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April 15th, 2008

Abstract

Relationships through Volunteering: The Fight to Maintain Interest in Volunteer Based Organizations

While working at Development and Peace I became interested in how relationships develop between the volunteers and the full-time staff, speakers for the organization, or students and how, in my own experience, I began to lose interest in what I was trying to accomplish because I was unable to connect with many of the people from the organization and also because I felt as though once my task was completed I became obsolete in that area of the campaigns Development and Peace runs. “Man lives in the spirit when he is able to respond to his You. He is able to do that when he enters into this relation with his whole being. It is solely by virtue of his power to relate that man is able to live in the spirit” (89) Martin Buber wrote in his 1923 work *I and Thou* and it was with this sentiment that I began to approach my practicum. Using texts drawn from antiquity such as Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* and texts drawn from scientific studies on volunteerism such as Valérie Millette and Marylène Gagné’s “Motivation and Emotion”, I have approached the above mentioned queries from both the psychological factors and the organizational problems that I believe attribute to how successful an organization is able to attract, and maintain, volunteer interest.