Reshaping the Volunteer Workforce

Tecker International
301 Oxford Valley Road, Suite 1504B
Yardley, PA 19067
(215) 493-8120
info@tecker.com
www.tecker.com

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Objectives

To review existing volunteer infrastructure and realign processes/structures to better support the association's strategy.

To reshape volunteer opportunities to be more effective and more attractive to a larger number of talented volunteers.

Organizing Principles

1. Workgroups should be composed of people with appropriate and sufficient knowledge and experience.

2. Each workgroup's organization, composition, process and accountability should match the nature of their mission.

3. High performance work teams are composed of people who know what they are doing, enjoy the work, and like the other people with whom they are working.

4. Opportunities for involvement need to match the current realities of participants' lives; rather than requiring them to reshape their lives to match how the organization has traditionally accomplished its work.

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Designing Appropriate Committees

An Overview:

- Introduction
- Trends Impacting the Design of Work Groups and Committees
- Comparison of Ad Hoc Work Groups and Standing Committee
- Reasons for Having Committees
- Development of Key Standards for Work Groups / Committee Design
- Key Factor Analysis

- Sequence of Decision Steps
- Designing Functional Groups
- Designing Work / Task Groups
- Final Review of Existing Committees
- Alternative Strategies
- Sample Governance Charts

Introduction

One of the major responsibilities of an association's governing body is to develop an infrastructure that effectively performs the functions and work of the organization. The three possible work groups include: staff, standing volunteer committees, and ad hoc volunteer committees. The challenges of the design include:

- Identifying the right functions and work that needs to be accomplished;
- Structuring the appropriate work groups to perform the function and work; and
- Eliminating work groups that do not contribute to the accomplishment of the identified function or work.

An association's work structures should be sized-right to effectively accomplish the work. They should not include entities that: a) have no role or responsibilities, b) overlap one another, c) slow the overall governance and decision-making process, and d) do not contribute to the association's strategic direction.

For many associations, this means that its committee or work group structures need to go on a diet, eliminating dead wood and reducing their overall level of bureaucracy. This workbook outlines a process to accomplish this objective.

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Trends Impacting Work Groups and Committees

The following trends impact the design (re-design) of association management structures. While these trends indicate certain structures, there is no one right way. Each association must design a structure that is tailored to support its specific needs and objectives.

- Overall projected decline in volunteerism.

- Movement towards identifying smaller, more productive pieces of work for volunteers to accomplish through the use of ad hoc committees or work groups.

- Desire to get the most from the available time offered by volunteers.

- Delegation of program development and implementation (but not oversight) to staff - volunteer committees have too much wait time built into their program development and implementation process.

- Clarification of the right roles and responsibilities of committees and work groups - committees perform a management function, not a leadership function. Committees work for the governing body, and are not shadow governing bodies.

- Centralization of committee control, input and accountability, and the decentralization of thinking, working and participation.

*In redesigning work groups, it is not an issue of where the association has been, but where it is going (strategic direction), and designing the right work groups to get it there. This is an opportunity to cut **old baggage - bureaucracy.***

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Questions to Ask of Every Committee

1a. Is this committee working on an area of declared strategic importance to the organization?

1b. Is this committee executing a process of ongoing importance to the association?

2a. Is this committee working in an area where we expect members to possess the experience and expertise, by virtue of who they are and what they do, required to make a good decision?

Critical Dimensions	Ad Hoc Committee/ Working Groups	Standing Committee
Membership	Invited, based on knowledge or competence	Assignment based on committee function
Decision-making	Consensual	Bargaining
Authority/Influence	Formal, implicit/specialized knowledge and/or personal competency	Diffuse, implicit/function of the Standing Committee
Time boundaries	Based on completion of the project or objective	Open-ended/annual or self-sustaining
Typical product	Project or tasks	Recommendation, reports, overview or functions
Output evaluation	Convener (Governing Body)	Governing Body or consensus of concerned parties

Reasons for Having Committees

❑ Advice - Study a situation and bring back a recommendation to the governing body.

❑ Review - Review opinions, products, etc. and report back to governing body.

❑ Work - Objectives (tasks) linked to the strategic plan/operational plan.

❑ Functional - Provides oversight information, advice or insight to assist the governing body with developing procedure or positions on proposed issues (nomination committee, publication committee, financial committee, etc.). Functional committees must have a clear charge and accountability so they do not become shadow boards or duplicate staff.

Please note: Only one of the four committees described are able to complete tangible work tasks.

Development of Key Standards or Philosophies
For Committees or Work Group Design

To serve as an overall guide in redesigning work groups:

- Initially develop a set of standards or philosophies (i.e., assumptions or specifications) concerning how the organization wishes to use its work groups in the future. These standards then become policy that governs the use of work groups.

- If the association does not agree on a set of standards, it will not come to consensus about the re-design of the work groups.

- These standards should represent the association's common good and not specific needs of special interest groups.

Key Factors

A Key Factor Analysis needs to be conducted to identify the major enabling and inhibiting factors that are associated with the association's current work groups and committees.

(+)	(-)
• Work unit objectives are linked to the strategic plan and policy. • We are using fewer standing committees to get the work done. • Staff does the program design and implementation work. • We constantly assess and evaluate committee work and effectiveness. • More work accomplished by as hoc groups. • More management work is done by staff due to the sophisticated nature of the work getting done. We have less committee wait time. • We have reduced standing committees and reallocated the resources to ad hoc work groups. • We manage work on a more centralized basis. • Authority is distributed on an appropriate basis.	• Standing committees are becoming *shadow boards* or staff. • Committees are slow to get programs / services to the marketplace. • Committees design services based on what they perceive membership wants and not what members actually want (no assessment). • Work needs to be redesigned into smaller, *bite sized* pieces in order for volunteers to be able to complete it. • We have many standing committees who continually require resources (life of their own) and do not contribute to our strategic direction. • Some standing committees are not aligned with our strategic plan. • Committees with *light loads* tend to be committees with minimal responsibilities. • Our committees typically lack strong marketing expertise.

example

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Key Factors

A Key Factor Analysis needs to be conducted to identify the major enabling and inhibiting factors that are associated with the association's current work groups and committees.

(+)	(-)

Standards

Using the Key Factor Analysis from the previous page, the association needs to develop a set of standards by which it will design and manage its work groups (benchmark or a frame of reference).

<u>Examples</u>

We will:

- Maintain high volunteer involvement in worthwhile association work and activities.
- Provide the highest quality of programs, services and products.
- Use committees, work groups with objectives that are linked to the strategic plan and in turn will drive the budget process.
- Have clear objectives for the committee/work group, with measurable results and they will be held accountable.
- Use ad hoc groups with sunset clauses where applicable.
- Shift work to ensure that committees have meaningful workloads.
- Abolish committees that have no work load or viable function.
- Reach out to involve new people in work groups and committees.
- Review how appointments to ad hoc groups and committees are made to ensure that we are getting the best (first team) with new and innovative ideas.

Standards

Using the Key Factor Analysis from the previous page, the association needs to develop a set of standards by which it will design and manage its work groups (benchmark or a frame of reference).

We will:

Sequence of Decision Steps

With the completion of the standards (frame of reference), the association is ready to design (re-design) its work group structure. This is a four step process that will review the function/work required. Then, design the best work group (if any) needed to perform this function/work:

Step 1: Identify the current and new function/work to be assigned.

Step 2: What is the actual role required of the work group in the function/work?

- functional oversight
- advice
- review
- work/task

Step 3: What is the need for coherency and continuity (on-going work groups) vs. fresh new ideas (ad hoc groups with frequently changing participants)?

Step 4: What type of group (standing committee, ad hoc committee, or staff) is best positioned to perform this function/work? This may include an existing group or require a new group.
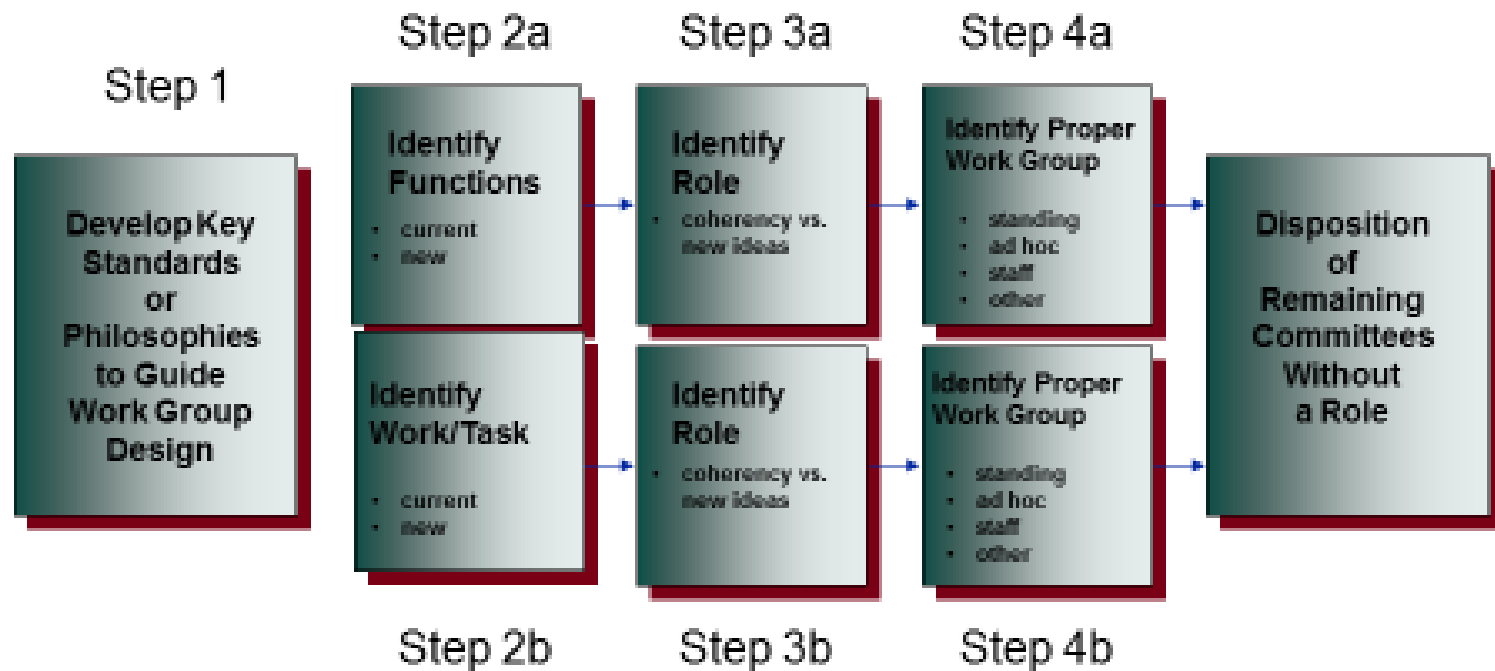
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Sequence of Decision Steps

Step 1

Develop Key Standards or Philosophies to Guide Work Group Design

Step 2a

Identify Functions
- current
- new

Step 2b

Identify Work/Task
- current
- new

Step 3a

Identify Role
- coherency vs. new ideas

Step 3b

Identify Role
- coherency vs. new ideas

Step 4a

Identify Proper Work Group
- standing
- ad hoc
- staff
- other

Step 4b

Identify Proper Work Group
- standing
- ad hoc
- staff
- other

Disposition of Remaining Committees Without a Role

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Work/Task Worksheet

Develop a list of:

- Present key functions that are performed by current standing committees.

- Required functions that are not being performed by any work group.

Remember that a functional committee provides advice, information, etc., and assists the governing body with develop procedures or positions concerning specific proposed issues or tasks that the committee is overseeing.

Examples of Ad Hoc Work Group Activities:

- Nominations, awards, education oversight, committees of the Board, etc.

A. Current:

B. New:

Functional Worksheet

List the functions from the previous page. Then, identify: 1) reason for the committee (role, advise, etc.); 2) need for coherency vs. new ideas; and 3) appropriate current or new work group that will be required for each function. Compare the existing committees structure with the appropriate work groups and revise as necessary.

Function	Role: Advice, Work, Review	Coherency vs. New Ideas	Appropriate Work Group (Type of Committee or Staffs	Identify Existing or New Committee or Staff Work Group

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Work/Task Worksheet

Develop a list of:

- Key work/tasks or objectives that are performed by current standing committees and ad hoc groups.
- Required key work/tasks or objectives that are not currently being performed by any work group.

Remember that a work group accomplishes tasks (work, action plans, etc.) that are linked to the association's strategic and operational plan.

Examples of Ad Hoc Work Group Activities:

- Implement a strategy from strategic plan.
- Review and revise bylaws.
- Develop a new training program.
- Convention planning.
- Develop a technology plan

A. Current
B. New

Work/Task Worksheet

List the tasks and objectives from the previous page. Then, identify: 1) reason for the committee (role, advise, etc.); 2) need for coherency vs. new ideas; and 3) appropriate current or new work group that will be required for each function. Compare the existing committees structure with the appropriate work groups and revise as necessary.

Function	Role: Advice, Work, Review	Coherency vs. New Ideas	Appropriate Work Group (Type of Committee or Staffs	Identify Existing or New Committee or Staff Work Group

Revise Existing Committee Structures

- Using the work sheets, identify all of the functions and work assignments. Then, assess each existing committee or work group's role, responsibilities and work load.

- The governing body should consider assigning the activities of committees/work groups with light function/work loads or few responsibilities to other committees or work groups. Then, eliminate that work group.

Alternative Strategies

The following are examples of additional strategies that can be used to reduce the total number of committees:

1. Cluster activities into fewer standing committees with larger oversight responsibilities.

2. Reduce the number of members in the standing committee.

3. Drop current standing sub-committees that are reporting to standing committees in favor of smaller ad hoc work groups.

4. Convert combinations of committees and taskforces to "action teams" with responsibility for related clusters of objectives in the strategic plan or related strategies requiring implementation in the coming year.

Governance Bodies and Their Responsibilities

Example

Governing Body	Consists of	Primary Responsibilities
Executive Committee	Board Chair, Vice Chair, Executive Director, Secretary, Treasurer	• Oversees organization on behalf of the Board; • Oversees finances (w/Finance & Audit Committee); • Resolves issues around conflicting priorities or additional resource needs (w/Finance & Audit Committee); • Reviews senior staff compensation and performance of senior staff.
Individual Responsibilities	Chair Vice Chair Executive Director	• Presides at all Board meetings; • Presides at all National membership meetings • Acts in chair's stead; • Chairs nominating & development committees • Acts as official spokesperson; • Acts as Board parliamentarian • Acts as Ex-officio members of the finance and audit committee, responsible for financial affairs, including preparation, interpretation, and presentation of budget(s) and financial reports to the board; • Facilitates committee meetings
Strategy Committee	2 Board directors (one of whom is chair) and Vice Chair of the Board	Focuses board on critical strategic directions and priorities: • Technology • Market outreach • Association image • Governmental relations • Steer strategic panning process

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Governance Bodies and Their Responsibilities

Example

Governing Body	Consists of	Primary Responsibilities
Finance and Audit Committee	3 Board Directors (one of whom is chair) & Executive Director	• Focuses Board on critical financial and investment strategic directions and priorities; • Reviews and recommends staff-prepared budgets, and periodic financial reports to Board (w/Executive Director); • Recommends resolution(s) to issues regarding additional resource needs.
Nominating & Development Committee	2 Board Directors, chaired by Vice Chair of Board	• Focuses Board on critical strategic directions and priorities related to succession planning and career-pathing of volunteer leaders; • Oversees annual nomination and election process; • Develops performance standards and oversees annual Board self-evaluation process; • Ensures diverse makeup of governance structure; • Oversees volunteer rewards & recognition program; • Acts as link to potential volunteer leader "pool": NABs and other Advisory Boards • Oversees Succession • Develops Advisory Board.

Constituent Relations Committee	3 Board Directors (one of whom is chair)	• Focuses Board on critical strategic direction and priorities related to member and stakeholder outreach;
		• Acts as link to constituent Advisory Boards:
		  - GPN
		  - APN
		  - NABs
		  - Ambassador Network

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Governance Bodies and Their Responsibilities

Governing Body	Consists of	Primary Responsibilities
Policy Issue Advisory Task Force		
Strategic Initiative Task Force		

Example