INNOVATIONS IN TRAINING

LES INNOVATIONS DE LA FORMATION

~ ~ Celebrating our 15th year of publication ~ ~

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EDITORIAL

In this edition of the Journal we provide a scope of articles on innovative training programs. Robbie Giles and David Newman, 'Everything new is old again' provide a comprehensive overview and resources for volunteer task training. They deal in more depth with innovative approaches to meeting volunteer board and board members' development needs, organizational requirements and objectives.

Debbie Gilmer focuses on her first hand experience with a new board development pilot project. This project was designed in three phases, two of which are highlighted in this article.

Holly MacIntyre tells of her personal experience in identifying her own need for a more extensive understanding of how people learn and the need to develop her teaching skills. Holly continues to apply her own skill development training which is generating a positive impact on both the Canadian Cancer Society volunteers as well as her community.

Christine Taylor provides insight into the planning of a conference with excellent tips from her four years assisting with the Vitalize Annual Provincial Voluntary Sector Conference for the Wild Rose Foundation.

Our peer expert responds to a question about how to develop a training package that will engage all the members of a wide age range of volunteers.

Having retired three years ago, when preparing for this issue, it was the first time I experienced twinges of missing my role as a Manager of Volunteer Services. Keeping training opportunities current and exciting for volunteers is vital. Everyone benefits from the time and innovative thinking that you put into your program.

Carol Anne Clarke is a member of the Editorial Team

EVERYTHING NEW IS OLD AGAIN - INNOVATION IN VOLUNTEER TRAINING?

by Robbie Giles & David Newman

Let us start with an important element in training that cannot be overlooked in any meaningful discussion. Development is both the goal and the result of training, and nowhere more so than for volunteers. Training is one of the processes through which development can be achieved. Random House-Webster describes development as "the act of growing, evolving" while training is defined as "proficiency by instructing and practice." These are important distinctions. We must think 'development' of volunteers before we determine what needs 'training'.

Whither and whence?

There is little to be gained in a forum such as this by focusing on mostly task training and itemizing 'new' techniques and technologies. There is lots of good material, experience and innovation out there on task training that is readily available and often relates to self-directed, independent and distance learning, voice activated and interactive software and hardware, CD-ROM, Internet, conferencing and multiple medium technologies, methodologies and other 'ologies'. Check these out:

http://www.ispi.org/
http://www.pfeiffer.com/WileyCDA/
http://www.langevinonline.com/index.asp
http://www.ntl.org/
http://www.odnetwork.org/index.html
http://www.astd.org/astd and, of course
http://cstd.typepad.com/cstd/2005/06/index.html.

Volunteer trainers need to wear other hats beyond classic training. At the very least they must expand their role to consultant in determining what needs to be developed in volunteers, both individually and collectively, to meet the organization's needs and expectations of them. What training is needed for?

It is also important to determine what kinds of volunteer roles we should address. Line and partial role volunteer training is often most effectively addressed by task training. Development is still a consideration, but a less important one. As a result, we found our interest migrating to learning for volunteer members of boards.

That incorporates task, skill, competency, ethical, values and attitudinal learning, a very broad scope and permits us the luxury of expounding and proselytizing.

Our focus is on innovative approaches to meeting volunteer Board and Board members' development needs as well as their organizational requirements and objectives. And above all, our approach is adaptive rather than prescriptive. Within those parameters we determined that there really is no substantial innovation in volunteer training for board members. Indeed, seeking innovation can represent a lengthy, time consuming and success limiting route, an entertaining but high effort / low return detour.

Rather than innovation, an organization should spend its time and effort determining and providing the right mix of the extraordinarily broad range of learning and training alternatives available, customized to its own nature and needs and individualized to the traits of each volunteer board member. While many of us seek to 'innovate' by reinventing the world, what is really needed is creative adaptation for new realities, adaptations that focus on the fundamentals.

Oh, bother!

Why should an organization bother with board volunteer development and training at all? While there are certainly legal, liability and risk management dynamics, the answer ultimately rests in the organization's clientele and the actual services provided. Training is provided to meet a need, to fill the gap between resources available and results desired and to ensure that resources, existing and acquired, can be effectively deployed to achieve the desired end result. The fundamental is still 'what to train'. The rest are tools and techniques, a plethora of which are out there. Some of the sites above are helpful - but these are specifically targeted at Board development:

www.imaginecanada.ca/
www.muttart.org/
www.strongboards.ca
www.actionca.ca
www.boarddevelopment.org/
www.volunteer.ca/volcan/eng/iwork.php?display=3
www.charityvillage.ca

Volunteers are not simply cheap labour or staff substitutes for cash strapped organizations. Volunteers should fill a role that cannot be played solely by staff and nowhere is this truer than the Board of Directors.

Board recruitment, selection, retention, development and training depends on the nature of the organization itself, the extent to which an organization adheres to continuous learning, continuously improving its processes, products or services and facilitating the learning of individuals and teams in the organization. This active learning culture means that each part of it, senior and middle management, employees, volunteers and clients help each other learn. This sounds basic and even 'motherhood', but in reality it is profoundly profound. It means welcoming constant and rapid change and rejecting defensive or ego-based resistance.

After all, the first rule of Board governance is that the Board speaks with one voice. It also means individualization and customization and has important implications for determining the most effective way of training and facilitating the learning of individual volunteers to be engaged in the collective directions and decisions.

The structuring of training and learning in such an environment becomes an ongoing, flexible and changing process in itself, entailing a wide variety of techniques, methods, subject matter and occasions.

All volunteer training must be based on common concepts of skill and knowledge requirements, enhancements needed and the role to be played by the volunteer. It must also be based on common perceptions of what the client needs and how it can best be delivered. The bottom line is encouraging, receiving and acting on feedback. It is absolutely crucial that training be preceded by consulting. Volunteers themselves will tell you what are the most effective volunteer training concepts and techniques are and what needs to be done for continuous learning and improvement. Some individuals learn best by reading, others by reading and discussion, debate, experimenting or sharing experiences.

The Rules of the Road
- Understand and approach the development of each volunteer individually;
- Identify individual development needs clearly. Do not train for training's sake;
- Identify interactions with clientele and results expected;
- Identify who needs what development and/or training;
- Develop and provide the tools to do it;
- Audit and analyze the results; and
- Start again.

Once the organization has a solid appreciation of its own nature and needs, the challenge is to identify the key change dynamics affecting volunteers, the interactions expected of them and the environment in which they function.

Believing and Belonging
It is important to train in the changing dynamic in our workplaces. In the immediate post-World War II environment, volunteers tended to stay with the same 'cause' and that cause was often related to their professional, societal or career interests. Now, unlike previous generations, mobility of interest is an important factor. No longer do people undertake a life-long commitment to employer or even career, nor do volunteers necessarily make a life-long commitment to one 'cause'.

The mobility of interest in volunteering has become more and more apparent as even life-long volunteers move from one area of activity or interest to another. The volunteer in literacy may well find himself or herself working with

people with disabilities, the arts or medicine in a relatively short period of time. It is therefore important to identify needs and design training with this in mind. There is no sense in investing angst and analysis about volunteer, or for that matter staff, mobility. It is simply the reality of our times and should be accepted as such. We must avoid, at all costs, setting training frames of reference based on another generation's models.

Volunteer mobility means that staff and organizational resources should be geared to tracking and providing corporate memory and consistency for the benefit of volunteers. Core messages and missions must be constantly and consistently reinforced in training programs to address the role of the Board and decisions it must make, let alone to ensure that a Board can refresh itself. It also means a clear focus on 'what we will do' rather than 'what we will not do'.

Mobility also has its benefits. Volunteers, and especially Board Members, are not a newly hatched 'tabla rasa', a blank slate, an empty vessel to fill with training. Most now come with established skills, experiences and sets of values as volunteers.

Volunteer training is androgogy - adult learning, not pedagogy - childhood learning. It is a skill specific component of personal development. We don't need to train someone for a skill or value they already have. Adult-centred learning builds on the existing skills, knowledge and values of volunteers. The sum of the personal development for individual volunteers then becomes aligned with the collective organizational development, evolving the organization in a way that is consistent with its purpose and direction. The challenge in Board volunteer management is to ensure the alignment of the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes of volunteers to the organizational development. Training is intrinsically linked to recruitment, development and task performance - to shared vision.

It really is 'all about me'
We must know the individual attributes and aspirations of Board volunteers and use them to benefit the organization. 'Who you know' has always been an important Board volunteer attribute, especially for those engaged in fund-raising or opinion influencing roles. The time has come, however, when 'what you know' and 'where you've been' are at least equally important.

One cloth does not fit all. Training needs must also be assessed from the context of balance, particularly for Boards of Directors. While all members of the Board should share common values, goals and objectives, each member will also bring their own. The right mix is crucial and training must be designed to build on individual strengths and personal development for each Board volunteer. Not all Board members need to be budget specialists, nor do all members need to have more than very basic understanding of the organization's financial instruments.

Learning needs will be different, perhaps even radically so for each individual. If we look at training as a process for the individual Board volunteer to acquire the needed skills, experiences and attitudes, we see the importance of identifying and building on the existing strengths of volunteers. This kind of non-prescriptive approach places training in the broad organizational context as well as on a deeply personal level. Indeed, such learning is less a training exercise than a development process for the individual Board volunteer involved in it. As such the commitment comes from the trainee.

Coaches and mentors are also crucial components of volunteer training and a subject unto themselves. That means that volunteers will clearly benefit from the wisdom of others in gaining knowledge skills and attitudes. It also means that volunteers will benefit from coaching and mentoring others. There is nothing wrong with blurring the line between trainer and trainee. After all, the key is learning, not training.

Training is not an option
A common attitude toward volunteer training is that it is a nice, enlightened option for a truly modern organization. There is, however, a "darker" side to training volunteers. Formal and required training also takes on the role of disclaimer for an organization, sometimes even an extreme form of risk avoidance. Organizations must often train volunteers just to say that they have, to avoid the consequences of exposure to controversy in an increasing litigious society. The consequences of not providing training to volunteers in legal and fiduciary matters could well leave the organization exposed to legal or regulatory penalty. In such circumstances, training is not optional for the responsible manager or executive director. But that does not mean that such training should lack individual and personal relevance. The fact is that there is still a more, ethical and operational imperative behind such compulsory training that develops further both the individual volunteer and organizational development. Taken seriously and done correctly, such training transcends potential darkness and takes us into the light.

A paradoxical element in Board development and, hence, training is that it is the Board itself, as the ultimate direction and responsibility bearing group in an organization, that determines its level of development effort and situation, its own training needs and programs, the ultimate in self-directed learning. This requires a degree of self-knowledge and introspection that cannot be taken lightly.

Progressive Boards review topical areas that matter to them. They refresh and review their policies according to the future they envision for those they serve. They bring in subject matter experts and adapt their learnings to their organizational needs. They assess their performance and their results and then adjust the roles and responsibilities of the Board and Staff to constantly improve their likelihood of future success.

A new innovative initiative
The only true innovation needed in volunteer training is a change in thinking about training. Individualization and customization of training is the way. The bottom line for any training is not whether it is innovative - it is whether it is effective. Training must always be conducted with the desired results in mind:
- Here is our purpose for existing;
- Here is our value set - what's expected of you;
- Here are our standards - what our results should be;
- Here are our roles and responsibilities;
- Here is our tool kit - what you have to work with; and
- If you do this, we will all succeed!

Robbie Giles is a private consultant who is currently involved with the Strong Boards initiative (www.strongboards.ca). He has been a Board member on local, provincial and national boards and works with organizations from all sectors who are committed to future-focused, principle-based service to clients and constituents. Robbie has been a private business owner, the Director of Human Resources Planning and Development at the City of Ottawa and the Director of both Corporate Training and Quality Process Development.

David Newman is a policy, communications and management consultant and writer, based in Ottawa, experienced in a broad and eclectic mix of endeavours, including a number of volunteer Boards, and interested in most interesting things. Among a list too long and boring to recite, Dave has been a senior aide to federal Ministers of the Crown, a hi-tech marketing and development VP, Director of Public Affairs at Saskatchewan Government Insurance, and Manager of both Issues Management and Business Relations and Director of both Public and Government Relations at Canada Post.

A translation of the main article is available upon request.

National Volunteer Week
April 23 - 29th
National Volunteer Week was first proclaimed in 1943 as recognition to the women who contributed during the Second World War.
In the 1960s its focus shifted to include all community volunteers.
In 1990, the third week of April was designated National Volunteer Week.
Today, volunteer organizations celebrate the unique gift of time that millions of Canadians give each year.

STRONG BOARDS PROJECT

by Debbie Gilmer

Do you think that your time is worth more than your money? If you answered yes then you are among the majority of Canadians who now think so. The last Statistics Canada survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating told us that for the first time ever Canadians gave more money than time to not-for-profit projects they believed in. This recent shift in values should influence many aspects of volunteer resource management including how we design training opportunities for volunteers. It definitely influenced our thinking when we envisioned the Strong Boards Project.

What is Strong Boards?
- Strong Boards is a new board development pilot project currently available only in Eastern Ontario.
- It is designed to help organizations reduce the legal liability to which their voluntary board members are exposed by adopting a culture of good governance and accountability.
- Volunteer Ottawa is delivering the project to 77 agencies eligible to participate by virtue of their funding relationship with the Ontario Ministries of Children and Youth Services or Community and Social Services.
- Strong Boards is funded by an Ontario Ministry of Finance initiative called 'Strengthening our Partnerships'.
- All consultations and board development sessions are free of charge.
- The sessions are customized to each board's individual needs.

The Strong Boards Project has been designed to roll out in three phases, two of which are of interest for this article.

Phase 1 (Fall 2005) 'pushing out':
The main objective of this initial phase was to make as many eligible agencies as possible, through their lead staff and volunteers, aware of the services available to them through this project and to prepare them to engage in Phase 2 activities, namely in-house board development sessions.

Phase 2 (Fall 2005 to Spring 2007) 'focusing in':
Activities during Phase 2 focus on board development. Critical to the success of this project will be how specifically we can address individual agency board development needs. This will be achieved by the relationship developed by the Strong Boards consultants with their assigned agencies.

When organizing communications and activities in these two phases we tried to follow three precepts:

1) Allow zero (or as close to zero as possible) barriers to participation. Here are some of the ways we strive for zero barriers to participation:
    - Push all information out to all board chairs and executive directors through clear, colourful and concise electronic bulletins sent directly to their e-mail accounts on a regular basis (every four months or as required to introduce new ideas and phases), as well as sending messages by direct mail and phone. Make it very easy for potential participants to stay informed.
    - Budget for consultants to travel out to individual agencies for initial consultation meetings and development sessions. These are scheduled to suit the participants' time and location.
    - This approach achieves the added benefit of allowing the whole board to participate together synergistically and saves participants from attending outside sessions and then having to regurgitate their learning to the rest of the board - not as effective or time-efficient. Everyone is exposed to the same learning environment, understanding is shared within the board team and application of learning can begin even before they leave the session.

2) Information and sessions offered need to be 100% relevant to participating agencies. Ways we try to achieve complete relevancy are:
    - We complete a thorough needs assessment with the board or we provide board members with a version of the board effectiveness checklist which is self-administered. Everyone then knows which areas are of interest to their board and work together focusing on these aspects.
    - A statement of work, summarizing recommendations for board development based on the assessment, is drafted and is specific to each agency. This means participants know what time commitment is needed to achieve results.

3) Our last precept is to make every contact with participating agencies one of added value for participants. We try to accomplish this with every contact we make.

Since Canadians have identified time as their most valued commodity, we must keep this in mind when working with volunteers. Make your time together easy, relevant and value-added. It is all up to you!

Debbie Gilmer is Project Manager for the Strong Boards Project based at Volunteer Ottawa. She may be reached at 613-736-5266 ext 232 or Debbie.gilmer@strongboards.ca

APPLYING ADULT EDUCATION TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

by Holly MacIntyre

Volunteerism has been a continuous part of my life since the age of twelve. I have been an active member of my community, increasing community participation and ensuring community capacity grows and nutures in a supportive environment. Today, I continue to participate as a volunteer in my community and enjoy my role as a volunteer, community member and energetic participant in supporting opportunities that enable people to have more power and control over improving the health of their communities.

My current professional role builds on that experience. It was in my role three years ago that I recognized the need for better understanding of adult education. As a health promoter with the Canadian Cancer Society - Nova Scotia Division, I am also a community developer. In 2004, I recognized that it would benefit our volunteers if I had a better understanding of how people learn and if I improved my teaching skills. I wanted more than 'professional development', to focus beyond the simple one shot, discrete daylong event. I completed my research, I chatted with colleagues and past participants of various programs and decided to enrol in St. Francis Xavier University's Diploma in Adult Education program.

Through the course of classroom modules and application in my professional role, I discovered that I have a great excitement for learning and teaching and I look forward to sharing this with others. I firmly believe that an adult educator who is passionate about his or her beliefs can make a difference. Each of us has that opportunity to make a difference every day.

We are all part of various communities. I belong to the community that I reside in, the community where I volunteer and the community where I work. Community development means different things to different people. Community development empowers: it strives to achieve an active, involved community. In order for organizations to ensure that any gains they make will continue after they have ceased to operate, they need to aim to leave behind communities that are genuinely involved in what happens to them. Community development is an intervention that helps people to organise and respond to problems and needs which they share. It supports the establishment of strong communities, creating organizational actions, which help improve the quality of life and government. In all aspects, the need to have sound understanding and training in place supports volunteer participation in a meaningful way. Being able to identify the learning needs and support this skill development with sound education principles values the contributions of all involved.

Community development and training are ongoing learning processes. They take a lot of patience, time and respect for groups we are working with. It also requires training, development of processes and supports ongoing learning. There are lots of good ideas. I have learned not to underestimate the potential of people, however, you need to appreciate the limitations of volunteers. You never reach the end of a community development or adult education process - it is ongoing. This is why the essential skills I learned and now apply are so very critical.

A solid foundation in principles and practices of adult education is applicable to any area; volunteerism and human resources are only two. For me, it involved learning practical training skills, techniques and strategies that I could infuse throughout my workplace. It was understanding and appreciating that there is a level of knowledge to be learned around specific learning needs, various learning styles and learning to adapt to each of these.

A community is made up of people who share something in common. That common ground varies widely, but there is a mutual connection somewhere, whether it be shared interest, values or neighbourhood. This mutual connection is often where assets and capacities can be built upon. Adult education can support the mutual connection, further enhance the assets that are already within the community and help to bring them forward.

There is no area where the training and development I received in adult education cannot be applied. I have used it in program/resource development, implementation and evaluation, wellness programming, community development, research and analytical areas, policy development strategic planning and networking. Adult education supports the participation of communities to develop strategies to enhance and improve their health. As a community developer, I am constantly facilitating transformational learning.

The ideal is to be the facilitator and, using sound priniciples, let the community members and volunteers identify the issues, choose the priorities and come up with the strategies to address the issues.

Adult education is a lifelong process. There will always be the opportunity to learn, network, engage and develop improved skills. The transfer of learning during the St. Francis Xavier University program has been one of my most valuable opportunities to build on my experiences. I have had the privilege to work with many individuals and organizations in my daily role and community role. The training was a fantastic journey. As I continue to implement my own learnings, the benefits to my volunteers, Canadian Cancer Society donors and staff can be monumental.

Holly MacIntyre is the Programs Coordinator: Health Promotion, Volunteer Development and Training.

PLANNING A CONFERENCE ...
by Christine Taylor

Planning an event of any kind such as a wedding, an anniversary celebration or a conference can be a major undertaking and quite overwhelming at the beginning. Where to start? Whom do I hire? Do I need caterers? What topic should we be addressing? How do I know a good speaker from a not so good speaker?

RESEARCH, RESEARCH AND MORE RESEARCH!

Vitalize Annual Provincial Voluntary Sector is now in its 18th year. The very first year, we had only 350 delegates from around Alberta. Since then, it has continued to grow and our expected capacity for 2006 is 1,400 delegates, not only from Alberta but from the rest of Canada as well.

The first step is deciding what the 'theme' will be. What is it that you want to get across? Is there something that needs to be addressed? Is there something that has been brought to your attention by your Board of Directors? Themes are very important. They set the tone for your entire event. They can be catchy, serious or right to the point but they must represent your ideas.

How do you get the information out to your potential delegates? A good place to start is with a promotional brochure or 'teaser'. You need to let people know, especially in the voluntary sector, about your event well in advance. In many cases, voluntary sector organizations need plenty of time for budgeting purposes. It is also a good way to 'introduce' what you plan on presenting and it gets people ready for more to come! It does not have to be anything fancy but should include your theme, cost, dates, location and contact information.

Now you can begin the task of choosing your speakers. You must be very clear about what you expect from your speakers. It is imperative that they understand what your organization represents and what the theme is. No matter how good the speaker is, if he or she is not addressing the needs of the conference, it is a waste of time and resources. Perhaps you attended a conference where you saw a speaker that would be perfect. Many speakers are hired this way or through 'word of mouth'. There are a number of terrific speakers bureaux throughout Canada that will assist you in choosing the right speaker(s) for your event. Many speakers will also work with you on their fees. Make sure to ask if fees are negotiable!

So, how much do you charge your delegates? This will depend on your overhead costs, facility costs, speakers' fees, catering charges. Is your organization able to underwrite some of the cost? Budgeting for a conference can be tricky but, with some thorough research and good budgetary planning, you should be able to meet your target without any problems.

Where are you going to hold your event? Is it big enough? Are there pillars in the room that will block viewing? What about acoustics? These may seem like small details but, when the day of your event arrives, your extra attention to detail will ensure that your delegates are pleased with the results. In some instances, facilities have to be booked two or three years in advance. Ensure that the facility suits your needs and that you are able to work with the facility staff to make your event a successful one.

Catering can be a challenge, especially in this day and age when so many people have allergies or special dietary needs. It is imperative that you ask your delegates to advise you ahead of time if they have any special requests. You can then work with your caterers to make appropriate arrangements.

Now that you have all of the big details figured out, it is time to send these out to the masses! A 'program guide' can be as simple or lavish as you like. A more in depth program guide can be very expensive so remember this before you start. Your guide should include ALL of your information; who your speakers are, the topics they will present, times, dates, location and anything else you think would be of value to your audience. It is this guide that will entice people to attend your event so make sure it is accurate and interesting!

The program guide must also include your registration information. Depending on the size of your event, this can be done by your conference team or you might consider hiring a company that will arrange all of the registration logistics you. Registration can be difficult when dealing with a large group of delegates and it is certainly very time consuming as well. Again, this will depend on your budget.

One of the biggest things in planning an event is 'Plan B'. What if one of your speakers gets mowed down by a herd of buffalo on the way to the airport? It is imperative that you have someone as a 'backup'. Canceling a session at the last moment does and will happen but, if you can avoid it by planning ahead, you will save yourself a lot of frustration and your delegates will appreciate your conscientiousness. It is great to have some backup speakers that you know will be able to deliver at moment's notice.

It is hard to believe that it takes an entire year to plan a large event. The Olympics put their Organizing Committee into place nearly six years ahead of the event. Okay, you will not need six years but, once you get into the planning of your event, you will be glad that you gave yourself enough time to organize it properly. With excellent organization, meticulous planning and dedication your event (no matter how big or small) will be overwhelmingly successful!

Christine Taylor is an Assistant with the Wild Rose Foundation. This is her fourth year assisting with the Vitalize Conference and has also worked with the Edmonton 2001 IAAF Organizing Committee and CBC Television.

PEER EXPERT

Scenario: I am the manager of volunteers at a large facility. My volunteers range in age from teenagers to 70 year olds. I find that it is getting more and more difficult to deliver an orientation and training package that will engage all the members of this disparate age group. Do you have any suggestions'?
It would be good if you could address the need for on-line training as well as 'live' training to meet the needs of everyone.

Response:
I can sum up my answer in two simple words - small steps.

We tend to focus our energy, most often unconsciously, in bridging the digital divide in one giant leap. If you break things up in multiple, smaller steps, you have a much better chance of building trust in the change, greater understanding about the change and even some excitement!

The most promising option available to you would be to use online classroom technology. These are web-based programs that allow you to deliver your training session from your computer with your audience meeting virtually through their computers. One such service is Elluminate (www.elluminate.com), which was created for elementary students and is being used in services like the 2010 Legacies Now-Volunteers Now system called www.VolWeb.ca.

The reason this solution is so promising is that with the right equipment you can use the technology in person and online simultaneously. Ideally, you would deliver your training in person, but instead of using slides you would use the technology to display and broadcast your presentation to both those in person and online.

The 'small step' is for those who feel more comfortable participating in person. Participants get the experience they are accustomed to but will see the technology working before their eyes. Who knows? Maybe next time they will sign up online!

Remember to think about your own computer comfort level. If needed, consider having someone around for support as you integrate technology - another staff person, or better yet, create or adapt a new role for a volunteer!

Justin Ho is a writing and strategy consultant, with a special emphasis on technology and its use in the nonprofit sector. He has worked on websites, communications and strategy initiatives with Volunteer Canada, Volunteer Richmond Information Services, 2010 Legacies Now - Volunteers Now and the BC Social Economy Roundtable.

BOOK REVIEW
by Lisa Jayne

The Complete Guide to Supervisory Training and Development by Lester R. Bittel.

Managers of volunteer resources are responsible for providing effective orientation and training for volunteers so they can do their work effectively. Training is becoming increasingly important as a tool to attract new volunteers and retain existing ones. Increasing numbers of high school students, new graduates, new Canadians, new retirees and other people in career transition are looking to volunteering as a way to develop personal and professional skills.

Managers of volunteer resources who are new to their role or those who are contemplating setting up or re-designing their volunteer training programs may find useful information in *The Complete Guide to Supervisory Training & Development.* While it is written with the private sector in mind, the Guide takes a thorough and analytical approach to training and development for supervisors that can be applied to volunteers involved in the daily operations of not-for-profit organizations. For example, an organization that relies on volunteers to handle phone calls might benefit from having a comprehensive training program with a small number of training sessions, each designed with a clear, manageable objective that involves the trainee acquiring knowledge, demonstrating and practicing a skill and sharing feedback.

Chapter three provides a good starting point for volunteer resource managers to reflect on their own competencies as supervisors of volunteers and volunteer teams. Ideally, volunteer resource managers would be able to demonstrate many of the 'competencies of a successful manager' such as self-confidence, an interest in developing others and the ability to inspire teamwork.

Chapters seven through nine discuss the theoretical principles of learning, course design and methodology. Chapters ten and eleven cover program design and ongoing program planning including checklists for program planning and instructor planning. Chapter fifteen covers program evaluation and follow-up and includes a simple diagnostic matrix for identifying and solving training failures.

You may find that the Guide is a useful reference as you develop and re-design your training program. However, the content of the book is quite dense and academic so you will probably require further research and resources. This book is available from Chapters or from pricegrabber.ca.

Lisa Jayne is the Manager of Education, Training and Consultation at Volunteer Ottawa. She enjoys the privilege of working with volunteer trainers & consultants.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Trainers Handbook. The AMA Guide to Effective Training (1998 - 3rd edition) by Mitchell Garry. This book is divided into 4 parts that range from the theory of training to marketing a training program. It is available from Amazon.com.

Gower Handbook of Training and Development (1999) edited by Anthony Landale. The 38 essays in this new edition cover subjects ranging from action learning to role playing. This book is available from Amazon.com.

Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources list of college and university programs in Volunteer Resource Management: www.cavr.org/index1.html

Charity Village Campus - online training for proposal writing, grantseeking and fundraising: www.charityvillage.ca/CV/learn/index.asp

Charity University - a wide range of non-profit management classes available by telephone or internet: http://charitychannel.com/cu/

Athabasca University governance courses: www.athabascau.ca (search course list by keyword "governance").

www.e-volunteerism.com

www.energizeinc.com

Youth Can Make a Difference

Free The Children, the organization started by international child rights activist
Craig Kielburger, has teamed with The Toronto Star and
Nipissing University to introduce Global Voices. This project will
educate and encourage students to voice their opinions
about significant social justice issues facing youth around the world.
In addition to features in the Toronto Star,
a new website hosted on thestar.com will
include lesson plans for educators and a
special 'junior journalists' section.
To see more about this initiative, visit their website at:
www.thestar.com and look under special features.

LOOKING AHEAD

April 23-29, 2006
National Volunteer Week

May 9-11, 2006
Professional Administrators of Volunteer Resources-Ontario,
Toronto, Ontario

June 8-10, 2006
Vitalize Conference
Edmonton, Alberta

June 22-25, 2006
Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources (CAVR) Conference,
St. Johns, Newfoundland

September 22-26, 2006
International Association for Volunteer Effort - World Volunteer Conference,
New Delhi, India

To become a member of: PAVR-O www.pavro.on.ca or
CAVR www.cavr.org

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS & THEMES

Issue	Deadline	Theme
Volume 1	articles due on the 24th of March	Corporate Connections
Volume 2	articles due on the 24th of May	Motivating Volunteers
Volume 3	articles due on the 24th of August	Positioning our Profession
Volume 4	articles due on the 24th of October	Risk Management