

# CILT's Volunteer Vibes

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We had a very successful Volunteer Orientation Workshop in January. We are very pleased and excited to welcome these fresh, new faces to CILT's team of volunteers. Please join me in welcoming the following people to CILT:

Darcy Attas  
Orathai Bowers  
Luigi Lisciandro

## **What is National Volunteer Week?**

[www.metronews.ca/toronto/work/article/192075](http://www.metronews.ca/toronto/work/article/192075)

National Volunteer Week, which takes place April 19-25, is meant to spread awareness about volunteering as well as get more people to donate their time.

The event has a long history, originally starting just after the Second World War as a way of recognizing the efforts of female volunteers during the war. Since then, the annual campaign has branched out to recognize and celebrate the efforts of all of Canada's estimated 12 million volunteers.

This year, Volunteer Canada wants people to celebrate their passion for volunteering by sharing their volunteer experiences with the world. Members of the public can upload photos and videos showing how they volunteer at [www.volunteer.ca/nvm](http://www.volunteer.ca/nvm).

## Understanding Volunteer Motivations

by Merrill Associates [www.charityville.com/cv/research/rvol56.html](http://www.charityville.com/cv/research/rvol56.html)

I am frequently asked, "How do we motivate our volunteers?" My response is, "You don't." Volunteers bring their own unique motivations to their work. A good volunteer manager learns to identify those motivations and then helps each volunteer achieve a sense of personal satisfaction.

A variety of studies (Independent Sector, 1999, 2001; Safrit, King, Burcsu, 1993; Guseh & Winders, 2002) report that volunteers are motivated to action primarily for altruistic reason. Altruism is defined as a concern for the welfare of others. Among the top reasons for volunteering consistently identified by volunteers are: a personal belief in a cause, and a desire to help others.

While these are the primary reasons cited, we also know that volunteers are motivated by a variety of personal reasons and may have different reasons at different times. I may volunteer for a particular event because I am doing it with friends and colleagues from the office. I may volunteer for another organization because I feel passionately about the cause. Perhaps someone I know was affected by an illness and I want to do something to make a difference. Or, a particular opportunity, such as serving on a board, may offer me an opportunity to develop new skills and meet new people. Overall, we can conclude that volunteers have a variety of motivations for the work they do.

Volunteers indicate they are most satisfied with their volunteer experience when:

- It is for an issue of personal importance
- They feel needed and valued
- It is meaningful, interesting work

Understanding and identifying these motivations does not necessarily mean each volunteer will have a positive experience or feel fulfilled (and motivated) by the work they are asked to do. There are other intrinsic motivations we each have that affect our satisfaction regarding work. In 1968, Harvard professors, McClelland & Atkinson, identified three primary needs that we attempt to fulfill through work:

- Need for achievement
- Need for affiliation
- Need for power

These needs are learned, culturally-based behaviours. Although most individuals have a mix of all three types, one need tends to be predominant for each of individual, and we generally try to satisfy the need that is strongest in any given situation. For example, I may volunteer for an organization because I believe passionately in the cause and I have a need to feel a sense of belonging and

affiliation with others who share that belief. The need I am hoping to satisfy in this situation may be very different from the need I feel when working on a political campaign or serving on a fundraising committee. In those situations I may have a stronger need to make something happen or to bring about change.

To understand the implications of these needs for volunteer managers, consider the following descriptions:

- **The Achiever:** This person is committed to accomplishing goals, welcomes a challenge, and looks for opportunities to test out new skills and improve performance.
- **The Affiliator:** This person values relations, enjoys working with others, and seeks out opportunities to be helpful and supportive.
- **The Power Person:** This person seeks to influence people and events so that change is realized. (MacKenzie & Moore, 1993)

Achievers like to grow through challenges. They seek success in a situation that requires excellence or high performance. Achievers set high standards for personal performance and often require more of themselves than others require of them. Achievers have many positive characteristics:

- Results-oriented
- Set goals, take risks
- Innovative
- Like challenges
- Overcome barriers

They can also be so focused on the goal that they can seem insensitive to the people and the relationships. They can at times appear autocratic as they move a project forward. Achievers tend to like variety and dislike routine. These are people who make lists, mentally or in writing, and then check off the items as they go. They are often great at designing and starting projects but can become bored when maintaining projects. Though Achievers can work in a group or team, they often prefer working alone. They like to be given the authority to do the job. Because they are results-focused, they like well-delegated tasks, concrete feedback to improve performance, and a "hand-off" management style.

Affiliators enjoy forming alliances and partnerships with individuals and groups. They like to work with other people and they enjoy developing friendships. Affiliators are "people persons" who seek out relationships and like working with a wide variety of people. Their positive characteristics focus on relationships:

- Sensitive to the feelings and needs of others
- Support others in achieving goals
- Talk about feelings

- Want to help others

Unlike achievers, affiliators do not focus on the goals. In fact, they may sacrifice project goals/timelines by devoting so much time to the relationships and trying to keep everyone happy. They tend to seek/need approval and often take criticism very personally. They dislike and will avoid controversy or conflict. In a group situation, affiliators will be very aware of the personal dynamics in the group and often tend to talk about feelings rather than the work itself. Sometimes this is very annoying for achievers or power people, who tend to focus more on the work and goals rather than the relationships and feelings. Affiliators offer a wonderful balance in a group. They can slow down the "forge ahead" goal-oriented members and help to build a sense of team. Because they are people-oriented, they like a very "open door" supervisor who is caring and personal. Affiliation people like the opportunity to sit down and talk over things. They enjoy receiving input/advice from a supervisor. They enjoy feeling part of the team.

Power people like to use their influence and skills to bring about change. It should be noted here that sometimes power is viewed as a negative in our society. McClelland distinguished between personal power that is motivated by personal ambition and manifested as a need to be in charge or control, and social power, which is the use of personal power for the benefit of all. Power people, as referred to here, believe in sharing power, information, and control to influence people and events so that change can happen.

Power people like to use their personal influence to shape opinions. They are concerned with position, title, respect and reputation. Power people may be:

- Charismatic leaders
- Opinion shapers
- Articulate
- Verbally aggressive

They can build confidence in a group. They can also come across as autocratic because they are self-assured and certain that their way is the best way. They are seen as "take charge people" who are focused on the outcome and, thus, sometimes indifferent to the people involved. Power people prefer very clear policies and procedures and defined limits of authority. They respect strong leadership/management but frequently do not see the rules as applying to them. They are very comfortable working alone.

It is important to recognize that one style is not better than another. Each person has a preferred style in which they work most comfortably. As volunteer managers, we will have all three styles in our volunteer corps. It is, therefore, important to understand these motivations and how to work with each type of person so that they feel their needs are being met.

There is no one management style that works for all volunteers. This means a volunteer manager must change his/her personal style to meet the needs of a variety of volunteers. The volunteer who is an affiliator is looking for a patient, chatty supervisor who really cares about how the volunteer is feeling about the assignment. The supervisor who is an achiever is just anxious to get on with it.

The affiliator is concerned with any conflict, while the achiever is so focused on the goal to perhaps be unaware of conflict within the group. The affiliator may perceive criticism as a personal attack rather than a simple suggestion directed at enhancing performance. The achiever believes that everyone is anxious to improve performance and would welcome such a suggestion.

Both the affiliator and the achiever may find the power person too honest, forthright and "pushy." The power person loves political intrigue; the affiliator hates it. The affiliator chairs a meeting that attends to the needs of the group. The decisions are secondary. The achiever is happy only if the agenda is covered, decisions are made, and the meeting ends on time. Power people only come to the meetings that they think are worthwhile. (MacKenzie & Moore, 1993)

While these are described here as three distinct types of people, it is important to mention again that volunteers are complex beings and rarely fit nicely into one category. Many people are a blend of these styles or may exhibit certain styles in certain situations.

Over the years, a variety of tools have been designed to help identify dominant needs. MacKenzie and Moore (1993) published an easy-to-use 11 question Motivational Analysis that is quickly administered and scored, and helps one identify their individual motivational style. The danger with such quizzes is that volunteer managers begin to think they should design a "test" for each volunteer applicant so they can quickly assess motivational styles. Such an approach is not practical in most settings. Information about motivations can be gathered through skilful applicant interviewing. Volunteer managers can design questions to help identify motivations.

For example:

- Describe for me a situation that gave you great satisfaction or a sense of a job well done.
- What type of work or working situations do you find most frustrating?
- When working in a group, what do you like and dislike?
- Do you prefer working alone or in a group setting?
- What type of supervision do you prefer?

Even volunteer recognition practices should be based on the personal needs of each volunteer. Affiliation volunteers tend to prefer sharing success with friends and family members, annual dinners, parties/socials, and compliments from their

supervisor. Achievers tend to prefer a written note from the executive director or president of the board, a note sent to their employer detailing their accomplishments, pins, certificates and promotions. Power people like being recognized publicly for their accomplishments; enjoy media recognition, titles of status, and opportunity to innovate.

### **References:**

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### **Disability Awareness Corner**

#### ***Chiari Malformation* Kee-AR-ee**

*The Chiari malformation is an abnormality in the lower part of the brain called the cerebellum. There are several different forms. The most common type is the Chiari I malformation (CM) which this article addresses. Less commonly, it may be known as Arnold-Chiari malformation, tonsillar herniation or tonsillar ectopia. Most cases of Chiari are congenital, meaning they are present from birth.*

In normal anatomy, the cerebella tonsils are located just above this line called the foramen magnum. But in an individual with Chiari, the tonsils hang below the line (herniate) into the spinal canal. The degree to which the tonsils extend can vary tremendously.

## **What are the symptoms?**

The most common symptom of Chiari malformation is a headache, which begins at the back of the head (neck) and radiates upward. The pain is often made worse or can be brought on by coughing, sneezing or straining. These activities are known as valsalva manoeuvres.

Visual problems such as nystagmus (involuntary eye movements), double or blurred vision may occur. Balance difficulties, vertigo and dizziness also may be present. Some people may have cranial nerve compression. This can result in apnea (cessation of breathing), gagging, swallowing difficulties, facial numbness or syncope (temporary loss of consciousness).

Patients may have muscle weakness, particularly in the upper extremities, coordination problems, and gait abnormalities. Imaging of the spine may reveal a fluid collection inside of the spinal cord, known as a syrinx. Some individuals may have hydrocephalus, a build up of fluid in the ventricles of the brain.

## **Is there a treatment?**

The first step after diagnosis is to consult with a neurosurgeon who has experience treating and managing this disorder. Be aware that you may need to travel and you may wish to consult with more than one specialist.

If symptoms are mild and not progressing, your doctor may recommend conservative management. Supportive care such as headache and pain management, physical therapy or a reduction in activities can help manage symptoms.

An operation may be recommended. This is referred to as a posterior fossa decompression. The surgeon makes more room in the back of the head by removing small pieces of the skull bones. This reduces compression of the brain stem and allows the tonsils to move back into their natural position. The specific surgical techniques will vary among surgeons; no consensus yet exists on the best variation on this surgical procedure.

## **Is this condition hereditary?**

Researchers investigated the genetic implications of the Chiari malformation with or without syringomyelia. A genetic prevalence has been identified in some families. Researchers continue to search for the gene(s) that are responsible for producing the Chiari malformation.

MRI scanning is recommended for family members who have signs or symptoms of the disorder.

Source: <http://www.asap.org/chiari-malformation.html>

## CILT News

*T*he Gateways to Cancer Screening Project was featured in a webinar for CWD-O (Citizens With Disabilities – Ontario). Nancy Barry from CILT and Linda Muraca from Mount Sinai did a 50 minute presentation on the project in the form of a webinar. This was our first time doing something of this nature, so it was really an interesting experience. A “webinar” is a seminar over the internet in a live chat room setting. With a headset and microphone, you can actually give a presentation and interact with others as though you were physically in the same room together.

Stay tuned for more exciting news about the Gateways Project.

*CILT's Volunteer Vibes* is a quarterly publication of the **Peer Support Program**. If you are interested in volunteering at C.I.L.T. please call Nancy to request a Volunteer Application Package.

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**Volunteer Vibes** is also available on audiotape upon request.

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