



Maurice and Marilyn Cohen
Center for Modern Jewish Studies



*Good Works: Research on Connections Between
Volunteer Engagement Practices and
Social Return on Investment for
Volunteers and Non-Profits*

MAVA 2018



Sue Carter Kahl
CONSULTING

WELCOME!

- **Introductions – Presenters and Project**
- **Research Findings**
- **Implications**
- **Applications**

PRESENTERS

- **Fern Chertok – Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies,
Brandeis University**
- **Sue Carter Kahl – Sue Carter Kahl Consulting**

TIME FOR GOOD – THE INITIATIVE



THE RESEARCH TEAM

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University

- Fern Chertok, Research Scientist
- Annette Koren, Research Scientist
- Rachel Minkin, Research Associate
- Matthew Brookner, Research Associate

Sue Carter Kahl Consulting

- Sue Carter Kahl, Principal
- Jeffrey Brudney, Betty and Dan Cameron Family Distinguished Professor of Innovation in the Nonprofit Sector, University of North Carolina, Wilmington

TIME FOR GOOD : THE RESEARCH

- **Document review**
- **Observations**
- **Interviews & focus groups**
- **Organization visits**
- **Volunteer survey**
- **Volunteer Manager survey**



FROM VOLUNTEERING TO OUTCOMES



WHAT THE VOLUNTEER BRINGS: MOTIVATIONS

- ✓ Desire to do something meaningful with others
- ✓ Desire to respond to the current political climate
- ✓ Professional motivations
 - *Enhance resume*
 - *Learn new skills*
 - *Explore career options*
- ✓ Prosocial motivations
 - *Work on issues I care deeply about*
 - *Help improve the local community*
 - *Be a part of something larger*
 - *“Give back” to the community*
 - *Make a difference in people’s lives*



MULTIPLE WAYS TO DEFINE SOCIAL RETURN

Intentions

- *Intention to continue volunteering*
- *Intention to recommend others to volunteer*

Actions

- *Donating*
- *Referring another volunteer*
- *Referring a client*

Attitudes

- *Awareness of social issues*
- *Educate others about social issues*
- *Ownership and commitment*



WHAT THE VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES: 2 KEY LEVERS

**Meaningfulness of the
volunteer experience**

**Perceptions of appreciation and
integration**



LEVER #1: MEANINGFULNESS

*The pitcher cries for water to carry
And a person for work that is real*
Marge Piercy

How we measured Meaningfulness

My volunteer work...

- Helped me feel part of something larger than myself
- Made a difference in people's lives
- Made me feel more connected to the community
- Made an important contribution to the organization

LEVER #2: APPRECIATION AND INTEGRATION

“The deepest craving of human nature is the need to be appreciated.”

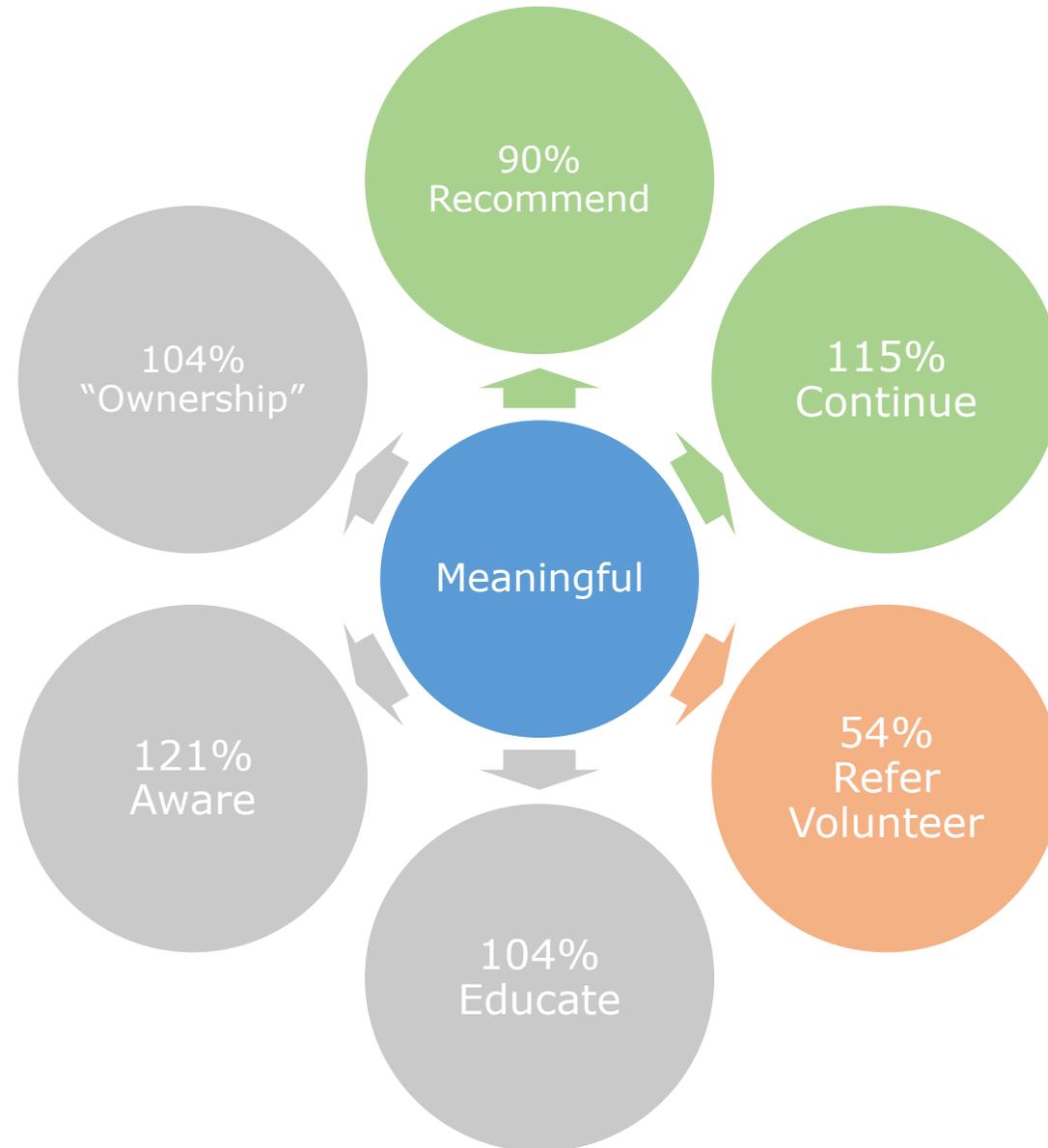
William James

How we measured Appreciation and Integration

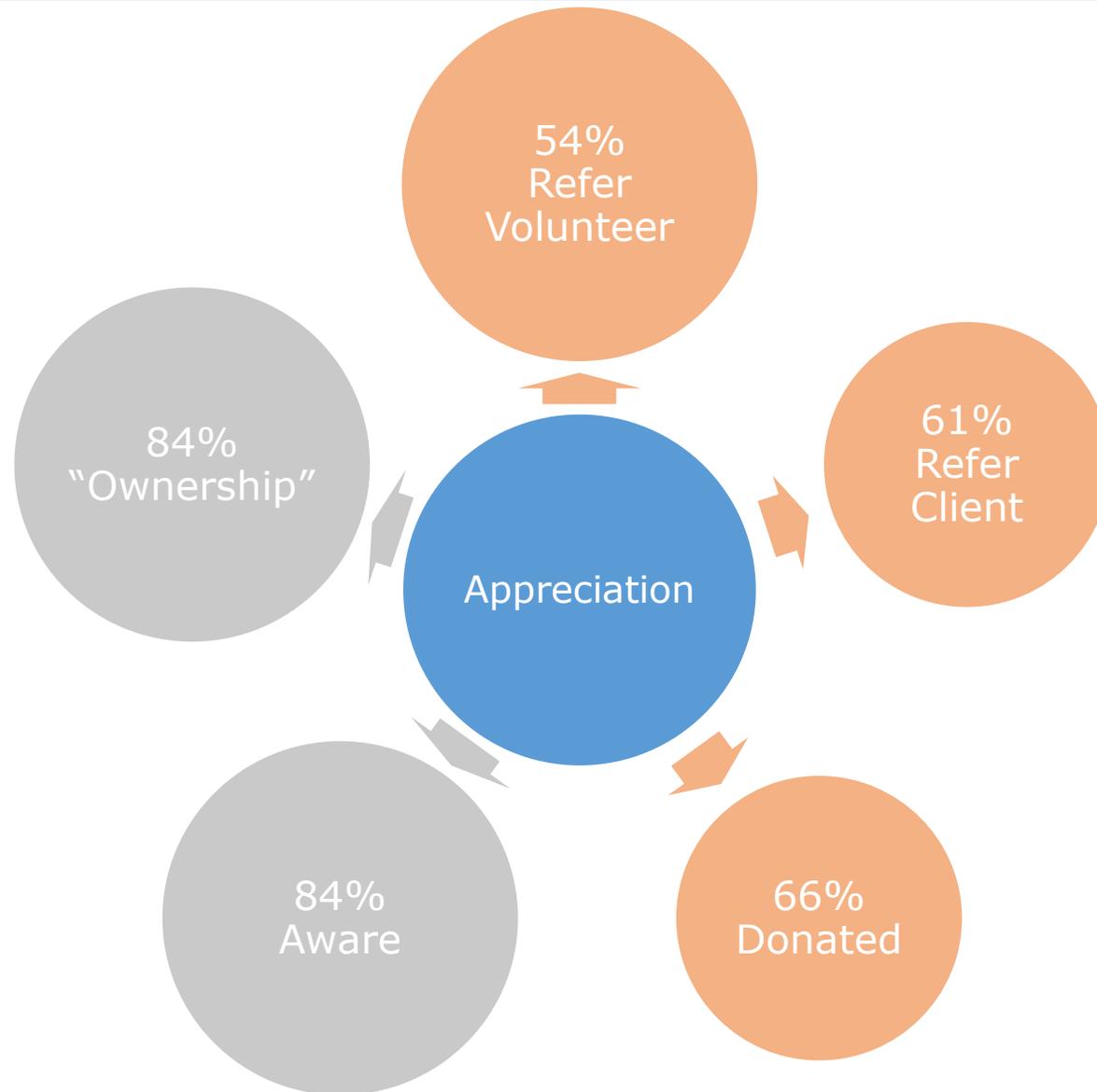
How often were each of the following part of your experience?

- The paid staff asked for input or ideas
- The paid staff expressed informal appreciation
- Received useful feedback about volunteer performance
- The staff talked about the impact of service on the organization

IF VOLUNTEERING IS PERCEIVED AS MEANINGFUL.....



IF VOLUNTEERS FEEL APPRECIATED AND INTEGRATED.....



HOW VOLUNTEER MANAGERS PROMOTE MEANINGFULNESS



Treat volunteers as valuable human capital

- *Application*
- *Orientation*
- *Introduction to staff*
- *Ask volunteers to report hours*

Encourage engagement with the larger organization

- *Help volunteers explore other types of volunteer work*
- *Encourage participation in other programs*
- *Check in with staff*
- *Update volunteers about the organization*

Help volunteers frame the meaning of service

- *Give volunteers the opportunity to reflect on their service*
- *Help volunteers examine assumptions about social problems*

HOW VOLUNTEER MANAGERS PROMOTE APPRECIATION



Treat volunteers as valued human capital

- *Interview, assess skills, name tags, train staff, provide needed resources*

Create ongoing dialogue with volunteers

- *Provide and ask for feedback*
- *Ask volunteers for their ideas*

Recognize and thank volunteers

- *Encourage staff to express appreciation to volunteers, too*

Educate volunteers

- *Educate about the challenges facing specific groups*
- *Tell volunteers about the impact of their service*

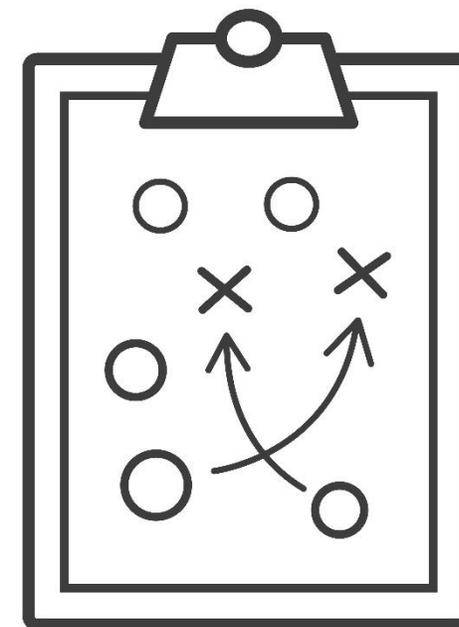
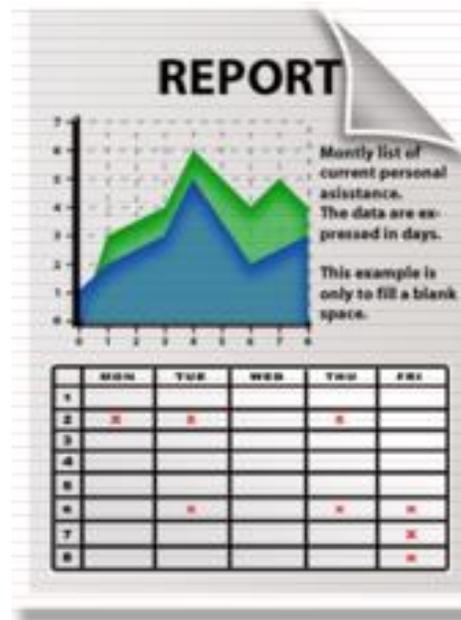
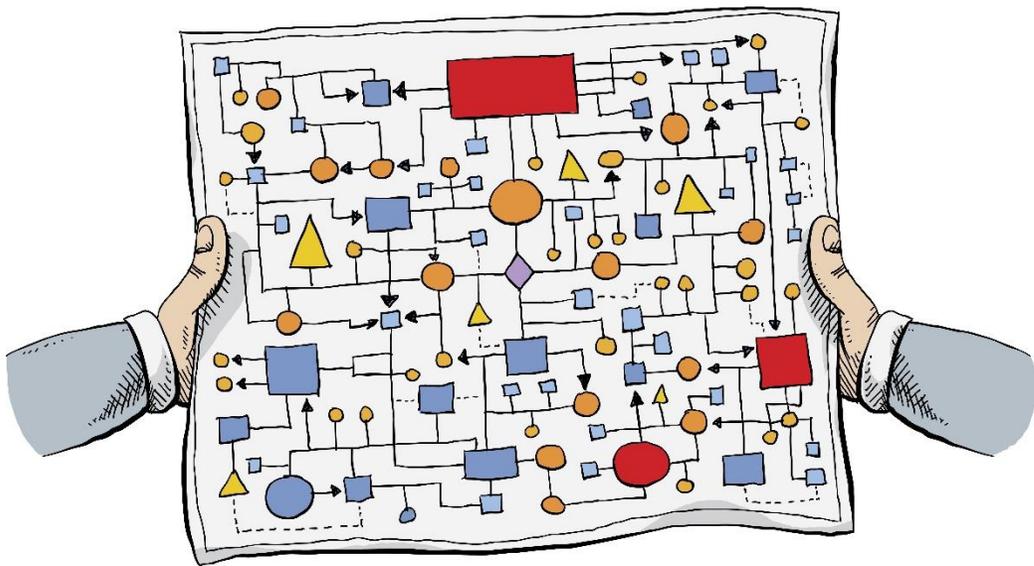
Encourage engagement with the larger organization

- *Encourage participation in other programs*

PUTTING IT ALL BACK TOGETHER



IMPLICATIONS FOR UJA FEDERATION – AND BEYOND



IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERS OF VOLUNTEERS

Now
what?



WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

Intentions

- *Intention to continue volunteering*
- *Intention to recommend others to volunteer*

Actions

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- *Referring a client*

Attitudes

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HOW ARE WE DOING?

- Cultivating meaning
- Sharing appreciation and integrating volunteers



**Thank you -
have a great conference!**