

Volunteer Management



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Question: Are HRM practices in volunteer management most efficacious in retaining volunteers?

Volunteer Management

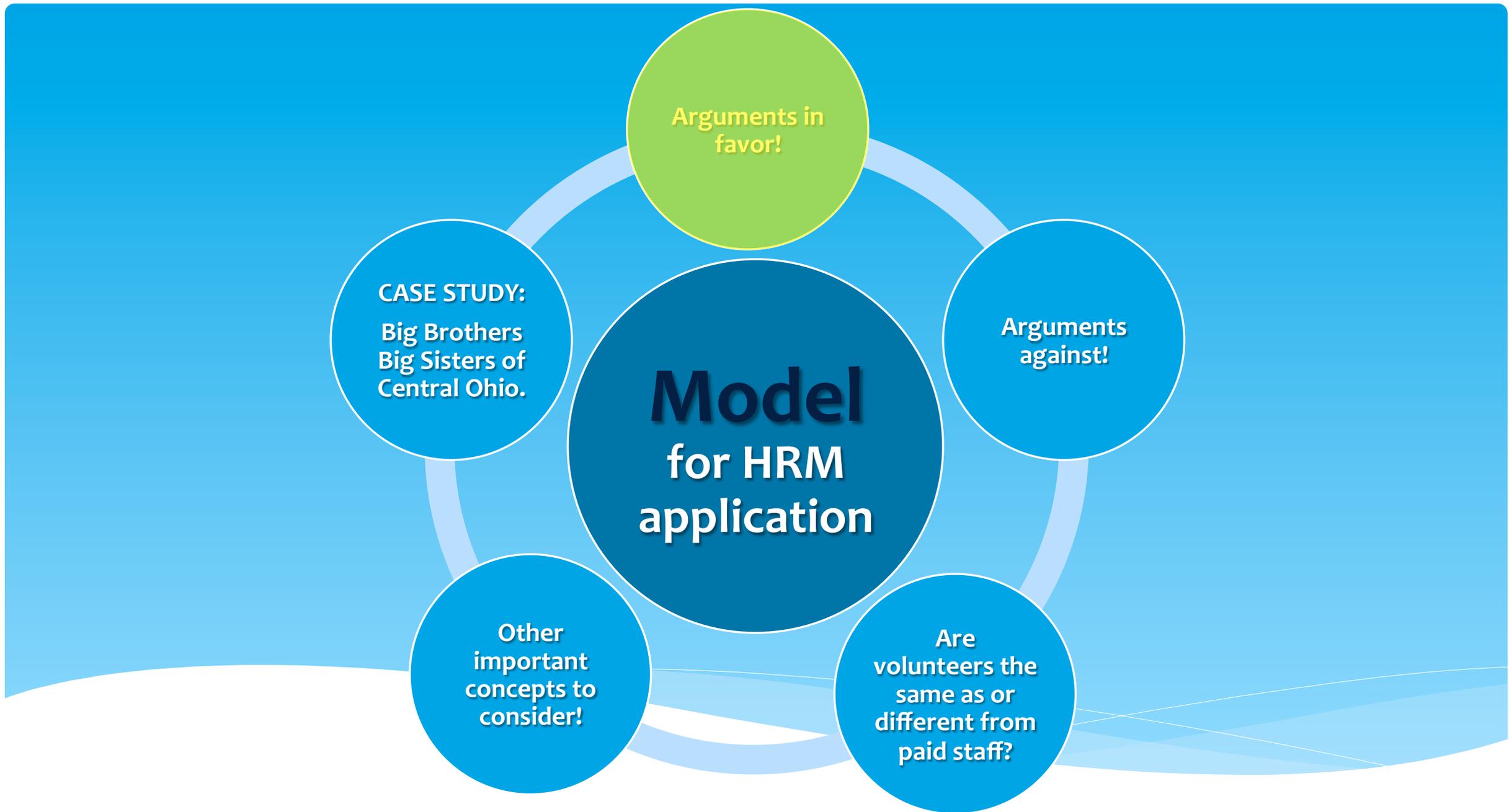
Answer

**Yes and No.
It DEPENDS!**

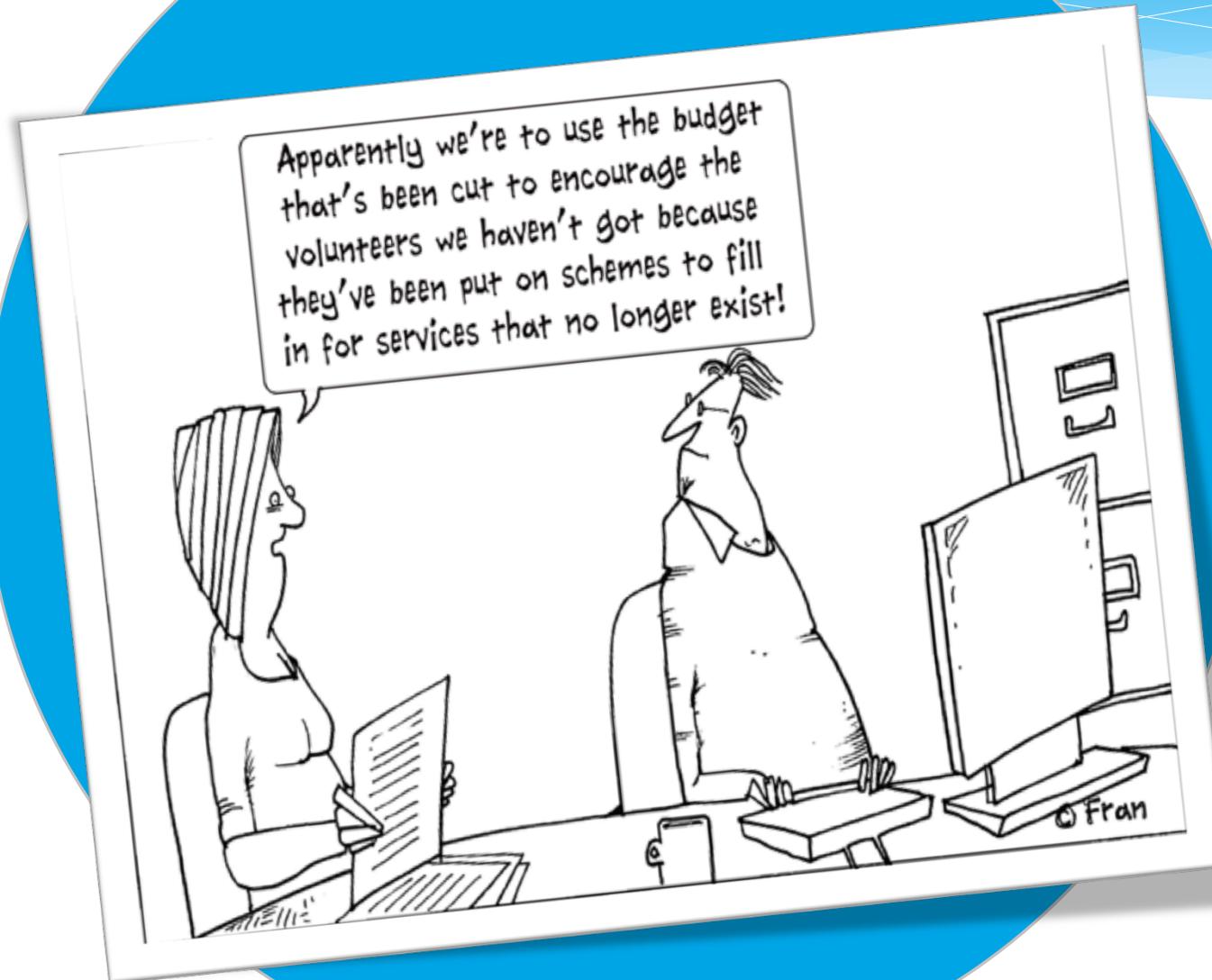
Volunteerism

- 9.3 million full-time workers = \$225.9 billion labor (2013)
- 22.2 percent of men and 28.4 percent of women volunteered
- 35-44 year olds = 30.6%; 16-19 year olds = 26.2 %; 20-24 year olds = 18.5%
- beginning with age 45, volunteer frequency reduces
- part-time workers = 31.7 percent%; full-time workers = 26.8 %
- average 50 hours/year (low of 36 hours for 25-34 year olds to a high of 86 hours for those aged 65 and over)
- recruited by being asked to volunteer (most frequently by someone in the organization) = 40.8 %; initiated the volunteering themselves = 43.0%
- collecting, preparing, distributing, or serving food = 10.9%
- fundraising = 10.0%
- tutoring or teaching = 9.8%





Arguments in Favor



Arguments in Favor

HRM for volunteers **increases** efficacy of volunteer retention through ...

- Integration into the organization (social networks, organizational support, positive tasks, training, positive relationships, staff support, positive evaluations)
- Aligning HR strategies with organizational strategies and formal volunteer performance management system
- Position development, recruitment, mentoring, fit testing, orientation
- Selective screening, accurate matching of volunteers with positions, establishing tenure, supervision, performance rewards

Arguments in favor!

Arguments against!

Model for HRM application

CASE STUDY:
Big Brothers
Big Sisters of
Central Ohio.

Other
important
concepts to
consider!

Are
volunteers the
same as or
different from
paid staff?

Arguments Against



Um...Roger? I don't think you quite understand our Meals-on-Wheels concept.

Arguments Against

HRM for volunteers **decreases** efficacy of volunteer retention through ...

- Creating volunteer and paid staff dissonance; volunteer = secondary roles with close supervision and threat to paid staff
- Administrative techniques, routinization, and supervision experienced as negative
 - Created bureaucracy making conflicts for volunteers
 - Professionalization contradicts volunteer values for collaboration, lateral communication, and consensus style
 - Recruitment and selection ineffective

Arguments in favor!

Arguments against!

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Volunteers & Paid Staff

NEGOTIATIONS ARE AT A SENSITIVE STAGE
THEY'RE DEMANDING AN EXTRA CUP OF TEA
AND FREE CUPCAKES EACH TIME THEY MAN THE SHOP!



Volunteers & Paid Staff

Are different in

- Motives, needs satisfaction, (pro-social) personality, remuneration, time investment, career lifecycle, source of legitimacy, commitment, (in)dependence, contractual obligation, psychological contract, task fulfillment obligation, distribution of authority, compliance/sanctioning, professionalism, role, primary goal, unique value of volunteer work

Are similar in

- Meaning of the activity, function/task structure, commitment/job attitudes, psychological contract, task fulfillment expectation, primary goal

Arguments in favor!

Arguments against!

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Other Important Concepts

- **Job satisfaction** increases the probability of volunteer retention. Participation efficacy (ability to benefit others) and group integration are significant predictors of intent to continue volunteering.
- **Organizational commitment** affects volunteer retention. Job satisfaction (by far), autonomy, job involvement, and feedback are the strongest predictors of organizational commitment.
- Although both volunteers and non-volunteers show prosocial characteristics, volunteers display more community and social orientation. The source of their compassion is wellbeing and fairness in dealing with others. These are the true **drivers of volunteerism**.

Arguments in favor!

Arguments against!

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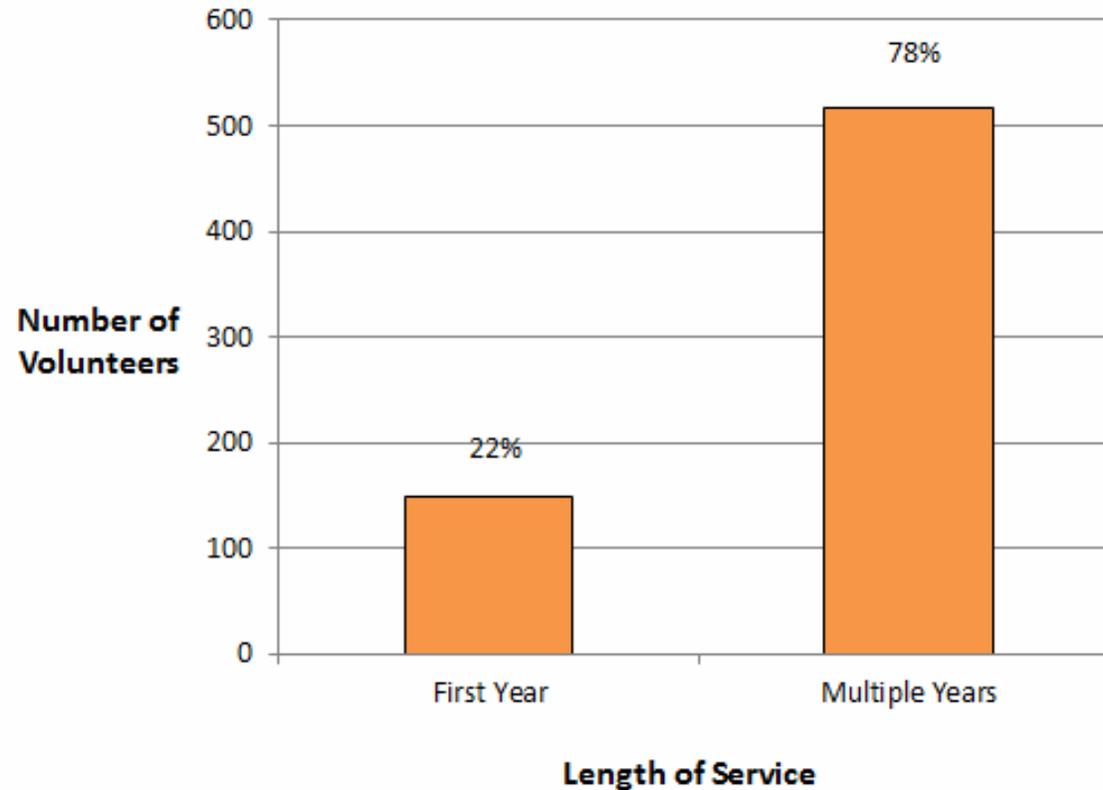
- \$4.8 million budget, 178 staff, 2,369 volunteers
- Staff and volunteers must follow BBBS policy
- The work performed by volunteers is nearly identical to work that would be performed by paid staff elsewhere.
- Safety is of such paramount importance that extreme care is translated into policies and procedures for serving a vulnerable population.
 - Finding a right fit or match of mentor with mentee is a monumental determinant of program success.
- BBBS practices HRM with volunteers, including recruitment and selection, formal application and screening, orientation and training, reward giving, evaluation, and discipline.



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Central Ohio

Volunteer Experience

Length of Time as a Project Mentor Volunteer



Arguments in favor!

Arguments against!

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**Model
for HRM
application**

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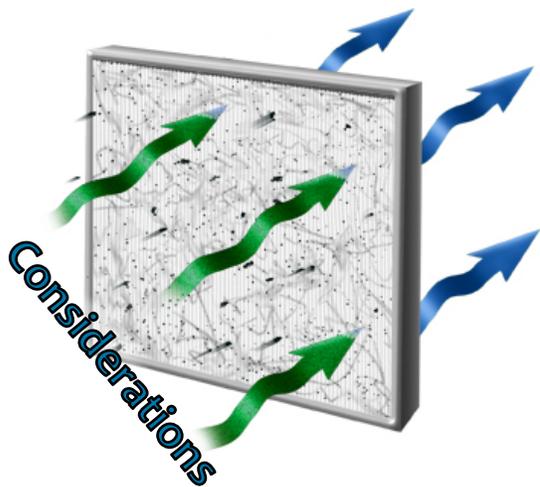
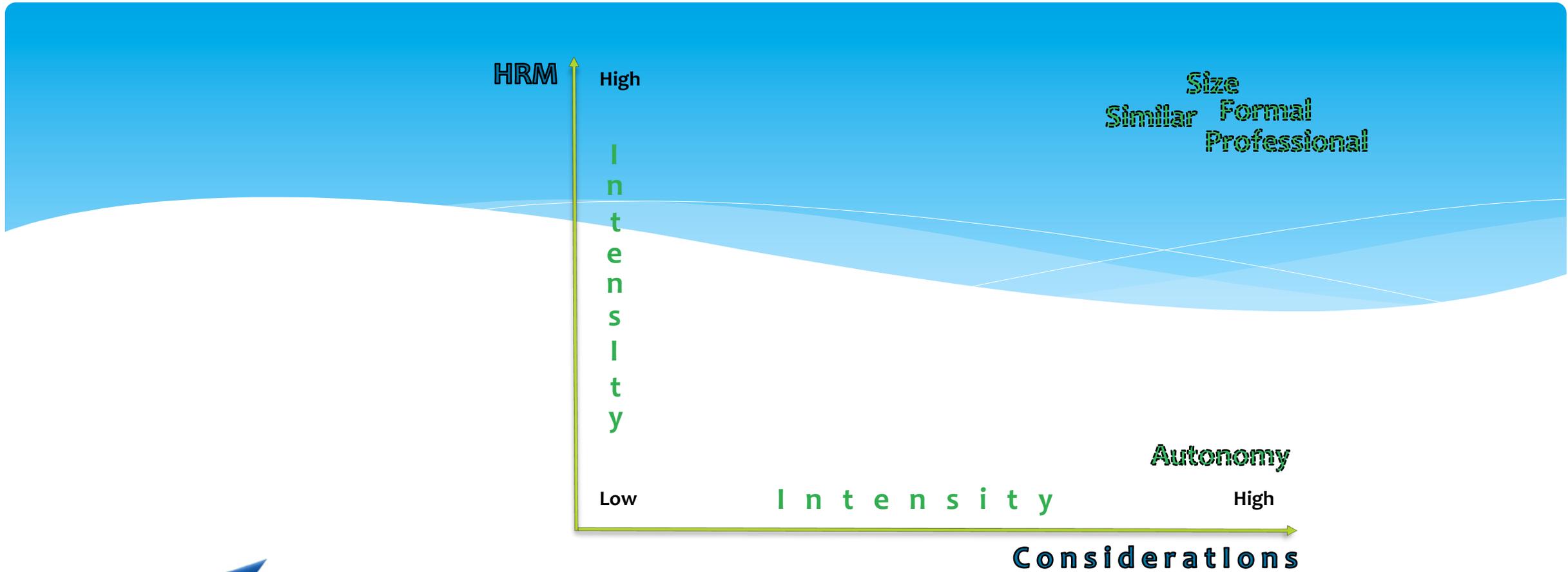
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Model—but first!

- ↳ Literature review (37 scholarly sources) + volunteer/paid staff comparison + BBBS = no contradictions, just a contingency perspective
- Consider: Volunteers do best when they experience organizational and social integration, job satisfaction, accurate matching with their assignments as well as personal identification with their assignments, training, appreciation, collaboration with paid staff, and respectful supervision.
- Volunteers are motivated by compassion in helping others and seeing them succeed, a place of belonging, social networking, and positive relationships.
- Volunteers are disincentivized by negative messaging, bureaucratization, dissonance with paid staff, and formality and routinization that are not congruent with their levels of responsibility.

Model

- A synthesis of the literature and case study produces a number of dynamic variables which, when used as filters through which to pass choices about volunteer management, may produce tailored, efficacious volunteer management structures in their unique settings.
- Although volunteers differ from paid staff in terms of remuneration, legal obligations, and certain motivations, it is important not to “throw the baby out with the bathwater” when it comes to arguing that the differences between volunteer and paid staff preclude any thought of treating them in the same way.
- Rather, the circumspect synthesis, even in the face of predominant evidence identifying significant differences between the two, takes the differences and similarities into consideration when applying the filters.



Considerations

Agency size (high intensity, high HRM)

Similarity of volunteer and paid staff work assignments (high intensity, high HRM)

Professionalism (high intensity, high HRM)

Formality (high intensity, high HRM)

Autonomy/freedom (high intensity, low HRM)

In Conclusion

The higher intensities of HRM practices would be applied as:

- The volunteer agency is larger.
- Volunteer and paid staff work assignments are more similar.
- The volunteer program is more professionalized.
- The volunteer program is more formal.

And the lower intensities of HRM practices would be applied as:

- The volunteers value more autonomy and freedom.

For example, at BBBS of Central Ohio, where HRM with volunteers is very similar to HRM with employees,

- the agency is large,
- volunteer work assignments are as sophisticated as paid work assignments are in other structures,
- the volunteer program is more highly professionalized and formalized, and
- volunteers experience less autonomy and freedom due to safety strictures and mandated policies affecting HRM.

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QUESTIONS? QUESTION? QUESTIONS?



Retention