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Leadership Pulse™ Research Results  
from March, 2007 Pulse Dialogue™

Volunteerism: Leaders' Attitudes, Thoughts and Behaviors.

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## Executive Summary

The focus of the current Leadership Pulse was volunteerism at work. Although there was much enthusiasm from a core group of leaders with whom I work to study this topic, it did not seem to create much enthusiasm in the larger leadership audience. Our response rate was only 177 people, down from 384 people who participated in the prior Leadership Pulse. Could it be that volunteerism at work is just not on the radar screens of many leaders? If not, should it be? The results shed some light on this subject.

Volunteerism rates are at a historic high for the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 2006 61.2 million Americans age 16 and older volunteered 8.1 billion hours of volunteer service. In this context, below you will find a snapshot of our findings:

### The state of volunteerism

- 52% - say their companies formally sponsor volunteer work
- 88% - indicate they personally engage in volunteer work (of any kind)

### Volunteerism in their current organizations

- 56% - say organizations should sponsor more volunteer opportunities
- 37% - think volunteer work on resume helps get a job in their organization
- 78% - organizations are supportive of them personally volunteering
- 73% - their managers are supportive of volunteer work.
- 66% - volunteering has positive impact on careers in their own companies

### Beyond the current job

- 72% - doing any volunteer work will help their careers in the long run
- 58% - career opportunities will improve if one does volunteer work

Executives were more likely than non-executive to report perceived organizational support for volunteer work. Perceptions of organizational support and managerial support for volunteer work were highly correlated suggesting a link between the two.

Energy levels were related to hours volunteered in a curvilinear fashion indicating that volunteer work has a positive affect on energy levels up to a certain point. Specifically, energy levels were found to be highest for those who volunteered between 10-20 hours per month and energy began to decrease when volunteer hours exceeded 20.1 hours. These finding suggest that volunteer behavior appears to increase energy levels more than no volunteering, but that volunteering over 20 hours a month can have a diminishing affect on energy levels.

*Theresa M. Welbourne, Ph.D.*

## ***New OPPORTUNITY for all LEADERSHIP PULSE participants***

In May, 2007 we are expanding the Leadership Pulse study to provide you with real-time benchmark data for your own organization. You can sign up your management team (up to 100 people; minimum of 5 people needed) and in exchange for your participation receive:

- **On-line reports for your own management team**, showing your results and trend data (the group overall scores).
- Your data compared to your industry (**real-time benchmarking**).
- Individual participants from your management team will receive **personal reports** showing their own scores vs. their group score for the management team and their score vs. their industry score.
- Access to **all technical reports and regional reports** as they start to become available (we will provide regional reports when we have enough organizations in a given region to warrant that reporting).
- Web-based learning events and invitations to conferences and other networking events.

To learn more, go to: [www.eepulse.com](http://www.eepulse.com) – under the Leadership Pulse button.

To sign up or obtain more information about the Leadership Team Pulse write to [info@eepulse.com](mailto:info@eepulse.com) and ask for information about the leadership team pulse.

Thank you for your continued support. Feel free to write to me or call if you have any questions or comments.

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## **The State of Volunteerism**

The March Leadership Pulse investigated volunteerism at work. We devoted the March pulse to this topic because volunteerism is prevalent in America, and a large amount of it is carried out by working adults. These employees are members of both the “for pay” organization and the volunteer organization when they devote time to volunteerism. These dual roles affect the employer, the home life of the volunteer and the success of the volunteer agency or organization.

For example, while new skill development might develop from a volunteer job the benefits of these new skills may not be applicable to the “for pay” employer, or the skills may make the employee much more productive at work. Is the expenditure of energy and time away from the “for pay” position worth the skills developed? It is for these and other reasons that we believe the topic of volunteerism deserve consideration. This study attempts to better understand attitudes and behaviors of leaders towards volunteerism and their thoughts on the dual roles many employees play.

Before reviewing the results of the Leadership, we thought it useful to provide the readers with some facts about volunteerism in America. Below are some data gathered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (study titled Volunteering in America: 2007 State Trends and Ranking in Civil Life).

### **Volunteerism Facts**

Volunteerism rates are at a historic high for the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This trend is not surprising given the renewed national interest in volunteering after the 2001 terrorist attacks and the hurricanes of 2005.

- In 2006, 61.2 million Americans age 16 and older volunteered 8.1 billion hours of volunteer service.
- The nation’s volunteer rate increased by 3.1 percent between 1974 and 2006 and 6.3 percent between 1989 and 2006.
- Currently 1 in 3 working adults between the ages of 35 – 54 perform some form of volunteer work each year.
- On average, two-thirds (66%) of volunteers who served in 2005 went on to serve in 2006.

- On average, females (31.6%) are more likely than males (24.3%) to engage in volunteer work and baby boomers (32.4%) are more likely than college students (29.6%) to volunteer.

These data make it clear that Americans are volunteering in record numbers. The numbers reveal that nearly 1 in 3 adults of working age are engaged in some form of volunteerism. Given the current level of volunteer behavior evidenced in the country today, we wanted to ask leaders to share their thoughts on this important topic. We decided to use the Leadership Pulse to get more details about the attitudes and behaviors of leaders towards volunteerism.

### **The Leadership Pulse Study**

The Leadership Pulse taps into a large sample of executives (over 4,000 to date) who have agreed to participate in short, Pulse Dialogues (our word for short surveys<sup>1</sup>) conducted every two months. We gather data on topics of strategic importance to leaders and then provide results to those who participate in this study. Our goal is to learn from data, create a dialogue around the subjects we study and help leaders continually learn so they can use the data to bring value to their organizations. The results presented in this report are from the Pulse Dialogue that closed on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2007. An earlier news letter and individual personal reports were made available to all participants approximately two weeks after the closing of the Pulse Dialogue.

### ***Who responded to the Pulse Dialogue?***

A total of 177 leaders participated in the most recent Leadership Pulse. This response rate is notably lower than our past rates. While we cannot determine the exact cause of the lower response rate, we speculate that the topic of volunteerism did not generate enough interest to fully engage our sample of leaders despite the reality that 1 out of 3 employees are expending billions of hours on volunteer activities.

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<sup>1</sup> We changed the word to Pulse Dialogue as a signal that the process used is an attempt to evolve the traditional survey process. For example, the dialogues are done on a more frequent basis with fewer questions, and we provide everyone who participates with results and multiple ways to engage in dialogue about the results. In addition, participants receive personal reports that compare their own results to averages for people in their industry and the overall sample. We think the dialogue and learning is the key to this information exchange, where in traditional surveys scores and one-way communication are the overall goals.

## Volunteerism Study – Overview of What we Learned

We gained many useful pieces of information using the Leadership Pulse to open a dialogue with leaders about the topic of volunteerism. Before offering the specifics, an overview of the findings is offered along with sample comment data to help frame the more detailed views of the data that follow in the results section. We asked leaders to comment on the value of volunteerism to their firm and their own career opportunities. We found 37% of respondents' comments reflected the idea that volunteerism benefited the firm by building a positive presence in their communities (i.e., public relations). The following example is typical of the public relation theme:

*"We are very visible in our community...and giving back through volunteerism only builds additional equity with our customers."*

Other comments revealed that leaders value the skill development volunteer opportunities afford their employees, notably skills associated with leadership. For example, as one leader put it,

*"If employees take a leadership role in the volunteer activity, it can help develop managerial/project management skills which will ultimately help their careers."*

Combined, the two major themes of "public relations" and "skill development" that emerged accounted for 72% of the comments assessing the value of volunteer work to organization and/or career. Through the comment or dialogue process we also learned two important pieces of advice leaders would offer new employees regarding volunteer work. Thirty-four percent of leaders suggested choosing a volunteer activity should reflect employees' personal values/beliefs and they should be passionate about the cause, what we termed intrinsic value. A typical piece of advice looked like this:

*"Reach beyond yourself, without regard to personal or professional gain, but rather to what you can and should give back to the community as a part of your personal growth and understanding of who you are."*

However, the second major recommendation contained warnings to those who would volunteer. Specifically, 23% of leaders noted the importance of striking a work / volunteer balance. The following are typical warnings about the work/volunteer balance:

*"Do your job well first, then if you still have energy, volunteer." And,*

*"Don't let your volunteer work interfere with your ability to complete your primary work responsibilities."*

These last comments clearly suggest that leaders have some concern that volunteer work might somehow interfere with “for pay” responsibilities. Indeed, the first comment above alludes to the idea that energy is a finite commodity and one should “spend” it first on for pay work and use what is left for volunteer work. Interestingly, we found (presented in more detail below) that volunteer work may actually increase overall energy levels when the “right” amount of volunteer work has been established.

The data show that 78% of leaders from the sample said their organizations support volunteerism. Seventy-two percent report that doing any type of volunteerism would help their career in the long run; while only 37% believe having volunteer work on a resume would help prospective candidates gain entrance into their organization.

In summary, respondents overwhelmingly perceived organizational support for volunteerism, and many felt that volunteer work affords opportunities for skill development, especially leadership skill development. And while respondents did not believe that having a history of volunteerism on a resume would bolster the likelihood of landing a job within their firm, they did think that current employees’ volunteer behavior benefited the organization through increased visibility in the community, skill building, networking opportunities and personal fulfillment. Finally, while there were concerns about striking a work/volunteer balance, we found evidence that increased levels of energy are associated with a specific range on volunteer hours. Next, we turn to the details of the study results and elaborate on many of these findings.

### **Volunteerism Study Results**

The following set of questions were asked using a five point response scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). The % agree column reflects the percentage of those who responded 4 = *agree* or 5 = *strongly agree*.

### Percent of respondents who agree with question posed

Question	% Agree
My organization is supportive of my doing volunteer work.	78%
My manager is supportive of my doing volunteer work.	73%
I think that doing any type of volunteer work will help my career in the long run.	72%
When our employees volunteer, it has a positive effect on their professional careers within our firm.	66%
My career opportunities with firms other than my current employer improve when and if I do volunteer work	58%
My company should sponsor more volunteer opportunities for our employees.	56%
Volunteer work on your resume helps you get a job with our company.	37%
Volunteering has a negative impact on your pay.	3%
When our employees volunteer, it hurts their chances of promotion in our organization.	1%

Based on the results above it appears that the majority of respondents believe their organizations and managers support their volunteer work. Indeed, these two support variables were highly correlated with each other. This strong positive relationship may indicate that perceptions of organizational support are highly dependent on the level of perceived managerial support. That is, the higher the level of perceived managerial support respondents reported, the higher were respondents' perceptions of organizational support. Conversely, it could indicate that if there were a culture or climate supporting volunteerism, superiors would be more likely to behave in a congruent manner with the culture or climate in which they operate. In either case, it appears that perceptions of organizational and supervisory support are strongly related in respondents' minds.

It is interesting to note that respondents were nearly twice as likely to believe that volunteer work has a positive effect on their career within their own company, but much less likely to help prospective job seekers gain entrance into their company. One gets the sense that volunteerism is "extra;" it won't hurt you, but it is not going to really land the job for you. Basic core skills are always first.

The data also suggest the vast majority of respondents do not perceive a negative impact of volunteer work on pay or promotional opportunities. Indeed, when reviewing the open-ended comments it is clear that respondents felt volunteer work held the opportunity for building networks, improving community relations and opportunities for leadership skill development with very few comments reflecting outright drawbacks related to volunteer work.

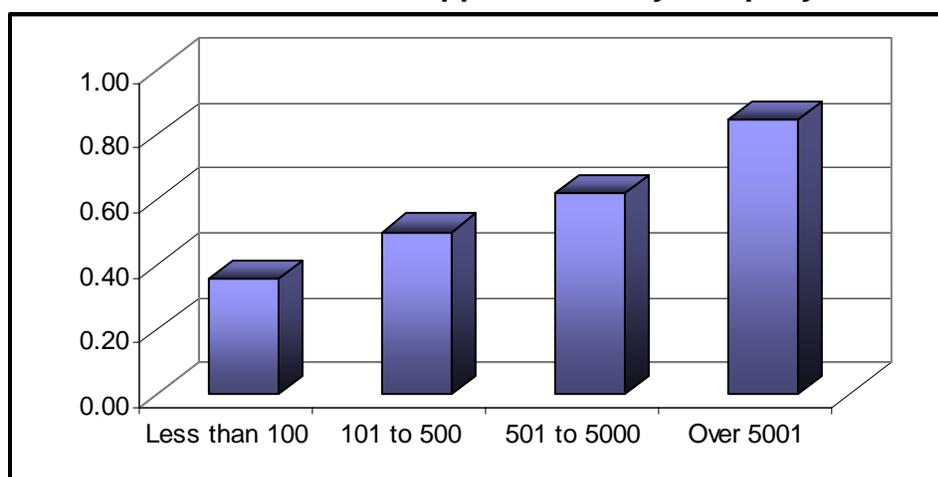
As part of the Leadership Pulse process we continually collect demographic data from respondents to help break the data into views that are of interest to our stakeholders. In reviewing the results by these demographic cuts we found statistically significant

differences on the dimensions of firm size and job level. It is to these differences that we now turn.

## Firm Size

We asked whether formal volunteer opportunities were offered within respondents' companies and analyzed this question by company size. The results of that analysis are presented below.

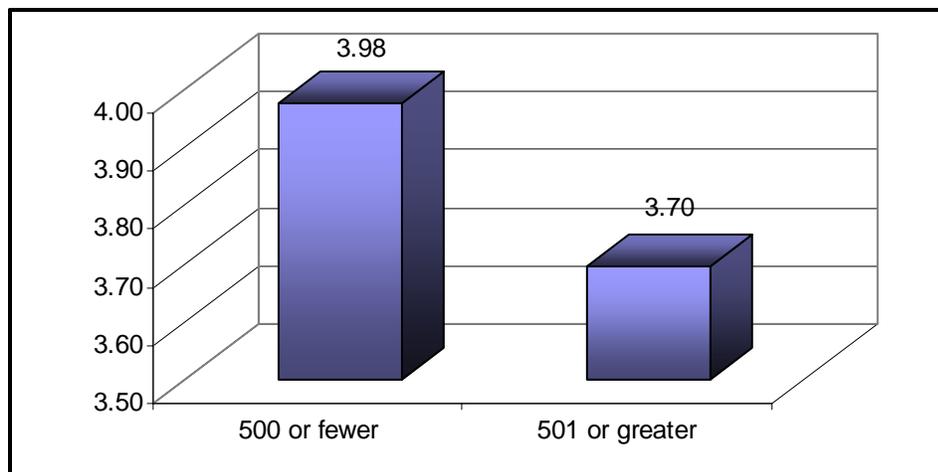
### Percent of formal volunteer opportunities by company size



The results, while not a surprise, demonstrate that the larger a company is the more likely it will be to sponsor formal volunteer opportunities. Eighty percent of firms employing over 5,000 people offer some formal volunteer opportunities; by contrast 36% of companies with less than 100 employees report formally offering volunteer opportunities.

However, just because a company sponsors volunteer activities does not necessarily indicate that volunteering is viewed as a benefit to one's career. We wanted to know if firm size had any bearing on perceptions of career benefits within respondents' companies, so we reviewed the question "*When our employees volunteer, it has a positive effect on their professional careers within our firm*" by company size. The results reveal that leaders of smaller organizations (i.e., less than 500 employees) were more likely to perceive volunteerism as positively effecting professional careers compared to leaders of organizations with more than 500 employees.

## Does volunteerism positively affect employees' career within firm



While we do not have conclusive evidence, it seems plausible that volunteerism is viewed by leaders of smaller firms as having a greater affect on careers because there are fewer opportunities for development in smaller firms, so the volunteer work stands out. We also asked respondents to comment on the value of volunteerism to their organizations. The comments were categorized by firm size, and we examined whether there was a qualitative difference between comments coming from leaders of large vs. small firms. Below are a few example comments to highlight the qualitative difference by respondents' firm size.

### *Less Than 500 Employees*

"If a volunteer opportunity can teach you skills you don't already have, then it will be valuable in your career."

"Effective volunteerism builds leadership skills and confidence. Those individuals who have led volunteer organizations often have the people skills and values that we are looking for in our company."

"If you are striving to move into leadership roles within your company, use your volunteering opportunities to gain skills, obtain leadership roles and to network. All of these things will better position you for the move to a leadership role within your organization."

### *More Than 501 Employees*

"My organization is generally very supportive, but it doesn't trump poor work performance."

*“We have been actively promoting volunteerism in my firm for 3 years. I’m not quite sure that I have seen even a noticeable intangible value as a result - certainly not a tangible value to the corporation. Nor have I seen volunteerism have an impact on career growth overall.”*

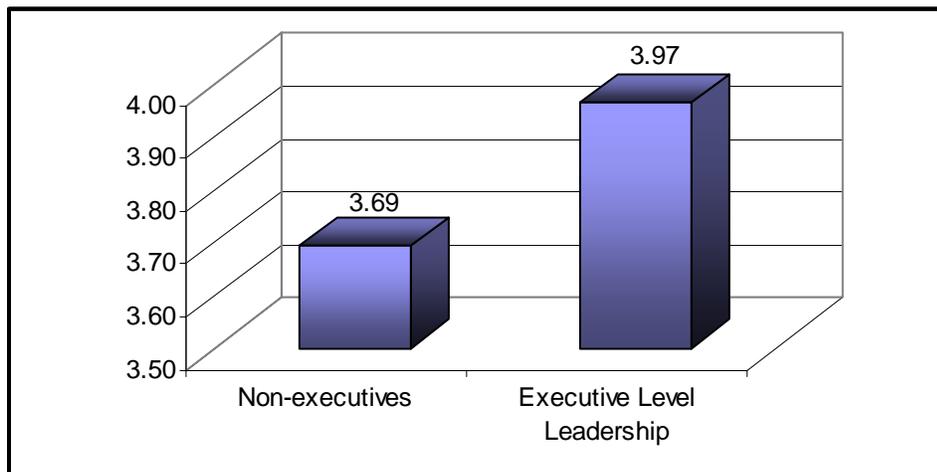
*“If employees take a leadership role in the volunteer activity, it can help develop managerial/project management skills which will ultimately help their careers. Translating this in a way that management, recruiters, etc. see as valuable is completely different matter.”*

While the majority of comments from both large and small firms were similar in the perceived value of volunteer behavior, there were differences worth noting. As indicated by the comments above, leaders from smaller firms appear to value volunteer behavior without the need to qualify the experience. Comments provided by leaders from larger firms were as likely to see the value of volunteer behavior, but also more likely to qualify the benefits with addendums such as “translating this in a way that management, recruiters, etc. see as valuable is completely different matter.”

### Job Level

Given that firm size appears to have some impact on perceived career benefits we thought it would be interesting to test whether job level affected perceptions of volunteerism. To this end we split the sample into executives (C-core level job holders and VPs of any functional area) and non-executives (all other job levels) and reviewed the question: *“When our employees volunteer, it has a positive effect on their professional careers within our firm”*. The results of this analysis are presented below.

### Does volunteerism positively affect career within firm



The results reveal that executive level respondents are significantly more likely to view volunteer behavior as more beneficial to ones professional careers than are non-executives. Below is an example of the type of comments offered by executives:

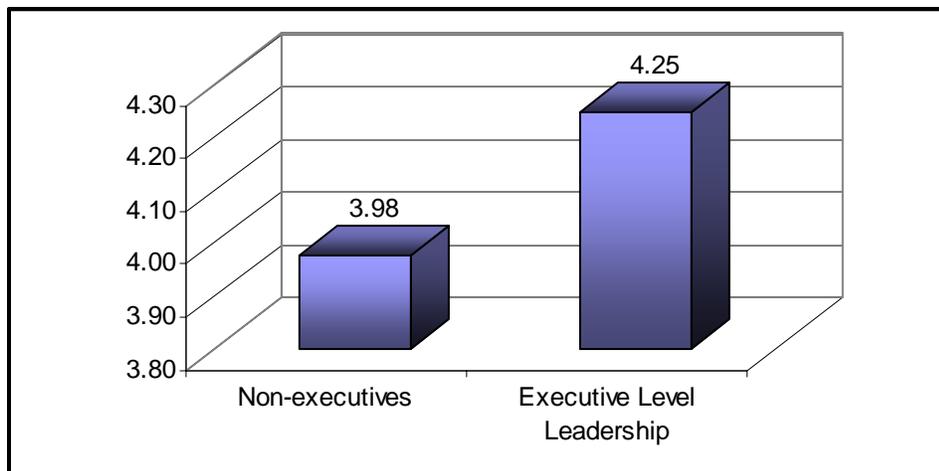
*“Mainly, volunteer work has been perceived at least in professional firms to be a career building activity. However, I believe it helps the organization as a whole because volunteers represent the company they work for so there is PR value; and they learn about and are exposed to a variety of needs and networks as a result of their volunteerism. This knowledge and learning can be brought to bear for the good of the company.”*

Contrast this complex, big picture perception of volunteer work with a comment provided by a non-executive:

*“It is a good way to pick up or sharpen skills that you need for career growth.”*

So while both executive and non-executive respondents perceived career benefits from volunteer work, it appears that executives see how seeking career building opportunities actually benefit multiple stakeholders, and therefore they may value volunteer behaviors more than non-executives. We also wondered whether executives were more or less likely to perceive organizational support for their volunteer activities compared to non-executives. The results presented below indicate that executives are significantly more likely to perceive organizational support than non-executives.

### Perceptions of organizational support for volunteer work



While we did not ask any additional questions related to organizational support, we speculate that senior executives are more likely to accurately gauge the level of support for volunteer behavior because they are closer to prominent others who shape the culture/climate such as board members and the CEO. While this is somewhat

speculation, we do have additional empirical support for this idea. Specifically, when we separate executives and non-executives then run a correlation between supervisory support and organizational support we find the correlation for executives is higher ( $r = .81, p < .001$ ) compared to non-executives ( $r = .76, p < .001$ ) supporting the idea that perceptions of organizational support are stronger for executives when considering their perceptions of “superior support” such as CEOs and board members.

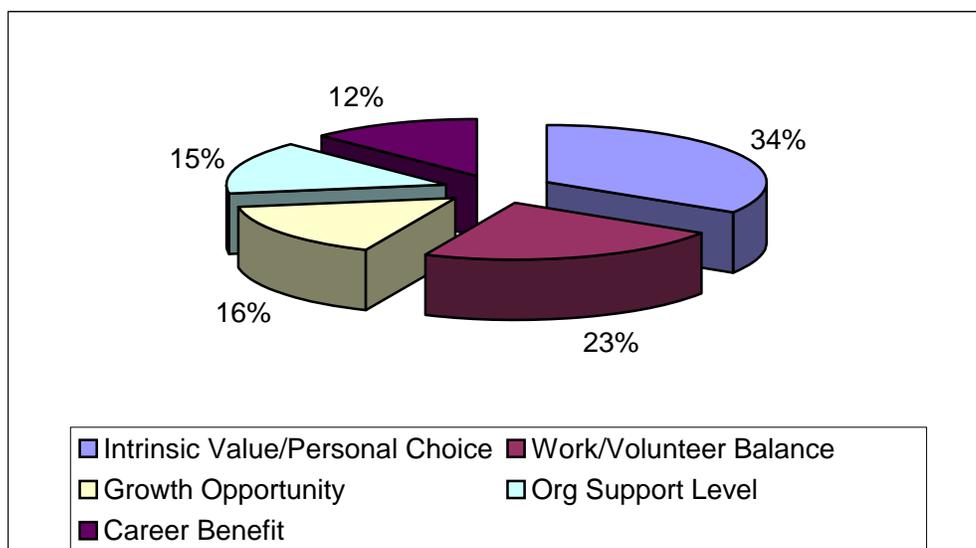
### Open Ended Comments

While we have given some examples of open-ended comments throughout the report we now share these results in detail. We asked two open-ended questions to help us understand why leaders do (do not) value volunteerism and the type of advice they would give to somebody considering volunteer work.

The following two questions were posed:

- If you were giving advice to a new employee about doing volunteer work, what would you say?
- Please share any other thoughts you have about the value of volunteer work to your organization overall or to career growth overall.

The results of coding open-ended question one ***If you were giving advice to a new employee about doing volunteer work, what would you say?*** are presented below.



The most often cited piece of advice leaders had to offer referred to what we labeled *intrinsic value / personal choice*. Thirty-four percent of comments involved advice, in one form or another that suggested individuals should volunteer for activities they are passionate about or that bring intrinsic rewards and focus less, if at all, on the potential career benefits. Comment examples from the category intrinsic value/personal choice:

*“Volunteer work is for the greater good and can look good on a resume if the person looking at it cares about service to the community. Volunteer because it’s the right thing to do and you enjoy it not because it looks good.”*

*“Do it because you have a passion for the cause you are supporting, not because of what it will get you. Then recognize the best benefit it offers you is the network you establish or the broadening of skills it can offer you.”*

*“Do it. Don’t be concerned if it will help your career. Do it because it is the right thing to do”*

The second most prevalent piece of advice fell into the category we labeled *work / volunteer balance*. Twenty-three percent of comments in this category consisted of warnings and concerns about maintaining a balance between the two activities. Indeed, this advice was clear – do not let volunteer activities interfere with “for pay” responsibilities. Comment examples from the category work/volunteer balance are presented below:

*“Strongly encourage it, however need maintain balance with job productivity and deliverables being adequately met.”*

*“Balance your volunteer responsibilities with your paid job schedule and obligations”*

*“As long as you can effectively balance your work/life demands, go for it! Volunteerism is a great way to give back to the community and build your network”*

The third most prevalent piece of advice fell into the category we labeled *growth opportunities*. Sixteen percent of comments in this category consisted of advice related to volunteer opportunities offering skill development, stretch assignments, networking opportunities, etc. Comment examples from the category growth opportunities follow:

*“It is a great way to network and possibly expand your skill set.”*

*“Go for it! It gives you the opportunity to give back a little of what you have been given and is a great way to learn, network and grow.”*

*“Volunteering provides a safe opportunity to stretch and grow.”*

In addition to growth opportunities, a similar set of comments were labeled *career benefits*. Fifteen-percent of comments in this category consisted of advice related to a career benefit gained from volunteering such as the enhancement or establishment of a business network. Comment examples from the category career benefits below:

*“Try to make it relevant to our work in some way, whether supporting a client or a population that we work with a lot.”*

*“If they are in sales I would say - "Do it". Get your name out there.”*

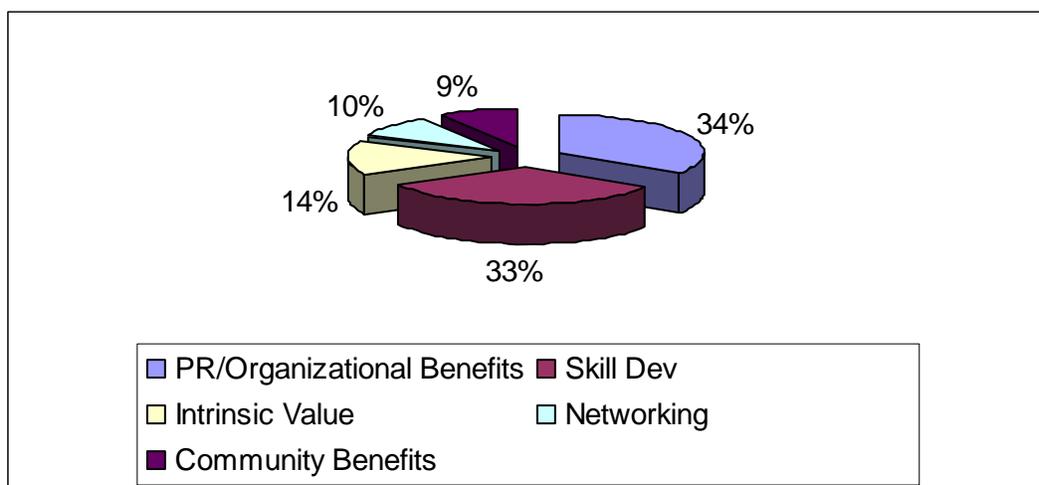
*“Volunteering is an excellent way to network within your chosen field and in other fields of work”*

*“Get involved. Not only is it the right thing to do, you'll meet people in that arena that may come back to be in your professional life years down the road.”*

The second open-ended question asked:

- ***Please share any other thoughts you have about the value of volunteer work to your organization overall or to career growth overall.***

The results of the comment coding process are displayed below.



The most often given value related comments concerned the public relations (PR) benefits of volunteer work. A second element of the pr/organizational benefit category

concerned organizational benefits such as improved employee morale / attitude as a consequence of volunteer work. Comment examples from the category PR or organizational benefits follow:

*“Volunteer work enhances the view that the community has of our organization. It establishes us as a part of the community and not just a corporate entity.”*

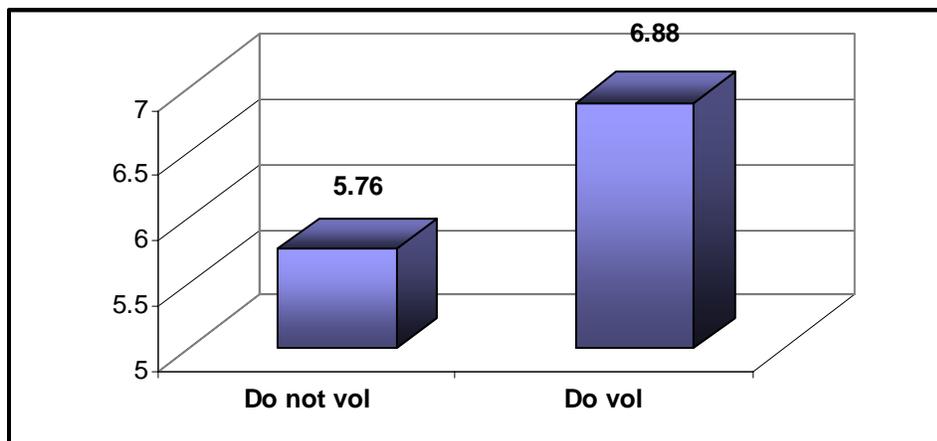
*“Employees who volunteer give the company a good name in the community and show that the company supports the community. It also gives the employee additional experience to bring back to the job and helps them do their job better.”*

A nearly equal amount of comments (33%) addressed the value of volunteer work on skill development to the individual who engages in volunteer work. Networking accounted for 10% of the comments and the last two comment categories concerned the value to self (intrinsic rewards) and direct benefits to the community.

### **Energy and Volunteerism**

We also investigated the relationship between respondents’ current energy levels and reported volunteer work. We wanted to know whether the amount of volunteer work was associated with current energy levels. To answer this question we looked at two relevant pieces of information. First we examined the energy score differences between those who reported volunteering and those who reported no volunteer activity. The results are presented below.

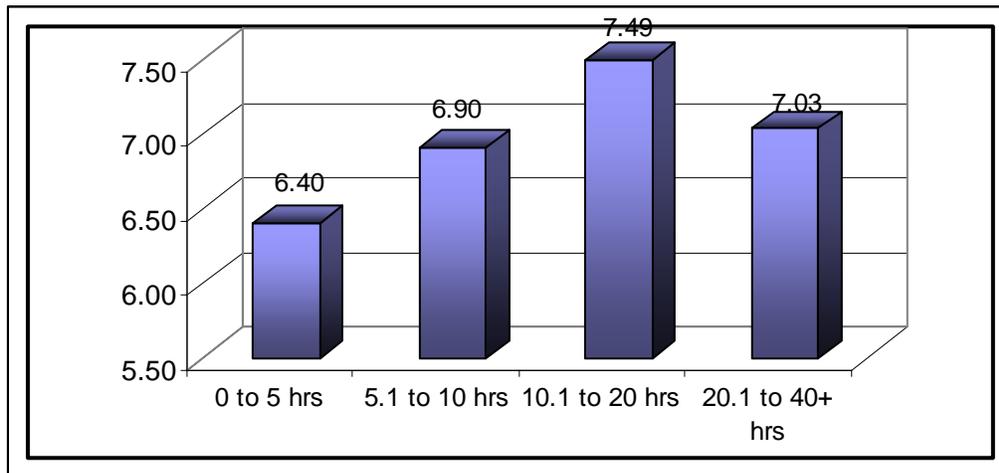
#### **Energy scores of those who do and do not volunteer**



It is clear from these results that energy is much higher for those who engage in volunteer work than those who do not engage in volunteer work. Given the result above we decided to dig a little deeper and reviewed the amount of hours volunteered per month to help clarify the relationship between energy level and volunteer work.

Specifically, we wanted to know if an increase in volunteer hours was associated with sequentially higher energy levels. The results are presented below.

### Hours volunteered and energy scores



These results suggest a more complex relationship between energy and amount of hours volunteered. Energy increases as volunteer hours go up, to a point, and then after that energy drops off (specifically after the amount of volunteer work exceeds 20.1 hours per month). This type of relationship suggests that there might be a limit on the amount of hours per month when it comes to optimizing energy or the energizing effect of volunteerism.

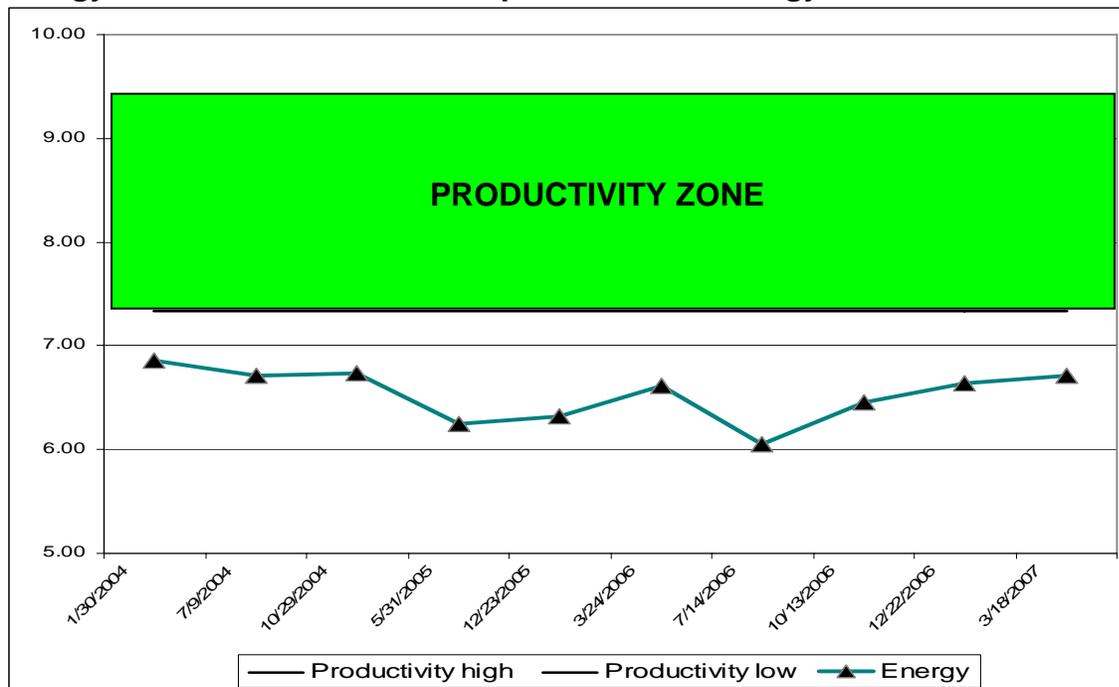
Because energy predicts productivity, sales, and other performance outcomes, it is important for organizational leaders to understand the factors that can enhance employee energy at work. This data suggests that an optimal level of volunteer work can help the organization beyond the public relations, community involvement, and even skill development benefits a leadership team may now be considering. Volunteer work may increase the energy of employees at work, and by enhancing energy, the results is higher productivity, which then leads to improved bottom-line performance.

### More on the Energy Pulse™ Trend Data

As part of the on-going research, the Leadership Pulse tracks leaders' energy levels. Background information on energy and validation of the Energy Pulse metric can be found on the eePulse web site ([www.eepulse.com](http://www.eepulse.com)). Numerous multi-firm and within-firm studies have demonstrated that the one-item energy question predicts (using longitudinal, predictive research methods) turnover, customer service scores, sales, absenteeism, quality, 360 performance ratings, and more. The net is that **when energy goes down, if no intervention is implemented, then individual and firm**

**performance will go down in the near future.** Also, we discovered that leadership energy is a lead indicator of employee energy because leader energy affects employee energy. The energy data from March 2007 reveal that **across all industries, energy levels remain in a slight upward trend since the low point of 7/14/06 when viewed over the past 10 measurement periods.**

### Energy Trend Data: Current and previous nine energy scores



The data also reveal that **24% of the current sample is reporting in what we call the “danger” zones** (either overly energized to the point of potential burnout or not energized and somewhat energized); both conditions predict sub-optimal performance levels (see detailed data below);

### Energy distribution scores

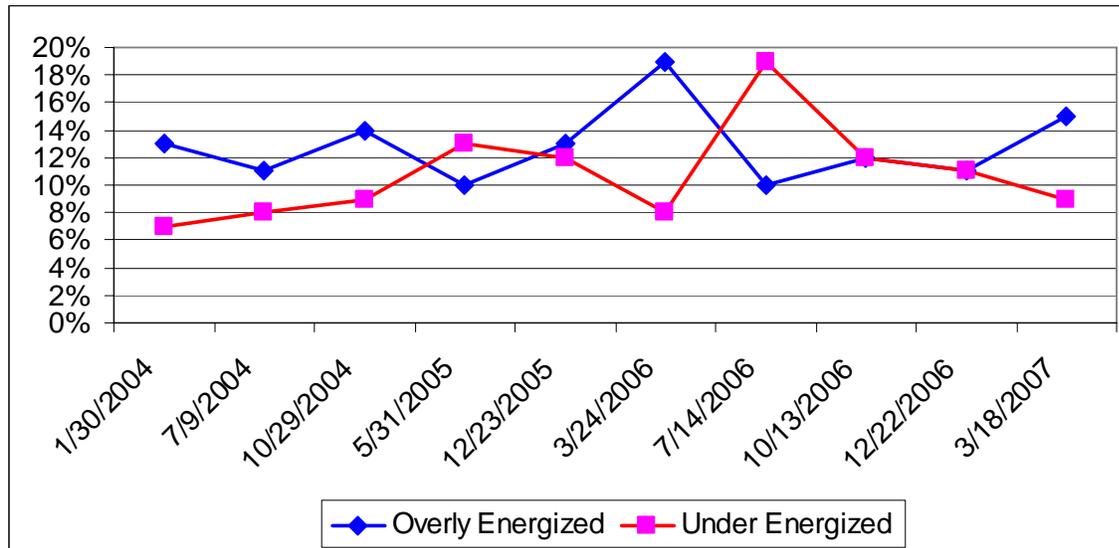
Response Scale	Percent
8.76 - 10.0 Overly energized	15%
6.26 - 8.75 Very energized	52%
3.75 - 6.25 Energized	24%
1.25 - 3.74 Somewhat energized	8%
0.0 - 1.24 Not energized	1%

Energy (SD)	6.70 (2.01)
Change	0.06

We also include a trend analysis of danger zone percentages for the past ten measurement periods that correspond with the energy trend data above.

### Percent in the energy danger zones over the past ten measurement periods



Our research shows that energy is not something to be maximized but optimized. Thus, we use a proven method of self-reported productivity levels to create what we call a productivity zone and ultimately report whether employees, groups, units, companies, etc. are in the “zone” of productivity<sup>2</sup>. Because the energy metric is such a useful metric in determining overall organizational health we will review below the energy scores by individual industries next. This information shows which industries are in their own zones, which are above, and those that are below.

<sup>2</sup> Zone status is calculated by using the answer to a separate question which asks respondents to rate the energy levels where they are most productive. The self report method has been found to predict performance outcomes. The process and metrics are trademarks of eePulse with a patent pending on the methods and technology.

## Industry level results for March, 2007

Group	Energy (SD) <sup>a</sup>		Change <sup>b,g</sup>	Zone <sup>d</sup>	PLow <sup>e</sup>	PHigh <sup>f</sup>	Energy (%)				
							Low Energy (0.0 - 3.74)	Medium Energy (3.75 - 6.25)	High Energy (6.26 - 10.0)		
<b>All Industries</b>	6.71	(2.05)	↑	0.07	-0.64	7.35	9.40	9	24	67	
<b>Agriculture</b>	NA			NA	NA	NA				NA	
<b>Biotechnology</b>	NA			NA	NA	NA				NA	
<b>Communications</b>	7.08	(1.28)	↓	-0.35	-0.61	7.69	8.97		33	67	
<b>Construction</b>	7.75	(1.41)	↑	1.69	-0.55	8.30	9.71		17	83	
<b>Consulting</b>	6.92	(1.95)	↑	0.51	-0.56	7.48	9.43	8	18	74	
<b>Engineering</b>	5.75	(1.50)	↓	-1.56	-2.25	8.00	9.50		50	50	
<b>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</b>	6.79	(1.40)	↓	-0.31	-0.83	7.62	9.02		29	71	
<b>Government</b>	4.13	(3.47)	↓	-2.31	-2.64	6.77	10.24		50	50	
<b>Health Care</b>	5.00	(2.16)	↓	-1.42	-2.17	7.17	9.33		25	50	25
<b>Information Technology</b>	6.17	(1.88)	↓	-0.40	-1.46	7.63	9.51	13	33	53	
<b>Manufacturing</b>	6.57	(2.54)	↓	-0.45	-0.30	6.87	9.41	17	17	65	
<b>Mining</b>	NA			NA	NA	NA				NA	
<b>Not-For-Profit Agency</b>	6.83	(2.28)	↑	0.17	-0.48	7.31	9.59	10	20	70	
<b>Other</b>	6.70	(1.84)	↑	0.27	-0.33	7.03	8.87		40	60	
<b>Retail Trade</b>	6.60	(2.70)	↑	1.69	↓	6.15	8.85		20	80	
<b>Services (other than consulting)</b>	7.75	(1.53)	↑	1.22	-0.12	7.87	9.40		17	83	
<b>Transportation and Public Utilities</b>	6.75	(1.56)	↑	0.17	-1.41	8.16	9.72		50	50	
<b>Web-based Technology</b>	5.83	(3.33)	↓	-0.36	↓	5.67	9.00		33	67	

Unfortunately, the lower response rate for this time period resulted in some industries not having adequate data for trending purposes. The first column includes a list of all the industries sampled. An NA indicates that there were no responses from that industry for this particular Pulse Dialogue. The second column heading, pulse, is the average energy score for each industry. SD is the standard deviation of energy. The

smaller the SD, the more similar are the scores of the respondents from that industry. The third column shows overall change from the previous energy question. The associated arrow indicates whether the energy score has increased, decreased, or remained stable. The fourth column, zone, represents the area in the energy distribution where leaders are most productive. Energy scores that fall within the upper and lower productivity zone are considered “in the zone” (research shows being in the zone positively predicts performance outcomes). Thumbs up is an indicator of being in the zone; blue and minus sign is below, and red and positive sign is above the productivity zones. The fifth and sixth columns represent the lower and upper bound of the productivity zone.

The current results indicate that four industries are operating within their productivity zones (Biotechnology, Manufacturing, Services (other than consulting) and other), as indicated by the “thumbs up” symbol in the zone column. An examination of the “change” column shows while energy overall has increased, several industries have experienced energy loss (arrow down). For example, engineering reports a loss of 1.56 energy points and a review of their zone score tells us that they are operating 2.25 points below their productivity zone. Government also lost ground and is reporting a loss in energy of 2.31 points and is currently 2.64 points below their productivity zone. Finally, a quick review of the health care industry demonstrates that their energy levels have dipped 1.42 points and they are operating 2.17 points below their productivity zone. This very simple, yet effective energy metric is warning us that these industries from our sample are experiencing energy loss in dangerously large amounts. Given years of research on the predictive nature of the energy metric this is a cause for concern.

### **The Multi-Employed Person**

There is a lot of talk about work-life balance. Perhaps we need to take the topic one step further and start having conversations about “multi-employed person,” and one slice of that which is work-volunteer balance. With data from other studies showing the importance of volunteerism activity, it is critical that individuals, employers, and volunteer agencies all understand the complexity of the effects of volunteerism on its many stakeholders.

#### *Volunteerism and the volunteer:*

Based on our findings, the respondents in our sample appear to say that volunteerism is good for them personally. They feel they are doing volunteer work for the cause, to be helpful, and they hope it has some personal effects on their career and work. However, there were no clear statements that volunteer work helps people climb the corporate

ladder. Volunteerism leads to other opportunities that indirectly help employees (e.g. networking, skill development, etc.).

#### *Volunteerism and the organization:*

Business leaders seem to say that volunteering can be good for their employees, and they seem to think that volunteering is part of their overall social responsibilities to the world and community. Again, no one goes out of their way to say that volunteerism is having a direct impact on the business' bottom line results.

#### *The dance:*

It seems like the respondents are all dancing around the issue of volunteerism at work. There's a lot of sweet talk about how it helps, how it makes people feel good, how the indirect effects may be good for your career, and more. But few people come out and say volunteering will get me a promotion or a better job. In fact, one of the lower scoring questions was whether volunteering on someone's resume would help that person get a job. It appears that respondents think while it doesn't get in the way, it's not going to push you over the edge and really "get you" the job.

#### *The hidden advantage of volunteering:*

Maybe people are unclear about the effects of volunteering on the organization because they don't really know how to measure or test their assumptions. What I found most interesting about this study was the relationship between volunteering and energy. We know from all of our prior research that energy predicts performance (e.g. turnover, sales, customer service scores, productivity, and more); therefore, if people who volunteer are people with higher energy, then it follows that volunteering may have a direct and positive effect on firm performance.

Unfortunately, causation cannot be attributed in this study. It may be that higher energy people are more likely to volunteer (they can manage time better, etc.) vs. volunteering affecting energy. In either case, the link is one that deserves more attention because volunteering may be one of the few direct interventions a company can take to raise employee energy levels. If this were the case, there is one more caveat for the employer. It may be well worth the time to help employees manage their multi-work selves because too much volunteering may backfire. Help employees achieve the right hours in work and off-work activities; help employees select the right type of volunteer activities to supplement their skill set and help with their career goals, and make the discussion of volunteer work part of the overall performance review with employees.

If you are interested in being part of the ongoing efforts to help leaders bring added value to their organizations please contact Dr. Welbourne at [theresa@eepulse.com](mailto:theresa@eepulse.com).

If you are currently not part of the Leadership Pulse study group, and you wish to participate (or sign up leaders within your organization), you can register at <http://www.umbs.leadership.eepulse.com>.

Read about the new opportunity to get instant benchmarking data for your team by joining the Leadership Team Pulse; details at: <http://www.eepulse.com>: under Leadership Pulse or write to [info@eepulse.com](mailto:info@eepulse.com) to learn more.