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A Survey of Leadership Training in the Portland Metropolitan Area

City Club of Portland (Portland, Or.)

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**A Survey of Leadership Training
in the
Portland Metropolitan Area**

Conducted by the
Leadership Development Opportunities Task Force
The City Club of Portland
May 1991

A Survey of Leadership Training in the Portland Metro Area

INTRODUCTION

During 1989-90 a citizen group from the Portland metropolitan area met to study the future of this community using the Civic Index process designed by the National Civic League. The League identified ten measuring tools against which to evaluate the health of a community's "civic infrastructure." One of these is leadership.

There is no generally accepted definition of leadership. Within the context of community volunteerism and this survey, leadership is defined as the process of moving a group in some direction that is in the best long-term interests of the group and larger community. To do this, many individuals need to learn the skills linked specifically to this process so that they then can best use their ideas to help guide the community. The National Civic League concluded "that the processes that lead to decision-making are as critical to a community as its physical and economic assets."¹

Portland's Civic Index Synthesis Committee concluded that citizens in the Portland metropolitan community needed training opportunities that could expand their abilities to contribute volunteer leadership. They also needed ready access to information about where to get such training.

THE DIRECTIVE

The Civic Index committee recommended "The City Club of Portland create an annual inventory of leadership training programs available in the metropolitan region. The first such inventory should identify what training opportunities are not available."²

Responding to the request, then City Club President Mary Cramer formed, in late 1990, the Leadership Development Opportunities Task Force. The task force designed and conducted a leadership training survey of a wide variety of community organizations. The survey was completed in April, 1991. Appendices to this report include selected survey results and the inventory of all training identified.

1. Portland Civic Index Project Final Report, 1989-90, p.1

2. Ibid., p.7.

SURVEY RESULTS

Respondents

More than 500 organizations were contacted by mail; 24% responded. This response rate did not allow us to create what the task force believes is a comprehensive list of community resources. However, it did allow us to take the pulse of the community through a cross section of organizations.

Key community groups that were identified included neighborhood associations, chambers of commerce, social and human service agencies, education institutions, and other government and arts agencies.

All responding organizations had decision making or advisory groups for which volunteers were used. The most commonly used volunteer leadership forms were boards of directors (82%) and committees (60%). The average number of such advisory groups was 2.7 per organization. Nearly half of the responses were from social service organizations (23%) and neighborhood groups (17%). The majority of all groups served the general public (55%).

Leadership Training Currently Provided

Forty-four percent, or 57 organizations, currently provide some sort of training for volunteers. A matrix of all responders is contained in Appendix B. The training can be broken down into three groups:

- Agency-specific skills
- Personal improvement skills
- Community/organizational leadership training

Thirty-one of 57 organizations provide community leadership programs. However, only 17 of the programs are open to the public. These programs are listed in Appendix C.

Training Needs

Survey results clearly indicate a need for leadership training in the community. Even organizations that currently provide training expressed a need for additional programs. The most frequently cited program need was in the area of "increasing board and committee effectiveness," closely followed by "recruiting & developing future volunteer leadership." All five subject areas listed in the survey (Questions 6, Appendix A) were cited by at least 42% of responders. Additional needs were written in for the personal skills areas of team building, consensus building, and communication. Fund-raising also was noted as a key skill to build.

Meeting the Need

Two colleges—Lewis & Clark and Concordia—provide the most extensive programs on volunteer leadership and related issues. Concordia has a Center for Management of Nonprofit Organizations. The center offers an Executive Directors Professional Certificate, a 21-credit program. It also offers a Development Director Certificate and cooperative graduate credit programs. Lewis and Clark College offers a series of workshops targeted at public sector and nonprofit agencies, such as "Effective Public Sector Boards and Commissions" and "Managing Citizen Par-

icipation," as well as basic skills such as leading effective meetings, team building, problem solving, and strategic planning.

The drawbacks to these programs are that they are certificate programs for the non-profit manager and/or are more expensive to attend. They are not designed to serve large numbers of community volunteers.

Few leadership programs or individual skills courses are sponsored by community organizations not in the business of education. Most active are the Chambers of Commerce. One good example, among several, is the multiple opportunities created by the City of Gresham and its Chamber. The City provides a series of workshops designed to help volunteers work more effectively on city boards. The Chamber has an Executive Leadership Program, similar to many chamber programs, that is designed to develop a trained pool of business people from which to fill community leadership positions. The low-cost, six-month program involves 12 sessions but is limited to 30 participants.

The majority of individuals in the Portland Metropolitan community who might serve in leadership roles, however, have few options for gaining additional skills to be more effective. Currently only 17 organizations responding to the survey offer leadership training to nonmembers. However, 43 indicated an interest and ability to offer at least one program to outside groups. The majority of organizations are not in the business of providing training. The training area these organizations cited most frequently as one they could offer was "Increasing board and committee effectiveness."

The most significant lack seems to be that no person or agency is either coordinating the use of these resources or systematically attempting to create more than the sum of our potential training parts. A systematic effort in 1984-86, the Metropolitan Leadership Development Program, was discontinued due to lack of funding, excessive investment and ultimately the loss of a key champion of the program.³

INVESTING IN LEADERSHIP

Task force members contacted the National Civic League to learn how other communities address the need for leadership development. Chris Gates, Executive Director of the League, reported that several major cities have long-standing well-developed programs centered around the concept that the community as a whole needs to be involved in developing leaders. According to Gates, successful leadership training programs are built on these fundamentals:

- Leadership is defined as service.
- Leadership is viewed as a duty of all citizens.
- Leadership as a concept must be instilled at the earliest ages and reinforced regularly.
- Clear pathways to leadership and service opportunities must be communicated to the general public.

3. The 1984-86 Metropolitan Leadership Development Program was formed by seven community organizations to increase the number of capable volunteer leaders. The program was highly successful but was staff intensive, not funded on a long-term basis, and ultimately lost its own leadership. The program was discontinued after training 90 community leaders and placing 76 in organizations.

- Organizations must aggressively seek out a diverse group of leaders from the community.
- One organization needs to be the focal point or umbrella for all leadership activities and endeavors targeted for the general community.
- A well-thought-out curriculum for each of the leadership training elements is essential.
- Fees from leadership development program participants will only cover a portion of the cost of the program. Additional funding generally is sought from corporations, foundations, and governments.

It appears that the success and continuation of leadership development programs is directly linked to a belief on the part of community leaders that leadership development is essential to the health and vitality of the community.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol N. Mason, Chair
Don Ballinger
Patrick Donaldson
Christine Tomlinson
Carol F. Turner

Approved by the Research Board on July 24, 1991 for submittal to the Board of Governors. Approved by the Board of Governors on August 12, 1991 for publication. NOTE: BECAUSE THIS REPORT CARRIES NO CONCLUSIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS, NO OFFICIAL ACTION IS REQUIRED OF THE MEMBERSHIP.

Appendix A

Survey Questions & Responses

1. Is your organization primarily a (check one):

| | | |
|----------|-----------|--|
| 30 | 23% | Social Service |
| 22 | 17% | Neighborhood |
| 19 | 15% | Educational |
| 17 | 13% | Community Service |
| 15 | 12% | Other |
| 13 | 10% | Business Associations/Chambers of Commerce |
| 10 | 8% | Government |
| 3 | 2% | Arts |
| <u>1</u> | <u>1%</u> | Political |
| 130 | 100% | |

2. Does your organization serve primarily (check one):

| | | |
|----------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 71 | 55% | General Population |
| 12 | 9% | Disadvantaged |
| 10 | 8% | Women; Women & Children |
| 11 | 8% | Other |
| 11 | 8% | Business Community |
| 7 | 5% | Youth |
| 5 | 4% | Other Organizations |
| <u>3</u> | <u>2%</u> | Minorities |
| 130 | 100% | |

3. Which of the following volunteer groups does your organization use for policy setting, advice, or implementation projects? (Check all that apply.)

| | | |
|-----------|------------|--|
| 106 | 82% | Board of Directors |
| 78 | 60% | Committees |
| 60 | 46% | Executive Committee |
| 44 | 34% | Task Forces |
| 40 | 31% | Advisory Board |
| <u>19</u> | <u>15%</u> | Other |
| 2.7 | | Average number of volunteer leadership groups per organization |

4. Do you provide leadership or management skills training for members of the above groups?

| | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 57 | 44% | Yes |
| 68 | 52% | No |

5. If you do not provide leadership or management skills training for your volunteers, does your organization have a need for these types of programs in order to be more effective?

| | | |
|----|-----|------------|
| 38 | 29% | Yes |
| 41 | 32% | Maybe |
| 8 | 6% | No |
| 5 | 4% | Don't Know |

Appendix A Survey Questions & Responses

(continued)

6. Please check those programs that would be useful to help your organization enhance the leadership capabilities of your volunteers.

| | | |
|----|-----|---|
| 54 | 42% | a. Leadership skills for volunteer activists |
| 75 | 58% | b. Recruiting & developing future volunteer leadership |
| 85 | 65% | c. Increasing effectiveness of boards & committees |
| 60 | 46% | d. Developing organizational vision |
| 56 | 43% | e. Management & coordination of volunteers |
| 17 | 13% | f. Other |
| | | 8 Miscellaneous |
| | | 3 Fund raising |
| | | 6 Communication/Group Dynamics/ Consensus Building/Team Building |

| | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 2.7 | | Average number of decision making groups per organization |
| 113 | | Number of organizations indicating training needs |
| 87% | | Percent of organizations indicating training needs |

7. If your organization could offer training in any of the above areas to outside groups, please indicate to which ones. This information will be used for follow-up contacts.

| | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 22 | 17% | c. Increasing effectiveness of boards & committees |
| 19 | 15% | d. Developing organizational vision |
| 15 | 12% | a. Leadership skills for volunteer activists |
| 15 | 12% | e. Management & coordination of volunteers |
| 13 | 10% | b. Recruiting & developing future volunteer leadership |
| 5 | 4% | f. Other |
| 36 | 26% | Number of org's able to offer at least one program. |
| 7 | | Number of additional organizations with programs open to the public but not citing any of above categories |
| 43 | | TOTAL number of org's able to provide programs |

Appendix B

Organizations Providing Management Skills or Leadership Training

This chart provides an overview of organizations which train volunteers for (1) individual management skills such as time management or (2) community leadership roles such as board members.

| ORGANIZATION | INDIV. SKILL | LEADERSHIP |
|---|--------------|------------|
| CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE | | |
| Forest Grove | X | |
| Gresham Area | | X |
| Lake Oswego | | X |
| McMinnville | | X |
| Newberg | | X |
| North Clackamas | | X |
| Oregon City | | X |
| CITIES | | |
| City of Gresham | | X |
| City of Vancouver | | X |
| COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES; SCHOOLS | | |
| Clackamas Community College Employee & Management Dev. | X | X |
| Clark College | X | |
| Concordia College | X | X |
| Lewis & Clark College | X | X |
| Linfield College/Portland campus | X | |
| Oregon Institute of Technology/Portland | X | X |
| Portland Community College Institute for Management & Prof. Dev | X | |
| Portland Public Schools | X | |
| Portland State University | | |
| Northwest Equal | X | |
| Professional Development Center | X | |
| University of Oregon | X | X |
| NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS | | |
| Mt. Scott-Arleta | | X |
| Neighbor West/Northwest | | X |
| SERVICE & OTHER ORGANIZATIONS | | |
| American Business Women's Assoc. | | X |
| Boy Scouts of America | X | |
| Citizen Involvement Committee | | X |
| City Club of Portland | | X |
| Janis Youth Programs | X | |
| Junior League of Portland | X | X |
| League of Women Voters | | X |
| Native-American Business Alliance | | X |
| Oregon PTA | | X |
| Oregon School Board Assoc. | | X |
| Peninsula Children's Center | | X |
| Phoenix Rising Foundation | | X |
| Portland Rose Festival | | X |
| Providence Child Center | | X |
| Schools for the City | | X |
| Soroptimist Int'l of Gresham | X | |
| Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees | X | |
| St. Vincent de Paul Society | | X |
| Technical Assistance for Community Svc. | X | |
| The Salvation Army | | X |
| United Way of the Columbia Willamette | | X |
| Volunteer Bureau of Greater Portland | X | X |

Appendix C

Leadership Development Programs Open to the Public

The following workshops and programs have been identified as targeted toward development of "community leadership" and open to the general public by the organizations providing them. Most involve a series of workshops on various components of civic leadership. For more information, contact the providing organization.

| ORGANIZATIONS | PHONE | PROGRAM |
|---|------------------------|---|
| CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE | | |
| Forest Grove Chamber of Commerce | (503) 357-3006 | "Time Management" |
| Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce | (503) 665-1131 | "Executive Leadership Program" |
| Lake Oswego Chamber of Commerce | (503) 636-3634 | "Leadership Development Program" |
| McMinnville Chamber of Commerce | (503) 472-6322 | "Leadership Development Program" |
| Newberg Chamber of Commerce | (503) 538-2014 | "Leadership Newberg" |
| CITIES | | |
| City of Gresham | (503) 669-2537 | "Leadership Workshop" |
| City of Vancouver | (206) 696-8222 | "Annual Workshop for Neighborhoods" |
| SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS & OTHER GROUPS | | |
| City Club of Portland | (503) 228-7231 | "Pathways to Leadership" |
| Neighborhood West/Northwest | (503) 223-3331 | "Neighborhood Board Member Orientations" "Neighborhood Committee Member Orientations" |
| Oregon Parent Teacher Assoc. | (503) 658-2896 | "Basic Leadership Skills" |
| Technical Assistance for Community Service | (503) 239-4001 | "Leadership Development" (designed for non-profit organizations) |
| United Way of the Columbia-Willamette | (503) 226-9351 | "Boardwalk Program" |
| Volunteer Bureau of Greater Portland | (503) 222-1355 | "Basic Boardmanship" "The Management and Coordination of Volunteer Programs" (availability to non-members may be limited) |
| COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES | | |
| Concordia College | (503) 288-9371 | "Boards of Directors" "Nonprofit Board Governance: Back to the Basics" |
| Lewis & Clark College | (503) 768-7206 | "Effective Public Sector Boards & Commissions" "Managing Citizen Participation" |
| Oregon Institute of Technology, Metro Campus | (503) 725-3066 | "Effective Use of Advisory Committees" |
| Clackamas Community College | (503) 657-6958 x523 | "Vital Learning Management Training Series" "Zenger Miller Frontline Leadership" |