

Redesigning Leadership

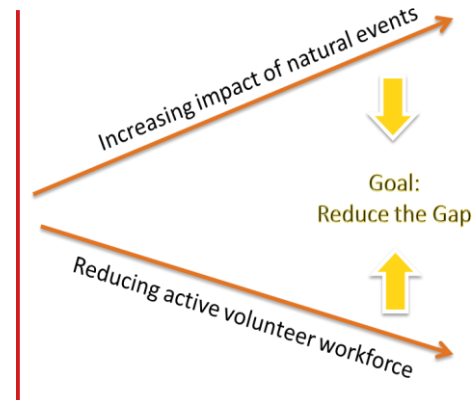
by addressing basic volunteer needs



Nicholai Popov, Michael Jones & Dominique Parrish
Faculty of Business, University of Wollongong NSW Australia

Problem

Volunteer retention is a prevailing challenge to emergency response organisations. Volunteers in some agencies will only serve for an average of 2 years. The implications of high turnover means there is a continuous burden of cost for basic training, with little performance return.



Leadership

A significant part of retaining volunteers is leadership. A leader's ability to foster positive volunteer experiences and improve job satisfaction among volunteers will ultimately determine length of service. We need to understand:



- How leadership behaviour can be altered and developed to remedy the issue of volunteer turnover.

Program

Building on a NSWSES/RFS Pilot (2014), this program aims to train leaders in the application of a psychological theory known as Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Findings indicate that leadership training in SDT results in increased job satisfaction and reductions in intention to quit among volunteers (Jones et al, 2015).



This program extends the pilot study conducted by introducing 2 additional perspectives: **Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) and Social Capital (SC)**. Increases in OCB (Coyne & Ong, 2007) and SC (Krackhardt & Hanson, 2006) have both been associated with improvements in turnover intention.

Training leaders to effectively apply SDT, build OCB, and cultivate SC among volunteers will:

- extend the period of time volunteers typically serve; and
- reduce overall turnover intention.

Coyne, I., & Ong, T. (2007). Organizational citizenship behaviour and turnover intention: a cross-cultural study. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(6), 1085-1097. doi: 10.1080/09585190701321831

Jones, M. V. Forner, N. Popov, D. Parrish, S. Kiriden, J. Eidenfalk, Y. Berry (2015) "Improving the retention of volunteers through the satisfaction of basic psychological needs." 2015 International Business Conference, New York City August 2-6

Krackhardt, D., & Hanson, J. R. (2006). Informal networks: the company behind the chart. *Harvard Business Review*, July(1), 191-196.

NSW Auditor. (2014). *Management of volunteers NSW State Emergency Service Performance Audit*. Sydney: Audit Office of NSW. www.clipartpal.com

