Retaining and Recruiting Hospital Foundation Volunteers in a Post-Pandemic Reality

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# Evaluation of Results and Initial Reflection

A printed “log sheet” was given to each attendee of the training session, along with pens and paper pads for note taking. The log sheets were an optional way for attendees to document newly acquired P2P recruitment strategies and were not collected by the researcher. In addition to the researcher’s observations, a formal Chi-Squared statistical Analysis was planned for a later date. The test would be performed using the online *Practical Statistics for Social Research (PSSR)* analysis tool (Reichard, 2024) to test the researcher’s hypothesis that a training intervention could create a statistically significant change in active volunteer participation.

**Observations**

A total of eight Foundation members attended the training: the five active members, plus three inactive members who were curious about P2P strategy. A warm and welcoming atmosphere was maintained, resulting in camaraderie between active and formerly active members.

All attendees paid full attention to each slide in the training, without exhibiting distraction from electronic devices or other intrusions. Attendees were observed taking notes on their paper pads. At the end of each PowerPoint slide, attendees were encouraged to ask questions for clarification before the next slide was presented.

During role-playing segments of the training, attendees engaged in realistic and lively simulated interactions. Participants were divided into four pairings; these pairings were change four times in order to provided varying scenarios.

Attendees were introduced to research measurement tools such as metrics and key performance indicators, but only for term familiarization and informational purposes. It was made clear to participants that actual use of the above tools was neither expected of them nor necessary for successful P2P networking/recruiting.

After the training workshop, attendees were directed to a table laden with volunteering sign-up sheets for four upcoming Foundation events: 1) a donor appreciation Taco Night, 2) the hospital’s community Health Fair, 3) the Foundation’s general meeting, 4) a committee meeting for the Foundation’s golf event fundraiser. Attendees were observed signing up for volunteering events, adding event dates to their phone calendars, and discussing amongst themselves possible networking strategies to use with their peers in other organizations. Attendees were thanked for their participation and excused to leave the conference room.

**Evaluation**

The sign-up sheets on the table revealed that all eight training workshop attendees signed up to volunteer––many volunteering for more than one Foundation event. While encouraging, this observation in itself would not objectively determine a measurable increase in the number of active Foundation volunteers. It would be necessary to tally the total number of active volunteers (returning and new) following the four sign-up events. Attendance would be taken at each of these events using sign-in rosters; only then could a proper tally be made.

At the conclusion of the four Foundation events, the total number of volunteer participants was tallied. That number totaled 15 active volunteers––an increase over the 5 active volunteers prior to the training workshop. Since there were only 8 attendees at the training workshop, the names on the event sign-in rosters revealed an increase of *7 additional volunteers from outside the Foundation*. This indicated that peer-to-peer (P2P) networking had brought new volunteers. Foundation members who attended the training workshop confirmed that they had indeed incorporated P2P techniques learned in the workshop.

In order to rigorously test the hypothesis of significant change, a Chi-Squared test of independence was conducted to examine the association between two categorical variables by comparing observed frequencies in a contingency table with expected frequencies derived under the hypothesis that the variables are independent. Two groups were established as follows:

**Table 1.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Group | Before Training Workshop | After Training Workshop |
| Active Volunteers | 5.00 | 15.00 |
| Inactive Volunteers | 13.00 | 7.00 |
|  |  |  |

The Chi-Squared analysis proved a statistically significant change as follows:

**Table 2.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Statistic | Value |
| Chi-Squared Statistic | 6.4646 |
| Degrees of Freedom | 1.0000 |
| p-value | 0.01100415 |
| Fisher's Exact p-Value | 0.02484172 |

**Hypotheses**

H0: No statistically significant association exists between Before Training Workshop and After Training Workshop.

Ha: A statistically significant association exists between Before Training Workshop and After Training Workshop.

**Findings**

The Chi-Squared procedure suggests a statistically significant association between Before Training Workshop and After Training Workshop at an alpha level of 0.050 (p = 0.01100415).

Fisher's Exact Test suggests no statistically significant association between Before Training Workshop and After Training Workshop at an alpha level of 0.050 (p = 0.01100415).

**Initial Reflection**

This action research intervention was successful because it created the anticipated change in the number of active Foundation volunteer participants. The intervention itself was kept simple; thus it is an easily repeatable form of research. The researcher sees no need to conduct this intervention differently, as it was successful.

The researcher was personally pleased with attendees’ receptivity to the training workshop content, principles, and applied strategy. The success of this intervention strengthened the researcher’s confidence in the ability to effectively create constructive organizational change.. Broader implications of project outcomes will be examined to determine whether this particular training session intervention might be scaled up for larger segments of society, along with future research in applied and clinical sociology. A content-flexible, scalable version of this intervention could conceivably “change the world” if disseminated widely.

This project aligns with the researcher’s initial expectations considering its small scope. Below are ideas for evaluative elements that could be utilized for future practice in a more comprehensive IRB-approved Participatory Action Research intervention.

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