

Volunteers' salaries

I was delighted to see the emphasis given to the training of volunteers in the July issue. In addition to those mentioned by the authors, another important element of a volunteer training program is a plan for recognition. Because volunteers are not rewarded with salaries, they must receive satisfaction from their experiences and recognition for their accomplishments. The taste of successful experience, the thrill of completing a job and the sense of achievement help keep volunteers interested in continuing their work.

There are intangible rewards—being asked for advice, developing new friendships, feeling fulfilled and helping others. But we also need to plan for more tangible rewards such as certificates of recognition, small, informal recognition ceremonies or large, highlighted events. Newspaper, newsletter, radio and TV coverage of volunteers' efforts are broader, more visible ways to give recognition. These usually increase a volunteer's job satisfaction and often inspire him or her to want to do more.

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"What's Different About Training Volunteers" (1984, July) made some excellent suggestions on "what it takes to create—and retain—skilled, motivated volunteers." As a former paid staff person for the American Cancer Society, I recognize one important aspect of retaining volunteers that was not covered. This is the need to keep volunteers busy and involved with meaningful tasks within your organization. No volunteer will "feel he or she is a unique, important individual" if he or she is only called upon occasionally. Idle volunteers soon will find other activities or organizations to devote time and energy to.

Keeping volunteers active enough to maintain their interest and motivation can be a problem when an organization's volunteer needs are seasonal or unpredictable. Before planning and offering a volunteer training program, take a close look at how the volunteers will be used and give

thought to their consistent involvement in your organization.

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Profiting from the nonprofits

As a regular reader of *Training & Development Journal*, I believe that the publication shows a bias in favor of the for-profit sector. It is hard to believe that workers in nonprofit organizations offer nothing to the field of training, but little or nothing that appears in the *Journal* reflects the training experience and insight of the nonprofit community.

Organizations such as the YWCA, the Girl Scouts and ASTD have trained staff and volunteers for many years. The staff of these organizations must deal with issues such as translating training theory into practice, merging organizational goals with training goals, assessing the needs of the community, and fostering pride and commitment in paid, unpaid and underpaid staff. I would like to see articles in the *Journal* that address some of these issues.

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Documentation begets training

I enjoyed "Giving Documentation Its Due" by Adele Cooke in the August issue. In the pharmaceutical industry, documentation is federally mandated through the use of Standard Operating Procedures that attempt to ensure compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices and Good Laboratory Practices. The Food and Drug Administration's GMP/GLP guidelines, and resulting company SOPs, form a foundation for the majority of training. Training is required in the pharmaceutical industry, and

the relationship between industry and the government is comfortable.

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The simple truth and unadorned

I read "Cutting Edge Trends in Organization Development" by Gordon Lippitt, Ronald Lippitt and Clayton Lafferty (1984, July), at first with interest, then with frustration. I wish one of the cutting edge trends were a return to plain English. The authors, like many writers on organization development, describe issues and conditions that have always existed in the work place in one form or another. Fortunately, through the efforts of organization development professionals, these issues increasingly are receiving the attention they deserve.

Unfortunately, many OD experts use jargon that turns off many managers and that is unnecessary. This article is a good case in point. The reader finds expressions such as "psychosocial technical systems," "mobilize interdisciplinary task forces," and "an organization and its components have multiple options in their interrelationships." Instead of saying "total resource utilization," why can't the authors say "use of all resources?" Surely there is a simpler way to say "helping management to downsize proactively!"

This unnecessary use of jargon is detrimental to the advancement of OD because it teaches OD practitioners to describe organizational conditions and events in language foreign to managers. We have a lot to gain and not much to lose (except perhaps a bit of the mystique of OD?) by returning to the use of plain English.

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