(Approx. 659 words)

What Makes a Great Organization Great?

YOU DO!

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Most “non-profit” organizations exist to help others. They help in the community and have a mission and goals. Although I am writing this article for the members of our organization, the Sarasota Technical Users Group, I hope this article will benefit many members of other organizations and yours too. It has to do with making things better – to help more people in more ways. And we are NOT talking about money here! People make an organization work so it can do some good. If other organizations are like ours, you will see that only a handful of people do almost all the work. They serve on boards, and committees, make phone calls, send out communications, and more. Wouldn’t it be a big help if someone volunteered to help, at only one or two hours a MONTH?! Yes, it would!

Let’s take an example; we’ll call him Joe. Joe likes to help others and enjoys it very much. He serves on the board, communicates, and answers emails about the organization. A big help for Joe would be if someone would volunteer to send out one or two monthly emails. Or make a couple of phone calls to verify membership. Or send out an email survey. This frees Joe up to do a better job in other ways, not to mention to give him a break.

Why do people not volunteer to help? I’ve heard many reasons over the years, and here are the main ones –

**1. I don’t have the time**. Yes, you do. This is not a full-time job, and you will not be bothered by many phone calls or emails. There are plenty of needs for people like YOU, anyone, to give just an hour or two a month.

**2. I don’t have the skills or knowledge**. You don’t need ANY skills or knowledge to help. Of course, if you DO have some skills that could be useful, that’s great. But we need people to help; first, many areas need your help, and no skills are required! Besides, we offer free training too!

**3. I’m taking care of a sick relative**. Wow, that’s important, and no one wants you to neglect taking care of someone who needs you daily. But if you have the time to make phone calls to your friends, can you not make a few calls for your organization? Or send an email? A phone call to a member is a great personal touch that makes the organization more meaningful to them. Keeping in touch with members is a huge step to making a good organization a great organization.

Here are some things our organization would like to do to help our members, but we need volunteers to help: What type of help does your group need

**A) Offer more classes** – our instructors could use some help (no, you do not have to teach).

**B) More contact with our members** to understand how our organization helps them and what they would need or like in the future.

**C) Conduct a survey** to help us do more and better things.

**D) Improve communications** with our members – news articles, email, and phone calls.

**E) More recognition of others**, especially our volunteers, organizing a gift or luncheon.

**F) Asking other members to help too**!

There are many benefits to helping, too – you will make new friends, learn something new, have more fun in your life, and have something to talk about (which makes you a more interesting person). So what’s NOT to like?

Organizations would always like to improve and do more for their members. Every such organization needs everyone to contribute a little to provide more. Will you donate an hour or two a month? Contact ANYONE in your organization to find out how.

I thank you in advance for your kind help.

