

# Success

by Design

Building Strong Organizations... Strong Communities

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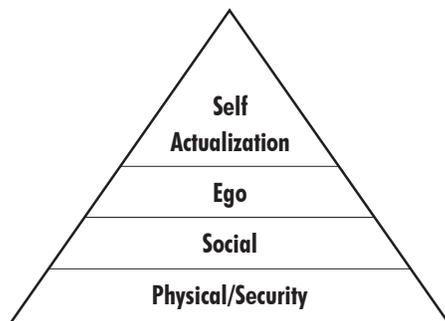
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## Motivation and Leadership

One of the greatest assets an organization can have is motivated people. The question for many leaders is “**what turns on motivation in people?**” Unfortunately, there isn’t a switch. Motivation comes from within, but a leader can help to create an environment that encourages high energy and motivated members.

### Members Needs

A person joins an organization because they believe they will gain from being there. They have asked themselves the question, “What’s in it for me?” and found a positive answer. The opportunity to fulfil personal needs gives the member a reason to join and stay with an organization. If the leader understands the personal needs of each member they will be on their way to understanding what motivates each member.



*Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*

Abraham Maslow developed a theory related to an individual's needs, called *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*. These needs are found in each person. At the base of the triangle are the highest priority needs (physical and security), the ones that a person is motivated to fulfil first. They won't care about the other three needs in the triangle until their security and physical needs (e.g., food, shelter, clothing and safety) are met.

Most members join an organization to fulfil some need in the upper three levels of the triangle (social, ego and self actualization). Some members may be involved because they want to be with friends, the social level. Others may be involved because of the recognition they receive, the ego level. Those members with a self actualization need, are those involved to develop themselves, to learn something new or to reach their potential by using a hidden skill or talent.

**Alberta**  
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Each of us has needs. Consciously or unconsciously, we set priorities to fulfil these needs. Once a need is met, it no longer is a motivator and our motivation shifts to another need. If an organization is not filling the needs of the member, then the member may become dissatisfied and ultimately leave the organization. It's an ongoing leadership task to stay in touch with members' needs and to see that the organization is meeting these needs.

Be aware that there are some individual needs which can't be met by the organization. The organization should stay focused on its purpose and not exist to meet the individual needs of one or two members.

## Window of Work

People aren't predictable. They react to different situations in different ways. The simplest way to find out the needs of each member is to ask. Remember people's needs change. Activities, programs and tasks should be developed to utilize members and recognize the variety of individual needs in your organization.

The following exercise can be used with members to determine their needs. A piece of plain paper is divided into three sections: *Skills I Have*, *Interests I Want to Develop* and *Things I Don't Like to Do*. The member is asked to write under *Skills I Have* all the things that they enjoy doing. Under *Interests I Want to Develop*, they jot down things they would like to learn. The *Things I Don't Like to Do* section allows members to outline tasks or activities that they don't like and don't want to do for the organization.

Example Window of Work Name: Jenna

Skills I Have	Interests I Want to Develop	Things I Don't Like to Do
<i>(I enjoy)</i>	<i>(I want to)</i>	<i>(I don't want to)</i>
horticulture	learn weed identification	work in a booth
meeting new people	operate a video camera	do bookkeeping
socializing	do public speaking	count money
taking pictures	join a committee	bake pies

## Match the Needs to the Task

Once the member's needs have been identified, help fulfil those needs for the benefit of the member and the organization. Jenna might, for example, enjoy organizing a workshop on weed identification since she has identified it as an *Interest I Want to Develop*. She benefits by fulfilling her needs and the organization benefits from having an enthusiastic member organize an educational event.

## Evaluate Your Organization

Take an objective look at your organization. Some procedures or practices can either help or hinder motivation.

### Are Your Meetings Interesting?

Interesting meetings help create a motivating environment. Ask your members for ideas on how to create meetings that are right for them. Read about ways to improve meetings. Have a guest speaker provide new ideas to make meetings more stimulating for all those attending.

Involve members in goal setting.

Review the organization's goals regularly. Members are more motivated and committed to achieving goals if they participate in creating them.

## **Use Job Descriptions**

Written job descriptions are an excellent tool. If members see what's expected of them, they are clear about the job they are undertaking. A job description helps the leader match the right person to the task.

## **Modify Tasks**

The tasks may need to be changed or modified to accommodate what members are looking for. Even the job of "clean-up" can be changed to involve socializing. This may help to motivate volunteers.

## **Provide Variety**

A new task or working with someone new can be motivating for an experienced volunteer.

## **Give Recognition**

Make sure members are appropriately recognized for their contributions. Recognition is a need and a motivator for many individuals. Be creative in your recognition and match it to the needs of the members.

## **Be Flexible**

Ask if the organization can provide the environment or facilities to accommodate the volunteer's needs and schedule. For example: child care, wheelchair access or car pooling.

## **Leadership**

A positive attitude is a must in a leader. An organization's morale is affected by the leader's attitude. Not only must a leader be positive, but they must also be determined to change negative experiences of the group into growing experiences.

A leader should know the members. Each member is equally important to the success of an organization. Provide a personal touch to your leadership by making an effort to know each member by name. Respect each member for their abilities - everyone has something to contribute. A little encouragement from the leader can bring forward a member's abilities for the benefit of the organization.

## **Summary**

Understanding the needs of individual members helps you develop programs that involve many enthusiastic, committed and motivated volunteers. Your organization will be using its' best asset to its full potential.

Adapted from *Motivation and Leadership*, 1989, written by Judy Taggart, with the permission of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.