

AFTER THE THRILL IS GONE – STAYING POWER, MOTIVATION AND REJUVENATION FOR PROGRAMMER’S CONCERNS

By

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There is one resource that we have on all program boards, and it is the human resource...people. Whether you have a Student Center, \$80,000, a beautifully equipped theater, Chevy Chase, or not, the resource that we most depend on to achieve our goals is a human one (known and loved by us all as...The Volunteer!) It is this resource and how effectively a manager (or board chairperson) utilizes it which greatly determines whether the manager and his/her organization, achieves success.

I have yet to run into the board that is not concerned with that Age Old Problem of Recruitment! Well, I'd like to take us through the looking glass for a moment, and see what recruitment is, spelled backwards..."Low and Behold it spells Retention!" Oftentimes, on our boards we go about recruiting people like the person who's trying to fill up a leaky bucket...we forget to make sure our organization is holeless at the other end.

This paper has been specifically designed to focus upon four major issues/areas that will go a long way toward making our organizations whole and help us as managers to better understand and utilize the human resource. These four magical issues are:

- the uniqueness of management responsibilities
- motivation and the manager
- leadership styles and strategies
- communication principles

Now that follows is an attempt to take the magic out of these above issues, and help you to become aware of how they effect the positive growth of your organization and your management of it (making it whole, so to speak!)

THE UNIQUENESS OF MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Briefly defined, “Management is the efficient and effective utilization of the resources of an organization to achieve the objectives or goals of the organization”. This statement implies that the overall responsibility for identifying and using “resources” to reach objectives is that of management, i.e., (you as the board chairperson). There are many things that are classified as resources, money, facilities, equipment, and time, etc., and the quality of these resources vary from school to school. The resource that we all need to use effectively in order to reach our goals is PEOPLE.

If you are a chairperson of a board or a committee, your function as the manager of that group changes from that of “doing” to functions like: planning, organizing, controlling, communicating, training, decision making, motivating, coaching, leading, delegating, evaluating, and disciplining.

You will note that “doing” is not listed as a management function! Therefore, when you are spending part or all of your time in “doing” you are non-managing. It is very important that we as managers continually evaluate the role we perform as managers and separate out the “doing” from the “managing” functions. In raising our own awareness of these functions we can then assess and reassess the value of delegating part or all of our “doing” functions to the members of our board.

Setting aside this doing function is one of the hardest things that we as programmers have to face when we become presidents (or managers) on program boards. Some of the reasons for this is because 1) oftentimes this is our first experience as “managers” and 2) many times we are elected to the office because of our skills, efforts, and contributions as “doers” within the organization.

How many times have you voted for a person on your program board because of their time commitment, caring and program skills rather than their delegation and organization skills? This does not mean to imply that the “doer” cannot be a good president, but to try and point out that the president cannot achieve success for the organization in the same way that won him/her the respect of the organization as a “doer”.

The success or failure of the president now depends on how effectively they can achieve the committee’s objectives through the efforts of others (i.e., how well they can manage and motivate people). One of the hardest things for us to learn is that we now have to depend on the people within our organization to achieve our objectives (whether it is a good film program or whatever) and not our own ability to do them.

The manager, president or whatever must become aware of their new functions (management functions) and learn to assume them if they are to avoid the over extension, burnt out and hassled syndrome of student activities programmers.

MOTIVATION AND THE MANAGER

Motivation is defined as “the desire or force within an individual which causes him/her to act.” Defined as above motivation becomes something which is within a person not some external force which is applied to that person (like a kick in the pants). If it is true that motivation comes from within, then the question, “how do I motivate my committee?” has no meaning. The people are already motivated toward their own goals and needs.

The role of the manager then becomes one of bringing about better results in the committee or board by setting up an environment which will allow those already motivated people to help the organization achieve its goals. To do this one must have:

- 1) Understanding of motivational principles
- 2) Understanding of individual volunteers
- 3) Opportunities to fulfill motivational needs on the job.

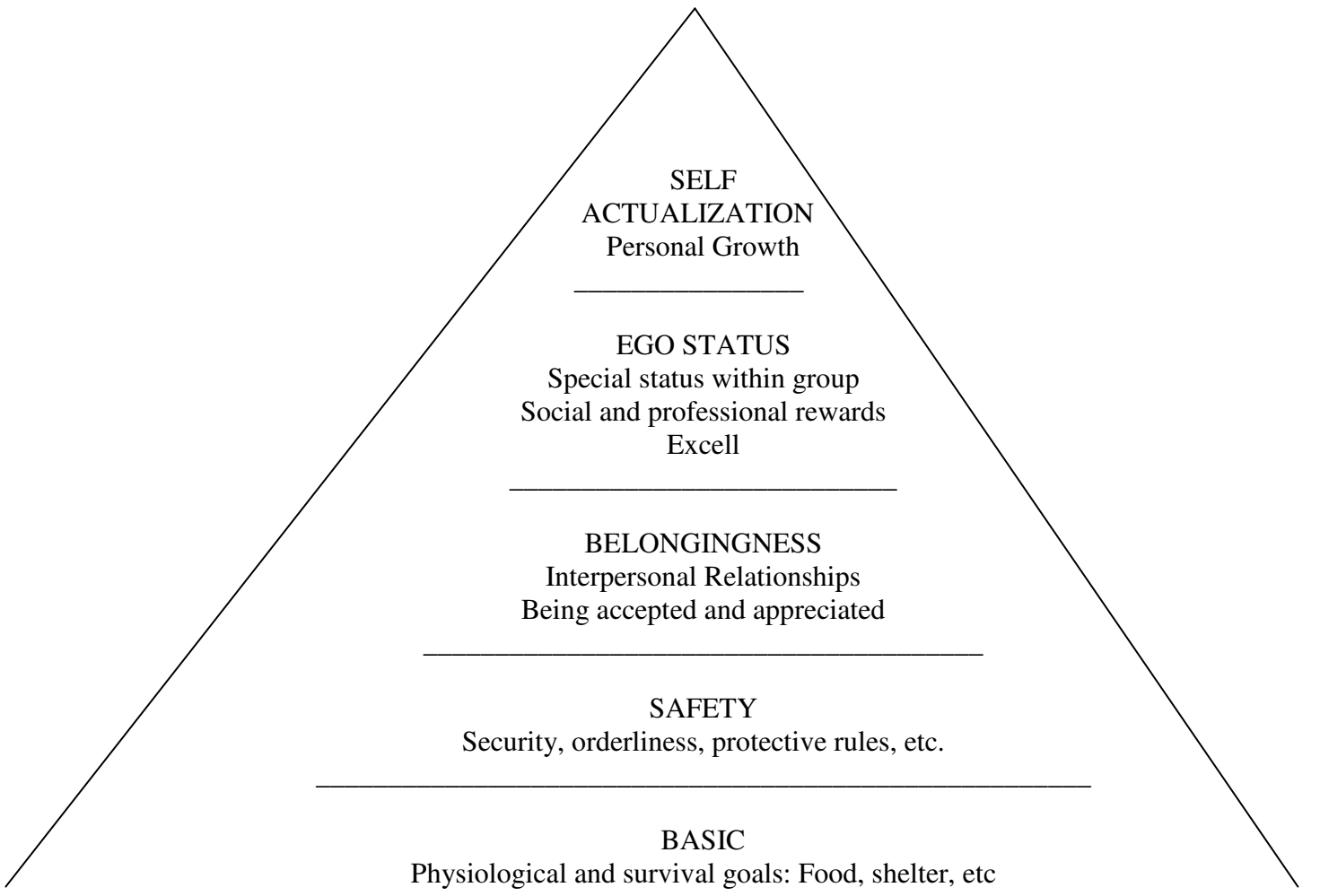
= Better Results

It is of primary importance to structure the organization so that the people’s goals and needs (i.e., what motivates them) flow with the organization rather than against it!

The first step that a president must take is one of understanding some basic motivational theory...what causes people to act the way they do.

One theory is that of Abraham Maslow. Maslow theorized that “experienced needs are primary influences on an individual’s behavior. When a particular need emerges, it determines the individual’s behavior in terms of motivations, priorities, and action taken”.

Maslow created a hierarchy of needs which traces the general needs a person faces and also the progression of needs (i.e., as one need is met what the next one would be). His hierarchy basically looks like the diagram below. Maslow states that basic needs have to be met before safety needs and safety needs have to be met before belongingness needs, etc.



Another theory is that of Herzberg. He talks about motivation in terms of Hygiene and Motivator factors.

Hygiene factors are basically things like physical conditions, (office décor, noise level, workspace, furniture, etc.) Security (organization stability, board's policies and procedures, etc.) Economic (rewards, money, credit, and benefits) and Social (cliques, coffee breaks, friendliness).

Motivator Factors are things like Achievement (solving work problems, seeing the results of your efforts, completing a difficult task, creating a "whole: tangible product, having meaningful responsibilities), Recognition (respect from peers, acknowledgement from the program board president or advisor, receiving feedback on your performance, knowing you have accomplished a meaningful task), Participation (planning and scheduling your work, being allowed to make important decisions, being part of organizational decision making and problem solving teams which are related to your area of responsibilities), and Growth (being able to increase your

skills and competencies, applying new learning to job tasks, becoming more competent).

Herzberg basically says that Hygiene factors can produce increase productivity, but this is usually short term until the hygiene factors are improved again (i.e., more pay, more rewards, better office, more equipment, etc.) which ends in a never ending cycle effect.

Motivators on the other hand can bring about lasting increases in the productivity of the volunteer because they become motivated internally by the program rather than by a periodic external reward.

In working with volunteers Herzberg's theory has a lot of application. Being conscious of the motivators and then working toward developing them on our committees can give us some concrete direction for working with the motivating our volunteers!

Well, so much for theory. The next step is toward understanding the individual volunteer. It is very important that you take the time through formal and informal communication and contacts to discover the needs, priorities, interests, and expectations of each volunteer in your organization.

You can then use the theory in combination with the knowledge of the individual to create opportunities for the individual to experience, on the program board, those jobs which have significance to their personal needs or goals. This way you have their internal goals and motivators working with the organization.

On our program boards we are in the unique position of having many opportunities for achievement, recognition, participation and growth. It is those opportunities which make co-curricular activities fun and challenging. The president of the program board really has a head start toward motivating their volunteers. However, one must combine understanding of motivation theory, understanding of the individual's needs and motivators, and the organization's opportunities to fulfill these needs, to gain better results in the organization's product and people who are not burnt out through program overload.

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND STRATEGIES

Leadership can be defined as the "Art of getting others to do willingly those things mutually agreed upon as necessary to achieve a common goal." Each

person who is president or a committee chairperson has their own leadership style...that is, a unique pattern of behavior associated with his or her day-to-day interactions with committee members.

There are many different leadership styles and very few of us are a perfect model of any one style. However, leadership styles can have a major impact on the motivation of the people on our committees as well as our own feelings of frustrations or success as we relate to the committee. Also leadership skills and styles can be learned. The first step to this is identifying your own “real” leadership style.

The examples of different leadership styles are those of traditional leadership and developmental leadership. Below is a summary of the basic roles, the pros and cons, and the administrative expectations of each.

TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP

- One person - assumes a primary central role
- has total or majority of control
 - takes credit for successful programs
 - is center of attention
 - gets the glory
 - gets the grief
 - has the answers
 - often carries most answers in head
 - has all of the answers

A centralized efficient system

A great deal, usually the total program, depends on how good leader is

A great deal of pressure on that person

Leader over group

Leader as boss

Key – Administrative Expectations

The focus is on:

1. Accomplish tasks efficiently

DEVELOPMENTAL LEADERSHIP

One person - assumes major teaching role

- insists on maximum input from members
- encourages the generation of expectations from group members
- teaches the members to be effective
- transmits to members all expertise so they learn what he knows as they carry out projects
- the group gets the glory
- leader must be satisfied with vicarious reward of seeing others get the glory
- members teach each other and leaders
- gets members to take on as much responsibility as they can handle
- asks questions to bring out problems so group can solve

A system less efficient, particularly in the beginning

A system whose success depends more on members

A system where pressures are shared by group

A deliberate program of learning

Leader as part of group

Leader as facilitator

Key – Administrative Expectations

The focus is on:

1. Accomplish task
2. Insure individual satisfaction or success

The results are:

Members accomplishes task out of personal commitment

- Efficiency drops
- Learning increases
- Commitment increases
- Builds members ego by their involvement in their experience

Generally, behavioral scientists have discovered that moving from an “autocratic” environment to a more open “participative” environment will produce the best results in the long run.

When we look at leadership styles, we should remember that no one leadership style works in all situations. Leadership styles are more or less effective and appropriate; and a president should always consider the person they are working with, the situation and themselves before choosing a leadership style. Some people call this tact but most of us call this situational leadership!

A WORD ABOUT DELEGATION

You will note that effective delegation is a key to 1) becoming a “manager” rather than a “doer”; 2) participative or developmental leadership and 3) keeping the president of the program board from flunking out of school. One definition of delegation is the act of allowing committee members to successfully carry out assigned tasks; it includes:

- 1) Giving responsibility to accomplish the job objectives
- 2) Granting authority to make the decisions and take the action required to meet objectives
- 3) Creating accountability for achieving results

In actual practice it is a personal thing involving interpersonal relationships that make delegation a success.

Here are some obstacles to delegation:

- You are limited by the “I can do it better myself” fallacy. You feel the only way to finish work correctly is to do the work themselves.
- You do not know which tasks to delegate.
- You have a lack of confidence in a volunteer’s ability to make proper decisions.
- You feel that you will lose control of the work and will not know what is happening in the program board or committee.
- You are unwilling to take the risk of letting committee members make decisions and of being held accountable for the member’s decisions.
- You cannot delegate effectively because you do not understand your authority levels.
- You are particularly interested in the work and want to do it by themselves because they get satisfaction from this personal involvement.

- You have an absence of sensitive controls that can warn them about impending difficulties.

WHY VOLUNTEERS WILL NOT ACCEPT DELEGATION

Volunteers/committee members will not accept delegation because:

- They find it is often easier to ask the president than to make a decision by themselves.
- They do not understand their own authority level; therefore, they are indecisive.
- They fear criticism for mistakes.
- They lack resources and necessary information to do a job.
- They lack self-confidence
- They feel the incentives are inadequate to motivate them.

WHY DELEGATION FAILS A SELF-CHECK

Delegation fails for one of three main reasons. Each reason seems obvious, but all presidents should examine their own process of delegation and evaluate its effectiveness. If it seems not to be working, maybe one of the causes below is the reason:

- The process is incomplete; that is responsibilities for results have been distributed without granting sufficient authority or creating a relationship of accountability.
- The president refuses-consciously or unconsciously- to delegate. The obstacles to delegation are never overcome by the president or the committee member.
- Delegation is blocked by incomplete or ineffective communications. Many times the president goes through the process and activities associated with delegation without the volunteer realizing delegation was attempted. Thus, the president acts and proceeds as if delegation has occurred, with the volunteer finding out when deadlines come near. This is the most difficult reason to identify and can be eliminated by the job clarification process.

COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

“Communication is the process of transferring an idea or message from a sender to one or more receivers.”

Successful communication is when the idea or message received is approximately the same as the idea/message sent. A successful communication is more difficult, than we think. Because contrary to public opinion meanings and definitions are in people not in dictionaries! Each person has attached their own frame of reference to every word and gestures we use to communicate. Therefore, it's important that you as a manager “check for understanding” on the part of the receiver. The way you check for understanding is important. Have you ever noticed that if you ask a person “Do you understand?” most of the time they say “yes”. When checking for understanding is done this way the pressure on the listener is to say yes. A better way of checking can be done by asking the person “What have you heard or understood me to say?”

Also an awareness of some of the conditions which hinder or refract (distort) communications helps us to overcome these barriers or blocks to communication.

Some of the common barriers are:

Preoccupation – when a person is focusing on something internal rather than listening to what the communicator is saying.

Emotional block – when words used are emotion-charged for the listener.

Hostility – when you're communicating with an individual with whom your angry, or it may be a carry over from a recent experience.

Past Experience – where we predispose that the same conditions exist exist and listen less effectively as a result.

Hidden agents – where people interpret all messages in reference to their own needs/interests.

Inarticulateness – lack of verbal skill.

Physical Environment – warm stuffy room, being tired (mind

wandering).

Defensiveness – insecurity in person who tends to distort questions into accusations and replies into justifications.

Too many “links” – the old telephone game...the more people you have between the original sender and final receiver, the more distorted the message will be.

Technical “jargon” – “in words” that aren’t defined.

Uninterested receivers – they really don’t want to hear what you have to say.

Ego-status threat – I’m better than you so I won’t take orders from you....

Inappropriate media – a written memo when person to person talk would have been better and visa versa.

Now that we’ve talked about the sending part of communications, its just as important that the listening or receiving be developed. The manager should actively listen and continue to try to develop this skill. Listening does more than improve the understanding of the message. Listening demonstrates a definite and sincere interest by the manager into the problems, ideas, and suggestions of the sender. Listening is a powerful form of recognition as well which the manager can not afford to over look.

All in all communication ought to be a process of sharing rather than an instance of combat. The effective listener realizes this, and listens acceptively.

After reading this you may wonder how all this theory is going to help you feel less hassled, rejuvenated, and more successful in your work with student activities. In essence if you have read this paper, you will have made the first step toward learning an improved managerial behavior, which if you take the next four steps will help you overcome some of the above problems.

The four steps for moving from theory to practice are:

1. Awareness – gaining at least some theory or concepts leads to examination of self’s skills.
2. Understanding – learning more theory as a result of possible need

to change.

3. Commitment – to change
4. New habits – are established and sustained.

WHAT DO YOU DO AFTER THE THRILL IS GONE?

You get your organization together that's what? We've defined four areas that are necessary for you to understand and develop skills in, if you want your organization to become a rewarding place in which to work. Those four areas are management, motivation, leadership, and communication. They are interlockatory (like jigsaw puzzles), and increased skill in one area will positively effect the others. Remember: a good organization is like any other complex machinery it needs oiled, greased, inspected and worn out parts replaced...in short it needs to be maintained.

P.S. Read your owner's manual!!!

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