

Increase Connectivity of Donors to the Volunteering Program



Whitepaper Project Completed for the Kosciusko Leadership Academy by

Erin Syslo

Benjamin Navarro

Kirit Patel

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Introduction and Executive Summary

Central to the success of any non-for-profit (NFP) organization that provides community services is the recruitment and developing of a committed network of volunteers and donors. In order to create, implement, and sustain strong programs and partnerships to address the needs in the community, NFP organizations are constantly revising strategies to inspire others to donate their time, skills/talents, and money.

Due to growing number of programs and clients, Cardinal Center identified the need to increase the number of active contributing volunteers, and establish an effective connection with its donors in order to improve sustainability. Cardinal Center considers this to be a crucial factor to assure the success of the services they provide.

Our team aims to explore the possible causes that impact the recruitment and retention of donors and volunteers. Some of the areas to explore include but are not limited to: lack of time available, resources constraints, physical limitations of donors and volunteers (health issues), lack of reliable transportation, lack of awareness of the need, limitations with the use of technology, competition for resources from other NFPs, personal values, beliefs, and convictions, and work and family existing commitments.

Possible solutions and plan of action: learn satisfactory level of donors and volunteers, provide awareness of program's specific needs, improve connectivity frequency by learning about the best way to communicate with them, taking into account their use of technology and means of communication (social media, email, printed materials, etc.)

Description and Scope

In collaboration with the United Way of Kosciusko County, we developed and conducted a survey of a sample of volunteers in order to measure their level of satisfaction with the experience of donating time and other resources to the Cardinal Center, and to gage the existing connectivity between the Cardinal Center and volunteers.

Data collected from the survey has been analyzed to originate a report, listing the strengths of the existing volunteering program. The report also includes a suggested plan of action to address deficiencies of connectivity.

Scope of services: Cardinal Center focuses on three needs which include: Adult with Disabilities, Children and Families with Challenges and Kosciusko Area Bus Service (KABS).

History: Cardinal Services began in 1954, when parents in Kosciusko County were confronted with a lack of resources to support them in raising children with disabilities. Any group or organization that could provide the answers or offer the services they needed proved too expensive or too far away. Desperate for a solution closer to home, a number of these parents began connecting with each other through the “letters to the editor” section of their local newspaper. Before long, their children began meeting for daily classes at a family home in Milford. Although these families had varying needs, they shared the same dream — that their child could do more and be more than society seemed to understand.

The parents were right. Soon, children who were deemed “untrainable” were learning basic skills and opening a door to greater possibilities.

Success: What started as a handful of children learning from a single teacher in a living room has grown into an organization with a staff of nearly 500 employees who serve over 4,000 people each year. With the ongoing commitment of those original families and the countless others who have joined in along the way, Cardinal Services has filled a vital niche that helps many individuals, as well as their families, live more productive, happy lives.

IMPACT 2012 - 2017

- 1,065** Men & women guided in finding a job
- 14,750** Women & children served through WIC
- 268,000** Rides provided by KABS
- 1,070** Adults attending day services
- 275** Families per month served by Healthy Families
- 945** People in independent living homes & apartments

1,180 Children served through Head Start programs

Mission: The Mission of Cardinal Services is to assist and advocate for people with disabilities and challenges to live lives full of dignity, growth, and opportunity.

Needs: Cardinal Services is staffed with experts trained in working with and helping our community members with disabilities. However, the work begins with the generosity of people in our community.

Our KLA White Paper will also explore ways to motivate donors and volunteers in Kosciusko County to get further involved with the mission of the Cardinal Center by volunteering their time and resources in the various programs the Center offers in Kosciusko County.

Impact on program: By connecting with more volunteer who give of their time and resources, Cardinal Services program will increase its impact in the community; volunteers make the community stronger and the citizens happier and healthier. Volunteers can see that their contributions to the Cardinal Center are a true reflection of their values, commitments and beliefs.

Implications: Sustainability can only be established by assuring the continue spiral of Cardinal Service reaching out to those in need, recruitment and training of donors and volunteers, report of volunteer's impact on programs, measuring donor's satisfaction, and motivating them to keep contributing. The lack of Donor's support will negatively impact Cardinal's ability to reach out to the needy citizens, having impacted the sustainability of its mission.

Solution proposed: Increase connectivity to the Donor.

Project Detail and Research Data

Definition of Volunteerism

“To volunteer is to choose to act in recognition of a need, with an attitude of social responsibility and without concern for monetary profit, going beyond one’s basic obligations”

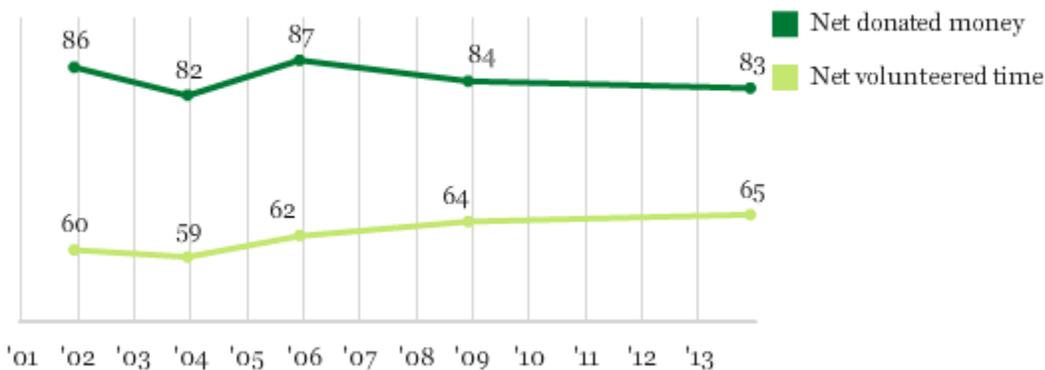
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Americans and Volunteerism

A 2013 Gallup Poll, reports that 65% of have volunteered time, and 83% have donated money that year.²

Summary of Americans' Charitable Activity, 2001-2013

Polls conducted in early December



GALLUP

Benefits of Volunteerism

Research studies show that most people do in fact hold the belief that helping others is a good way to gain fulfillment for yourself.³

Researchers have reported five major areas of benefits for the volunteers:

- a. The development of civil skills and the improvement of citizen behavior
- b. Prevention of antisocial behavior (it fosters interpersonal trust, toleration and empathy for others, and respect for the common good)
- c. Improve Physical Health
- d. Improve Mental Health, and

¹ Ellis and Noyes (1990) *By the people: A history of Americans as volunteers* (Rev. ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

² <https://news.gallup.com/poll/166250/americans-practice-charitable-giving-volunteerism.aspx>

³ Robert Wuthnow, *Acts of Compassion*, 87 (1991).

e. Fosters Occupational Achievement. ⁴

Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers

Benjamin Gidron used the results of voluntary surveys in three Israeli community centers to compile motivators that characterize "stayers", "leavers for objective reasons" (uncontrollable turnover), and "leavers by choice" (controllable turnover). In his study published in the Journal of Social Service Research, Gidron concludes that:

A typical "stayer" was reportedly well prepared for his job; given a task which he considered interesting, challenging, and well-suited to his skills and knowledge; derived sense of accomplishment and achievement from his work; and performed in an environment of meaningful interaction with peers.⁵

Researchers have studied the field of volunteerism to determine the best practices to attract, recruit, and retain volunteers. Among the several practices mentioned, they coincide that direct/personal contact is the most effective approach.⁶ These finding imply that need for current volunteers to share their stories of volunteerism, encouraging friends and family members to participate in the mission of the NFP organization. Holmes points out the importance for the agency of having a Volunteer Coordinator or Committee in charge of the interviewing process for volunteers, their training, scheduling, and hiring.⁷

Volunteerism in NFPs offering services to people who have Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

In her letter to Indiana Legislators of October 17, 2018, Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch states that

There are approximately 100,000 Hoosiers who have an intellectual or developmental disability. These individuals aspire to live and work in a safe, affordable and accessible environment, just like everyone else. While Indiana has taken bold steps in the past, **we must remain vigilant in always striving to do better.** ⁸ (emphasis added)

⁴ John Wilson; Marc Musick, The Effects of Volunteering on the Volunteer, 62 Law and Contemp. Probs. 141 (1999)

⁵ Benjamin Gidron (1985) Predictors of Retention and Turnover Among Service Volunteer Workers, Journal of Social Service Research, 8:1, 1-16, DOI: [10.1300/J079v08n01_01](https://doi.org/10.1300/J079v08n01_01)

⁶ Watts, De Witt and Edwards (1982) Recruiting and Retaining Human Service Volunteers: An Empirical Analysis

⁷ Holmes, Nemic, and Weisbrod (1979) Four Ways to Attract as Many Volunteers as You Can Use. Practice Digest 2.

⁸ Comprehensive State Plan on Community-Based Services for Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

https://www.in.gov/fssa/files/1102_Final_Report_11.1.2018.pdf

This letter was included in the Comprehensive State Plan on Community-Based Services for Persons with IDD, published by the official website for the Government of Indiana. In its conclusion, the plan reports: ...The future community based services and supports for people with IDD will require (...) the **full participation and involvement of the broader community**.⁹ (emphasis added)

Cardinal Services reports that 9.6% of people in Kosciusko County under the age of 65 have a disability; and 1 in 5 people with a disability is employed, compared to about 4 out of 5 people without disability ¹⁰, and emphasizes that

When you make a commitment to volunteer with Cardinal, you are making a direct impact on the lives of those with disabilities in our community. By giving your time, you are helping break down the walls that our society places around these people, and are showing them that they are valuable.

⁹ https://www.in.gov/fssa/files/1102_Final_Report_11.1.2018.pdf

¹⁰ <https://cardinalservices.org/>

Analysis and Results

Conclusion: Survey results analyzed for importance, perspective and communication connectivity to Donors. Attribute results and interactions are assessed and categorized. The result charts are in Figures 1, 2 and 3 and Survey result summary from Cardinal is in Figure 4.

Donor's engagement and Survey allowable time reflected on % of responses (62%).

Survey questions structure- To learn the dissatisfaction level, sub question approach is required.

Connectivity: Cardinal unknown at 40% of time about why their Donors are connected to them.

Program Importance: Donors know about only two out of 10 Cardinal's programs significantly more than Cardinal's other programs.

Influencing Comments: Donor's satisfaction level shows in their comments but fund clarity related comment considered as negative may lead to demoralize the Donor.

Perspective, Knowledge and Satisfaction: With 6% of low satisfaction level and 16% of unknown about program's impact influence the perspective of the Donor's gift.

Communication and Technology: Cardinal's Calling, Lunch and Tour programs influences rating of programs communication and donor's giving method.

Cardinal's Strengths: Cardinal needs to continue leverage of following

- Program versatility signifies the Cardinal's presence in the community
- Reaching out to Donors by Calls, Lunch and Tour method
- Leverage Friends and Family
- Program knowledge for Satisfaction and Perspective

Cardinal's Opportunities: Cardinal needs to focus more on the following:

- Learn why Donors show low importance of their KABS Program
 - Is there a cost or accessibility issue?
- Giving Accessibility
 - Method. Analyze means used by donors to give (electronic, checks, credit cards, etc)
- Participants

- Use them as a program's ambassadors. Research shows that sharing personal positive experiences with friends and family about volunteering is one of the most effective tools for recruitment.¹¹
- Personal Connection
 - Donors are not always aware of the impact their gift had on the programs.

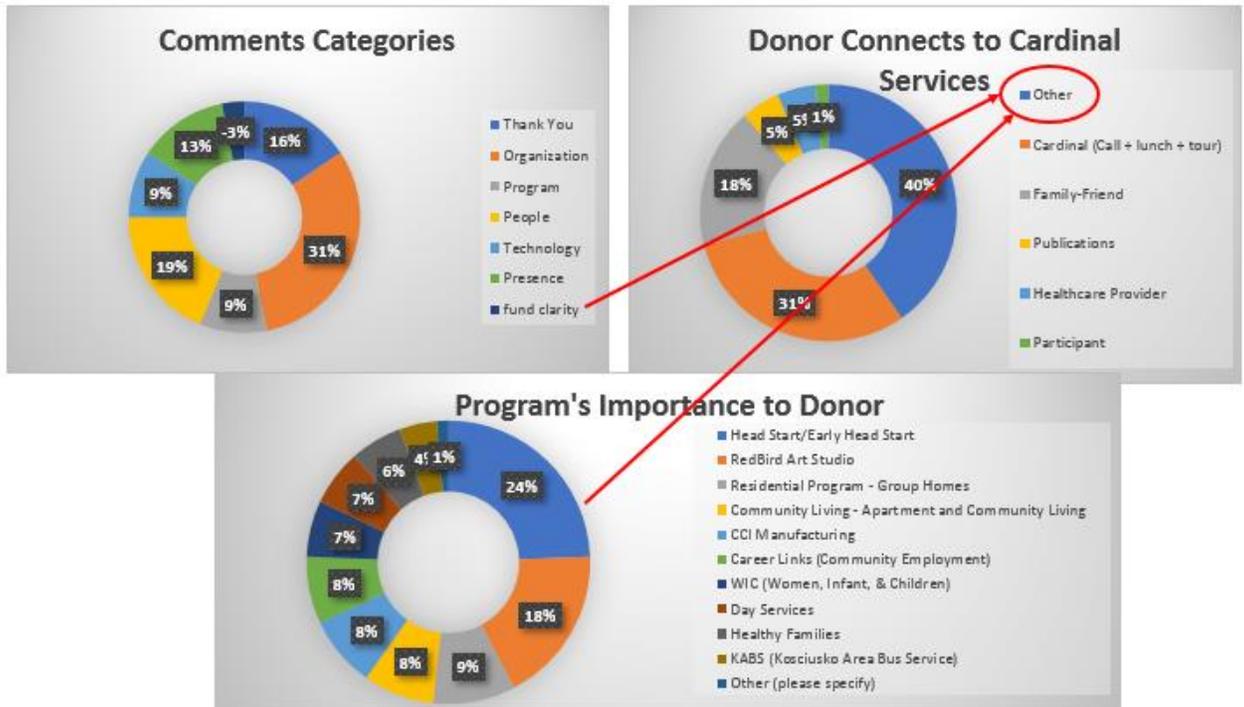


Figure 1: Importance Connectivity

¹¹ Watts, De Witt and Edwards (1982) Recruiting and Retaining Human Service Volunteers: An Empirical Analysis

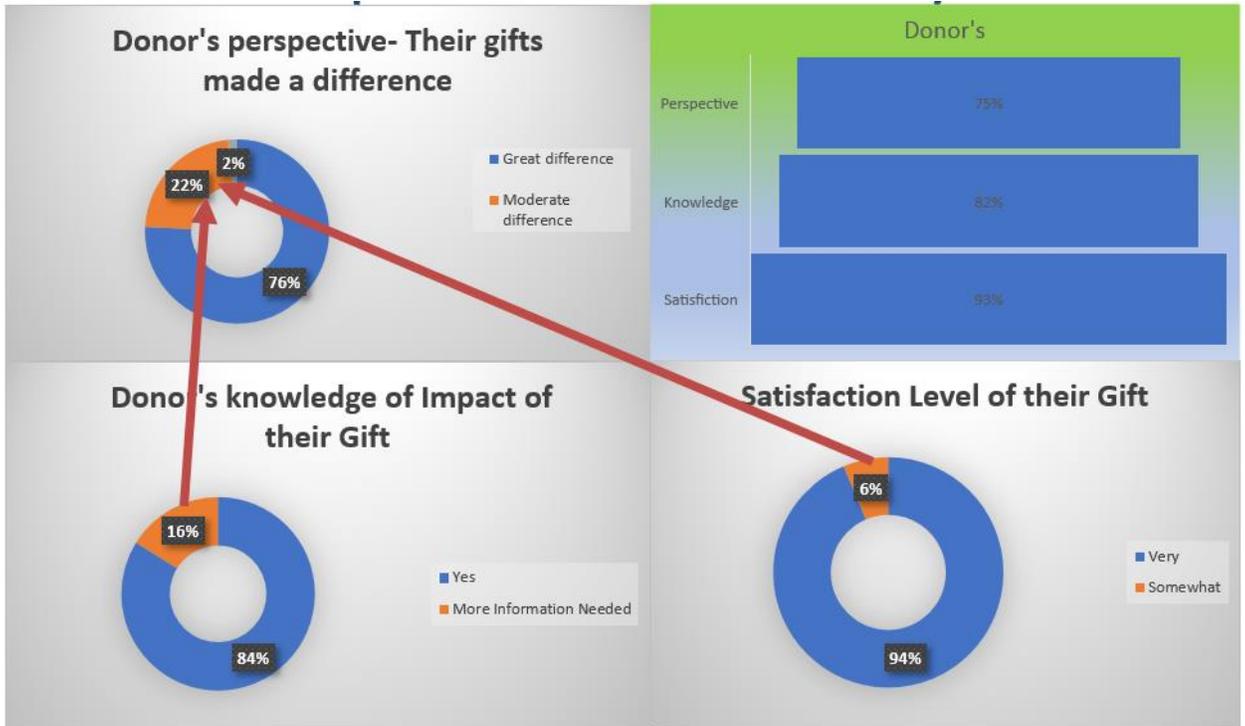


Figure 2: Perspective Connectivity

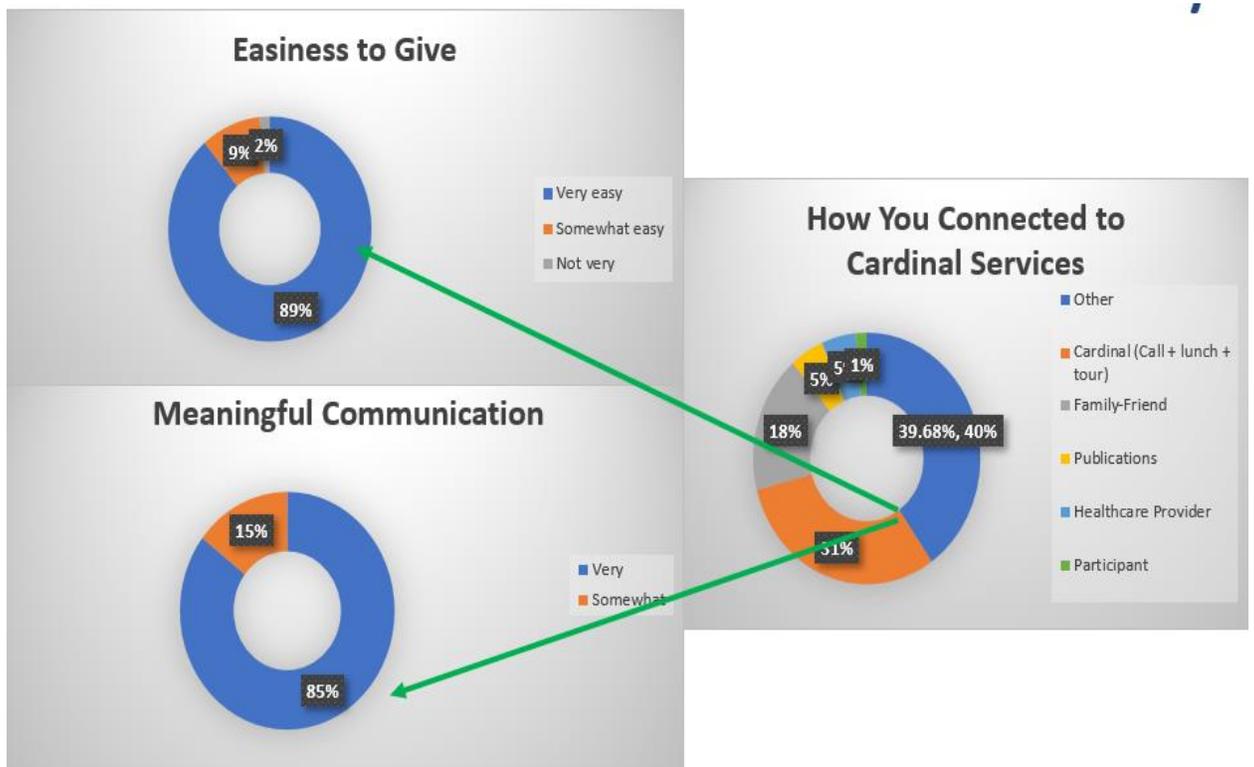


Figure 3 Communication Connectivity

Appendix

Donor and Volunteer Satisfaction Survey

Q1. How did you first get involved with Cardinal Services?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Cardinal Connection (1-hour lunch and tour)	20.63%	13
Cardinal Call	9.52%	6
Publications	4.76%	3
Family member or Friends	17.46%	11
I and/or a family member participated in one or more of Cardinal's services	1.59%	1
Healthcare Provider	4.76%	3
Other (please specify)	39.68%	25
Answered		62
Skipped		1

Q2. To what degree do you feel your gifts of (time and money) to us have made a difference?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Great difference	74.60%	47
Moderate difference	22.22%	14
Little difference	1.59%	1
Answered		62
Skipped		1

Q3. Do you feel like you know the impact of your gifts?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes, Cardinal Services does a great job communicating the impact.	62.54%	52
No, Cardinal Services does not communicate the impact.	0.00%	0
Cardinal Services does an okay job on communicating the impact, but I don't know the details.	15.87%	10
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
Answered		62
Skipped		1

Q4. To what extent have you found our communication to you meaningful and motivating:

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very	84.13%	53
Somewhat	14.29%	9
Not very	0.00%	0
Answered		62
Skipped		1

Q5. Of the programs and services, your gifts help support, what are the most important to you? Check all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Head Start/Early Head Start	90.48%	57
Healthy Families	22.22%	14
WIC (Women, Infant, & Children)	23.81%	15
Residential Program - Group Homes	34.92%	22
Community Living - Apartment and Community Living	30.16%	19
Day Services	23.81%	15
Career Links (Community Employment)	28.57%	18
CCI Manufacturing	30.16%	19
KABS (Kosciusko Area Bus Service)	15.87%	10
RedBird Art Studio	66.67%	42
Other (please specify)	4.76%	3
Answered		234
Skipped		0

Q6. How would you rank your level of satisfaction with your giving to Cardinal Services?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very	93.65%	59
Somewhat	6.35%	4
Not very	0.00%	0
Answered		63
Skipped		0

Q7. How easy has it been to give your time and/or donations to Cardinal Services?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very easy	88.89%	56
Somewhat easy	9.52%	6
Not very	1.59%	1
Answered		63
Skipped		0

Figure 4- Survey Results from Cardinal

Works Cited

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