

March 2011

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Upcoming Events

ASIST Training for SW Ontario April 2 - 3 , 2011
In London for London, Sarnia, and Windsor DCs

National Volunteer Week
April 10 - 16, 2011

DCO Visioning Day
May 2 and 3, 2011
Niagara Region

Working effectively with Challenging Callers
4 Wednesdays in
May starting May 4, 2011

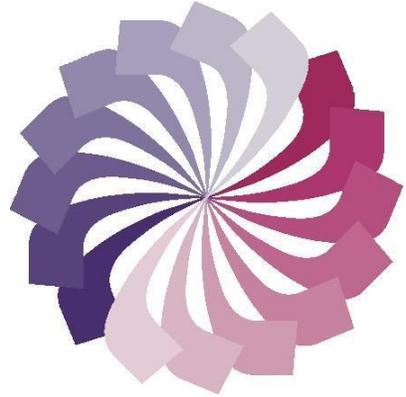
New content each month on www.learningforums.ca! Get a password through your volunteer coordinator.

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DCO Strategic Planning for 2012 - 2014

by Ralph Beslin, CPF, ABC

It's that time again-time for DCO's next three-year strategic planning cycle. The current strategic plan is over two years old and that means keeping the wheels in motion to develop Strategic Plan 2012-14.



It was my pleasure to facilitate the last strategic planning session in Niagara Falls in 2008. Working with a dynamic group is always exciting for a facilitator, and the group of leaders at that session-from DCO and member centres-was as energetic, committed, strategic and focused as any group I've worked with. And what about the outcome? It was a list of strategic initiatives that was also as ambitious as I've ever seen.

Earlier this year, at a "planning to plan" session in Kitchener, I renewed acquaintances with the DCO Board Executive and the Executive Director. Of course, we did more than that-mainly reviewing an environmental scanning summary I had compiled on the healthcare and mental health sector. We discussed this scan enthusiastically with an eye to identifying which issues and trends might have the biggest impact on DCO, local centres, and the movement.

We also determined the focus for the next wave of planning from development to finalization of the new Strategic Plan later this year. As facilitator, it provided me with the short-term process to be followed to arrive successfully at the outcome at the next planning session with the movement's leaders.

Basically it moves from the planning-to-plan session through interviews I will conduct with several of the leaders to the next strategic planning session to producing an action summary document, outlining the directions and priorities decided on at the planning session. After further consultation during the following months and an implementation timeline is put in place, the road will end with Strategic Plan 2012-14.

All of this takes place under the guidance of the DCO Board of Directors and with the involvement of many of you. All of you soon will be getting more detailed information on strategic plan development.

From my perspective, I look forward to talking with some of you over the next few weeks and working with another dynamic planning group. One thing I know for certain; it will be a lively planning session! Thank you for

calling on me once again to provide facilitation support. It's truly an honour to be a part of your plans and a participant, in a small way, in your movement, and your cause.

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Bridging the Gap: YOUTH and FAMILIES

As promised in last month's *e-News & Views*, we will begin our series highlighting the four demographic groups studied in Volunteer Canada's pan-Canadian research study, **Bridging the Gap**, to see through the lens of youth, families, Baby Boomers, and employer-supported volunteers, to understand who they are, how to draw them into a rewarding volunteer experience, and how to keep them coming back.

This month, we'll start with youth and families.

YOUTH

Youth are brimming with vitality to bring to any volunteer organization, but they have certain needs that should be met in order to draw them and keep them. In the province of Ontario, youth are affected by mandatory community service requirements that certainly draws them in, but will it keep them?



Organizations that have a young volunteer base need to understand their youth, engage them, respect them, and give them responsibility. Young people like to be together with friends and are open to meeting new people, so everyone would benefit from organizations that offered group volunteer activity.

Young people's schedules are often hectic, so short-term volunteer engagements would accommodate this *and* they'll have more opportunity to learn different skills that enhance their futures.

Try to match their abilities with online volunteer opportunities: this group is tech-savvy and responds to innovative online communication, so organizations with an IT department, big or small, could use these young people with advanced technological skill-sets to not only help with your organization's online presence, but to help recruit new young volunteers who are receptive to online recruitment.

FAMILIES

Volunteer families are the least catered to but there is a sizeable demand for volunteer opportunities for families.

Family volunteering is gaining prominence as a specific form of volunteering to allow children and

teens to gain confidence and self-esteem through volunteering with the guiding hand of a family member. Family volunteering promotes mentoring and the appreciation of the social impacts of volunteering in children and young people, and offers an opportunity to spend quality time with family while giving back to the community.

Family volunteers tend to value charitable activities highly and recognize that family participation in volunteer work can contribute to a happy, stable and rewarding life. However, in order to cater to busy family schedules, agencies must be extremely flexible and creative in their programs.

To draw these people, organizations must be able to offer flexible family-friendly volunteer programs to a wide age range including group / family activities where everyone can participate, develop interesting programs for children and teenagers to open them to social and community engagement, provide short-term or casual volunteer opportunities, and have virtual / online opportunities for busy parents.

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How to Work More Effectively with Challenging Callers Encore

Mark your calendars! DCO Learning Forums is pleased to offer another opportunity to participate in the exceptional four-week training sessions delivered by webinar last

November. **Gilles Brideau**, Bilingual Program Consultant from the Sudbury offices of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, will repeat his presentation of *How to Work More Effectively with Challenging Callers - Using Motivational Interviewing Techniques*, **Wednesday evenings beginning May 4th - 25th 2011.**



LEARNING FORUMS

FROM DISTRESS CENTRES ONTARIO

In early April watch for notices for registration in the Learning Forums newsletter *Learning in Partnership*, in the DCO's e-News +Views, and/or in your Outlook email.

In the meantime, mark your calendars and plan to participate so that you don't miss out on this valuable professional development opportunity!

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