of the Centre for Training and Consulting in the Not-For-Profit Sector at the United Way/Centraide of Windsor-Essex County. Marcela is a trainer with United Way of Canada and Volunteer Canada.

The author would like to acknowledge the following United Way staff for their contributions to this article through brainstorming of ideas & editing: Nancy Adams, Russ Horrocks, Yvonne Arnowitz and Mathew Grayson.

WHY OUTCOME MEASUREMENT?

by Eileen Dooley

Outcomes. Measurement. Logic Models. Indicators. These are all relatively new words within the voluntary sector and all too often, words that conjure up anxiety amongst human service organizations.

United Way/Centraide Ottawa first introduced outcome measurements in its application process three years ago and began a journey that we hope, in time, will allow us to invest donors' resources for maximum impact in the community. During the past two years, we have completed an environmental scan that identified significant socio-demographic trends and changes in our community. We have engaged key stakeholders in a process to identify areas where our United Way can best make a difference in our community. As a result, six impact areas were chosen. These include:

- ♦ promoting healthy development for children and youth;
- ♦ reducing isolation and enhancing seniors' quality of life;
- ♦ reducing barriers and increasing participation for people with disabilities;
- ♦ strengthening individuals and families in times of need and crisis;
- ♦ reducing barriers and increasing engagement for immigrants; and
- ♦ strengthening agency, neighbourhood and community capacity.

Of even greater significance is the fact that United Way/Centraide Ottawa,

through a process of working with agency partners, identified outcomes within each impact area. Moving forward, all of the work we do, whether an investment in a front-line program or volunteer/staff involvement in a community coalition, will be measured against how well it helps us achieve our identified outcomes. Our long-term goal is to report back to the community on how our investments in front-line programs and services, partnerships, coalitions and community-wide initiatives have changed lives in Ottawa. Our success will be measured against how well we and our agency partners measure progress toward meeting our identified outcomes.

United Way is not the only organization moving in this direction. Increasingly, funders are moving toward the use of outcome evaluation for a number of reasons. Rapidly increasing demands on donors and funders mean that additional information is needed about the impact of the agency's work in the community. We need the tools to better articulate the results and effectiveness of a supported program or service. Organizations like United Way need to be able to ensure that they are investing in organizations that are changing lives and can measure that impact.

As well, the nature of accountability is changing. In the past, voluntary sector organizations were funded on the basis of their activities; the numbers of clients served, client satisfaction and the number of meetings organized or counseling sessions offered. Increasingly, many donors and funders are asking what difference the organization will make before they invest. For our own United Way/Centraide Ottawa, the use of outcome measurement should enable us to tell even more compelling stories to our donors about the impact of agencies in our community.

Ultimately, the use of outcomes and measurement tools should benefit more than just the funder. Agencies themselves are well versed in tracking and monitoring their activities. Using outcomes to monitor the results of a program against agreed upon goals and objectives can provide a useful management tool for agencies. In fact, being able to measure and report upon program results can allow agencies to make a compelling case for support with other funders, donors, members of the public and government representatives. It can also act as a tool for program improvement, document program successes and clarify program design.

Outcome measurement is meant to enhance existing tools within agencies. What it does not do is tell a comprehensive story about the work an agency does. Nor does it tell us why the outcome was achieved or identify what actions are needed to improve the program or service. What it can do is assist agencies in telling the story of how their activities are linked to community changes and it can provide additional information to help improve program delivery. It can help agencies determine how and why programs are offered.

Ultimately, it can help the organization in its long-term planning.

Outcome measurement, in order to be effective, needs commitment from both the funder and the agency. Funders need to invest in training and support to agencies to demystify the process and provide operational assistance to agencies struggling with evaluation. Funders must also realize that the investment in outcome measurement is not a 'quick fix'. The process to enhance agency capacity to the point where we can truly measure our impact will be time-consuming. Reasonable expectations about what can be accomplished will be required on the part of funders.

At United Way/Centraide Ottawa, we are working to develop the capacity of agencies in this area. A dedicated staff member has been hired to work with agencies to help build logic models and identify measurement tools. Regular training sessions on logic models and indicators are offered to both funded agencies and those interested in applying for funding. One-on-one sessions are offered with agency staff to develop their capacity.

Agencies can maximize their chance of success by working with funders to identify best practices, offer feedback and advice and to encourage their volunteers and staff to understand and support the use of outcome measurement. They can enhance their success by using the information to adapt, improve and become more effective.

Outcome measurement is not the only answer to many of the stresses and strains facing the voluntary sector. Indeed, for many agencies, it probably feels like another burden being added to a long list of challenges. However, if we move forward carefully and work together to measure our results, ultimately we can tell a compelling story of our contribution to our community. And that can only benefit us all!

Eileen Dooley is Vice-President, Community Services for United Way/Centraide Ottawa. She is responsible for the investment and impact of donors dollars in the community, the expansion of United Way/Centraide's support for community programs and services and the redefinition of its' areas of impact.

BOOK REVIEW

by Marcela Ciampa

Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach
United Way of America

The Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach is a 170 page step-by-step manual that was written to assist program managers and executive

directors of not-for-profit organizations in the development and implementation of an outcome measurement system.

The book recommends eight practical steps for the implementation of an outcome measurement system. The steps come to life through the use of the following four hypothetical programs:

- ◆ Teen Mother Parenting Education Program
- ◆ Developmental Child Care Program
- ◆ Child Abuse Public Awareness and Prevention Program
- ◆ Neighbourhood Organizing Program

These programs are taken through all eight steps.

Worksheets and other useful tools are also included to assist the reader in the understanding of the concepts and the implementation steps.

The manual includes a glossary of terms associated with an outcome measurement system and a very comprehensive list of resources.

The examples and concepts are simple to understand and therefore make this resource a 'must have' when organizations are embarking into the outcome measurement journey.

This valuable resource can be purchased for \$5.00 US from United Way of America at 703-212-6300, item number 0989.

PEER EXPERT

Scenario:

I am being asked to set up an outcomes-based evaluation system for our Volunteer Resources Department. It seems quite overwhelming to me and I am not sure where to start. Can you help?

Response:

Outcome measurement is a form of evaluation that focuses on the results, or benefits, that happen for individuals as a result of having participated in a program or activity. These benefits may include new knowledge or skills, changed attitudes or behaviours that result in a positive change in circumstances for program participants.

A "logic model" provides a useful framework for the development of outcome measures for a volunteer program because it helps you identify the "if-then" sequence of change that logically occurs. Picture 1 describes a logic model framework.

Logic Model Framework			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
The resources required to operate a program. Examples include: funding, materials, staff, volunteers, equipment.	What the program does with the input. Examples include: training, counselling, mentoring, feeding, coaching, visiting, driving.	The products of the activities. Examples include: number of hours of participants served, number of meals provided.	The benefits for program participants. Examples include: new knowledge, increased skills, changed behaviours, improved condition. □

Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach is an excellent resource published by the United Way of America that identifies eight steps for implementing an outcome measurement system. These steps provide a helpful framework for working through the implementation process.

1. Start by assembling an outcome measurement work group (OMWG) that will assume responsibility for implementing the system. This should be a fairly small group of people who can provide different perspectives of your volunteer program. Membership might include a volunteer, staff from the selected program and another program or department, a Board member, and where appropriate, a client. Once assembled, the OMWG will develop a timeline and should share their plans with others in the organization. CEO or department head support for outcome measurement in your organization is critical to its successful implementation and should be secured by this point.
2. The OMWG now begins identifying potential outcomes for the program. This may include gathering ideas from other sources outside of the OMWG, such as key stakeholders, partners, referral agents, other staff and volunteers, clients, and existing research for similar programs. It should also include a review of

the organization's mission and objectives, program-specific objectives and funding contracts that may specify expected results. Constructing a logic model for the program will help to select the outcomes that are most important to measure. It is also very helpful to share your logic model with others for their feedback. Remember that programs may have more than one outcome "stream" and that outcomes can range from very immediate to very long-term.

When developing a logic model and outcomes for a volunteer program bear in mind that the purpose of involving volunteers is tied to the overall mission of the organization. While you can develop a logic model specific to your volunteer program, remember that volunteers are also inputs, or resources, to other programs and areas in your organization and it will be critical to relate the volunteer program outcomes to these others. Also note that the outcomes for a volunteer program may not actually be related to the volunteers themselves but rather to the clients they assist.

3. Once you have selected your initial outcomes you next need to identify indicators - the information that will help you know if an outcome has been achieved. Indicators must be observable and measurable, with no room for ambiguity. Some outcomes will require more than one indicator, and an indicator may provide information about more than one outcome - all outcomes will require at least one indicator. The process of identifying indicators can be very helpful in the further selection of outcomes.
4. Data sources for your indicators, along with instruments for collecting the data, must now be identified or developed. Existing records, surveys, observations and interviews are all possible sources of information.
5. A critical step before final adoption and implementation of your outcome measurement system is to test your system. This stage will require varying lengths of time dependent upon the indicators you have selected, some of which may require several months before you are able to measure progress.
6. Part of the testing stage involves actual analysis and presentation of the data you have collected. From this testing you will learn if you collected the right data, if information is missing or if you collected more data than you need.
7. Based on the trial run you can now make any necessary improvements to your system before full implementation. This may include modifying your outcomes, indicators or data collection methods.
8. With implementation of an outcome measurement system you now have information about your program that allows you to promote your program in a more complete and meaningful way. This information will also inform your future program planning and management.

While implementing an outcome measurement system for your volunteer

□
program may seem an onerous and time consuming process there are many benefits to doing so. First and foremost, it will clearly identify the value of your volunteer program and how it contributes to achieving your organization's mission and objectives. This in turn provides you, as managers of volunteers, with a firm foundation upon which to advocate on behalf of volunteers and the resources required to support them.

Tracey has worked within the voluntary sector for more than 20 years with various human service organizations in Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Regina. She has worked with the United Way of Regina since 1994, initially as Manager of Volunteer Regina for 8 years and currently as Director of Community Impact and Investments.

She is currently Past Chair of the Board of Volunteer Canada and was a founding member of the national Volunteer Centre Advisory Council. Provincially, Tracey has responsibility for overseeing establishment and implementation of the Canada Volunteerism Initiative (United Way is the host organization in Saskatchewan). In April 2003 Tracey was appointed as Vice-Chair of the Premier's Voluntary Sector Initiative.

NEWS BITS

On January 17, 2005 The Canadian Centre for Philanthropy (CCP) and the Coalition of National Voluntary Organizations (NVO) launched Imagine Canada.

The entire process took over two years to complete as the CCP and NVO met with stakeholders and members to discuss the merger.

The newly formed Imagine Canada will act create an even stronger organization to support Canada's charities, nonprofit organizations and socially conscious businesses and champion the work they do in our communities.

For all the details, visit the website at:

www.imaginecanada.ca

JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Editorial Process and Guidelines for Authors

Objective

The Journal of Volunteer Resources Management is intended:

1. to serve as a credible source of information on the management of volunteers in Canada;
2. to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and to encourage networking among managers of volunteers;
3. to provide a professional development tool for managers of volunteers;
4. to recognize and encourage Canadian talent in the field of management of volunteers;
5. to include in each issue at least two articles that will consider different views on a specific and predetermined theme.

Target Audience

The Journal's intended audience includes managers of volunteers, educators, media and funders of not-for-profit organizations across the country.

Submissions

All manuscripts will be accepted on diskette or via e-mail in either Microsoft Word or Word Perfect. Submissions should be written according to "Canadian Style - A Guide to Writing and Editing" - Secretary of State, Dundurn Press. External reviewers may be engaged to review content if deemed advisable by the committee.

The revised draft is edited for clarity and consistency by the Editorial Team.

The edited version is returned to the author for acceptance along with an approval form for signature.

The signed form is to be returned to the Editorial Team within a week along with any suggestions for final revisions.

Format and Style

Authors are asked to respect the following word counts:

	Words	Pages
Lead Article	2000	5-6
Secondary Article	700-800	2-3
Book Review	150	1

The lead article will look at the topic in some depth and will normally require the author to conduct research into current trends and perspectives on the subject.

The secondary article will adopt a more practical approach, including personal experiences and opinions.

Advertising

Limited advertising space will be allowed in the Journal, for materials of direct relevance to managers of volunteer service, and as long as it conforms to the guidelines set out by the Editorial Team.

Guidelines:

1. Only ¼ page and ½ page ads will be accepted.
2. Ad must be camera-ready.
3. A maximum of one page of ads will be permitted per issue.
4. Job ads are not recommended.
5. Cost is to be determined by the Editorial Team.

LOOKING AHEAD

April 17 - 23
National Volunteer Week

June 23 - 26, 2005
CAVR ACRB Conference
You can get there ... from here
Vancouver, British Columbia
<http://www.cavr.org/conference2005/index.html>

Click on the following websites if you want either more information or to become a member of: PAVR-O www.pavro.on.ca or CAVR www.cavr.org

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS & THEMES

	Issue	Deadline	Theme
<input type="checkbox"/>	Winter '05	articles due on the 24th of February	Volunteers in Leadership Roles
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spring '05	articles due on the 24th of May	The Challenge of Diversity