

MOTIVATION...WHAT MOVES YOU?

Why do people do the things they do? Why are we driven to exert effort toward accomplishing one thing but not another? Being motivated means we are simply purposeful. We use attention, imagination, passion and processes to pursue our goals. We hold need and desires inside us that motivate us to action. This motivation is called internal motivation. We also have external factors that motivate us to be effective and stimulate our internal needs and desire.

MOTIVATING VOLUNTEERS

Let's look at what motivates volunteers. We can classify volunteer motivators into three main types: achievement, affiliation and power. Here is a short description of each volunteer motivator. See if you recognize yourself in one of these types.

*Achievement—The achievement motivated person looks for situations requiring top performance in which they can excel with unique accomplishments. This person is a risk taker, innovative, and enjoys striving for lofty goals. They want to do the job better, figuring out ways to remove obstacles, with concrete feedback and a “hands-off” management style.

*Affiliation—The affiliation motivated person finds being around other people with social aspects very appealing. They want to build friendship and to be respected. They want to help others and care deeply about others' feeling; they may seek/need approval and often take criticism poorly. In contact to achievement oriented person, they may sacrifice their goals in favor of developing relationships.

*Power—The power motivated person wants to have impact, influencing others with their ideas. They are articulate, charismatic leaders who want to win arguments and get others to do things their way. They seek to influence through communication. Although power is often viewed negatively, a person who is motivated by power can also use personal power for the benefit of all.

RECOGNIZING VOLUNTEERS

To recognize and continue to meet volunteer needs, try the following external motivators that tap individual motivation needs.

For **Achievement Oriented** People

- Challenging tasks that require efficiency with clear goals.
- Tangible awards, plaques, pins, badges, newsletter media articles for display.
- Commendation letters, compliments, smiles, publicity.
- Opportunity to create innovative ideas and to request input for goal decisions.
- Opportunity to advance, introductions to authority related to accomplishments.

For **Affiliation Oriented** People

- Opportunities for socialization on the job, coffee breaks, family picnics.
- Affection, humor, praise in front of family, gifts, letters from clients.
- Time to talk, personal notes expressing thanks, personal events.
- Commendations telling how work benefits people, respect sensibilities.
- Inclusion in PR promotions, banquet recognition.

For **Power Oriented** People

- Job assignments that offer increased responsibility and authority, visioning.
- PR and media contacts, recognitions seen by people in authority and broad based.
- Opportunity to innovate, interact with highest authorities, question, debate decisions.
- Opportunity to teach, persuade others and have one's name connected to books, articles.
- Listen to ideas, introduce to people of influence, opportunities for advocacy.

SUMMARY

Understanding personal needs and desires in any situation can better define internal motivations for action behavior. One cannot "motivate" others to action; yet external factors such as praise, promotions or raises could influence action if they produce connections to internal needs. As persons desire to grow themselves or help others, understanding their volunteer motivation type will help provide positive experiences that satisfy needs for all.

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