innovative
nonprofit solutions

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

OUR MISSION

The INS Group helps nonprofits, government agencies, and faith-based institutions create innovative solutions to build their capacity and sustain their programs and services.

We accomplish this by assessing, designing, and implementing organizational development strategies that focus on improving effectiveness and enhancing the organization's sustainability. The INS Group was established in 1999 and provides organizational development and capacity building services nationally.

Message from the President

I'm excited to share this month's newsletter after a long break. Going forward, you can expect a newsletter from The INS Group four times a year.

Fall is an important time of transition for nonprofits. Development officers shift into the fundraising season, program staff unveil new initiatives and services, and administrative staff settle into the new fiscal year (or begin preparing for the next one).

No matter what services your nonprofit provides, fall is an opportunity to reimagine existing programs, improve organizational processes, and plan for the future. In this issue, you'll find information about new FLSA regulations for overtime pay, how they might affect your organization, and resources for ensuring compliance. You'll also get inspiration for enhancing volunteer programs in the digital age, with easy tips for extending your organization's recruitment reach and keeping volunteers engaged for the long haul. Fundraisers will enjoy six tips for rethinking site visits and how to create a meaningful, memorable experience for visitors. Finally, nonprofit leaders will be challenged to recruit more Millennials for their Boards of Directors so that nonprofits can tap into this generation's considerable digital expertise and philanthropic giving streak.

The INS Group is committed to helping nonprofits strengthen their organizational capacity and navigate the challenges that lay ahead—whether it's fundraising support, strategic planning, Board development, and more. Please share this newsletter with colleagues and peers committed to improving the nonprofit sector. You can also visit us at www.theinsgroup.com to learn more about our portfolio of services and how we can help your organization develop innovative solutions to meet its needs.

Ruth

Ruth A. Peebles, President
The INS Group

How Will the New FLSA Regulations Affect Your Nonprofit?

The new Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regulations signed into law earlier this year have nonprofits across the country scrambling to make sense of how these changes will impact them and their staff. Starting December 1, 2016, nonprofits will have to pay overtime to certain employees who work more than 40 hours a week but earn less than $47,476 per year.

Nervous? Don't worry, you're not alone. Here are a few guidelines for determining how these regulations affect your business and employees:

1. **Defining exempt vs. nonexempt employees.** Many employees and employers mistakenly believe that employees are "exempt" simply by virtue of receiving an annual salary (versus an hourly wage). This is incorrect. Most positions are considered nonexempt except for "white collar" jobs—those requiring certain administrative, professional, and executive duties AND which pay more than $913 weekly ($47,476 annually). These helpful worksheets from the National Council of Nonprofits will help your organization easily determine which employees are nonexempt or exempt.

   These changes will mean huge budgetary shakeups for organizations where employees do not meet the new salary threshold ($913 weekly) to be considered exempt from receiving overtime pay. In particular, if your nonprofit employs workers with professional duties, you may be impacted.

2. **Who can receive overtime pay?** Only nonexempt employees are eligible to receive overtime pay for working more than 40 hours per week. Nonprofits discovering that many of their employees are nonexempt, and thus eligible for overtime, face three primary choices: bumping up some staff salaries to at least $47,476 per year, keeping nonexempt staff salaries the same and paying those employees overtime, or restricting nonexempt employees' ability to work overtime.

   Nonprofits should analyze their staff's workloads and determine just how much overtime their employees work on a regular basis. Some employees work far beyond 40 hours each week, while others only do so seasonally for high-demand programs. Employers will need to take on the tough task of revising their 2017 budgets to accommodate these new realities—and keep in mind that, every three years, exempt employees' salary thresholds will rise per FLSA regulations.

3. **Adjusting to FLSA changes is not an either/or situation.** There's no doubt that many businesses in both the for-profit and nonprofit sectors will be significantly affected by the new FLSA regulations. However, instead of seeing these changes as hurdles, consider them challenges to reevaluate the efficiency of your organization.

   Some organizations will choose a combination of raising salaries to make employees exempt, eliminating or restricting overtime for nonexempt employees, and budgeting to accommodate for predictable situational overtime. Others will hire part-time workers to help limit overtime among staff members and substantially reassign work so that it is fairly distributed among all employees (which may result in some new hires). There is no one right solution for any organization, so be creative and seek input from other companies in your sector.

It's important to keep in mind that there are many ways to comply with the new FLSA regulations. While initial budget shifts may be painful, they will go a long way to improve the sustainability of your organization and ensure that workers are being compensated fairly for their efforts.

FLSA Resources for Nonprofits

- Society for Human Resource Management
- National Council of Nonprofits
- U.S. Department of Labor webinar series
- U.S. Department of Labor FAQ

Rethinking Site Visits

"I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand." --Confucius

Your organization has great collaterals for sharing its impact—a vibrant annual report, videos, program profiles on social media, and maybe even an impact page on your website.

But are you bringing visitors to see and experience your organization's work?

Site visits are an important way to help the public, volunteers, and current and potential funders understand your nonprofit's impact. Relationship building often begins with a phone call, but site visits are a powerful opportunity for supporters to connect with your mission and the individuals you serve.

Here are a few tips for planning and implementing successful site visits:

1. **Determine your goals and audience.** Are you celebrating a new program? Do you want to reconnect with longtime funders? Do you wish the general public knew more about your nonprofit's work? Determine 3-5 fundraising and marketing goals your organization has for the next fiscal year and then identify program opportunities that will allow visitors to connect with your organization's work.

   When creating a guest list, think broadly. What companies or groups are interested in the areas in which your organization works? Are there city or county officials that would want to know more about your nonprofit and its accomplishments? Don't be afraid to invite individuals or groups with whom you have little or no prior relationship. If you operate programs in partnership with other organizations, tap into their networks and brainstorm potential visitors. Don't be afraid to make site visits a joint effort!

2. **Create a formal event with an informal feel.** Take the time to develop a well-planned, thoughtful event. Create a graphic and email invitations or send invitations in the mail. When possible, align your visit with a national celebration (National Summer Learning Day, National Children's Book Week). Limit visits to a maximum of 1.5 hours and share an agenda with visitors beforehand. Offer refreshments when possible and send people home with "swag" or a small gift. Everyone has busy schedules; these touches show that you respect people's time and appreciate their interest.

   On the day of the site visit, try to put visitors at ease. Avoid overly formal professional clothing and limit presentations with slides. Too often, presentations feel one-sided and stiff. Instead, do what you can to encourage a conversation about your organization's work. Arrange chairs in a circle, ask guests what they know about your nonprofit, and encourage questions. Invite staff members and the individuals you serve to share stories about your organization's work and the impact they have seen or experienced. This last approach is a tremendous way to connect with visitors and allow them to learn about your work from people with whom normally they might never interact.

3. **Let visitors see or do the work themselves.** Site visits are a unique opportunity for visitors to directly experience your work and see its benefits. Drop in on a gardening class with kids and encourage visitors to ask children what they are learning. Bring visitors to your warehouse and have them speak with dedicated volunteers who are loading boxes of food for families. Do whatever you can to make visitors feel like they are a part of the process and have seen your mission in action.

4. **Notify program staff of site visits.** Bring your program staff into the loop well before site visits. Let them know the number of visitors that are coming, encourage them to wear clothing with your organization's logo, and share any expectations you may have. After the visit, quickly debrief with staff to see what went well and what you can do better next time.

5. **Protect the privacy of individuals you serve.** Sometimes visitors like to take photos on their cell phones. On the day of your visit, inform visitors about any safeguarding or media policies your organization may have. Discourage visitors from taking photos on their own—it's important for staff members and the people you serve to have a say in how their images are taken and used. (Be especially careful with minors; be sure to have parents/guardians sign a photo release, and have the courtesy to ask children if they would like to be photographed.) When possible, get signed photo releases from program staff and participants in advance and have Communications staff take photos that you can share later with visitors.

6. **Follow up with a thank you.** Send visitors a simple thank you email or note for spending time with your organization and encourage them to visit again. Provide a link for them to sign up for your newsletter and social media channels, and let them know that you plan to keep in touch. Site visits are about relationship building and providing a glimpse into your organization's work. Don't forget this critical step!

Volunteer Programs for the Digital Age

No matter their size, most nonprofit organizations rely on volunteers as an integral part of their success. From setting up tables at an event to organizing a 5K charity race on behalf of your organization, volunteers perform important tasks without the need to hire additional staff.

A well-run volunteer program is essential for recruiting volunteers, engaging them effectively, and keeping them invested for years to come. Here are several free digital tools that can help your organization make the most of its volunteers:

Evaluating your volunteer program. How healthy is your current volunteer program? Do you have a dedicated staff person or volunteer to manage volunteers? Small and medium-sized nonprofits often struggle to find the money or time necessary to create infrastructure and processes for a healthy volunteer program. But the investment is well worth it—remember that volunteers, in addition to giving their time, are public supporters of your organization and often turn into donors.

Learn where your program stands by doing a thorough assessment of your organization's capacity and goals. AGE UK offers a great assessment tool. While this resource was developed for nonprofits in the UK who recruit older volunteers, it's a great starting place for any nonprofit. If your organization focuses on food insecurity, Volunteer Match offers an online volunteer program assessment. This tool is particularly valuable because it provides personalized next steps based on your organization's goals and current volunteer program.

Sharing volunteer opportunities. Newsletters and social media are excellent places to share volunteer opportunities, especially time-sensitive ones. But many nonprofits have year-round projects for which they need volunteers. Idealist.org allows nonprofits to post unlimited volunteer opportunities visible to more than 1.4 million visitors a month. Better still, nonprofits can post opportunities in three languages, specify the number of volunteers and any special skills needed, and list opportunities that are available for several weeks or months out of the year. ActivateGood.org lets nonprofits post short- and long-term opportunities, and it also assists with volunteer management by sending reminder emails about volunteers who sign up.

Managing volunteers. Maintaining communication with volunteers and assigning them tasks are incredibly time-consuming processes. Fortunately, many programs make this work a lot easier with free or low-cost services. TrackItForward.com will let nonprofits with fewer than 50 volunteers track their time for free, with affordable pricing plans for larger numbers of volunteers. YourVolunteers.com offers the whole kit and kaboodle from volunteer scheduling to engagement, with a free cloud-based system and affordable paid options.

But the most important part of managing volunteers is ensuring you have established processes. Volunteer management comes with a fair share of challenges—including scheduling volunteers, thanking them, and even letting them go. Volunteer Match offers a wide variety of free webinars to help volunteer coordinators develop better processes, build their management skills, and tell the story of volunteers' impact. Learn more at learn.volunteermatch.org.

Thanking volunteers. Volunteers who don't feel appreciated are far less likely to give you their time (or money) again. Take the time to ensure that you thank volunteers for their efforts, whether that comes in the form of an email, phone call, or annual appreciation event.

Short on resources? Assign a program manager to personally thank volunteers before or after their work shift. Collect volunteers' email addresses and ask a Communications staff person to send an e-blast with a thank-you graphic after an event. Social media is a great way to share photos, tag volunteers, and publicly recognize companies or groups that send volunteers. Whatever you do, try to be timely with thank you messages—don't wait till National Volunteer Week/Month in April.

Canva.com is a free, easy-to-use graphic design platform that allows organizations to create thank-you graphics and save their brand's colors and logos. Create several generic templates that you can rotate throughout the year to send individual volunteers. For large groups, create a personalized graphic with a photo and the organization's name. These templates can be created by any staff person and then run by your nonprofit's communications department for approval.

These are just a few tools for getting started—the Internet is your best friend for finding new platforms and services that can bring your volunteer program to the next level. With time and minimal cost, you can develop volunteers who serve as longtime ambassadors and funders of your organization's mission.

RESOURCES

Age UK Volunteer Program Assessment

Volunteer Match Program Assessment

Why Every Board Needs at Least One Millennial

Millennials have been skewered in the media as selfish, lazy, and apathetic. In 2013, *Time* magazine declared them as the "Me Me Me" generation.

Yet Millennials—defined as individuals born between 1980 and 1996, or those 20-36 years old today—have unique perspectives and skillsets to contribute to nonprofit organizations. Here are three reasons why you should consider inviting at least one Millennial to join your Board of Directors:

1. **Diverse perspectives.** Marcus Morrow, 35, a Board member for Achievement Academy of Durham and Durham People's Alliance, warns that ageism is bad for organizational sustainability. "Boards made up of a single, collective perspective tend to approach problems and situations in a myopic manner," he says. He suggests that Board members work to recruit from beyond their own peer groups and consider individuals with different backgrounds and experiences.

2. **In-demand skillsets.** Millennials often have skillsets—cultivated both professionally and socially—that are must-haves in the modern workplace. From expertise in social marketing to data mining to crowdsourcing, Millenials are adept at leveraging their everyday experiences and enthusiasm into tangible wins for professional and organizational gain.

3. **Big hearts (and wallets).** Despite their reputation as living off of Mom and Dad, Millennials are significant philanthropic contributors. The 2014 Millennial Impact Report from the Case Foundation found that 87% of Millennials donated money to a charitable cause in the prior year. In addition, nearly half had volunteered their time or skills to a charity in the previous month. As Millennials age and increase their personal wealth, there's no doubt that they will become formidable influencers and contributors within the nonprofit sector.

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The INS Group can assist you with:

- Organizational Assessments
- Strategic Planning
- Strategic Fund Development Planning
- Board Development
- Grant Writing and Research
- Board Fundraising Training
- Executive Coaching
- Project Management
- Marketing Communication