

Growing the BCCC Church Community:
Motivations to Volunteer, (Scarratt, 2007).

When pastoral leaders, in conjunction with their followers, determine a plan or a course of action for the future, they recognize that they will not implement the plan alone. They may not have paid employees to whom they may simply delegate various tasks, so ideally, leaders need people to volunteer, to subscribe enthusiastically to the vision they have created, and to roll up their sleeves and get started. Such is the case at BCCC.

To reach this point, followers need to be motivated. Mackeracher (2004) considers motivation to be “an all-purpose term defined as a tendency within a person to produce organized and directed behaviour [which allows individuals] to ensure their own and their communal groups’ survival and satisfaction” (p. 131). Motivation can be external (e.g., the leader’s vision is so exciting that I want to be a part of it) or internal (e.g., I look for a special place where I can use my special talents), but in either case, it is ultimately a decision of the individual. It seems strange to say that the decision to volunteer must be voluntary, but there are times when there is a perceived obligation to volunteer, which will never result in the same enthusiastic commitment. Contributions to the section include Allison (2003), Clary and Snyder (1999), Covey (2004b), Kouzes and Posner (2002), and Warren (1995).

In their 1999 article “The Motivations to Volunteer: Theoretical and Practical Considerations,” Clary and Snyder draw on functional theorizing to explore the reasons, purposes, and motivations underlying human behaviour. Using a Voluntary Functions Inventory (VFI) questionnaire, they identified six personal and social motivations

potentially experienced by volunteers:

1. Values—I feel it is important to help others;
2. Understanding—Volunteering helps me learn through . . . experience;
3. Enhancement—[Volunteering] makes me feel better about myself;
4. Career—[Volunteering] can help me to get my foot in the door;
5. Social—People I know share an interest in community service; and
6. Protective—[Volunteering] is a good escape from my own troubles. (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 157)

Clary and Snyder's (1999) research "findings [suggested] that people's motivations for performing actions as diverse, complex, and sustained as volunteerism are very likely to be multifaceted" (p. 157). Roughly two-thirds of VFI respondents indicated "having two or more important motivations" (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 157). Findings were replicated when items from the VFI were included "in a national survey about American adults' giving and volunteering" (Clary, Snyder, & Stukas, as cited in Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 157). Similarly, when used in surveying volunteers 50 or older, the VFI factor structure was found to be superior to "either a single motivational or a two-factor model" (Okun, Barr, & Herzog, as cited in Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 157).

The findings speak to the "altruism and egoism debate" (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 157) about what motivates people to volunteer, and are significant for BCCC, a church largely dependent upon volunteers. Is helpfulness motivated by the desire to benefit oneself or out of concern for others? What factors are at work in motivating BCCC volunteers and in sustaining volunteerism?

Clary and Snyder (1999) suggest that matching people's motivations to the

volunteering situations results in greater satisfaction and “it follows that their actual intentions to continue . . . will also be linked to the matching between experiences and motivations” (p. 158). Clary and Snyder determine that the degree to which volunteers receive function-specific benefits, as well as the degree to which they find their volunteerism enjoyable, determine their level of satisfaction. It is important to note that the recurring theme in their investigation was that volunteer behaviours do not depend solely on the match between the person and the situation, but rather depend on the dynamics of peoples’ interactions and situational opportunities.

Allison (2003), a pastor, sets the responsibility for motivating volunteers squarely on the shoulders of the church leader in “Motivating Volunteers in Your Church: A Twelve-Point Checklist.” He poses a series of questions to help pastors discover the key to motivating their volunteers and challenges them to evaluate which of the 12 points contribute to their personal motivation and that of low-performing or non-performing congregants.

Allison’s (2003) first point, *Spiritual Gift Factor*, is based on the belief that “God has given each person at least one primary spiritual function/gift” (1 Peter 4:10-11, as cited in Allison, p. 2). It “help[s] people understand and discover how God has wired them spiritually” (Allison, 2003, p. 2) and how their gift fits into the church’s ministry. Allison maintains that “God-given giftedness goes hand-in-hand with a person’s passion and vice-versa [and that] when we’re not plugging into our means of service—then we’re not so motivated” (2003, p. 2). When the second point, the *Passion Factor*, is also considered, volunteers are the most effective. Allison asks, “Are the volunteers in your church high maintenance or are they serving where their passion is?” (2003, p. 3).

Urging pastors not to assume that volunteers know exactly what to do, Allison (2003) advocates using the *Clarity Factor* and taking the time to walk volunteers through specific expectations, thereby avoiding frustration and eliminating possible confusion over their roles in recruiting new volunteers for ministry. According to Allison, the use of the *Feedback Factor* is “needed to function effectively as a leader and manager” (2003, p. 3). He asks, “When was the last time you . . . praised a volunteer for specific excellent work [and] when was the last time you skillfully and lovingly pointed out an area of improvement” (Allison, 2003, p. 4)? “Volunteers want feedback too” (Allison, 2003, p. 4) and “the number one motivator of people is feedback on results” (Blanchard & Johnson, as cited in Allison, 2003, p. 3).

Allison (2003) asks, “Are your volunteers *EQUIPPED* with tools and training to do their ministries well?” (p. 4). He emphasizes that applying the *Equipment Factor* and providing the correct tools and training for the job will help keep volunteers motivated. Advocating the *Modeling Factor*, Allison states, “People do what people see. . . . You *MUST* be the first living model you want volunteers to follow” (2003, p. 5). He therefore asks, “Do the volunteers in your ministry and church have living models to follow—or just good talkers” (2003, p. 5)?

Allison (2003) considers the *Freedom Factor*, the freedom to choose, explore, and discover the best service fit, a basic need of human beings. He says, “Sometimes we even put a little spiritual guilt on wavering volunteers. . . . Are the volunteers in your church and ministry serving out of choice or guilt and manipulation” (Allison, 2003, p. 5)?

Through the *Efficacy Factor*, volunteers are made aware of the significant contribution they are making to the church’s mission and vision. In having the

opportunity to make a difference and in not feeling like a part of the “ecclesiastical machinery” (Allison, 2003, p. 7), they are motivated and “have Volunteer Efficacy” (Allison, 2003, p. 6). Allison asks, “Do ALL the volunteers in your ministry and church really understand their role in the achievement of the church’s vision and mission—or do they tend to believe they are a warm body filling an insignificant slot” (2003, p. 7)?

In agreement with legendary leadership expert De Pree, Allison (2003) notes that “the last job of the leader is to say thank you” (De Pree, as cited in Allison, p. 7). In adopting the *Thankfulness Factor*, great volunteers should be “PUBLICALLY [sic] APPRECIATED for their outstanding sacrificial service” (Allison, 2003, p. 7), by intentionally planning time for public recognition. Allison sees “a connection between appreciation and motivation for volunteers in the church” (2003, p. 7). He urges,

Don’t be like some leaders of volunteers . . . who neglect them . . . and then mount a soapbox to preach a sermon on commitment. . . . Are you doing a good job of . . . thanking those stellar volunteers. (Allison, 2003, p. 8)

Allison (2003) insists, “Work made fun gets done!” (p. 8) and recommends considering the *Fun Factor* to improve morale, boost results, and motivate volunteers. He comments, “I know that volunteering is not one big laughing festival, but from time to time there needs to be a little fun involved” (Allison, 2003, p. 8).

Allison (2003) considers the *Relationship Factor* instrumental in meeting the basic, God-given need to belong. Those who have the opportunity to “work together AND experience genuine community with each other will most likely be motivated volunteers” (Allison, 2003, p. 9). Allison asks, “Are the volunteers in your church experiencing community with other volunteers? Is working in your ministry more like a family or a business?” (2003, p. 9).

Allison's (2003) final point is the *Prayer Factor* and he advocates using it "when . . . seeking to motivate volunteers to high levels of service for God's Kingdom" (p. 9). He points out that the power of prayer can be seen in how it moves the heart of God to move the hearts of the people and advises putting together a dream team of volunteers to work in ministry and investing in a few moments of prayer. "Motivation is a heart thing—and thus, a God thing" (Allison, 2003, pp. 9–10). "When you're trying to find volunteers, pray" (Luke 10:2, as cited in Allison, 2003, p. 9).

Similarly, in *The 8th Habit*, Covey (2004b) sees that people "need to feel valued and appreciated, but they also need to feel that the work they are engaged in is worthy of their commitment and their best efforts" (p. 185). He maintains that "only those people who are allowed to tap into all four parts of their nature will find their voice and volunteer their highest contributions" (Covey, 2004b, p. 224). Covey (2004b) describes the four parts of people's natures and the needs and motivations of each part: the body (survival, economic prosperity), the mind (growth and development), the heart (love and relationships), and the spirit (meaning, integrity, and contribution).

Covey (2004b) maintains that "the organization has the same basic needs [as people]" (p. 224) and that having each person "co-missioned" to meet both their needs and those of the organization is key to igniting the fire inside people and unleashing the power of the workforce in a way that joins their needs to those of the organization. Clarifying the mission, vision, and values of the organization avoids confusion over what is truly important and is a critical part of the co-missioning process.

Covey (2004b) emphasizes that every choice is made in response to a deeper motivation, ranging from anger, fear, and reward, to duty, love, and meaning, and that the

latter three are the highest sources of human motivation. “They will always produce the greatest and most enduring achievements” (Covey, 2004b, p. 265).

Covey (2004b) discusses how, when faced with a question, it is important to identify the kind of question: a competency question as in “Can I do it?” a values question like “Should I do it?”, or a motivational question such as “Do I want to do it?” Thinking carefully and clearly about what kind of question is posed and keeping questions separate can help identify the best starting point.

Kouzes and Posner (2002) emphasize that values are also motivators. Values keep people focused on why they’re doing what they’re doing and the ends to which they’re striving. “Values are the banners that fly as we persist, as we struggle, as we toil. We refer to them when we need to replenish our energy. Through them we can answer the question, Was it worth it?” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 49). Kouzes and Posner emphasize that whenever people find a strong culture built around strong values, they will find leaders who personally live the values. Reminiscent of Allison’s (2003) Modeling Factor, Kouzes and Posner maintain that “the leader has to set the example” (2002, pp. 384–385).

Kouzes and Posner (2002) remind us of the ability of symbols, not acronyms, to capture the imagination and that enriching the language of stories can put a human face on success. Stories “tell us that someone just like us can make it happen. . . . They ‘Teach, Mobilize, Motivate’” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 381).

Kouzes and Posner (2002) stress that effectively communicating a vision has very potent effects and that when leaders do so, a variety of positive reactions are reported, including motivation. If a vision is communicated clearly with enthusiasm and optimism,

people are inspired. “When leaders clearly communicate a shared vision of an organization, they ennoble those who work on its behalf. They elevate the human spirit” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 143).

Warren (1995) reflects that “unfortunately churches are often held together by committees rather than commitment” (p. 343) and sees focusing on raising the level of leadership commitment as pivotal in bringing everyone else in the church along. “A rising tide raises all the boats in the harbor” (Warren, 1995, p. 343). Warren (1995) maintains that asking people for commitment is essential and that if leaders don’t, they “can be certain other groups will” (p. 344). His idea, “Build *on* commitment rather than *toward* commitment [italics added]” (Warren, 1995, p. 347), is an interesting one.

Warren’s (1995) recommendations focus on a people-building process through building on commitment—“people want to be committed to something that gives significance to their lives. . . . People do not resent being asked for a great commitment if there is a great purpose behind it” (p. 345). Warren (1995) challenges people to make a commitment and then grow into it, and explains that people respond to a passionate vision, not a need. It is important to be specific, for without this, “many stewardship campaigns don’t work” (Warren, 1995, pp. 345–346).

Using the analogy of a baseball diamond, Warren (1995) recommends breaking big commitments into smaller steps, so that “people can see how far they’ve come and how far they have to go” (p. 347), and regularly scheduling “celebration events” that give people a sense of accomplishment and motivate them to keep making progress. It is also important to identify the personal, family, social, and organizational benefits of commitment. “At the beginning of classes . . . we state the values and benefits to the

participants by saying, ‘Here’s what this class will do for you’” (Warren, 1995, pp. 346–347). He says, “God does this time and time again in the Bible. So many of the commands in Scripture have wonderful promises attached to them. We always end up being blessed whenever we’re obedient” (Warren, 1995, p. 346).

Quite simply, the task of the pastoral leader is to create an environment in which the desire to contribute can grow and thrive. This is not necessarily an easy task. It is, however, an essential one if the vision is to be realized. The vibrancy of the BCCC community and its potential for positive and dynamic growth require that its members commit to the vision and offer to hold themselves accountable to that vision and to each other. The leaders of BCCC have a unique opportunity to work with congregants and other members of the community to grow a special community of God within the community of Bragg Creek. Church leaders will hone their leadership skills, build and communicate their vision for BCCC, and continue to motivate members of the congregation to commit to the vision and make it their own.

Scarratt, Carol (2007). *Thesis: Building shared vision through appreciative inquiry - A congregational journey*, pp. 82-90. National Library of Canada. AMICUS No. 33568198. Library and Archives Canada.