



Recreation Volunteers: An Asset to be Cultivated

About 500,000 people devote a total of 80 million hours to recreation, sports, arts, and community volunteer work in Quebec each year. These 80 million hours are the equivalent of 44,000 full-time positions. The value of this voluntary labour ranges from \$560 million, if valued at minimum wage, to \$1.061 billion, if valued at the average wage.

This study surveyed 788 volunteers and 506 professionals involved in recreation, sports, arts, and community organizations in Quebec.¹ We also sponsored 10 discussion groups on how to interpret the results of the survey. These groups involved 550 volunteers and professionals from across Quebec.

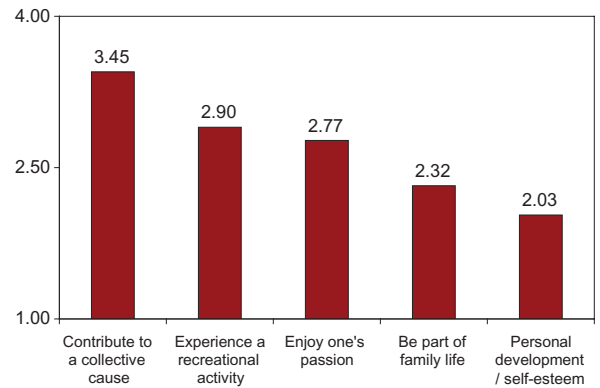
What motivates recreation volunteers to become involved?

Recreation volunteers become involved for a variety of reasons. Survey respondents were asked to rate various motivations on a scale from one to four, with one being a less important motivation and four being a very important motivation. The most important motivation was the feeling of contributing to a cause (average rating of 3.45). The desire to have a good recreation experience and to do something that they cared about were also important motivations (rating 2.90 and 2.77, on average, respectively). The desire to be part of family life and to develop personally or increase personal esteem were somewhat less important motivations (rating 2.32 and 2.03, on average, respectively).

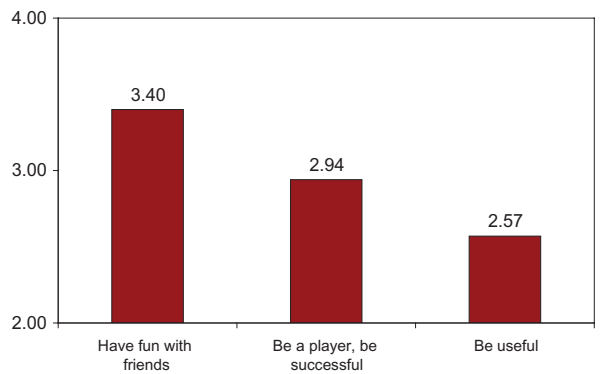
What motivates recreation volunteers to stay involved?

Volunteers' motivations for staying involved with recreation organizations may differ from the motivations that lead to initial involvement. Survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of various motivations for continuing to be involved on a scale of one to four. Recreation volunteers

Motives for Becoming a Recreation Volunteer



Motives for Continuing to Volunteer for Recreation Organizations



identified the desire to have fun as their most important motivation for continuing to volunteer (an average rating of 3.40), followed by the desire to be a player, and the desire to be useful (average ratings of 2.94 and 2.57, respectively).

¹ In this report, these volunteers are referred to as "recreation volunteers."

How are recreation volunteers recruited?

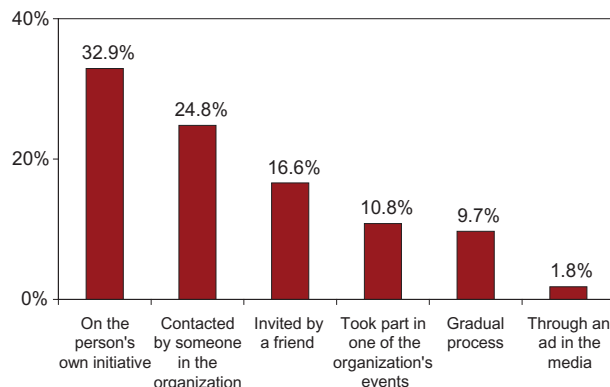
Almost one-third of recreation volunteers who participated in this study (32.9%) became involved with recreation organizations on their own initiative. Just over four in 10 began their involvement because they were asked by someone else — either a member of the organization (24.8%), or a friend who was already involved in the organization (16.6%). One in ten (10.8%) became involved because they took part in one of the activities offered by the organization, or became involved with the organization gradually, over time (9.7%).

Public notices and advertisements in the media appear to be a much less effective method of recruitment. Only 1.8% of volunteers said they were recruited in this fashion. Although they are ineffective as a means of volunteer recruitment, media notices may help increase public awareness of the volunteer work done by recreation organizations.

What factors affect the decision to volunteer for a recreation organization?

Survey respondents were asked what factors affected their decision to volunteer for a recreation organization. Approximately half said that the cause of the organization (53.9%), the atmosphere within the organization (51.2%), and the duties requested of them by the organization (49.2%) were factors that affected their decision to volunteer. Between a quarter and a third said that their own abilities (30.3%) and the previous achievements of the organization (27.5%) affected their decision to volunteer. The flexibility of the organization regarding the task to be performed, and the services offered

Recruitment Paths of Recreation Volunteers



Factors Affecting the Decision to Volunteer for Recreation Organizations



to volunteers, were important to approximately one in five respondents (21.7% and 21.3%, respectively). Interestingly, factors such as the personal advantages of volunteering, the urgency of the need, and the duration of volunteer involvement were not very important factors for the volunteers in this study.

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