

# How to Turn “I Don’t Have Time” into “I Can’t Wait to Volunteer!”

With Leadership Strategist Cynthia D'Amour, MBA

## Recruiting: the never-ending process

- Traditional vs. today's volunteers
- Need for shift in leadership style

## What today’s volunteers are looking for

1. **Why** should I get involved? (WIIFM)
  - a. Personal/professional development
  - b. Contribution to a greater good
  - c. Community
2. Quest for **meaningful impact**
3. **Doers** not Sitters — flexibility too!
4. **Time** matters
5. **FUN** is a value, not an option

## Final Thought...

# **Cynthia D'Amour's Active Member Minute**

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: **Make Your Agendas Power Tools**

Missy was the new chair of the committee. She was excited to be selected to lead and had a lot of great ideas.

In past years, the chair had done the bulk of the work. They always started with a full committee. However, after a meeting or two, attendance dropped — and there was no one left to volunteer to help.

Missy realized:

- A. She didn't have time to do it all
- B. She needed to make meetings worth attending.

One of her biggest frustrations from serving on the committee was the way her time was wasted when she showed up for a meeting. To add more value to showing for meetings, Missy launched a five- pronged attack using her meeting agenda:

## **1. Missy used her agenda to help paint a picture of what the team would achieve.**

She included a statement of vision about what they would be achieve by working on the team together. There was no room for doubt about why the meeting was important.

## **2. Missy arranged the agenda to allow debating issues early in the meeting.**

In past years, most people were allowed to be an audience — rather than actively participate. They had often spent the entire two hours simply listening to reports.

**UGH!**

Missy wanted everyone to have the opportunity to help shape the project path — and to feel some ownership in the project to boost commitment.

### **3. Missy asked team members to facilitate different parts of the meeting.**

Getting others involved in facilitating the meeting helped to guarantee they would show up for the meeting. It also created a leadership development opportunity for members on Missy's team. She wanted to use her meetings to move the project forward — and to create extra value for her team members.

### **4. Missy added times to the agenda.**

People got notice in advance how long they would have for reports and discussion. When added up, Missy's meetings were 1/3 reports and 2/3 whole group discussion. If you were on the committee, it mattered if you showed up to the meetings.

### **5. Missy sent out her meeting agenda at least a week in advance.**

Missy wanted to give people time to think about the discussion questions — and to get excited about what they would be working on at the meeting.

Missy also included a suggestion to invite any other members or potential members to the meeting who might bring a helpful voice to the table. This addition of experts and fresh eyes gave the meetings a fresh feel each month — and helped them to uncover overlooked opportunities.

Missy used her agenda — a traditional tool — to market her meetings as important to be at — and gave the promise that if you showed, you would be an important contributor.

### **How do you use your meeting agenda to its maximum value?**

# About Cynthia D'Amour, MBA

Cynthia D'Amour, Leadership Strategist, is the President of People Power Unlimited based in Ann Arbor, MI. She works with associations that want to get more members involved and organizations that want to develop their leaders.

Cynthia is the author of **The Lazy Leader's Guide to Outrageous Results, Go Team Go! Strategies for Leading Today's Volunteers to Victory, How to Recruit Generation Me, How to Turn Generation Me Into Active Members of Your Association, Members Tell All, Networking: The Skill the Schools Forgot to Teach** and **Are You ONE Relationship Away From Making BIG Money?**.

She produces a monthly e-zine, "**Cynthia D'Amour's Active Member Minute**," which keeps association leaders current on volunteer trends and gives specific ideas about how to get more members involved in their organization.

Cynthia writes a blog for chapter leaders from around the world to explore the issues of leadership and life. **Cynthia's blog** can be found at <http://cynthiadamour.com>.

Cynthia also hosts the **Chapter Leaders Playground** – an online community for volunteer leaders from across associations to come together to meet, share ideas and have fun working on their leadership goals. Members get involved in Special Interest Playgroups and may attend 40+ webinars each year.  
<http://www.chapterleadersplayground.org>

Having served more than 45 total years on volunteer boards and recruited more than 250 members, Cynthia D'Amour knows firsthand the key issues that association leaders face every day in dealing with today's members.

Cynthia is a certified teacher with a degree in marketing from Michigan State University. She's completed extensive graduate work in teaching methodologies and communication. Cynthia recently earned her MBA with an emphasis on Association Leadership from the University of Phoenix.

Cynthia taught eighth grade for five years specializing in a hands-on cooperative learning style that promoted learning in all of her students. As a manager for Macy's Department Store, her relationship-building strategies with clients increased sales 183% her first season there.

As the Vice President of Communications and Member Services of the Michigan Association of CPAs, Cynthia's team received recognition from the American Society of Association Executive's Associations Advancing America program.

Cynthia currently serves on the American Society of Association Executives' Strategic Research Committee and is a Component Relations Section Council's Past Chair. She is currently active in the Jr. League of Ann Arbor.

Cynthia is a regular speaker for ASAE. Her articles are published frequently in association leadership publications. Several of these articles can be found at Cynthia's web site: <http://www.chapterleadersplayground.org>